

22 September 2023

Request under The Freedom Of Information (Scotland) Act 2002

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request dated 23 August 2023, in which you requested the following information. For ease I have presented the information after each point of your request:

1. Do you have a target to cut emissions from air and/or business travel? If so, please share information about any target(s) you have (e.g. description of the target, when the target was adopted, timeline to meeting the target).

As a Non-Departmental Public Body, our targets are in line with the Scottish Government's. Our target is to be a net zero organisation by 2045. This target was adopted in 2019.

Our *2020-2023 VisitScotland Sustainability Policy and Objectives* outlines our objective to reduce all carbon emissions across our organisation. A copy of the Policy and Objectives document is provided as an attachment.

Our emissions are reported annually: [VisitScotland's Annual Sustainability Report | VisitScotland.org](#).

2. Please provide copies of any corporate policy your organisation has on the reduction of emissions from business travel.

The *2020-2023 VisitScotland Sustainability Policy and Objectives* document is relevant information in response to this question.

Travel and Subsistence Guidelines are currently under review however the relevant extract is at section 1.13 of the current *Travel and Subsistence Expenses Manual*. A copy of this document is provided as an attachment and the relevant extract is included below for ease:

Environmental and cost issues

- 1.13 VisitScotland has a Sustainability Policy and is committed to reducing the impact of travel and promoting a shift towards more environmentally friendly forms of transport. This includes reducing the emissions from business travel and thus its contribution to climate change and air pollution. Therefore, employees should support this by considering, whether journeys are essential or could be reduced, for example by using on-line meetings or video conferencing.
- 1.14 If it is necessary to travel, public transport options should be given priority over using cars or taxis. Furthermore, if it is necessary to use a car or taxi, please do consider that the cost and potential impact can be reduced through sharing with colleagues as appropriate. VS would also encourage all staff, where possible, to consider the opportunities for leaving the car at home when commuting to work.
For more information and ideas on **Greener and Smarter** Travel choices see www.chooseanotherway.com
- 1.15 Generally the most cost-effective means of travel available should be used, but this should be considered alongside environmental considerations and a balance struck.
- 1.16 The importance of this policy cannot be stressed enough, and Line Managers, HODs, and Directors will monitor such use to ensure best practice.

3. Please provide copies of any corporate policy your organisation has on the reduction of the use of air travel for business travel purposes.

As per Q1, our targets are to reduce all carbon emissions across the organisation.

4. Please provide details of the number of flights your staff have taken from Edinburgh & Glasgow Airports to London Airports for business purposes in the past 12 months (or your most recent 12-month reporting period) for travel to destinations within south-east England.

49 flights. For context, this is the number we have recorded in our travel booking portal system and expenses records. In some instances, when it has not been recorded in the system, this figure may include journeys taken by staff who were ultimately travelling to destinations beyond the south-east of England.

5. Please provide details of the number of rail journeys your staff have taken from Edinburgh & Glasgow railway stations to London railway stations for business purposes in the past 12 months (or your most recent 12-month reporting period) for travel to destinations within south-east England

28 rail journeys.

We hope this information is helpful to you. If, however, you are not satisfied with our response or the manner in which we have dealt with your application, you may in the first instance contact our Chief Executive, Malcolm Roughead, whose contact details are set out below:

Mr Malcolm Roughead
Chief Executive
VisitScotland
Ocean Point One
94 Ocean Drive
Edinburgh, EH6 6JH
Telephone: 0131 472 2201
Fax: 0131 472 2223
E-mail: malcolm.roughead@visitscotland.com

If you wish to request a review of your application under either the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 or the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004, your request should be submitted to us in writing, or another permanent format (for example e-mail or voice recording), and be received by us within 40 days of the date of this letter. Any request for a review should also set out, in as much detail as possible, the reasons why you are not satisfied with our response or the manner in which we have dealt with your application.

If you are still not satisfied with our handling of your application after we have responded to your request for a review, you have a right to apply to the Scottish

Information Commissioner for a decision on whether we have dealt with your request in accordance with the Act.

The Scottish Information Commissioner may be contacted at:

Scottish Information Commissioner
Kinburn Castle
Doubledykes Road
St Andrews, Fife
KY16 9DS
Telephone: 01334 464610
Fax: 01334 464611
E-mail: enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info

You also have the right to appeal to the Court of Session in Scotland on a point of law concerning our response.

Yours sincerely,

VisitScotland