



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

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Our ref: RFI 8841
15 June 2017

Dear

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: INFORMATION ASSET REGISTER

Thank you for your request for information, which we received on 17 February 2017 about our Information Asset Register, which we extended until 16 June 2017. As you know, we have handled your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

Following careful consideration, we have decided not to disclose some of this information.

We enclose a copy of Defra's Information Asset Register as a separate PDF attachment to the covering email (labelled RFI 8841 Information Asset Register).

Some of the information you have requested about our Information Asset Register is being withheld as it falls under the exemption in section 31(1)(a) of the FOIA, which relates to the prevention or detection of crime.

In applying this exemption, we have had to balance the public interest in withholding the information against the public interest in disclosure.

We recognise that the public has an interest in knowing about any information assets held by the government. Sharing this type of information can help to promote openness and transparency within government.

However, there is a strong public interest in withholding the information as it could aid potential attackers by giving them the information necessary to consider mounting a possible attack. Releasing information on how and where our assets are stored, the sensitivity levels of each asset, and who controls these assets could give potential attackers more than enough detail to identify potential targets, which could in turn prejudice the prevention of crime by facilitating the possibility of a criminal offence being carried out (i.e. attacks on the Department's IT systems).

Therefore, we have concluded that in all the circumstances of the case, the information should be withheld.

I confirm that Defra does also hold additional information about the owners of each of the assets on the Information Asset Register we have provided. However, after careful consideration we have decided that these names and contact details should be withheld



under section 40(2) read in conjunction with section 40(3)(a)(i) of the FOIA, as the information constitutes personal data relating to persons other than the requester.

Section 40(2) exempts information if disclosure would breach any of the data protection principles in the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA). We consider that disclosure of this information is likely to breach the first data protection principle in Schedule 1 of the DPA, which relates to the fair and lawful processing of personal data, as the staff involved are junior government officials, and as such would not reasonably expect their names and contact details to be disclosed in relation to the Information Asset Register, and so disclosure would not constitute “fair” processing of their personal data.

Information disclosed in response to this FOIA request is releasable to the public. In keeping with the spirit and effect of the FOIA and the government’s Transparency Agenda, this letter and the information disclosed to you may be placed on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk), together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context. No information identifying you will be placed on the GOV.UK website.

We attach an annex giving contact details should you be unhappy with the service you have received.

If you have any queries about this letter please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Information Rights Team
InformationRequests@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Annex

Complaints

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request you may make a complaint or appeal against our decision under section 17(7) of the FOIA or under regulation 18 of the EIRs, as applicable, within 40 working days of the date of this letter. Please write to Head of Information Rights, Area 4A, Nobel House, 17 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3JR (email: InformationRequests@defra.gsi.gov.uk) and he will arrange for an internal review of your case. Details of Defra's complaints procedure are on our [website](#).

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, section 50 of the FOIA and regulation 18 of the EIRs gives you the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) for a decision. Please note that generally the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have first exhausted Defra's own complaints procedure. The ICO can be contacted at:

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