

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

17 Smith Square,
London,
SW1P 3JR

Telephone 08459 33 55 77

Website www.defra.gov.uk



Our ref: RFI4839

05 July 2012

Dear Mr Birkett

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: Air Quality Forecasting and Smog Alerts since 13 May 2012

Thank you for your request for information that might have “appeared” since 13 May 2012 relating to the routine and non-routine services Defra has in place or plans for London and elsewhere relating to forecasting air quality and/or issuing smog alerts. This request was received on 7 June 2012 and has been handled under the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRs).

I enclose copies of the information that falls within this request.

Please note that we have decided that the names of junior officials and person from outside Defra should be withheld under regulations 12(3) and 13(1) (third party personal data) of the EIRs, as the information constitutes personal data relating to third parties. Regulations 12(3) and 13(1) of the EIRs provide that personal data relating to third parties is exempt information if disclosure would breach the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA). These names have therefore been redacted from the attached documents.

We consider that disclosure of this information is likely to breach the first data protection principle in Schedule 1 to the DPA, which relates to the fair and lawful processing of personal data, in three ways. First, disclosure would not constitute ‘fair’ processing of the personal data, second, disclosure would not satisfy any of the conditions for data processing set out in Schedule 2 to the DPA and, third, the disclosure of the information consisting of sensitive personal data would not satisfy any of the conditions for data processing set out in Schedule 3 to the DPA. Consequently, we have concluded that this information is exempt from disclosure under regulation 12(3) and 13(1) of the EIRs.

You also said that you would like to understand what considerations if any were given to

- the launch of the Twitter Service @DefraUKAir; and/or
- the merits of issuing a press release or information bulletin when Sevenoaks experienced a 7/10 HIGH ozone event recently.

On the first matter of the Twitter service, all information relevant to this request has been provided in our response of 13 June to your request of 13 May (our ref RFI 4789). There is no additional information which falls under this part of the request. On the second matter of the 7/10 HIGH at



Sevenoaks, no consideration was given to the merits of a press release or information bulletin about ozone data recorded at the London Air Quality Network Station, Sevenoaks. Defra does not hold data from this station in its databases.

In keeping with the spirit and effect of the EIRs, all information is assumed to be releasable to the public unless exempt. Therefore, the information released to you may now be published on our website together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context.

I attach Annex A, which explains the copyright that applies to the information being released to you.

I also attach Annex B giving contact details should you be unhappy with the service you have received.

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Defra
Area 5F, Ergon House
Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 2AL

Annex A

Copyright

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Annex B

Complaints

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request you may make a complaint or appeal against our decision within 40 working days of the date of this letter. Please write to Brendan Walsh, Head of Defra's Information Rights Team at Area1B, Ergon House, Horseferry Road, London, SW1P 2AL, (email: informationrights@defra.gsi.gov.uk) and he will arrange for an internal review of your case. Details of Defra's complaints procedure are on our [website](#).

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. Please note that generally the Information Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have first exhausted Defra's own complaints procedure. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF