

Reference: 2026-053

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

1. **The total amount spent by the SFO on external legal counsel for each financial year since and inclusive of financial year 2022/23, broken down by external provider and fee value.**
2. **A breakdown of that expenditure by law firm or chambers instructed, including the name of each external provider and the total fees paid to each during the period.**
3. **The matters or categories of work for which external counsel was instructed using the own SFO's categorisation system and the associated spend for each category where this can be provided.**

Response

Questions 1 & 2

The information on our external counsel spend in criminal and civil cases is regularly published under the Publication Scheme. You can view it on the below sites:

[Government Procurement spend over £25,000 - GOV.UK](#)

[SFO Annual Report and Accounts - GOV.UK](#)

We do not publish a breakdown by external provider or law firm/chambers instructed. Whilst some of this information may exist outside of the Publication Scheme records, locating, extracting and collating information pertaining to individual firm spend would require manual review of data, involve multiple members of Finance and Commercial team, and consequently, make the exercise too onerous and costly, exceeding the cost limit set out under section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Question 3

This information is not held by the SFO.