



Ministry
of Defence

Ministry of Defence

Defence Business Services Secretariat
Room 6303
Tomlinson House
Norcross
Thornton-Cleveleys
FY5 3WP

Ref: FOI2020/09688

Email: DBSRES-Secretariat@mod.gov.uk

Dear Mr



25 September 2020

Thank you for your email of 27 August 2020 to the Ministry of Defence (MOD) requesting the following information:

“How much your department (including its agencies) has spent on (i) consultancy services; (ii) agency staff; and contingency services in each of the last five years.”

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

A search for the information has now been completed within the MOD and I can confirm all the information in scope of your request is held. However, I have to advise you that as the information is not held centrally, we would not be able to answer your questions without exceeding the appropriate cost limit.

Section 12 of the FOIA makes provision for public authorities to refuse requests for information where the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate limit, which for Central Government is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3.5 working days in determining whether the department holds the information, locating it, retrieving it and extracting it.

It may be helpful if I explain that consultancy assistance is contracted by individual Top Level Budget Holders whilst the engagement of agency workers, including specialists, administrative and executives, across the MOD is predominantly through the Public Sector Resourcing (PSR) Agreement delivered by Alexander Mann Solutions Ltd (AMS). This allows Government departments to request temporary employees. The link to the framework can be found below:

<https://www.crowncommercial.gov.uk/agreements/rm3749>

However, there are instances in which individual departments will temporarily employ individuals outside of the PSR framework. Therefore, in order to fully answer your questions, we would be required to interrogate each non-employee record via our Human Resources Management System. In addition, consultancy appointments are arranged

directly with the individual departments. As a result, it would be necessary to check with each department to ascertain any spending which unfortunately would exceed the appropriate cost limit.

Under Section 16 (Advice and Guidance), if you were to refine your request to total amount spent through the PSR framework we would be happy to consider your request.

Additionally, you may be interested to know that detail of the Department's contracts, including the value of those contracts, is published to Defence Contracts online. Information regarding contracts awarded by the Ministry of Defence is published to Defence Contracts Online; our Annual Report and Accounts detail the amount spent on contingent labour. The link to this is provided below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ministry-of-defence-annual-report-and-accounts-2018-to-19>

If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance.

If you wish to complain about the handling of your request, or the content of this response, you can request an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights Compliance team, Ground Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail CIO-FOI-IR@mod.gov.uk). Please note that any request for an internal review should be made within 40 working days of the date of this response.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may raise your complaint directly to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not normally investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website at <https://ico.org.uk/>.

Yours sincerely,

Defence Business Services (Secretariat)