



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

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www.defra.gov.uk

Your ref:
Our ref: RFI 6569
Date: 22 May 2014

Dear

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: NOBEL HOUSE STAFF PREVIOUSLY EMPLOYED BY THE NATIONAL FARMERS UNION

Thank you for your request for information about Nobel House staff previously employed by the National Farmers Union, which we received on 7 May 2014. As you know, we have handled your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

You asked:

“Please could you tell me how many staff work at DEFRA's Noble House offices and how many of these staff have worked for the National Farmer's Union?”

Core Defra currently has approximately 1200 staff working in Nobel House.

We want to be as open as possible in answering requests. The Act itself also requires us to help people obtain the information they are looking for. Unfortunately, as mentioned in the response to your previous Freedom of Information request, information regarding the previous employment of staff is not held centrally. It may be divulged under the application process however it is not captured electronically. Despite narrowing down your request, due to the large number of staff located in Nobel House and the manually checking of all applications which would be required, the gathering together of the information you have requested would be likely to involve a significant cost and diversion of resources from the Department's other work.

Section 12(1) of the FOIA allows us to refuse a request for information if we estimate that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit, which currently stands at £600. On the basis of our estimates, we consider that the cost would exceed this limit and, as such, we are refusing your request.

In such cases, we usually offer the requester the opportunity to make a new request for a narrower category of information. However, as the information requested on previous employment is not held centrally, there does not appear to be a way that your request could be further narrowed that would enable us to provide an answer.



Please note that if you are able to modify your request, we will handle it as a new request and so the 20-working-day deadline for responding to requests would then commence from the date that we receive the modified request.

In keeping with the spirit and effect of the FOIA, all information is assumed to be releasable to the public unless exempt. Therefore, the information released to you may now be published on our website together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context.

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,

Ann Tarran

Direct Line 020 7979 8583

Email ann.tarran@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Annex A

Copyright

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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) 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