



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

Referendum Unit
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
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FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 - REQUEST REF: FOI 0286-16

Thank you for your email of 9 March 2016 asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You asked:

I would like to know how the costs of supporting the Remain Campaign are going to be calculated for all of the research, time and material, that this department of government has and is going to expend, considering that the Civil Service is committed to supporting the Remain Campaign. This effort is materially supporting the Remain Campaign and there is a ceiling of £7,000,000 in the amount of money that may be expended as specified in the document issued by The Electoral Commission titled Spending for EU referendum campaigners (http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/194586/Spending-for-EU-referendum-campaigners.pdf)

I know these costs have to be reported, by law, to The Electoral Commission and you should therefore currently be compiling accounts to that effect. If not I should like to know why not otherwise these costs should be readily at hand and I would therefore be interested in knowing the costs to date?

We are writing to advise you that the information you requested is not held by this Department. Whilst the Government has a clear position – that the UK will be stronger, safer and better off in a reformed European Union – no Government department directly supports any of the registered campaign groups.

The Electoral Commission can designate a lead campaigner on one or both sides of the referendum. The legislation sets out that campaigners had until 31 March 2016 to apply to be a designated lead campaigner; the Electoral Commission must now make its decision by 14 April 2016. These lead campaigners will have a spending limit of £7M and receive a number of benefits and, if campaigners are designated on both sides, this will include a grant of up to £600,000. The Electoral Commission is an independent body and is solely responsible for the decision as to which, if any, campaigns to designate as well as the administration of the grant. Other organisations may also campaign in the referendum and will usually be subject a spending limit of £700,000.

Yours sincerely,

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