

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

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Our ref RFI 4527

Date: 22 February 2012

Dear John

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: IT SUPPORT SERVICES

Thank you for your request for information on Defra's hardware and maintenance costs, which we received on 25 January 2012. As you know we have handled your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. We are also responding on behalf of a number of Defra network organisations who have also received your request, these include core Defra, Natural England (NE), Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD), Inland Waterways Advisory Council (IWAC), Science Advisory Council (SAC), Advisory Committee on Packaging (ACP) and Farm Animal Genetic Resources Committee (FAnGR).

Following careful consideration, we have decided not to disclose some of this information.

I enclose a copy of the information which can be disclosed.

The cost and duration of said contracts, with start and end dates and the names of the suppliers of aforementioned support services.

The majority of Defra's IT needs, including hardware and maintenance services, are provided by IBM United Kingdom Ltd under an outsource contract, which started on 19th July 2004 and ends on 31st January 2018. Expenditure under this contract in 2010/11 was £99.1m. Additional information on actual expenditure is available on No. 10 Downing Street website (<http://data.gov.uk/dataset/financial-transactions-data-defra>).

As well as the main IBM contract there are a number of other IT contracts (and inhouse hardware and maintenance support), throughout the Defra network. Although, not a definitive list some of these are detailed below:

- Atos IT Services UK Limited;
- Accenture; and
- Cap Gemini.

The name of the person responsible for the Defra network maintenance support contracts is available on the Defra website (<http://reference.data.gov.uk/gov-structure/organogram/?dept=defra&post=1>). As the information is publicly available from the above source, we are exempt from providing the information under section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act.



The remainder of the information requested – **a list of the models of the physical servers, storage devices, tape libraries, network switches and routers under support contracts; and service level associated with the equipment;** - is being withheld as it falls under section 43 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, which relate(s) to information that is likely to prejudice the commercial interests of any person. (A person may be an individual, a company, the public authority itself or any other legal entity).

Although, I can confirm we hold the information you have requested (a list of the models of the physical servers, storage devices, tape libraries, network switches and routers under support contracts), providing the information may prejudice the commercial interests of the company involved.

In applying this exemption we have had to balance the public interest in withholding the information against the public interest in disclosure. We recognise that there is a public interest in disclosure of information concerning IT hardware (models of the physical servers, storage devices, tape libraries, network switches and routers) and other information related to the contract especially in view of the current Governments transparency agenda.

On the other hand, there is a strong public interest in withholding the information because disclosure of such information would undermine the existing contract by creating an environment where third parties may offer to under cut the contract unaware of the full services being offered as part of the existing contract. This would also threaten any future contract negotiations with the existing suppliers or any new suppliers.

Therefore, we have concluded that in all the circumstances of the case, the information should be withheld.

In keeping with the spirit and effect of the FOIA, 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.

I attach Annex A, which explains the copyright that applies to the information being released to you.

I also attach Annex B giving contact details should you be unhappy with the service you have received.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me.

Yours sincerely

Luyi Brown

Email is.communications@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Annex A

Copyright

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Annex B

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) and he will arrange for an internal review of your case. Details of Defra's complaints procedure are on our [website](#).

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