



Department
of Energy &
Climate Change

**Department of Energy & Climate
Change**

3 Whitehall Place,
London SW1A 2AW
www.gov.uk/decc

Ms Ashley Davis

request-187247-cf398527@whatdotheyknow.com

Your ref:

Our ref: **13/1689**

21st December 2013

Dear Ms Davis

RE: FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

Thank you for your e-mail of 28th November 2013 requesting details on the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) officials' overseas travel expenditure.

Specifically you asked –

- i. the number of staff who had visited the US and Canada for work related business in the calendar years of 2011, 2012 and to date in 2013;
- ii. the names of airlines and what class of flight was taken on each trip;
- iii. the names of hotels used and
- iv. if the Department ever approved for any staff member to use VIP facilities at any UK or international airport for work related business.

You also asked that the information be broken-down to show the costs of each trip detailing

- v. flights,
- vi. accommodation,
- vii. transport and other costs such as
 - o internet, faxes and 'phone-calls.

Additionally you asked to provide information where staff members

- viii. were unable to provide a vouched receipt to claim work related costs and the reason why;
- ix. the amount refunded in each case.

We are able to answer some but not all of the questions you have asked.

Our records are ordered in financial years (April 2011 to March 2012, April 2012 to March 2013 and April 2013 to September 2013) - the breakdown of available information relating to flights and hotels used in the US and Canada is annexed at "A" and "B" to this e-mail. Please note that the analysis for 2011-12 is not complete as we do not hold a full analysis of the hotel spend by location for the period April to September.

We do not hold centrally any records of instances of staff being permitted to use VIP facilities at any UK or international.

Regarding information where staff were unable to provide receipts - once a claim has been approved, the Department's financial accounting system doesn't keep a record of whether receipts were provided. To obtain this information would necessitate a manual review of all claims which we estimate would exceed the FOI cost limit as described below.

Whilst I can confirm that it is likely that the Department does hold information on the number of staff who have visited US and Canada and incurred incidental expenses including internet, faxes and telephone-calls again it is not possible to provide this information to you without exceeding the cost limit of £600 provided under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act. This represents the estimated cost of spending 3.5 working days spent (i) determining whether the Department holds the information, and (ii) locating, retrieving and extracting the information and diverting scarce staff resources from more important tasks.

The Act provides that we are not obliged to comply with requests where the estimated cost of complying would exceed this limit.

It is not possible, for the reasons described above, to provide information on other transport costs incurred by DECC staff visiting the US and Canada particularly where travel (including taxis) or hotels have not been booked through DECC's contracted travel management companies and for good reason as such expenses will be subsumed in a more general "subsistence/other" category. You may wish to consider how the scope of your request could be narrowed to bring it within the cost limit.

You may be interested to know that the Department's travel policy updated on October 2010 provides that:

- staff should only travel if it is absolutely necessary
- subsistence claims must be based on actual costs
- all travel bookings must be made through the official suppliers
- standard or economy class must be used unless there is a clear business need for a higher class to be approved
- all expense claims will need to be approved regardless of grade
- such expense claims must be accompanied by the relevant supporting documents - unless receipts were not provided, for example when using an Oyster card. In such instances, a written explanation for any lack of receipts (or for any unusual expenditure) in support of expense claims must be provided to SSCL.

Appeal 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 letter and should be addressed to the Information Rights Unit at:

Information Rights Unit (DECC Shared Service)
Department for Business, Innovation & Skills
1 Victoria Street

London
SW1H 0ET (✉: foi@decc.gsi.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.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ron Williams', with a long horizontal flourish extending from the bottom.

Ron Williams

Annex A

Table detailing flights to US and Canada 2011-13

Supplier/Destination	Ticket_Type	Economy	Total	Supplier/Destination	Ticket_Type	Economy	Business	Total	Supplier/Destination	Column Labels	Economy	Grand Total
2011-12	Business Class			2012-13	Economy				2013-14	Business		
⇒ Boston		2,333.06	2,333.06	⇒ Boston		3,838.06		3,838.06	⇒ Calgary		2,451.25	2,451.25
British Airways		2,333.06	2,333.06	British Airways		3,052.17		3,052.17	Air Canada		2,451.25	2,451.25
⇒ Chicago		2,272.46	2,272.46	Virgin Atlantic Airways		785.89		785.89	⇒ Chicago Ord		996.70	996.70
Continental Airlines		2,272.46	2,272.46	⇒ Calgary		1,687.39		1,687.39	American Airlines		820.90	820.90
⇒ Denver		776.23	776.23	Air Canada		1,687.39		1,687.39	United Airlines		175.80	175.80
British Airways		776.23	776.23	⇒ Charlottesville		155.20		155.20	⇒ Dallas/Ft. Worth		979.55	979.55
⇒ Houston		567.47	567.47	United Airlines		155.20		155.20	British Airways		979.55	979.55
Continental Airlines		567.47	567.47	⇒ Chicago Ord		3,169.28		3,169.28	⇒ Denver		229.00	229.00
⇒ Los Angeles		190.10	190.10	British Airways		1,872.59		1,872.59	Hahn Air		229.00	229.00
American Airlines		190.10	190.10	British Airways-British Airways		1,296.69		1,296.69	⇒ Dulles	9,511.31	12,380.05	21,891.36
⇒ Miami	4,467.26	818.23	5,285.49	⇒ Dulles	14,807.82	4,618.49		19,426.31	British Airways		3,396.41	9,656.95
British Airways		818.23	818.23	British Airways		8,435.92	4,618.49	13,054.41	Emirates		496.00	496.00
Virgin Atlantic	4,467.26		4,467.26	British Midland		1,208.39		1,208.39	United Airlines		2,252.15	2,252.15
⇒ New York		5,220.17	5,220.17	United Airlines		3,275.84		3,275.84	Virgin Atlantic Airways	5,618.90	470.95	6,089.85
British Airways		4,712.02	4,712.02	Virgin Atlantic Airways		1,887.67		1,887.67	⇒ Houston Intercontinental		887.65	887.65
US Airways		508.15	508.15	⇒ Houston Intercontinental		5,287.06		5,287.06	British Airways		748.45	748.45
⇒ Philadelphia		1,192.00	1,192.00	British Airways		3,500.68		3,500.68	United Airlines		139.20	139.20
US Airways		1,192.00	1,192.00	United Airlines		1,786.38		1,786.38	⇒ New York JFK	4,454.75	4,362.75	8,817.50
⇒ Pittsburgh		161.93	161.93	⇒ Kennedy Ny	9,893.52	3,774.79		13,668.31	American Airlines		607.20	607.20
Continental Airlines		161.93	161.93	British Airways		5,778.78	3,774.79	9,553.57	British Airways	4,454.75	2,073.35	6,528.10
⇒ Seattle		1,655.33	1,655.33	Delta Airlines Inc		415.36		415.36	Virgin Atlantic Airways	0.00	1,682.20	1,682.20
British Airways		1,655.33	1,655.33	Virgin Atlantic Airways		3,699.38		3,699.38	⇒ New York LGA		1,075.00	1,075.00
⇒ Toronto	4,338.23	6,597.25	10,935.48	⇒ Ottawa		1,483.49		1,483.49	United Airlines		330.00	330.00
Air Canada		6,597.25	6,597.25	Air Canada		1,483.49		1,483.49	US Air Inc.		745.00	745.00
British Airways	4,338.23		4,338.23	⇒ Sacramento International		607.56		607.56	⇒ Pittsburgh		715.60	715.60
⇒ Vancouver		361.17	361.17	Delta Airlines Inc		607.56		607.56	United Airlines		715.60	715.60
Air Canada		361.17	361.17	⇒ Seattle-Tacoma		1,401.09		1,401.09	⇒ Salt Lake City		615.10	615.10
⇒ Washington	24,118.86	16,837.57	40,956.43	British Airways		1,401.09		1,401.09	DELTA		615.10	615.10
British Airways	4,851.61	12,135.88	16,987.49	⇒ St. Petersburg		727.98		727.98	⇒ San Francisco	3,961.45	5,215.05	9,176.50
United Airlines	11,627.79	3,264.16	14,891.95	British Airways		727.98		727.98	United Airlines		2,647.60	2,647.60
Virgin Atlantic		727.30	727.30	⇒ Toronto Yyz		2,150.87		2,150.87	Virgin Atlantic Airways	3,961.45	2,567.45	6,528.90
		7,639.46	710.23	Air Canada		1,146.98		1,146.98	Grand Total		£17,927.51	£29,907.70
				British Airways		1,003.89		1,003.89				£47,835.21
Total		£32,924.35	£38,982.97		Total	£45,208.32	£8,393.28	£53,602.60				

Annex B

Table detailing accommodation used in US and Canada 2011-13

Year	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
	£	£	£
Hotel			
Aloft Bolingbrook	-	136.64	-
Best Western Georgetown Suites	270.95	-	-
Club Quarters Houston	-	83.86	-
Courtyard Boston Waltham	-	236.84	-
Courtyard By Marriott Richland	225.64	-	-
Fairfax at Embassy Row DC	-	-	493.57
Georgetown Inn	-	1,135.53	776.42
Grand Hyatt New York	-	-	928.22
Hawthorn Suites College Station	-	224.58	-
Helix Hotel	-	-	366.67
Holiday Inn Express Airport Mississauga	-	69.26	-
Holiday Inn Express Waltham	-	534.23	-
Homewood Suites Holyoke	-	342.60	-
Hyatt Regency Crystal City	107.68	-	-
Hyatt Regency Washington	881.35	-	-
Imperial Hotel	-	69.00	-
Marriott Bethesda North	-	-	146.11
Mercure Hull Royal	-	70.00	-
Metropolitan Hotel Toronto	-	330.86	-
Millennium Hotel UN Plaz	-	-	929.92
One Washington Circle Hotel	-	-	513.84
Paramount Hotel New York City	-	110.00	-
Radisson Plaza Hotel Saskatchewan	-	772.88	-
State Plaza	-	844.50	-
Washington Plaza Hotel	-	1,736.33	1,180.90
Wingate By Wyndham Regina	-	-	634.11
	1,485.62	6,697.11	5,969.76