

5 June 2023

Request under The Freedom Of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 ("the Act")

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request and clarification dated 4 May 2023, in which you requested the following:

1. The total amount spent in the last five financial years on PR, both in-house and externally (split if possible) – clarified to include staff salary costs.
2. The total number of PR or Communications Officers employed by your organisation over the last five years – clarified to include those whose role relates principally to PR or Press.

I have considered your request and can respond as follows:

1. Please note due to a change in our financial system in 2019, we are only able to provide data from 2019-2023 for PR spend.

Due to how spend is categorised in our finance systems, we cannot extrapolate data to show the precise split of in-house versus agency spend. The data in the table below is what we hold in our systems as overall PR spend.

For context, VisitScotland is Scotland’s National Tourism Organisation and one of our core remits is inspiring potential visitors from the UK and international markets to choose Scotland as a holiday destination. PR is one part of the Marketing mix we use to do this. Our total spend on PR (consumer and corporate) is outlined in the table below.

Please also note that total spend on staff salaries includes Gross pay + Employer Pension + Employer NIC.

The totals are as follows:

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Grand Total
PR costs		£231,186.95	£233,490.04	£182,613.57	£239,573.01	£886,863.56
Staff salaries	£639,285.00	£807,540.00	£836,845.00	£854,942.00	£857,561.00	£3,996,173.00
Total	£639,285.00	£1,038,726.95	£1,070,335.04	£1,037,555.57	£1,097,134.01	£4,883,036.56

2. The total number of PR or Communications Officers employed by VisitScotland over the last five years relates to those roles with principal responsibilities (over 50% of role) being press or PR. Please note this reflects roles rather than individual people, to avoid double counting. The totals are as follows:

2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Average per year
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18.0	19.0	17.5	21.5	19.0	19
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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