



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

Ref: FOI2022/03714

DBSRES-Secretariat@mod.gov.uk

12 April 2022

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 18 March 2022 to the Ministry of Defence (MOD), seeking information about spending on home-working equipment.

You requested the following information:

1) How much money has your Department spent on home-working equipment for employees from January 2022 until March 2022? (including but not limited to laptops, broadband, chairs, chargers, headphones, and fans)

*2) Can you provide a thorough breakdown of:
a) the equipment that has been paid for
b) the amount spent on these items?*

Please provide this information in the form of either a Google or Microsoft Excel spreadsheet if possible.

I expect to hear from you within 20 working days from now, in accordance with the Act.

If it is not possible to provide the information requested - i.e. if the information exceeds the cost of the compliance limits identified in Section 12 of the Act - then please provide advice and assistance, under the Act's Section 16 obligations, as to how I might refine my request."

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 Ministry of Defence and I can confirm that all the information in scope of your request is held. However, I must advise you that we will not be able to answer your request without exceeding the appropriate limit. This is because to locate, retrieve and extract information in scope of your request, would involve scrutiny of 2,302 Miscellaneous Personal Payment claims received between 1 January 2022 and 31 March 2022. It is estimated that this would take at least five minutes per claim, at a total cost of approximately £4,795.

Section 12 of the Act 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, and locating, retrieving, and extracting it.

Under Section 16 (Advice and Assistance) I should explain that it is the responsibility of Line Managers within the Department to approve claims made using the MOD form 1108 (Miscellaneous Personal Payments). Only the most basic of free text appears on the centralised system to identify the reason for the claim, such as Reimbursement; Compensation; Costs Incurred; Refund; Other; etc. It may be possible to narrow down the search if you were to refine your request to a specific Business Unit within the MOD, however, it is likely that only claims for items such as equipment needed specifically for working from home during lockdown could be identifiable locally.

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,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the sender.

DBS Secretariat