



**Valuation  
Office  
Agency**

VALUATION OFFICE AGENCY  
An executive agency of HM Revenue & Customs

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22 December 2014

Our Ref: 11766216.3/CEO

To Mr Peter Wells  
By email: [request-241802-0ad7f940@whatdotheyknow.com](mailto:request-241802-0ad7f940@whatdotheyknow.com)

Dear Mr Wells,

**Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000 – request**

Thank you for your request for information under the FOIA made on 28 November to the Valuation Office Agency (VOA), which is an executive agency of HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC). Your request states:

*These questions relate to the 2010 National Non-Domestic Rating List which the VOA make available for reuse via subscription under the Open Government Licence (OGL) and which can also be manually searched here: <http://www.2010.voa.gov.uk/rli/>.*

*The questions are a follow-up to this FOI request:  
[https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/national\\_non\\_domestic\\_rating\\_lis\\_2/new](https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/national_non_domestic_rating_lis_2/new)*

*I am trying to establish whether there is any third-party intellectual property (IP), for example Royal Mail or Ordnance Survey data or database rights, in the address information within the 2010 dataset*

*Specifically:*

- 1. Do records exist of the processes that were used within VOA to either validate, correct or create addresses in either the 2005 or earlier datasets?*
- 2. During the process step of building on the 2005 dataset to form the 2010 dataset was the Postcode Address File, AddressBase or other third party addressing products used to either a) validate, b) correct or c) create new addresses?*
- 3. When a third party (for example the respective Billing Authority, the actual ratepayer or their representative) brings an entry in the Rating List to the attention of the VOA the address information in the entry in 2010 dataset could be affected by the subsequent process. In this subsequent process is the resulting address information in the 2010 dataset either a) validated, b) corrected or c) created by VOA using the Postcode Address File, AddressBase or other third party addressing products?*
- 4. Other than a third party bringing an entry to the attention of the VOA is there any other process that may reasonably be expected to validate, correct or create the address information in the 2010 dataset?*

I can confirm that the VOA holds information in the scope of your request.

In response to each of the elements of your request:

1. **Do records exist of the processes that were used within VOA to either validate, correct or create addresses in either the 2005 or earlier datasets?**

The guidance for validating, correcting or creating addresses in the 2005 and earlier rating lists is that VOA staff make ongoing manual updates to our database using:

- information received from billing authorities
- information received from ratepayers
- information uncovered in the course of their duties
- free Royal Mail postcode updates that are released publically as PDF and CSV files.

2. **During the process step of building on the 2005 dataset to form the 2010 dataset was the Postcode Address File, AddressBase or other third party addressing products used to either a) validate, b) correct or c) create new addresses?**

No. The 2010 dataset was built using the address information from previous lists, as updated in line with the process set out in the answer to your first point.

3. **When a third party (for example the respective Billing Authority, the actual ratepayer or their representative) brings an entry in the Rating List to the attention of the VOA the address information in the entry in 2010 dataset could be affected by the subsequent process. In this subsequent process is the resulting address information in the 2010 dataset either a) validated, b) corrected or c) created by VOA using the Postcode Address File, AddressBase or other third party addressing products?**

No.

4. **Other than a third party bringing an entry to the attention of the VOA is there any other process that may reasonably be expected to validate, correct or create the address information in the 2010 dataset?**

Please see the answer to your first question.

### **Appeal Rights**

If you are unhappy with the information provided in relation to this request, you may ask for an internal review within 2 months of the date of this letter. It would assist any review if you set out which aspects of the reply concern you and why you are dissatisfied. If you wish to do this, please contact us at the following email address: [foi@voa.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:foi@voa.gsi.gov.uk).

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner (ICO) for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided by the Valuation Office Agency. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

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

However if you have any general queries about this reply, please contact me. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications

Yours sincerely,

*Mary Hardman*

**Mary Hardman**

Director of Non Domestic Rating for the Valuation Office Agency