

Rob Shorrock
By Email: request-3698-
de369fc0@whatdotheyknow.com

12 November 2008

Your Ref: 21 October 2008
Our Ref: 37-254739744

Dear Mr Shorrock

Re: Request for a breakdown of expenditure incurred in providing corporate hospitality

I am writing in response to your email request of 21 October 2008 for information about corporate hospitality costs. Your request is reproduced below:

“Could you please provide me with a breakdown of expenditure incurred in providing corporate hospitality to members of the agency, partners, investors and clients during 2007/2008”.

Our definition of corporate hospitality is where the South West Regional Development Agency pays for tickets or events in order to take partners, or where we purchase additional tables for partners at an event the Agency is sponsoring. The Agency does not provide corporate hospitality in the usual sense of paying for clients or partners to attend sporting or entertainment events.

As part of our work to lead the development of a sustainable economy in the South West, the Agency has over a thousand projects in the region. Many of these projects will have events and meetings where attendees would have lunch provided, for example. These meetings and events are part of our day-to-day business and are not considered to be “corporate hospitality”. It would not be possible to locate, collate and extract this kind of information within the statutory time limit of 2.5 days.

However, I can confirm that we hold relevant information about corporate hospitality, as defined above, that the Agency has provided to partners and investors. Please find below details of corporate hospitality provided during the financial year 1 April 2007 – 31 March 2008.

SportAccord Conference 22 – 29 April 2007, Beijing

Three members of staff and one partner organisation (Sport England) attended this conference. The South West Regional Development Agency purchased a stand at this event and four delegate places were included. The Agency contributed £5556 for a representative from Sport England to attend this event.

South West England's excellent potential to host world-class events and pre-2012 Games training camps was launched to a global audience during this visit to Beijing and attendance at the SportAccord conference. More information about the April 2007 visit to Beijing is available on our website under the heading “Region’s sporting assets promoted to world audience”.

<http://www.southwestrda.org.uk/news/release.asp?releaseid=1959>

West of England Aerospace Forum - Gala Dinner, 28 November 2007. Bristol Marriott Hotel

The Agency paid for a table for 10 at £125 per head, plus VAT. This event was organised by the Forum to celebrate the success of the aerospace and defence industry in the South West. Three RDA employees attended along with representatives from the region's prime aerospace companies.

Sport England Regional Conference 27 – 28 February 2008. Centre Parcs, Longleat

The Agency had four delegate places at this conference. Two of these places were offered to partners and were taken up by Surf Life Saving Association of GB and the Learning & Skills Council. These delegate places cost £282 each, and were funded by the Agency.

Chinese New Year Dinner 27 February 2008 – arranged by Neil Blakeman Associates and Amtrak

The Agency paid £300 in total for ten delegates to attend this dinner. Three employees of the South West RDA attended the dinner, plus seven additional delegates.

Delegates who received our corporate hospitality were from the following companies and organisations: UK China Alliance Trading Association, Jingu Electric Appliance UK Ltd, Graphic plc, GKN Aerospace Services Ltd, Garrad Hassan & Partners, Swindon Borough Council and BAE Systems Advanced Technology Centre.

I hope this information is helpful.

If you are not satisfied with the way we have handled your request, or if you are unhappy with our response, you can appeal via our Freedom of Information Complaints Procedure, a copy of which is available on request or on our website at www.southwestrda.org.uk/complaints. If you are still dissatisfied after following our complaints procedure, then under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act you are entitled to appeal to the Information Commissioner (Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF, telephone 01625 545700, fax: 01625 524510).

Yours sincerely

Information & FOI Officer
South West Regional Development Agency