



Department for Transport

By email to:
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Department for Transport
[REDACTED] Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London SW1P 4DR
Direct Line: 020 7944 [REDACTED]
GTN No: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Web Site: www.gov.uk/dft

Our Ref: FOI F0009478

17th December 2012

Dear [REDACTED],

Freedom of Information Request F0009478

I am writing regarding your request for information, received on 18th November 2012. In that request, you asked us the following:

- Please provide the following information on how much your government department has spent on advertising, including but not limited to, digital, online, TV and print media adverts/campaigns in the past two years.
- Please state: Detail of each individual campaign: date created, media used, scope of the campaign, including how many adverts were to be formed, amount the campaign cost the department, including pitch, all charges, etc.
- Which advertising firm was worked with to create the campaign Any briefs given to the advertising firm shaping the campaign Any minutes of meetings internally or externally discussing the campaign.

The Department for Transport consists of a central Department (DfT) and six executive agencies as follows:

- Driving Standards Agency (DSA).
- Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA).
- Highways Agency (HA).
- Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA).
- Vehicle Certification Agency (VCA).
- Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA).

The Government Car and Despatch Agency (GCDA) ceased to be an agency of the Department on 30 September 2012.

This response covers both the central department and our executive agencies.

[REDACTED]

We have estimated that the cost of complying with your request would exceed £600. Section 12 of the Act (the full text of which is attached at Annex A) does not oblige the Department to comply with requests that exceed this limit, and we are therefore refusing your request.

We are unable to answer your full request within the cost limit because we do not keep a central record of the information you request. We would need to contact multiple teams across the Department and Executive Agencies in order to determine, locate, retrieve and extract the information that you seek. The level of detail readily accessible varies depending on the nature and scale of communications activities and the attributes captured within local business records.

To access the various financial and business records needed to identify expenditure on all types of advertising (i.e. all media for all purposes) over the last two years would require manual searches and be very costly.

If you send us a new, more specific request, we will consider if that can be dealt with within the limit. This may include reducing the number of parts to the request, specifying a particular part of the Department that you are interested in receiving information from e.g. an agency or just the central Department, reducing your time scales e.g. to the most recent completed financial year or seeking information about a specific type of advertising or advertising campaign.

Setting a minimum advertising campaign cost threshold may be another way of reducing the scope of the information you request. The Department has a central record of approvals from the Cabinet Office for advertising campaigns costing £100,000 or more and a threshold set at this level would significantly reduce the time needed to identify the business units who may hold the information you are interested in. Reducing the scope of the types of documents you request (e.g. to the commissioning brief) will reduce time needed to locate and retrieve the documents.

You may also like to be aware that the Department is fully committed to the Government's transparency agenda and publishes details of expenditure over £500 by month. In case you find this information useful I enclose the relevant link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/monthly-spend-over-500-in-the-department-for-transport-and-over-25-000-in-its-arms-length-bodies>

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.

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted signature]

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

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Annex A

Section 12 exemption:

Exemption where cost of compliance exceeds appropriate limit

(1) Section 1(1) does not oblige a public authority to comply with a request for information if the authority estimates that the cost of complying with the request would exceed the appropriate limit.

(2) Subsection (1) does not exempt the public authority from its obligation to comply with paragraph (a) of section 1(1) unless the estimated cost of complying with that paragraph alone would exceed the appropriate limit.

(3) In subsections (1) and (2) “the appropriate limit” means such amount as may be prescribed, and different amounts may be prescribed in relation to different cases.

(4) The Secretary of State may by regulations provide that, in such circumstances as may be prescribed, where two or more requests for information are made to a public authority—

(a) by one person, or

(b) by different persons who appear to the public authority to be acting in concert or in pursuance of a campaign,

the estimated cost of complying with any of the requests is to be taken to be the estimated total cost of complying with all of them.

(5) The Secretary of State may by regulations make provision for the purposes of this section as to the costs to be estimated and as to the manner in which they are to be estimated.