

16 February 2021

Request under The Freedom Of Information (Scotland) Act 2002

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request dated 24 January 2021, in which you requested the following:

1. How many frontline communications staff/press officers there have been for each of the ten years to 2019/20. If an average number cannot be sourced, pick March as a snapshot.
 - How many FTE frontline communications staff/press officers were there in January (snapshot) 2021.
 - What was the annual cost of employing those frontline staff in all those years 2009/10 - 2019/20.

2. How many FTE frontline communications staff/press officers have been employed that have been outsourced, in other words, not in-house but external PR/communications supplied by a private company in all those years 2009/10 - 2019/20
 - How much was spent in those outsourced frontline PR/communications/press office functions, in other words, not in-house but external PR/communications supplied by a private company.

I have considered your request, and can respond as follows:

As a snapshot in January 2021, we had 7.17 FTE frontline communications staff/press officers.

The below table details FTE front line communications staff/press officers from 2009/10 to 2019/20 plus the cost of employing those staff. Note we have captured the cost of employing as requested rather than salary alone. Therefore the cost includes Employer National Insurance Contribution and Pension costs.

Year	FTE front line press roles	Total cost to employ
2009/10	5.60	£196k
2010/11	5.60	£200k
2011/12	5.60	£213k
2012/13	5.50	£210k
2013/14	7.00	£236k
2014/15	5.17	£195k
2015/16	6.37	£223k
2016/17	7.63	£258k
2017/18	7.00	£261k
2018/19	7.17	£280k
2019/20	7.17	£293k

VisitScotland has not used agencies or outsourcing for frontline communications staff/press officers during the period 2009/10-2019/20.

I hope this information is helpful to you. If, however, you are not satisfied with the response or the manner in which your application has been handled, 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.

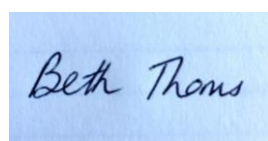
If you are still not satisfied with our handling of your application after we have responded to your request for a review, you have a right to apply to the Scottish Information Commissioner for a decision on whether we have dealt with your request in accordance with the Act.

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,

A blue rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Beth Thom".

Beth Thoms
Government and Parliamentary Affairs Executive
VisitScotland