

Lisa Evans
request-30739-36f63132@whatdotheyknow.com

Our Ref: FOI00940/Evans

19th April 2010

Dear Lisa,

Thank you for your recent request for the latest data from the COINS database that has been received by ONS from HM Treasury.

I am unable to provide you with this information as it would fall within the scope of the exemption under S35 (1)(a) Formulation of government policy, relating to on-going economic and fiscal policy. In reaching the above conclusion, the Office for National Statistics has consulted with HM Treasury, who provide the information to the ONS.

The COINS database is used to capture a range of different types of public spending information to facilitate the management of public expenditure and its parliamentary oversight; specifically budgeting, in-year monitoring and audited outturn data. It contains detailed spending data drawn from different departmental recording systems.

The "snapshot" that ONS receives from HM Treasury is an Excel file containing around 800,000 items of information on government spending. The latest COINS data snapshot contains provisional in-year expenditure and receipts figures for departments. These data were those in the COINS system on the day the data were extracted: COINS data are regularly updated by departments on a daily basis. The data in the extract are in-year monitoring data and, as such, have not been audited. For these reasons, ONS has reached the conclusion that release of this highly detailed provisional dataset could be subject to misinterpretation. ONS does aggregate and publish these data in a variety of formats, including in the quarterly and annual National Accounts and the monthly Public Sector Finance releases.

You have the right to have this response to your freedom of information request reviewed internally by an internal review process and, if you remain unhappy with the decision, by the Information Commissioner. If you would like to have the decision reviewed please write to Frank Nolan, Office for National Statistics, Room 1127, Government Buildings, Cardiff Road, Newport, Gwent, NP10 8XG.

If you have any queries about this email, please contact me. Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

Regards,

Yours Sincerely



Nikki Shearman