



Ref no: 14/0475

8 April 2014

Thank you for your email of 17 March 2014 where you requested the following information:

- *How many of your staff work part-time and what was the number for each year since 2004?*
- *How many employees work from home full-time and what was the number for each year since 2004?*
- *Is there a formal flexible working policy within your department, and does it allow employees to work from the location of their choosing?*
- *Do you have the technical capabilities to enable employees to work flexibly (i.e. work from home as if they were in the office) and are there any restrictions on the level of staff (i.e. seniority) able to do so?*
- *Are there any specific benefits available for those individuals with families in your department (e.g. childcare vouchers)?*
- *How many employees who care for someone (e.g. a child or adult) have submitted statutory applications requesting the legal right to work flexibly for each of the past ten years and what proportion were successful?*

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ('the Act') you have the right to:

- know whether we hold the information you have requested; and
- be provided with that information (subject to any exemptions under the Act which may apply).

I can confirm that the Department of Energy & Climate Change (DECC) holds some of the information you have requested.

The Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) was created in October 2008, to bring together energy policy (previously with BERR, which is now BIS - the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills), and climate change mitigation policy (previously with Defra - the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs). Therefore I am unable to provide any information prior to that date.

Part time workers

The number of Civil Servants who were working part time on 31 March in each year for which records are available, are shown in the table below.

Year	Number working Part Time	Total number of Civil Servants
31 March 2009	60	910
31 March 2010	70	1,050
31 March 2011	80	1,170
31 March 2012	90	1,310
31 March 2013	120	1,460

Home workers

DECC does not have any Civil Servants employed on a home working contract.

Flexible working policy

The departments flexible working policy allows all DECC staff, irrespective of grade or seniority, to apply to work flexibly and allows for a range of flexible working options. These include part time working, job sharing, compressed hours, as well as working from home on an occasional or more regular basis or as part of a formal arrangements where staff are officially based at home. The department encourages line managers to be supportive of requests to work flexibly however business delivery must take priority when considering employee requests.

Technical capabilities

There are a range of support facilities available. These include:

- providing staff with a laptop that can connect remotely to any home broadband service;
- access to the telephony system via an 0800 telephone number;
- use of a mobile phone, subject to business needs.

Family Benefits

DECC recognises how important it is to achieve a balanced working life and is also very aware of the high costs associated with childcare. To help with these costs staff are able to convert a portion of their salary into Childcare Vouchers allowing them to make significant savings on their existing childcare costs.

Under the childcare voucher scheme they are able to take a portion of their salary as childcare vouchers which are not subject to tax and National Insurance deductions. Salary sacrifice childcare vouchers allow staff to make tax and National Insurance savings on their childcare payments. The scheme is available to pay for the care of children up to the age of 15.

Requesting the legal right to work flexibly

DECC does not hold central records of those staff who have made a statutory application for flexible working. Flexible working applications are made and decided locally by line managers. The outcome of any statutory application for part time working though will be reflected in the number of part time workers. In order to identify these applications would involve contacting all line managers in DECC to identify if any requests had been

submitted and what were the reasons. Therefore the cost of complying with your request to provide information would exceed the cost limit of £600 provided under Section 12 of the Act. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3.5 working days in determining whether the Department holds the information, locating, retrieving and extracting the information. The Act provides that we are not obliged to comply with requests where the estimated cost of complying would exceed this limit. Therefore, this part of your request will not be processed further.

You may wish to refine your request by narrowing its scope by being more specific about what information you particularly wish to obtain, including any dates or period of time relevant to the information required. However, it is our estimation that the cost limit would be exceeded, regardless of how you refine this part of your request.

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 two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter and should be addressed to the Information Rights Unit (foi@decc.gsi.gov.uk).

Information Rights Unit (DECC Shared Service)
Department for Business, Innovation & Skills
1 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0ET

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 Commissioners Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9 5AF

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of further assistance.