



Department
of Energy &
Climate Change

Department of Energy & Climate Change
Atholl House
86-88 Guild Street
Aberdeen AB11 6AR
www.gov.uk/decc

Our ref: FOI2015/00003

28 January 2015

Dear ,

RE: Freedom of Information Request

Thank you for your email of 1 January where you requested the following information:

Please provide copies of all emails, letters and faxes between officers of the 'Department of Energy and Climate Change' and Flintshire Council, Cluff Natural Resources Plc, The Coal Authority, Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council, Liverpool City Council, the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, the Department for the Environment, Natural Resources Wales, The Crown Estates (Marine Management Organisation), the Health and Safety Executive, and the Department of Energy and Climate Change, between 15 January 2013 and 1 January 2015, in connection with plans for Coal, Gas and/or oil extraction from the Dee Estuary, the Irish Sea and Liverpool Bay.

We have considered your request in accordance with the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (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.

We have considered your request to be seeking emails, letters and faxes in connection with plans for Coal, Gas and/or oil extraction from the Dee Estuary, the Irish Sea and Liverpool Bay between officers of the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) and Flintshire Council, Cluff Natural Resources Plc, The Coal Authority, Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council, Liverpool City Council, the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, the Department for the Environment, Natural Resources Wales, The Crown Estates, Marine Management Organisation, or the Health and Safety Executive. On that basis, I can confirm that the Department holds some information falling within the scope of your request. Please find attached copies of the information requested:

E-mail / letter correspondence between DECC and the Marine Management Organisation;
E-mail / letter correspondence between DECC and Natural Resources Wales; and
E-mail correspondence between DECC and the Coal Authority.

A number of the e-mails issued from the department reference documents in relation to the 27th and 28th Licensing Rounds which are already available and accessible to you, as they are already in the public domain. Both the 27th Licensing Round Appropriate Assessments and the 28th Licensing Round Screening Report are available on the following website: <https://www.gov.uk/offshore-energy-strategic-environmental-assessment-sea-an-overview-of-the-sea-process>

Personal Information

Personal information within the information being provided to you has been redacted. Regulation 12(3) of the EIRs provides an absolute exemption for personal data, which then falls to be dealt with under the Data Protection Act (DPA). Personal data of third parties can only be disclosed in accordance with the data protection principles. In particular, the first data protection principle requires that disclosure must be fair and lawful and must comply with one of the conditions in Schedule 2 of the DPA. We do not think that it is fair to release the names and contact details of DECC staff or staff in other organisations falling within the scope of this request and do not think that any of the relevant conditions in Schedule 2 of the DPA apply.

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
Department for Business, Innovation & Skills
1 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0ET
E-mail: foi.requests@bis.gsi.gov.uk

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

Environmental Policy Unit

Energy Development Unit
DECC