



Ministry  
of Defence

## Information Systems and Services

Joint Forces Command/ISS HQ, Chief of Staff Secretariat, Bldg 405, MOD Corsham,  
Westwells Road, CORSHAM, SN13 9NR

[REDACTED]

Our Reference: ISS/COS/2015/01920

Email: [REDACTED]

19 March 2015

Dear [REDACTED]

### FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

Thank you for your email of 18 February 2015 requesting the following information:

*"Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, please provide the following information,*

*a) number, total duration, and cost of calls to the speaking clock (123), for the years 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015?*

*b) number, total duration, and cost of calls to 118 118, for the years 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015?"*

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

A search for the information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence, and I can confirm that information in scope of your request is held. The information you have requested can be found in Tables 1 and 2 below.

Please note that the MOD holds centralised records for calls from Mobile phones and Fixed landlines sourced from the MOD's Defence Fixed Telecommunications Service (DFTS) which has in excess of 260,000 lines. Fixed calls include those from the DFTS network to the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) and calls from Direct Exchange Lines (DEL – ie. the public telephone network). Please note that since 2010, calls to the Speaking Clock and Directory Enquiries have been progressively barred automatically from being dialled from the MOD's telephone network, the DFTS. Calls from this source are now automatically barred from the vast majority of the network.

The number, total duration and cost of calls invoiced to the Speaking Clock (123) and Directory Enquires (118118) are shown in the tables overleaf. They are represented in calendar years. The vast majority of these calls derived from DELs.

It should be noted that between 1 May 2010 to 31 August 2013, 28,663 calls were made automatically from a malfunctioning environmental monitoring machine to the Speaking Clock at a cost of £12,355. An acceptance of liability was received from the contractor in question taking responsibility for these erroneous calls. This data is included in Table 1 overleaf.

Table 1 - Calls to 123, Speaking Clock

Year (Billed)	Cost	Minutes	Qty
2010	£21,698	4,191	53,715
2011	£15,163	16,734	37,900
2012	£18,804	30,744	45,962
2013	£6,629	11,200	16,179
2014	£1,024	850	2,962
2015	£57	38	157

Table 2 - Calls to 118118, Directory Enquiries

Year (Billed)	Cost	Minutes	Qty
2010	£75,716	92,007	40,852
2011	£58,643	46,633	21,726
2012	£33,887	20,615	11,181
2013	£20,912	8,865	5,029
2014	£11,250	3,650	2,285
2015	£730	229	126

Whilst calls from DELs (ie. the public telephone network) and from MOD-issued mobile phones to the Speaking Clock and Directory Enquiries could technically be barred by the MOD, the cost of doing so far exceeds the resultant savings. However, we are striving towards ensuring that no calls are made from these two sources by either our Military or Civilian staff. We have issued instructions to all MOD personnel stating that calls from all MOD lines, including MOD-provided mobile phones and DELs to the Speaking Clock and Directory Enquiries are prohibited. All telephone bills are monitored centrally to identify fraudulent or inappropriate use, which would include calls to the Speaking Clock and Directory Enquiries. When such instances are identified, the relevant local budget holder, who is ultimately responsible for calls emanating from their staff, is informed and made aware of the offending caller wherever possible. Action may then be taken locally to address the problem.

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 HQ  
Policy Secretariat**