



Ministry  
of Defence

Ministry of Defence  
D3, Building 405  
Corsham  
Wiltshire SN13 9NR  
United Kingdom

Ref. FOI2015/07473

E-mail: [ISS-SecretariatGpMbx@mod.uk](mailto:ISS-SecretariatGpMbx@mod.uk)

27 October 2015

Dear [REDACTED]

## **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST**

Thank you for email of 28 August 2015 requesting the following information in relation to the Ministry of Defence (MOD):

- “1. How much has the MoD been billed for mobile phone call and text charges across sub-departments per financial year since 2012/13 and including the first quarter of 2015/16?”*
- 2. How much has the MoD been billed for data roaming charges across sub-departments per financial year since 2012/13 and including the first quarter of 2015/16?”*
- 3. How much has the MoD paid out in mobile phone call and text charges across sub-departments per financial year since 2012/13 and including the first quarter of 2015/16?”*
- 4. How much has the MoD paid out in data roaming charges across sub-departments per financial year since 2012/13 and including the first quarter of 2015/16?”*
- 5. What were the ten most expensive payments for mobile phone call and text charges for individual phone numbers per financial year since 2012/13 and including the first quarter of 2015/16, and what position did each person using the phone hold? NOTE - I am not asking to see the numbers themselves as I am aware this would breach data protection.*
- 6. What were the ten most expensive payments for data roaming charges for individual phone numbers per financial year since 2012/13 and including the first quarter of 2015/16, and what position did each person using the devices hold? NOTE - I am not asking to see the numbers themselves as I am aware this would breach data protection.*
- 7. What guidance has the MoD issued to servicemen/women regarding saving money on data roaming, for example by turning devices off when abroad*
- 8. Roughly (or exactly) what percentage of telecommunications use by the MoD comes under the Defence Fixed Telecommunications Service? Could you please outline what the*

*agreement involves and what other types of telecommunications agreements are in place across the department...?"*

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000.

A search for the information you have requested has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence (MOD), and I can confirm that some of the information in scope of your request is held.

A public interest test has been conducted by the department, specifically relating to the information you requested in questions 5 and 6. It was considered that release of this information could prejudice defence or the capability, effectiveness or security of relevant forces and be subject to exemption under section 26 of the FOIA 2000. However, the public interest test weighed in favour of releasing the information as it is considered unlikely that release of this information will prejudice the defence or the capability, effectiveness or security of relevant forces.

*1. How much has the MoD been billed for mobile phone call and text charges across sub-departments per financial year since 2012/13 and including the first quarter of 2015/16?*

The total billed to MOD under the Defence Fixed Telecommunication Service (DFTS) Agreement for mobile phone calls and texts by Financial Year is as follows:

<b>Financial year</b>	<b>Total Billed</b>
FY 12/13	£1.4 million
FY 13/14	£1.34 million
FY 14/15	£1.18 million
FY 15/16 (Q1)	£0.29 million

*2. How much has the MoD been billed for data roaming charges across sub-departments per financial year since 2012/13 and including the first quarter of 2015/16?*

The total billed to MOD under the DFTS Agreement for data roaming charges by Financial Year is as follows:

<b>Financial year</b>	<b>Total Billed</b>
FY 12/13	£362,000
FY 13/14	£445,000
FY 14/15	£414,000
FY 15/16 (Q1)	£109,000

*3. How much has the MoD paid out in mobile phone call and text charges across sub-departments per financial year since 2012/13 and including the first quarter of 2015/16?*

The total paid by MoD under the DFTS Agreement for mobile phone calls and texts by Financial Year is as follows:

<b>Financial year</b>	<b>Total Billed</b>
FY 12/13	£1.4 million
FY 13/14	£1.34 million
FY 14/15	£1.18 million
FY 15/16 (Q1)	£0.29 million

4. How much has the MoD paid out in data roaming charges across sub-departments per financial year since 2012/13 and including the first quarter of 2015/16?

The total paid by MoD under the DFTS Agreement for mobile data roaming charges by Financial Year is as follows:

Financial year	Total Billed
FY 12/13	£362,000
FY 13/14	£445,000
FY 14/15	£414,000
FY 15/16 (Q1)	£109,000

5. What were the ten most expensive payments for mobile phone call and text charges for individual phone numbers per financial year since 2012/13 and including the first quarter of 2015/16, and what position did each person using the phone hold? NOTE - I am not asking to see the numbers themselves as I am aware this would breach data protection.

a. Please find below a table showing the top 10 most expensive payments:

FY 12/13	FY 13/14	FY 14/15	FY 15/16
£9,862.51	£26,776.56	£20,874.33	£3,143.76
£7,123.78	£7,100.22	£6,932.39	£1,905.03
£6,842.85	£6,829.92	£4,826.37	£1,899.28
£5,705.35	£4,571.34	£4,820.46	£1,520.45
£5,662.80	£4,438.61	£4,368.81	£1,293.30
£5,662.43	£4,192.32	£3,891.72	£1,273.06
£5,418.09	£4,017.00	£3,847.90	£1,260.29
£5,027.28	£3,684.42	£3,765.50	£1,222.63
£4,985.93	£3,662.51	£3,515.41	£1,212.21
£4,812.46	£3,256.60	£3,507.71	£1,124.07

It should be noted that a different set of user accounts appear in the top 10 each year.

b. With reference to your request for the position held by the users of the phones, I can confirm that we do not hold this information centrally. These costs are only recorded against MOD cost centres.

6. What were the ten most expensive payments for data roaming charges for individual phone numbers per financial year since 2012/13 and including the first quarter of 2015/16, and what position did each person using the devices hold? NOTE - I am not asking to see the numbers themselves as I am aware this would breach data protection.

a. Please find below a table showing the top 10 most expensive payments:

FY 12/13	FY 13/14	FY 14/15	FY 15/16
£19,864.66	£40,878.41	£30,293.79	£1,588.01
£16,754.96	£20,194.67	£10,704.48	£1,475.00
£14,117.14	£16,883.90	£9,197.25	£1,350.00
£7,028.49	£11,046.53	£6,795.00	£1,248.86
£6,339.16	£7,555.83	£5,305.50	£1,225.00
£5,185.54	£7,023.58	£5,206.15	£1,177.06
£4,117.14	£5,429.08	£3,855.56	£1,125.00
£3,510.16	£4,190.44	£3,616.23	£1,103.04
£2,462.51	£3,928.32	£3,425.00	£1,100.00
£2,366.12	£3,871.29	£2,805.87	£1,087.21

It should be noted that a different set of user accounts appear in the top 10 each year.

b. With reference to your request for the position held by the users of the devices, I can confirm that we do not hold this information centrally. These costs are only recorded against MOD cost centres.

7. What guidance has the MoD issued to servicemen/women regarding saving money on data roaming, for example by turning devices off when abroad?

International roaming is barred as standard on all MOD mobile telephone numbers unless it is requested for business use. Only those users with a requirement to use their handsets overseas will be permitted to use data roaming. Guidance is provided to servicemen/women in the Telephone Operations, Management of Services and Operating Procedures. I have included an extract of this at Annex A to this letter.

8. Roughly (or exactly) what percentage of telecommunications use by the MoD comes under the Defence Fixed Telecommunications Service? Could you please outline what the agreement involves and what other types of telecommunications agreements are in place across the department?

I have interpreted your question as relating to an interest in commercial mobile telecommunications (excluding Airwave (emergency services) contracts). It is estimated that the DFTS Agreement covers over 90% of total spend in this category. There are a very small number of users in UK who have adopted contracts beyond the DFTS Agreement, and the contracts adopted for those located overseas are not monitored centrally but are considered to be of low value.

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, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail [CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk](mailto: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.org.uk>.

Yours sincerely,

Information Systems and Services (ISS) Secretariat

## PERSONAL USE OF TELEPHONE FACILITIES

13. MOD telephones, whether fixed or mobile, are provided for authorised use. Personal use is discouraged. However, it is recognised that people do sometimes need to make and receive personal calls (or other types of message) while at their place of duty, or while travelling on MOD business.

- a. The fundamental principle is that MOD should incur minimal cost (whether through call charges or administration) from the personal use of its telephones.
- b. The rules that apply to the personal use of MOD phones within the UK are as follows:
  - You may accept incoming personal calls;
  - You must only make outgoing personal calls from fixed phones (other than in exceptional cases, such as those described at paragraph C below) if there is no cost to MOD. This can be done by charging the call directly to a personal account through a charge card or similar method;
  - You may make outgoing personal calls (or text messages) to UK numbers from GSM mobile devices while you are away from base on duty, and where it is not practical to delay the call until your return home;
  - You must keep all personal calls brief, and they must not interfere with business.
- c. There are exceptions where MOD is prepared to pay for a call, and this is entrusted to the commonsense of the caller. Examples where it would not be necessary to use a charge card for calls from a fixed phone are:
  - Dealing with a family illness or emergency.
  - Making medical appointments or talking with your doctor or dentist.
  - Contacting a family member's school or carer urgently.
  - Changing immediate plans because of unexpected work commitments.
- d. When outside the UK, personal use of MOD phones (fixed or mobile) is limited to urgent use only, unless otherwise pre-approved by the appropriate local Command or budget manager.
- e. Inappropriate use of MOD telephones may lead to disciplinary action.

*(Extracted from source document ISSP 311, Telephone Operations, Management of Services and Operating Procedures, Version 1 issued July 2014.)*