



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/defra

Your ref:

Our ref: RFI 6503

Date: 01 May 2014

Dear

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: Travel and Subsistence for Special Advisors

Thank you for your request for information about Travel and Subsistence for Special Advisors, which we received on 9 April 2014. As you know we have handled your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

You asked:

Please can you provide me with a breakdown of costs of travel for special advisors which have been booked through the travel company which the Department uses to book travel for Special Advisors: 2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14.

In response:

Defra's current system for booking travel was introduced in May 2012. It allows staff to use a central travel provider with costs charged directly to a local budget. Prior to this, travel was paid for via Government Procurement Cards (GPCs). This means that specific travel arrangements for Special Advisors before May 2012 cannot easily be identified because transactions are shown in the name of cardholders rather than Special Advisors (who are never GPC-holders themselves).

Although we want to be as open as possible in answering requests, and the FOIA requires us to help people obtain the information they are looking for, gathering together the information you have requested in respect of April 2011- April 2012 would 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 of gathering information in respect of this period would exceed this limit and, as such, we are refusing this element of your request.



INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE

The table below sets out information relating to the eleven months from May 2012 to 31 March 2013 (the end of the 2012-13 financial year). Information relating to 2013-14 will be available in July 2014, once the Department's accounts for the year have been audited and published.

Special Advisor	Expense Type	May 2012 – March 2013 (£)
Amanda Craig	Air Travel	9,471
	Rail Travel	1,373
Guy Robinson	Air Travel	11,062
	Rail Travel	113
TOTAL		22,019

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 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

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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