



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs

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[www.gov.uk/defra](http://www.gov.uk/defra)

**Your ref:**  
**Our ref:** RFI 6653  
**Date:** 04 July 2014

Dear

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: Spend on external legal services**

Thank you for your request for information on spend on services of external law firms and barristers over the last five years, which we received on 10 June 2014. We have handled your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

You asked:

*I would like to know the amount of money the department spent on the services of external law firms and barristers over the last five years (years ending March 31). If this is not possible within the restrictions of the Freedom of Information Act, three years of data will suffice. If this is not possible, two years of data are acceptable.*

The information we have available is shown in the table below. The data shows payments made in each particular financial year.

Year	Spend
2009-10	£849,765
2010-11	£716,717
2011-12	£850,039
2012-13	£990,131
2013-14	£1,709,151

Defra's legal team transferred to the Treasury Solicitors Department on 1 September 2011. The data does not include advice from Treasury Solicitors and Parliamentary Counsel. Defra cannot distinguish between payments relating to fees incurred for work done for Executive Agencies as opposed to the Core Department. Defra do not hold data on any payments made to legal firms direct by Executive Agencies.

In keeping with the spirit and effect of the FOIA, and in keeping with the government's Transparency Agenda, all information is assumed to be releasable to the public unless exempt. Therefore, the information released to you will now be published on [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context. Please note that this will not include your personal data.

I attach Annex A, which explains the copyright that applies to the information being released to you.

I also attach Annex B giving contact details should you be unhappy with the service you have received.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

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## **Annex B**

### **Complaints**

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request you may make a complaint or appeal against our decision under section 17(7) of the FOIA or under regulation 18 of the EIRs, as applicable, within 40 working days of the date of this letter. Please write to Mike Kaye, Head of Information Standards, Area 4D, Nobel House, 17 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3JR (email: [requestforinfo@defra.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:requestforinfo@defra.gsi.gov.uk)) and he will arrange for an internal review of your case. Details of Defra's complaints procedure are on our [website](#).

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, section 50 of the FOIA and regulation 18 of the EIRs gives you the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Please note that generally the Information Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have first exhausted Defra's own complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF