

Tim Bannister

Our ref RFI 3486
Date: 25 August 2010

Dear Tim

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION:
GHG EMISSIONS FOR DEFRA IT SYSTEMS – SCOPE 3**

Thank you for your further request for information about our work and plans for measuring Scope 3 GHG emissions for our IT systems, which we received on 29 July 2010. We are dealing with this request under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRs).

What follows is the information you requested.

We view the key areas of scope 3 for Defra IT as being

1. emissions from our use of out-sourced data centres,
2. the valuing of embedded carbon in the assets deployed to deliver our services, and
3. the infrastructure services that “wrap” round end-user IT services eg Help desks

Our two main out-sourced data centres are managed by IBM. The first, hosting our production services, was successfully registered by IBM as a Participant Centre under the EU Code of Conduct for energy efficient data centres, last December. This registration requires regular power monitoring and Defra is to be provided with these figures on a monthly basis as part of the recently agreed footprint measurement report. The second centre IBM lease from a 3rd party and we are also to receive power monitoring data for this Centre in the monthly measurement report .

On the question of embedded carbon, we have no current plans to value this for the existing assets deployed by IBM for our IT services, nor for the provision of any new assets. However to understand more about the implementation issues involved Defra has trialled the use of PAS 2050 [a Publicly Available Specification for assessing product life cycle GHG emissions, prepared by BSI British Standards and co-sponsored by the Carbon Trust and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)] . We used the specification for assessing the lifecycle footprint of the Defra Whole Farm Approach web service provided by IBM.

Defra is also actively involved in a newly formed Carbon Trust working group of IT Suppliers that is seeking to set out guidelines and methods for Suppliers to use in

assessing lifecycle footprints including the manufacturing and delivery of IT assets and services.

Defra leads on the development of the Government Buying Standards for IT products and services (formerly 'Quick Wins') that provides sustainability criteria for new procurements, taking criteria from EPEAT and ECMA amongst other accreditation schemes, and placing them within the context of EU procurement rules. See

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/sustainable/government/advice/public/buying/index.htm>

These are structured into 3 tiers, minimum, best practice and leading. They are refreshed regularly to keep abreast of rapidly changing technology and to adopt new challenging criteria for the leadership tier. There are an increasing number of criteria for the sustainable manufacture of IT assets, but to date GHG measurement has not been included. We are keeping closely informed of developments in this area in particular international standards as well as the public availability of life cycle analysis (LCA) data with a view to potentially using this as a measure of sustainability for high carbon impact goods and services such as ICT.

Finally we have no plans currently to widen our foot-printing re-measurements to encompass end-user services – the so-called 'service wrap'. Although in the recent refresh of the IBM contract we have increased the provision of remote Help desk services, reducing the need for desk-side visits, thus saving IBM travel and staff time costs, and sought to promote the greater use of on-line training facilities as opposed to the more carbon intensive on-site provisions.

In keeping with the spirit and effect of the EIRs, all information is assumed to be releasable to the public unless exempt. The information released to you may now be published on our website together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. I also attach an annexe giving contact details should you be unhappy with the service you have received. I trust this provides you with the information you require

Yours sincerely

Bob Crooks

*Bob Crooks
Lead for Sustainable Green IT
Strategy, Planning, Portfolio and Architectures (SPPA)
Group ICT
Defra*

Bob.crooks@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Annex A

Complaints

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request you may make a complaint or appeal against our decision within 40 working days of the date of this letter. Please write to Brendan Walsh, Head of Defra's Information Rights Team at, Area1B Ergon House, Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2AL, (email: informationrights@defra.gsi.gov.uk) who will arrange for an internal review of your case. Details of Defra's complaints procedure can be found at: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/policy/opengov/complain/info.htm>

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. Please note that generally the Information Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have first exhausted Defra's own complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF