



Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy

Consumer & Competition
Department for Business, Energy &
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FOI2019/17801

20 September 2019

Dear Mr Barlow,

Thank you for your email of 23 August 2019 where you requested the following information:

- 1. The latest version of State aid wiki.*
- 2. A summary of State aid wiki information held by specialist State aid staff at BEIS;*
- 3. Slides and other papers about the current arrangements for the State aid regime shared at recent cross departmental State aid meetings: and*
- 4. The BEIS State aid team internal manual for procedures and applying block exemptions.*

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ('the Act'), you have the right to:

- know whether we hold the information you require
- be provided with that information (subject to any exemptions under the Act which may apply).

State aid wiki

The Department does not hold information within the scope of your first two requests. The State aid WIKI platform is hosted by the European Commission and is dedicated to the facilitation of contact between experts working on State aid from EU Member States, EFTA Countries, the European Commission and the EFTA Surveillance Authority.

Slides and other papers

The Department considers information within the scope of your third request to be exempt from disclosure under section 35(1) (formulation of Government policy) because it includes information held by the Department that relates to the formulation or development of the Government's approach to State Aid policy and casework.

Section 35(1)(a) of the Act is subject to the public interest test set out in section 2 of the Act. Having considered that test, the Department considers that in all the circumstances of the case,

the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

There is a public interest in providing the public with the information that it needs to satisfy itself that the Government's processes for developing policy is of a high quality, and the Government recognises the value of transparency in increasing accountability.

This has to be balanced against the information requested being related to the formulation of current Government policy, and any disclosure of such information would prejudice the ability of Ministers and officials across to Government to discuss policy options and implications freely and frankly.

Having considered the public interest test, we consider the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

State Aid team manual of internal procedures and application of block exemptions

Finally, the Department does not hold information within the scope of your fourth request. However, our public guidance, which includes guidance on procedures and Block Exemptions is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/state-aid>

Appeals procedure

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original request and should be addressed to the Information Rights & Records Unit:

Information Rights & Records Unit
Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
1 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0ET
Email: FOI.Requests@beis.gov.uk

Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

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. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF

Yours sincerely,

Consumer & Competition