



Ministry
of Defence

Financial Management Policy & Accounting
Ministry of Defence
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Reference: **FOI2014/03714**

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Date: 18 August 2014

Dear [REDACTED]

Your correspondence dated 21 July 2014 has been considered to be a request for information in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000. You requested the following information:

(1) For each of the financial years 2010/11, 2011/12, 2012/2013 and 2013/2014, please state the overall amount of money spent on consultants.

(2) I would like a breakdown of the 2013/14 figure and I would like the following information. For each consultant, please state the company or organisation they represent. Please provide a short description as to why the department hired their services e.g. to carry out a study or produce a report on a certain topic. Please provide the starting date and end date of each consultant, and the amount of money charged by each consultant to the department.

(1) I can confirm that the Ministry of Defence (MOD) holds information in scope of your request for 2010/11, 2011/12, 2012/13. The information is exempt under Section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), because it is reasonably accessible to you by other means. It is already in the public domain and can be accessed via the link below (see Table 1.03.09 – MOD Expenditure on External Assistance): https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/280531/factsheet-2013.pdf

I can confirm that the Department holds information in scope of your request for 2013/14. The information is exempt under Section 22 of the FOIA because the information is intended for publication at a future date. The information you requested is expected to be published in the current financial year between September and December. Once published it can be accessed via the link below:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?departments%5B%5D=ministry-of-defence&page=2&publication_type=corporate-reports

(2) The MOD contracts with consultancy companies to deliver a specific output at an agreed price, and the daily rate paid to individual consultants is a commercial matter for the contractor involved. We therefore do not hold information about the rate individual consultants have been paid or about their starting and end dates.

I have to advise you that we would not be able to provide the remaining information you have asked for without exceeding the appropriate limit. This is because to locate, retrieve and extract information in scope of your request would involve engagement with in excess of 50 separate areas within the Department at least some 5 man days of effort.

Section 12 of the Act makes provision for public authorities to refuse requests for information where the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate limit, which for central government is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3.5 working days in determining whether the department holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting it.

The MOD may be able to provide some information in scope of your request if you reduce or refine your request to bring the cost of compliance under the limit. It may be possible, for example, to provide a list of consultancy companies who were under contract for External Assistance (or Advisory Consultancy) in 2013-14 broken down against the categories listed in the table on MOD Expenditure on External Assistance mentioned earlier.

I hope you find this helpful.

Yours sincerely,

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If you are not satisfied with this response or you wish to complain about any aspect of the handling of your request, then you should contact me in the first instance. If informal resolution is not possible and you are still dissatisfied then you may apply for an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights Compliance team, 1st Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk). Please note that any request for an internal review must be made within 40 working days of the date on which the attempt to reach informal resolution has come to an end.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may take your complaint to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website, <http://www.ico.gov.uk>.