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| REDACTED | Area G-G  OAG  Victoria Quay  Edinburgh EH6 6QQ  Date 10.11.16 |

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**Freedom of Information Request**

Thank you for your email of 12 October 2016 requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).  You asked:

“I would like to know the amount of money your department spent on the services of external law firms and barristers for the year ending March 31st 2016.

Please exclude legal services provided by the Government Legal Department. However, please include legal services that the Government Legal Department has outsourced to a third party.”

We have now completed our search for information.  The Office of the Advocate General (OAG) has not spent any money on the services of external law firms in 2015-16. However OAG instructs counsel in relation to court actions in Scotland in which the Advocate General is a party or has intervened.  This may include appearing in court on behalf of the Advocate General and advice in relation to the case.  The following figure includes such costs together with costs for any advice obtained from counsel unconnected with court proceedings.  Accordingly, the cost to the Office of the Advocate General for external legal services, excluding legal fees recovered by this Office, in the year requested is as follows:

2015 – 2016 £12,840.87

Part of these costs will have been recovered  from other UK Government departments where they have an interest in the proceedings

You may, if dissatisfied with the treatment of your request, ask the Office of the Advocate General to conduct an internal review of its decision.  The internal review will be conducted by someone other than the person who took the initial decision.  Requests for internal review should be addressed to the Information Officer, Office the Advocate General, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh, EH6 6QQ.

If following the internal review you remain dissatisfied with the treatment of your request by OAG then you may take your complaint to the Information Commissioner, whose address is Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.  Details of the complaints procedure can be found here:

<http://www.ico.gov.uk/complaints/freedom_of_information.aspx>

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