

Reference: 2025-023

Thank you for your email in which you requested the following information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA):

I would like a breakdown of the total costs of all media and social media subscriptions. And any other recurring monthly subscriptions. We are seeking to know any and all departmental media subscriptions both print and digital. To things such as newspapers, magazines, publications and streaming services. For the previous year.

Response

Our total media costs for 2024-25 is £48,465.78.

A breakdown of all the media subscription costs is commercially sensitive and therefore engages section 43 (2) of the FOIA.

Section 43(2) of the FOIA deals with commercial interests and provides that:

Information is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any person (including the public authority holding it).

How the exemption is engaged

The requested information could detriment to the SFO's commercial interests if released by weakening its negotiating position with future media subscription suppliers. It could also detriment the commercial interests of the supplier when engaging future clients. As such, this information is exempt from release under section 43(2) of the FOIA.

Public interest test

Section 43 of FOIA is a qualified exemption. As such, it requires consideration of whether the public interest in exempting the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing whether the public authority holds the information. More information about exemptions in general and the public interest test is available on the ICO's website at www.ico.org.uk.

We understand the importance of publicising information about the SFO's use of public resources and funding. However, we do not believe that the release of media subscriptions information which we hold would add significantly to these factors and therefore feel there is minimal public interest in releasing this material. Further, as outlined above, the SFO is compliant with the reporting requirements across government, which requires the publication of data surrounding procurement processes on the Contracts Finder website: [Contracts Finder - GOV.UK](#).

We have therefore concluded that the balance of the public interest is in favour of not disclosing the information requested as the commercial interests weigh in favour of not sharing this detail.