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Our ref: 18-12-2009-121913-001

5 January 2010

Dear Mr Leaton

Re: Freedom of Information request

Your email dated 17 December 2009 has been considered to be a request for information in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Firstly, I must apologise that your email was answered directly by one of our departments and not within the Freedom of Information Act 2000. I am sorry for any inconvenience this may have caused. I will address your questions below in accordance with the FOI Act. If you still wish to apply for an independent internal review please let me know or contact the Head of Corporate information, whose details are in the last two paragraphs of this letter.

You stated: From the press I read that the Met Office will not release raw climate data because of confidentiality agreements.

1. Can you please supply a summary of which temperature records are subject to confidentiality agreements and which are not?
2. In the case of those subject to confidentiality agreements, the name of the other party to the confidentiality agreement.
3. When confidentiality agreements have been made, the agreements themselves.
4. Details of the requests to have the confidentiality agreements removed.

Save as discussed below, the Met Office does not hold this information because the temperature records are owned by the University of East Anglia which manages the confidentiality arrangements in respect of such records. The Met Office has always received temperature records from the University of East Anglia on the proviso that they would not be released. This proviso is based upon a verbal arrangement and a practice which has been adhered to since the early 1980s. We understand from the University of East Anglia that such an arrangement is necessary because the various organisations contributing to the work of the Climatic Research Unit have imposed restrictions upon the use and disclosure of their specific data. Please see the Climatic Research Unit's website at <http://www.cru.uea.ac.uk/cru/data/availability/> for further information in this regard.

The Met Office holds a copy of the terms for the supply of data through NERC Data Centres to bona fide research programmes. These terms govern the data that are owned by the Met Office and which are supplied to the University of East Anglia's Climate Research Unit and are publicly available at http://badc.nerc.ac.uk/data/surface/met-nerc_agreement.html.

The Met Office is facilitating the Climatic Research Unit to gain explicit permissions to release station data records. On 8 December 2009, the Met Office released station temperature records for over 1,500 of the stations that make up the global land surface temperature record. These records can be found at <http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/corporate/pressoffice/2009/pr20091208a.html>.

Data which the Met Office has quality controlled for the purpose of performing near-real time updates and which are not governed by any restrictions are made freely available (since 2000) at http://hadobs.metoffice.com/crutem3/data/station_updates/.

I hope this answers your enquiry.

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If you are not satisfied with this response or you wish to complain about any aspect of the handling of your request, then you should contact me in the first instance. If informal resolution is not possible and you are still dissatisfied then you may apply for an independent internal review by contacting the Head of Corporate Information, 6th Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail CIO-XD@mod.uk). Please note that any request for an internal review must be made within 40 working days of the date on which the attempt to reach informal resolution has come to an end.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may take your complaint to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website, <http://www.ico.gov.uk>.

Yours sincerely,

FOI Manager