



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

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

Your ref:
Our ref:
Date: 28 February 2014

Dear [REDACTED]

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: Details of meetings and correspondence between Defra and five sugar organisations

Thank you for your request for information asking for details of meetings and correspondence between Defra and five named sugar organisations, which we received on 4 February. We have handled your request under Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

I am writing to advise you that the time limit for responding to your request for information under the FOIA needs to be extended.

The FOIA allows us 20 working days to respond to your request from the date that we received it. However, section 10(3) of the FOIA provides that, where we have to consider the balance of the public interest in relation to a qualified exemption that applies to the requested information, we can extend the 20-working-day time limit for issuing a response until such time as is reasonable in the circumstances.

In this case, I regret that we must extend the time limit for responding by 20 days because the information requested is being considered under one or more of the FOIA's exemptions to which the public interest test applies. This means that we need to assess whether in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption(s) outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information it, and some extra time is needed to determine this.

The particular qualified exemption we are considering in relation to your request is Section 35(1)(a) Formulation of Government Policy.



I hope to let you have a response by 28 March, and will keep you informed of any further delay.

The information we can release at this point is given in Annex A.

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

I also attach Annex C 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

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

The number of times a representative has met with Barry Newton of the ACP Sugar Group over past five years is nine. The dates and the subject of the meetings are given in Table 1.

Table 1: Dates and subject of meetings with ACP Sugar Group

Date of meeting	Subject
17 December 2013	Balance of competencies
17 September 2013	Post CAP reform discussion on prospects for EU market and developing countries
5 September 2013	Post CAP reform discussion on prospects for EU market and developing countries
30 April 2013	CAP reform negotiations and impact on developing countries
9 April 2013	CAP reform negotiations and impact on developing countries
12 March 2013	ACP Sugar Group and Defra representatives gave a presentation at a National Farmers Union event.
11 January 2013	Meeting to discuss prospects for developing countries investment in their own refineries.
12 December 2012	Introductory meeting with new Defra Sugar lead
28 February 2012	Meeting with Defra/Dfid

We are unable to release the names of the Defra officials meeting attending the meeting listed in the table. Section 40(2) (third party personal data) provides that personal data relating to third parties is exempt information if disclosure would breach the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA). We consider that disclosure of this information is likely to breach the first data protection principle in Schedule 1 to the DPA, which relates to the fair and lawful processing of personal data, in two ways. First, disclosure would not constitute 'fair' processing of the personal data, second, disclosure would not satisfy any of the conditions for data processing set out in Schedule 2 to the DPA. Therefore, we have concluded that this information is exempt from disclosure under section 40(2) of the FOIA.

Details of correspondence are given in table 2.

Table 2 Details of correspondence between Defra and the Sugar Bureau

15 November 2011	Reply from Caroline Spelman to the Sugar Bureau
18 October 2011	Letter from the Sugar Bureau to Caroline Spelman
2 August 2011	Letters from the Sugar Bureau to both Caroline Spelman and Jim Paice about an EFSA statement on possible claims concerning the use of sweeteners. No response was found
9 April 2010	Reply to letter of 23 March 2010.
23 March 2010	Letter from the Sugar Bureau to Jim Fitzpatrick about a scientific paper entitled 'Is sugar consumption detrimental to health'.

Annex B

Copyright

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Annex C

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