



Ministry of Defence

Ministry of Defence
Main Building (06/K)
Whitehall
London SW1A 2HB
United Kingdom +44 (0)20 721 89000

Ref: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

11 August 2015

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email of 10 July in which you requested the following information:

1) How many away days/ team building exercises has the department had since January 1, 2014? 2) How many civil servants from your department have taken part in away days/ team building exercises since January 1, 2014? 3) How much money has your department spent on away days/ team building exercises since January 1, 2014? 4) Which companies were used to provide the away days/ team building exercises and what was the nature of the activity?

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). Training, planning and performance improvement are essential for the long term success of any organisation, and Government is no different. Away Days and Team Building activities are directly linked to business planning and/or capability building and development. The type of activities which take place include; group discussions on particular business topics, workshops to explore various business issues within the MOD and the formulation of action plans to take forward. Such activities can be a valuable use of time and resources, and can make an important contribution to the effectiveness of the Department.

A search for the information has now been completed, and I can confirm that this information is not held centrally. It has been assessed that the costs for providing this information will exceed the appropriate limit. Under Section 12 of the FOIA, we are not obliged to comply with your request as the appropriate limit is specified in regulations and for central government is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3 and a half working days in determining whether the Department holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting the information.

As the Department consists of many organisations, and breaks down into lower business areas, the authority to hold away days and team building activities are delegated. Each of these individual business areas would require time to identify events, which when aggregated for the MOD overall exceeds the appropriate cost limit.

Under Section 16 (Advice and Assistance) you may wish to refine your request for information on just one Top Level Budget (TLB) holder organisation or specific unit covering a shorter period of time. The link to the MOD's organisation charts on the .GOV.UK website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/mod-organisation-charts> may help you identify an area.

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.org.uk>.

Yours sincerely,

Defence People Secretariat