

E: iain.pearce@gov.scot

Kenneth Anderson  
Via email

Your ref:  
Our ref: FOI/17/00640

13 April 2017

## REQUEST UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (SCOTLAND) ACT 2002 (FOISA)

Dear Mr Anderson

Thank you for your request dated 17 March 2017 under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 (FOISA).

### Your request

You asked for:

What is the purpose of the GERS report and what function does it serve in the day to day running of the Scottish Government?

Is it true the statistics within GERS are estimated? If so, how are they estimated?

If the above is true, can GERS be considered a reliable source of information on current Scottish finances?

### Response to your request

The aim of the *Government Expenditure and Revenues Scotland* (GERS) publication is to enhance public understanding of fiscal issues in Scotland. GERS estimates the contribution of public sector revenue raised in Scotland towards the goods and services provided for the benefit of residents of Scotland under the current constitutional arrangements.

GERS is a National Statistics publication, and is produced in response to user demand. National Statistics status means that it has been independently assessed by the UK Statistics Authority and found to be produced to high standards, meets user needs, and to be methodologically sound and explained well. The content and methodology are regularly

reviewed in conjunction with its users – including the Scottish Economic Statistics Consultation Group, which brings together users from academia, the media, and the public sector - to help maintain its relevance and value. Since 2015, GERS has reported separately on devolved revenue and expenditure, and provided measures of how these are changing as a result of the Scotland Act 2012 and the Scotland Act 2016.

GERS is based on a mixture of administrative data and estimates. Further information on the data used to compile GERS are available at the following link:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Economy/GERS/Methodology>

### Your right to request a review

If you are unhappy with this response to your FOI request, you may ask us to carry out an internal review of the response, by writing to the Chief Economist, St Andrews House, Regent Road, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG, or emailing [Gary.Gillespie@gov.scot](mailto:Gary.Gillespie@gov.scot). Your review request should explain why you are dissatisfied with this response, and should be made within 40 working days from the date when you received this letter. We will complete the review and tell you the result, within 20 working days from the date when we receive your review request.

If you are not satisfied with the result of the review, you then have the right to appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner. More detailed information on your appeal rights is available on the Commissioner's website at:

<http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/YourRights/Unhappywiththeresponse/AppealingtoCommissioner.aspx>.

Yours sincerely

Iain Pearce

Economic Statistics  
Office of the Chief Economic Adviser  
Scottish Government