



HM TREASURY

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20 July 2010

Richard Taylor
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Information Rights Unit

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Ref: 10/629

Dear Mr Taylor

Re: Freedom of Information Act 2000: Treasury Plans for User-Friendly Searchable Version of COINS

Thank you for your enquiry dated 12 July. I am treating your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

2. You asked a number of questions about the Treasury's planned publication of more accessible subsets of COINS data. Answers to these questions are provided below:

- a) The specification for the "user-friendly", "searchable" version of the COINS data which George Osborne indicated the government is to make available in August.
 - The Treasury is not developing a new system and so no specification exists. Our intention is to release pre-defined subsets of COINS data that will largely remove the need for users to manipulate the data, and hence be more accessible.
- b) The current anticipated launch date, and proposed URL, for the new service.
 - The Treasury has committed to publishing these data sets by the end of August. The URL hasn't been confirmed but you will be able to access the data via the Treasury's website.
- c) Details of any consultation run, or unsolicited suggestion received, relating to the specification of the service.
 - The Treasury ran a consultation from 1 April to 30 June 2010 that asked for views on publishing further financial data. While this consultation has in many ways been superseded by the Coalition Government's transparency programme, the responses that were received will be taken into account in the development of the COINS data sets. No unsolicited suggestions were received.
- d) Any minutes, policy statement, or similar recorded information which provides insight into the government decision to provide this service itself; and specifically information on any consideration given to others who already provide, or are expected to provide this service.
 - The Treasury does not hold this information. Rather than providing a direct service, the Government's objective is to release data into the public domain that can then be used by third parties in a variety of ways. The original release of COINS data was part of this strategy;



the additional data sets are designed to make the data more accessible to a wider range of people.

- e) Who will be creating the service? If this work been contracted out, can you tell me who to.
 - As noted above, the Treasury will be releasing additional data sets into the public domain.
 - f) Details of the cost, or estimated cost, of providing the service.
 - The specific cost of making these additional datasets available has not been calculated.
3. If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. It will be helpful to us if you remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

Information Rights Unit
HM Treasury

Your right to complain under the Freedom of Information Act 2000

If you are not happy with this reply, you may request a review by writing to HM Treasury, Information Rights Unit, 2/S2, 1 Horse Guards Road, London SW1A 2HQ.

Email FOI.responses@hmtreasury.gsi.gov.uk

Any review request must be made within 2 months of the date of this letter.

It would assist our review if you set out which aspects of the reply concern you and why you are dissatisfied.

If you are not content with the outcome your complaint, you may apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by the Treasury. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF.

