

XXXXXXX  
XXXXXXXXXXXX

Our Ref: F0007552  
Date: 4 May 2011

Dear xxxxxxxx

**Application under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000 – F0007552**

I am writing in response to your request for information received on 8 April 2011 made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 asking for details as follows:

- 1. Does the Department for Transport have a policy in place for procuring domestically produced food for its catering operations?*
- 2. If so, please can you provide a brief outline of the policy?*
- 3. What percentage out of the total procured was produced in Britain in financial years 2009-2010 and 2010-11?*
- 4. In total how much was spent on food procurement in financial years 2009-10 and 2010-11?*

DfT consists of a central HQ organisation (DfT(c)) and seven Executive Agencies as follows:

Highways Agency  
Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA)  
Driving Standards Agency (DSA)  
Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA)  
Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA)  
Vehicle Certification Agency (VCA)  
Government Car and Despatch Agency (GCDA)

This response covers the whole Department as follows:

- 1. Does the Department for Transport have a policy in place for procuring domestically produced food for its catering operations?*
- 2. If so, please can you provide a brief outline of the policy?*

The Department for Transport is required to follow UK government policy on the procurement of food (including meeting UK standards of production). The most up to date guidance on this can be found at <http://sd.defra.gov.uk/advice/public/buying/products/food/>

However, you may also be interested to see details of the policies of three of the Department's catering contractors - Sodexo (who provide services to the DSA), Elior (the parent group of DVLA's catering provider, Avenance) and Style (for DfT (c)) see **Annex A**.

3. *What percentage out of the total procured was produced in Britain in financial years 2009-2010 and 2010-11?*

DfTc	DfTc does not keep detailed records. However it estimates that around 60% of its products are UK sourced produce including fresh, frozen, dried and canned goods. Please note that some ingredients may be UK canned, but the sourced raw ingredients are not. For example, Baked Beans may be canned in the UK but the beans and the sauce come from Italy. So it is very difficult to identify pure UK origin.
DVLA DSA	Please see table at <b>Annex B</b> To provide the percentage of food procured that is produced in Britain is exempt from release under section 12 (1) (cost of compliance exceeds appropriate limit) of the FOIA. A full breakdown of this exemption can be found at <b>Annex C</b> .  To compile the information requested would involve analysing details of every food item purchased in the last two years. DSA has estimated that this would take in excess of the 24 working hour limit prescribed.  However, DSA's catering contractor Sodexo is a corporate member of the Red Tractor scheme, the UK's leading food assurance mark. Sodexo serves some 500 Red Tractor items grown or reared in the UK including all fresh British beef, pork, 90 per cent of chicken, all milk and cream plus many fruits and vegetables.
Highways Agency MCA VOSA VCA GCDA	Information not held Information not held Information not held Information not held No food purchased

4. *In total how much was spent on food procurement in financial years 2009-10 and 2010-11?*

	<b>2009-10</b>	<b>2010-11</b>
DfTc	£216,046*	£185,192*
Highways Agency	£195,165.31 (may include some drinks)	Not yet audited so unavailable
DVLA	Nil (self funding)	Nil (self funding)
DSA	£102,300	£97,800
MCA	£ 31,112.26	£ 9,245.12
VOSA	£111,137*	£36,762*
VCA	£ 10,938.82	£12,667.01
GCDA	Nil (no food purchased)	Nil (no food purchased)

\*approximate/estimated value

The information provided may be published on our website. If you are unhappy with the way the Department has handled your request or with the decisions made in relation to your request you may complain within two calendar months of the date of this letter by writing to the Department's Information Rights Unit at:

Zone D/04  
Ashdown House  
Sedlescombe Road North  
Hastings  
East Sussex TN37 7GA  
E-mail: FOI-Advice-Team-DFT@dft.gsi.gov.uk

Please see attached details of DfT's complaints procedure and your right to complain to the Information Commissioner.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

Yours sincerely,

xxxxxxxxxxxx

[www.dft.gov.uk/](http://www.dft.gov.uk/)  
[www.dft.gov.uk/about/procurement](http://www.dft.gov.uk/about/procurement)

## **Your right to complain to DfT and the Information Commissioner**

You have the right to complain within two calendar months of the date of this letter about the way in which your request for information was handled and/or about the decision not to disclose all or part of the information requested. In addition a complaint can be made that DfT has not complied with its FOI publication scheme.

Your complaint will be acknowledged and you will be advised of a target date by which to expect a response. Initially your complaint will be re-considered by the official who dealt with your request for information. If, after careful consideration, that official decides that his/her decision was correct, your complaint will automatically be referred to a senior independent official who will conduct a further review. You will be advised of the outcome of your complaint and if a decision is taken to disclose information originally withheld this will be done as soon as possible.

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

## **Annex A**

### **Driving Standards Agency**

DSA's catering contractor, Sodexo has a policy of procuring domestically produced food.

Sodexo's sustainability strategy to 2020, the 'Better Tomorrow Plan', has a key commitment for the company to source local, seasonal or sustainably grown or raised products in all the countries where it operates.

In terms of Sodexo's purchasing policy in the UK specifically, the company buys meat and fruit and vegetables locally and regionally, its policy being to obtain the best quality and price. In most types of meat and poultry, the vast majority of its supplies are from British sources. Seasonal factors affect the purchase of fruit and vegetables, but wherever British sources can satisfy its value criteria, these are Sodexo's preferred sources.

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## **Elior UK Purchasing Policy**

The Elior UK Purchasing Policy is underpinned by the core values of our Business, which are:

- Customer Focus
- Professionalism
- Innovation
- Responsibility

Our principal commitment is to ensure our suppliers deliver products and services to our business via a safe supply chain, ensuring compliance to legislative food and safety regulations. We work under the guidance of the Elior UK Environmental Quality team to maintain the highest standards. These are monitored by regular audits of supplier premises and practices.

Our focus is to deliver best value to our customers by managing our supply chain effectively, to ensure quality and to maintain high levels of service. We use our purchasing power to leverage commercial advantage and engage with long term partners that we can rely upon to support our values and objectives. We regularly benchmark and assess the market to ensure we are achieving best value.

We are committed to purchasing in an ethical and transparent manner and operate a rigorous approach to selecting suppliers. We expect our suppliers to adhere to our defined Supplier Code of Conduct and require them to take a responsible approach to reducing the environmental effects of the manufacturing processes, packaging waste, carbon emissions and other associated concerns.

Our purchasing department comprises experienced professional buyers who collaborate with chefs, managers, operational and sales teams to ensure that we are innovative in the range of products and services we procure and that these meet core business requirements. Dedicated purchasing liaison managers support this process by actively providing advice and Best Practice guidance.

We source from a variety of local, regional and national suppliers; we support British sources for fresh food when it is commercially viable to do so. In terms of food purchasing, we regard UK and Ireland as "local". We recognise that it is important that local farming communities are supported and encourage their contribution to our supply chain. Whilst we strive to procure locally we accept that seasonality, availability, and cost of products will require us to import some products.

Our sourcing strategy for fresh products is centred on a number of principals:

- Strategic partnerships to aid the sourcing of fresh produce and meats from local producers
- Utilising regional craft bakers
- Working with co-operatives where appropriate
- Working with suppliers who operate sustainable sourcing practices such as Red Tractor, LEAF, and fishing schemes such as MSC (Marine Stewardship Council)

We encourage sustainable development practices throughout our supply chain and have minimum entry requirements for all core suppliers, as part of our competitive tender process.

Where clients require Fairtrade and organic products, such as tea and coffee, these are readily available.

We actively support and engage with government and regulatory bodies such as the FSA and DEFRA to support initiatives which develop Industry best practices

**DfTc**

## **Style Purchasing Policy**

Our purchasing policy is designed to ensure that we purchase the best quality, safe food at competitive prices, with financial transparency for our clients, through a combination of local purchase and where necessary national suppliers. In achieving this, account is taken of the need to meet our clients' agreed performance standards, and is not influenced by false incentives and National Supply Policies that detract from local benefits. We also believe that the use of local suppliers for all fresh produce as a minimum puts wealth back into the local community and reduces our carbon footprint. Our target is to purchase minimum of 60% of food locally thereby reducing our 'food miles' and preserving the environment.

### **Quality Assurance**

In terms of quality and safety, Style Food Services purchasing team carries out a comprehensive programme of supplier assessments. It is only when a supplier has met and surpassed our demanding standards that they become an accredited supplier to Style Food Services. Our assessments of suppliers is ongoing from their day to day service into our contracts to a full annual audit which includes a full review of their policies on sustainability, the environment, emerging markets and current and future legislation. Our Purchasing Director who is an associate member of the Chartered Institute of Purchase and Supply leads this review process.

### **Procedures**

Our robust purchasing procedures also ensure that only approved suppliers are used by our staff. We demand high operational standards in our kitchens and therefore we need to provide the tools to make sure that our staff has every opportunity to meet and surpass those standards.

### **Competitive Pricing**

Where possible we purchase our supplies direct from source at the best possible price. We then negotiate a delivery cost into our operations, allowing us the opportunity to offer more competitive prices to our clients and customers.

### **Partnership**

At Style Food Services we recognise the importance of working in close partnership with our suppliers to ensure the best possible price and service to our customers. We also firmly believe that this partnership should deliver a value for money service that provides the optimum quality, service and price.



## ANNEX B - Most recent DVLA data

### PROPORTION OF UK PRODUCED FOOD OF TOTAL SUPPLIED:

#### (FARM ASSURED, ORGANIC, FAIRLY TRADED TEA AND COFFEE AND SEASONAL PRODUCE)

Product	% Compliance	Comments
UK produced food (i.e. reared and grown in the UK) as a percentage of all food supplied[1]	52%	This taken across ALL food products, we cannot control the high volumes of coffee,tea, fruit etc which is produced outside the U.K.
Percentage of farm assured food of all food supplied , for example Red Tractor or LEAF Marque	100%	Compliant
Percentage of organic food of all food supplied	2%	The costs of Organic food means they do not fit our customer requirements.
Percentage of fish from managed sources.[2]	100%	Compliant
Percentage of fairly or ethically traded goods e.g. tea & coffee of all food supplied	11%	This figure will increase significantly as Starbucks now offer a Fair Trade coffee bean
Percentage of menus aligned to seasonal produce of all food supplied	100%	Compliant

### 3. PROPORTION OF DOMESTICALLY PRODUCED FOOD USED

Product	% Compliance	Comments
Bakery – e.g. bread loaves and rolls (i.e. origin of ingredients used and not where baked)[1]	63%	All fresh products are made locally, however frozen par baked products are imported
Whole eggs (i.e. in shells)	100%	Compliant
Fresh milk (e.g. whole, semi-skimmed, skimmed)	100%	Compliant
Cheese	85%	Some cheese used in bread products are imported due to their nature, Camembert, Brie, Parmasian etc.

<b>Product</b>	<b>% Compliance</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Ware potatoes – whole, unprepared	90%	Due to seasonal restraints and variety of potato there is a requirement for imported potatoes
Processed potatoes - for prepared both whole and cut[1]	95%	Some frozen products will be imported
Roots and Onions – e.g. carrots, parsnips, onions, turnips and swedes.[2]	75%	Onions are Spanish - Catering requirement.
Brassicas – e.g. brussel sprouts, cabbage and cauliflower.	80%	Seasonal restraints do not permit 100% compliance
Legumes – e.g. beans (broad), beans (runner & dwarf), peas (green for market), peas (green for processing), peas (harvested dry)	70%	Seasonal restraints do not permit 100% compliance
Protected vegetables – e.g. tomatoes (round, vine, plum and cherry), tomatoes (cold), cucumbers, lettuce, celery, sweet peppers	38%	Tomatoes, Peppers, Lettuce, Cucumber seasonal, grown outside U.K. (Holland)
Other vegetables – e.g. asparagus, celery, leeks, lettuce, watercress	55%	Seasonal restraints do not permit 100% compliance
Orchard fruit[3] – e.g. dessert apples, culinary apples, pears, plums	25%	Low compliance due to majority of U.K. fruit being unavailable, costly and quality issues
Soft fruit – e.g. strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, blackcurrants	55%	Seasonal restraints do not permit 100% compliance

#### **Meat and poultry**

Poultry meat	55%	Fresh is U.K. produced, frozen is EEC
Beef and veal	100%	Compliant
Mutton and lamb	22%	Out of season Lamb is imported, costs also prohibit compliance
Bacon	0%	All Bacon is produced in Belgium
Pork	95%	All fresh pork is U.K. reared, rest is EEC - (Ireland)
Fish[1]	25%	Majority of fish purchased originates from North East Atlantic, however is processed in U.K.
Overall % indigenous food[2]	68%	

#### **Notes**

Since completing this document there has been a significant increase in Compliance of Ethically sourced products (Coffee, coco, etc)

All pork meat purchased within the contract meets UK welfare standards. however the main barrier to purchasing “home reared” pork meat is cost.

All Beef is sourced from U.K. farms and meets welfare standards

Company look to improve (where possible) sourcing products which are grown / reared within the U.K., however due to a number of reasons, (i.e. Costs, Seasonal availability, EEC directives etc) 100% compliance is realistically unachievable.

## **Annex C**

### **Section 12: Exemption where cost of compliance exceeds appropriate limit**

- (1) Section 1(1) does not oblige a public authority to comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit.
- (2) Subsection (1) does not exempt the public authority from its obligation to comply with paragraph (a) of section 1(1) unless the estimated cost of complying with that paragraph alone would exceed the appropriate limit.
- (3) In subsections (1) and (2) “the appropriate limit” means such amount as may be prescribed, and different amounts may be prescribed in relation to different cases.
- (4) The Secretary of State may by regulations provide that, in such circumstances as may be prescribed, where two or more requests for information are made to a public authority—
- (a) by one person, or
  - (b) by different persons who appear to the public authority to be acting in concert or in pursuance of a campaign,
- the estimated cost of complying with any of the requests is to be taken to be the estimated total cost of complying with all of them.
- (5) The Secretary of State may by regulations make provision for the purposes of this section as to the costs to be estimated and as to the manner in which they are to be estimated.