



Department  
of Energy &  
Climate Change

**Department of Energy & Climate Change**

3 Whitehall Place,  
London SW1A 2AW  
[www.decc.gov.uk](http://www.decc.gov.uk)

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Our ref: EIR Request ref FOI2014/11180

23 June 2014

Dear **Redacted**

## **RE: Environmental Information Regulations Request**

Thank you for your email of 28 May in which you asked for the following:

*“This is a Freedom of Information request for details of correspondence (emails, letters) and details of meetings (including dates, agendas, minutes, and internal Ministerial briefing papers) between Ministers and the Permanent Secretary (including an Acting Permanent Secretary) at DECC (including their official special advisors) and senior executives at the following companies:*

- *iGas;*
- *Viking Energy;*
- *Tamboran Resources;*
- *Dart Energy*

*Concerning unconventional oil and gas extraction in the UK, including fracking and Coal bed Methane, from 1st January 2013 until today,”*

We have considered your request in accordance with the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (‘the EIRs’) as the information you have sought disclosure of, does in our view, fall within the definition of ‘environmental information’ as stated in the EIRs.

The Department wishes to be as open as possible in answering requests, and to help people obtain the information they are looking for. Unfortunately in this



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case, from our preliminary assessment, it is clear that to determine whether the Department holds the information you have requested and to locate, retrieve and extract the information would require a substantial volume of work.

In order to provide you with the information on the scale that you have requested would require a search of all the records, computer drives and email accounts of all DECC Ministers, The Permanent Secretary, the ex-Acting Permanent Secretary including all their private office staff and Special Advisors including their support staff for the period from 1st January 2013 until the date you made your request. We estimate that the amount of work required would take us over the limit referred to above.

In applying the exception, we have considered the public interest test in respect of your request. We have applied a presumption in favour of disclosure as required by Regulation 12(2). We acknowledge that there may be public interest in the information you have requested. Greater transparency makes the government more accountable to the electorate and increases trust and also enables the public contribution to policy making to become more effective.

However, your request is broad and voluminous. Gathering the information you request would be likely to involve a significant cost and diversion of resources from the teams concerned and the Department's other work. Therefore, we will not process your request as currently drafted at this stage.

Given the nature of your request you may wish to refine it by narrowing its scope and being more specific concerning the precise nature of the information you wish to obtain. You could, for example focus on information relating to a particular set of correspondence or meeting, or reduce the time period that you wish to obtain information for.

All external meetings between the Department's Ministers and Permanent Secretaries are published on a quarterly basis on the [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) website at the following link:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?departments%5B%5D=department-of-energy-climate-change&publication\\_type=transparency-data](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?departments%5B%5D=department-of-energy-climate-change&publication_type=transparency-data)

### **Appeals procedure**

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within 40 working days of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter and should be sent to the Information Rights Unit at:

Information Rights Unit (DECC Shared Service)  
Department for Business, Innovation & Skills  
1 Victoria Street  
London



Department  
of Energy &  
Climate Change

SW1H 0ET

E-mail: [foi@decc.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:foi@decc.gsi.gov.uk)

Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely,

***Redacted***  
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