



Government Legal Department

Operations
102 Petty France
Westminster
London
SW1H 9GL

+44 (0)20 7210 3000
FOI@governmentlegal.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/gld

Ref No: **FOI 25_198**

1st October 2025

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email of 8 September 2025 which contained your request for information. The Government Legal Department ("GLD") have processed your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("the Act").

Request

Please state the number of pre-action protocol letters the GLD has received from food and drink companies, advertising companies, or their industry associations, related to the legality of government obesity policies. These policies include sugar taxes, multibuy bans and advertising restrictions. Please provide information for each of the last five calendar years, and the current year to date.

If it is not possible to search by class of company, please search for entities from the following list. To avoid legal privilege issues, I am simply asking for the number of letters, not the company or entity that sent them.

AB World Foods
Advertising Association
AG Barr
Asda
Association of Cereal Food Manufacturers (ACFM)
Association of Convenience Stores (ACS)
Boots UK
British Retail Consortium (BRC)
British Soft Drinks Association (BSDA)
British Specialist Nutrition Association (BSNA)
Coca-Cola Great Britain & Coca-Cola European Partners
Costa
Dairy UK
Danone
Domino's
ETRC (European Travel Retail Confederation)
European specialist sports nutrition alliance (ESSNA)
Federation of Bakers
Federation of Wholesale Distributors
Ferrero
Food and Drink Federation (FDF)
General Mills
Greggs plc
Haribo
innocent drinks

Internet Advertising Bureau (IAB)
The Institute of Practitioners in Advertising
Kellogg's
Lucozade Ribena Suntory
Mars Wrigley Confectionery
Marks and Spencer
McDonalds
Mondelez
Muller
Nestlé UK
NFRN (Federation of Independent Retailers)
PepsiCo
Pladis
Porter Nutrition
Potato Processors' Association Ltd/FCPPA/SNACMA
Premier Foods
Provision Trade Federation (PTF)
Sainsbury's
TDMR (Total Diet & Meal Replacements Europe)
Tesco
The Co-op
UK Hospitality
UK Travel Retail Forum (UKTRF)
WHSmith
World Duty Free

Response

Pursuant to section 1(1)(a) of the Act, GLD informs you that it holds the information you have requested, but we have estimated that cost of complying with your request would exceed the appropriate cost limit, set at £600 for Central Government. This means compliance with your request would require more than 24 hours work, at the flat rate of £25 per hour, per person. This rateable value is applied to determining whether the department holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting it.

Section 12 of the Act makes clear that a public authority (such as the GLD) is not obliged to comply if it estimates the cost of complying with the request would exceed the 'appropriate limit.'

GLD's case management system does not store information in the way you have requested **by case subject matter of the type you are requesting**. Consequently, this would require GLD to undertake comprehensive and extensive manual searches to ascertain if the information is held, determine its location, and establish the methods for its retrieval and extraction.

We estimate that each case would require a minimum of five minutes to review, with more complex matters taking longer. Given the volume of cases in the case management system, which is approximately 15,000 new cases annually, we estimate that a manual search would take at least 1,250 hours to complete (12 cases per hour, $15,000/12 = 1,250$). Consequently, this would invoke the Act's Section 12 exemption.

Subject to the Section 16 of the Act, GLD has an obligation to provide advice and assistance to applicants. Your alternative request appears to us to be something that would not help you to establish the information you seem to be seeking. However, pre-action protocol letters are normally served on individual government departments responsible for the policy that is being challenged rather than the GLD, so even if we were able to provide you with a figure, it would not provide you with the information that you appear to be seeking.

Your Rights

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original correspondence. Please use the contact details provided at the top of this letter in order to request an internal review relating to your original request.

Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
www.ICO.org.uk

Yours sincerely,

Freedom of Information Team
Operations, Government Legal Department,
102 Petty France, Westminster
London SW1H 9GL
FOI@governmentlegal.gov.uk