



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Area 4A, Nobel House
17 Smith Square
London
SW1P 3JR

T: 03459 33 55 77
helpline@defra.gsi.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/defra

Mr Andreas Pavlou

By e-mail: [request-402945-
20b9404f@whatdotheyknow.com](mailto:request-402945-20b9404f@whatdotheyknow.com)

Our ref: RFI9012
16 May 2017

Dear Mr Pavlou,

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: CIVIL SERVANT MEETINGS WITH LOBBYISTS AND
THIRD PARTIES REGARDING BREXIT SINCE THE EU EXIT REFERENDUM**

Thank you for your request for information, which we received on 24 April 2017, about Civil Servant meetings with lobbyists and third parties regarding Brexit since the EU Exit Referendum. We are handling your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

We want to be as open as possible in answering requests for information. The FOIA itself also requires us to provide reasonable advice and assistance to those seeking to make such a request. Unfortunately, your request is very broad and could cover a large amount of information.

It may be helpful to explain why your request would involve a significant cost. The information you have requested is not held centrally by the Department. We would therefore be required to contact almost all of the business areas within the Department to determine whether they hold any information that would be relevant to the request, which would be costly and time consuming. We estimate it would require Defra to take well in excess of 24 hours' worth of work to locate, retrieve and extract any information relevant to your request.

Section 12(1) of the FOIA allows us to refuse a request for information if we estimate that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit, which currently stands at £600. On the basis of our estimates, we consider that the cost would exceed this limit, and as such, we are refusing your request.

Section 12(2) provides that we are not required to confirm whether Defra holds the information requested if by doing so we would exceed the appropriate cost limit of £600. This is the case for the information that you have requested, and so please note that this response should not be taken as confirmation that the information is held by Defra.



However, if you were to make a new request for a narrower category of information, it may be that we could comply with that request within the appropriate limit, although we cannot guarantee that this will be the case.

The best way we can help you is to ask you to consider narrowing down your request to focus more clearly on the precise information you are seeking. For example:

- As the request covers the work of a number of business areas, consider asking for information on the work of one business area within Defra, in order to narrow down the scope of the request.
- Consider providing a shorter and more specific time period for the work.

Please note that if you modify your request, we will handle it as a new request and so the 20-working-day deadline for responding to requests would then commence from the date that we receive the modified request.

We attach an annex giving contact details should you be unhappy with the service that you have received.

If you have any queries about this letter please contact the address below.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Shotton
EIRs/FOI Case Officer
Information Rights Team
InformationRequests@defra.gsi.gov.uk

Annex

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 under section 17(7) of the FOIA or under regulation 18 of the EIRs, as applicable, within 40 working days of the date of this letter. Please write to Nick Teall, Head of Information Rights, Area 4A, Nobel House, 17 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3JR (email: InformationRequests@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, section 50 of the FOIA and regulation 18 of the EIRs gives you 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