



Department of Energy & Climate Change

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Your ref: FOI re smart meters

Our ref: FOI 2015/00035

2 February 2015

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST: SMART METERS

Thank you for your email of 5th January 2015 where you requested the following information:

I want to know how many smart meters each individual utility company has installed.

Could you break down a list of all installed smart meters in domestic and non domestic properties since 2012 by name of each utility company.

Could you break this down by year and by company.

I.E

*..2013 X smart meters installed by nPower
X smart meters installed by British Gas
2014 X smart meters installed by nPower*

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

- know whether we hold the information you require
- be provided with that information (subject to any exemptions under the FOIA which may apply).

I can confirm that the Department holds the following information relating to your request.

The Government requests the larger energy suppliers (i.e. British Gas, EDF Energy, E.ON, Npower, Scottish Power, SSE, and Utility Warehouse) to provide quarterly updates on their progress with the smart meter roll-out, through an

information request issued pursuant to the suppliers' licence conditions that were made under Section 88 of the Energy Act 2008.

Since September 2013, DECC has published quarterly statistics covering the number of smart meters installed and operated by the larger energy suppliers (split by domestic and non-domestic sectors and gas and electricity). The data received from the larger energy suppliers, under licence conditions, is aggregated to provide an industry-level estimate, which ensures commercial sensitivity is protected.

The full series of these quarterly reports covering the period from quarter three 2013 to quarter three 2014 can be found by following this link on the Gov.uk website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/smart-meters-statistics>.

Smaller and non-domestic suppliers are not required to report on a quarterly basis. Instead, the Government requests smaller and non-domestic suppliers to report on their progress in delivering the roll-out of smart meters on an annual basis at the start of each calendar year. This forms part of a separate information request issued pursuant to suppliers' licence conditions.

In relation to providing details of the number of smart meters installed by each supplier, Section 105 of the Utilities Act 2000 prevents the Government from disclosing data provided under a mandate (such as an Information Request) where it relates to an individual supplier's business and the supplier has not given consent for disclosure (unless some of the more detailed exceptions to the prohibition contained in the section apply, which in this case they do not).

This restriction extends to Freedom of Information Requests. Section 44 of the FOIA covers information which is prohibited from disclosure under other legislation. Information is exempt if its disclosure by the public authority holding it:

- is prohibited by or under any enactment
- is incompatible with any Community obligation, or
- would constitute or be punishable as a contempt of court

The data requested from suppliers relating to individual suppliers' businesses is requested on a mandatory basis and is covered by Section 105 of the Utilities Act 2000. Those suppliers have not given consent to its disclosure. We consider, therefore, that Section 44 of the FOIA applies in this case and that the information requested is exempt from disclosure.

This is an absolute exemption and there is, therefore, no requirement to consider the public interest.

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 sent to the Information Rights Unit at:

Information Rights Unit
Department for Business, Innovation & Skills
1 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0ET
E-mail: foi.requests@bis.gsi.gov.uk

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 Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely,

Smart Metering Implementation Programme
Department of Energy & Climate Change