



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs

Nobel House  
Area 1E  
17 Smith Square  
London  
SW1P 3JR

T: 03459 33 55 77  
helpline@defra.gov.uk  
[www.gov.uk/defra](http://www.gov.uk/defra)

Our ref: FOI2019/12429  
2 July 2019

Dear

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: Air Miles**

Thank you for your request for information of 10th June about Air Miles. We have handled your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

You asked:

1. *How many airmiles have been accumulated by the department (department ministers and other staff travelling on business)?*
2. *How many airmiles have been offset by the department (from department ministers and other staff travelling on business)?*

*Could I please have the data for the last TWO years, from 2017 to the most recently available data. Could you please sort the data by year.*

Please see the table below that sets out the information you have requested in question 1.

<b>Calendar Year</b>	<b>Miles travelled by air</b>
2017	1.8 million
2018	3.2 million
2019 (Jan-May)	1.4 million

The data is from Defra’s sole travel provider. The increase is largely caused by an expansion of the number of people in the core department following restructuring of the Defra group. Between January 2017 and May 2019 the number of Full-Time Equivalent people working in Defra rose from 1,851 to 4,964, a 168% rise.

Note that this data originates from financial information, i.e. what Defra has paid for. It is possible that some flights were not actually taken if there was a last minute change and the ticket was non-refundable for example.

We have interpreted your second question to mean carbon offsetting. Defra does not directly offset carbon emissions from flights. However Defra takes a number of steps to reduce carbon emissions. This includes being part of the Carbon Reduction Commitment and discouraging the use of flights in the Travel and Subsistence Policy. Further



information about Defra's carbon reductions can be read on pages 93, 138 and 141 of the 2017/18 Annual Report and Accounts at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/725030/defra-annual-report-2017-18-print.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/725030/defra-annual-report-2017-18-print.pdf)

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 Annex A, explaining the copyright that applies to the information being released to you, and Annex B giving contact details should you be unhappy with the service you have received.

If you have any queries about this letter please contact the address below.

Yours sincerely

**Information Rights Team**  
[InformationRequests@defra.gov.uk](mailto:InformationRequests@defra.gov.uk)

## **Annex A**

### **Copyright**

The information supplied to you continues to be protected by copyright. You are free to use it for your own purposes, including for private study and non-commercial research, and for any other purpose authorised by an exception in current copyright law. Documents (except photographs or logos) can be also used in the UK without requiring permission for the purposes of news reporting. Any other re-use, for example commercial publication, would require the permission of the copyright holder.

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## **Annex B**

### **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 11 of the EIRs, as applicable, within 40 working days of the date of this letter. Please write to Nick Teall, Head of Information Rights, Area 1E, Nobel House, 17 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3JR (email: [InformationRequests@defra.gov.uk](mailto:InformationRequests@defra.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