

**Department of Energy & Climate Change**  
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London SW1A 2HD  
Tel:  
email:  
www.decc.gov.uk

Ref no: 12/1778

20 December 2012

Thank you for your email of 17 December 2012 where you requested the following information:

*Please provide, for the tax year 2011/12, approximately:*

*aa) the total number of individuals whose services you bought through "arrangements" with intermediaries*

*ab) the total payments to the intermediaries in aa)*

*ac) for intermediaries through "arrangements" with whom you bought the services of two or more individuals, the names of those intermediaries*

*ad) for each of the intermediaries in ac), & in decreasing order of numbers, the number of individuals whose services you bought through them under those "arrangements".*

*We would be grateful if you could reply both by email & by post.*

### **Freedom of Information Act 2000**

Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ('the Act'). Under the Act you have the right to:

- know whether we hold the information you have requested and;
- be provided with that information (subject to any exemptions under the Act which may apply).

### **Number and cost of individuals**

The Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) has taken the meaning of individuals and "arrangements" to mean the procurement of services via the guidance set out by the Government Procurement Service.

DECC already publishes, on a regular basis, details of the numbers and cost of its contingent workforce. This information can be viewed by following the hyperlink below. In reading this data you should note that its purpose is to provide a snapshot of the departments workforce at a point in time and not a cumulative total across a period of time. The spend data however represents the spend for the month shown.

[http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/accesstoinform/about\\_decc/about\\_decc.aspx](http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/accesstoinform/about_decc/about_decc.aspx).

The files are in the section entitled DECC Workforce Management Information and are in the form of Excel spreadsheets in both xls and csv formats. Further information about DECC expenditure over £500 can be found by following the hyperlink below. From this you will be able to see the range of suppliers used to procure services which may include intermediaries. However to identify how many people have been procured in relation to

each individual invoice would be exempt under section 12 for the reasons set out below in relation to your bullet points ac) and ad). I recognise that there may also be expenditure for less than £500 for the procurement of services but this again would be exempt under section 12 for the same reasons.

[http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/accesstoinform/expenditure/spend\\_over\\_500/spend\\_over\\_500.aspx](http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/accesstoinform/expenditure/spend_over_500/spend_over_500.aspx)

Therefore the information that you have requested in your first two bullet points aa) and ab), is exempt under section 21 of the Act as the information is already available.

### **Names and numbers of Intermediaries**

From our preliminary assessment, it is clear, in respect of the final two bullet points in your request, ac) and ad), that we will not be able to answer your request without further clarification. Under section 1(3) of the Act, a public authority need not comply with a request unless any further information reasonably required to locate the information is supplied. If a request is too broad or general in nature, then public authorities have a duty to provide advice and assistance to the applicant in order to focus the request.

DECC does not hold centrally and electronically, the details you have requested in respect of the number of people that have been procured from each supplier. In order to provide you with the information on the scale that you have requested would require us to request copies of every invoice paid within the period you have specified to establish how many people have been procured from each supplier.

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, locating, retrieving and extracting the information.

We estimate that it will take us in excess of 3.5 working days to determine appropriate material and locate, retrieve and extract the information in reference to your request. Therefore, your request will not be processed further.

You may wish to refine your request by narrowing its scope by being more specific about what information you particularly wish to obtain, including any dates, periods of time or suppliers relevant to the information required.

If you are unhappy with the result of your request for information, you may request an internal review within two calendar months of the date of this email. If you wish to request an internal review, please contact me.

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 Commissioners Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire SK9 5AF

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of further assistance.