

XXXXXXXXXXXX
St Mary's
Isles of Scilly

By email: XXXXXXXXXXXX

Dear XXXX,

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST – REFERENCE NUMBER: F0007576

Further to my email of 13 May, the Department has now completed its search for the information which you requested on 12 April and this is detailed below. I apologise for the delay with this response.

1. Details and minutes of any meetings, e-mails and correspondence which occurred between the Isles of Scilly Steamship Group (Isles of Scilly Steamship Company (ISSCo.) and the DfT for the period from the 6 May 2010 until the 31 March 2011?

DfT officials met representatives of the Isles of Scilly Steamship Company (IoSSC), Andrew May and Jeff Marston, twice during the time period above – on a visit to Penzance Harbour on 14 September 2010 and in a meeting at DfT offices in London on 3 March. Representatives from Cornwall Council were also present at both meetings. There were no minutes taken at either meeting. There has been no correspondence between DfT officials and representatives of the IoSSC during this time period.

2. Details and minutes of any meetings, e-mails, correspondence which occurred between Andrew George MP and Norman Baker MP including officials of the DfT, for the period from the 6 May 2010 until the 31 March 2011?

Attached is a copy of all the emails and correspondence (documents 1 to 24) between Andrew George MP and Norman Baker MP and DfT officials during the time period above.

There were two meetings on 15 December between Norman Baker and Andrew George MP with various stakeholders. The DfT note of the meetings is attached. Also attached is a copy of Andrew George's letter of 13 May for information.

3. Were Norman Baker and DfT officials aware that the Isles of Scilly Steamship Group were negotiating with British International Helicopters (BIH) about possible shared use of their St Just Aerodrome facility situated near Land's End up until the time that the Isles of Scilly Steamship Group unilaterally withdrew from these negotiations with BIH in an announcement by them on the 26 October 2010?

Officials became aware of this in January 2009 through correspondence – a copy of the letter received and the DfT response is attached for information. (Documents 25 and 26).

XXXXX XXXXXX
Department for Transport
Great Minster House
76 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DR
Direct Line: 0207 944 XXXX

Web Site: www.dft.gov.uk

29 June 2011

4. Were Norman Baker and DfT officials aware of the surprised reaction of BIH to the sudden termination of the negotiations by the Isles of Scilly Steamship Group/ISSCo. on 26 October 2010?

No.

5. At what date were Norman Baker and DfT officials aware of the Isles of Scilly Steamship Group's/ISSCo's position as Preferred Operator status in the Route Partnership Isles of Scilly SeaLink project?

On 6 May 2010.

6. What criteria and benchmarks were used in the DoT appraisal of the Isles of Scilly Route Partnership project? Was any bench marking used also set against that of the provision of Scottish off-shore shipping services?

The Isles of Scilly scheme was appraised using the standard DfT appraisal tools that are used for every local major scheme. The scheme was not compared to any other shipping services.

7. Evaluation of the document submitted by the Isles of Scilly Steamship Group entitled ISLES OF SCILLY LINK - SECOND HAND TONNAGE OPTIONS including any business plans, cost estimates, regulatory, environmental impact and economic forecasts and how it demonstrates better value for money than the rejected scheme for the Isles of Scilly sealink.

There was no evaluation or appraisal of the ISLES OF SCILLY LINK - SECOND HAND TONNAGE OPTIONS document but the information added to views that the preferred scheme was not the only option available.

8. What safeguards for the essential needs of islanders on Scilly for everyday living, including year round access to routine medical services on the mainland, will be implemented by the provision of a scheme to maintain services as per Norman Baker's decision letter of 31 March 2011.

Normal service is operating – current passenger services are ongoing and being maintained as before. Future operations are up to the operator. There is no decision yet on an alternative scheme.

9. Please give the DfT analysis of how the loss of £11.75 million of EU convergence funding together with that of £15 million of prudential borrowing by Cornwall Council set against an untested and unquantified scheme, second hand tonnage options, represents better value for money than the rejected scheme?

The second hand tonnage options were not appraised – as explained in answer to question 7 above.

10. At what date were policy changes made by the DfT in the proposed specification of the Isles of Scilly Link scheme from conditional approval to that of poorly appraised value for money?

Conditional Approval was granted in 2007 subject to no increase in costs and completion of the appropriate statutory and procurement processes. Following the change in Government in 2010, Ministers responded to a scheme with a substantial increase in costs since 2007 (from £42m to £62m).

In keeping with the spirit and effect of the Freedom of Information Act, all information is assumed to be releasable to the public unless exempt. A copy of this response and the information provided may now be published on our website.

If you are unhappy with the way the Department has handled your request or with the decisions made in relation to your request you may complain within two calendar months of the date of this letter by writing to the Department's Information Rights Unit at:

Zone D/04
Ashdown House
Sedlescombe Road North
Hastings
East Sussex TN37 7GA
E-mail: FOI-Advice-Team-DFT@dft.gsi.gov.uk

Please see attached details of DfT's complaints procedure and your right to complain to the Information Commissioner.

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

Yours sincerely,

XXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Your right to complain to DfT and the Information Commissioner

You have the right to complain within two calendar months of the date of this letter about the way in which your request for information was handled and/or about the decision not to disclose all or part of the information requested. In addition a complaint can be made that DfT has not complied with its FOI publication scheme.

Your complaint will be acknowledged and you will be advised of a target date by which to expect a response. Initially your complaint will be re-considered by the official who dealt with your request for information. If, after careful consideration, that official decides that his/her decision was correct, your complaint will automatically be referred to a senior independent official who will conduct a further review. You will be advised of the outcome of your complaint and if a decision is taken to disclose information originally withheld this will be done as soon as possible.

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