



Network Rail  
Freedom of Information  
The Quadrant  
Elder Gate  
Milton Keynes  
MK9 1EN

T 01908 782405  
E [FOI@networkrail.co.uk](mailto:FOI@networkrail.co.uk)

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

20 September 2018

Dear [REDACTED]

**Information request**  
**Reference number: FOI2018/01124**

I am writing in response to your email of 21 August 2018, in which you requested the following information:

*'Regarding the administration/defence of discrimination claims since the Equalities Act 2010 came into effect, the value of payments made to external solicitors including those expenses incurred by an external solicitor for which they then charge Network Rail by way of disbursement.'*

I have processed your request under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

As you know from our responses to your previous requests for this and similar information, it is not possible for us to retrieve this information within the 18 hour appropriate limit set out in the Act. However, our previous estimates were based on the time needed to identify purchase order numbers and then manually search any associated invoices in order to locate and extract cost information. As a result of further enquiries we have made following your new request, we have identified a different way of locating the cost information.

This method involved extracting all legal costs from the iProcurement system, and then conducting further analysis to cross-reference these details with records held by our Legal team to specifically identify discrimination cases; we identified relevant cases using a range of searches and filters. While we have not been able to identify all of the information you have asked for in this way, by using this method we have been able to identify and retrieve costs for the majority of the relevant cases.

I am providing the information we have retrieved in the table below. In doing so, I would ask that you note the following caveats:

- Although our new method of searching is quicker and more effective than the process we had previously described in our estimates, it remains the case that to locate further relevant cases and retrieve all the cost information for the entire time period since 2010 would still involve separate manual searches of individual records. These further searches would once again exceed the 18 hour limit. I must be clear that the results presented below are not a full and complete record of the costs, as further records may be held but could not be retrieved within the 18 hour limit.
- Rather than refuse your request outright, to assist, we have followed your previous suggestion and worked 'up to' the 18 hour limit to provide as much information as possible within that time. The information provided represents costs for all relevant cases which could be identified and retrieved in 18 hours. Costs for further cases in each of the relevant years may be held, but could be located within the 18 hour limit.
- Again following your suggestion, we began our searches with the most recent years. We are not able to provide any costs for 2010 as the 18 hour limit had been reached.

For those cases which could be identified and cost information retrieved within 18 hours, the value of the payments to external solicitors in relation to discrimination claims for the period since the Equalities Act 2010 came into effect is shown below:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of discrimination cases identified within 18 hours</b>	<b>Total value of payments made</b>
2011	21	£370,405.50
2012	26	£481,822.59
2013	17	£241,400.00
2014	12	£376,576.70
2015	10	£240,815.60
2016	23	£587,771.95
2017	17	£416,345.90
2018	19	£283,800.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>£2,998,938.24</b>

As noted, these amounts relate to payments which we have identified in our records as relating to cases involving a claim of discrimination and which could be retrieved within 18 hours.

If you have any enquiries about this response, please contact me in the first instance at [FOI@networkrail.co.uk](mailto:FOI@networkrail.co.uk) or on 01908 782405. details of your appeal rights are below.

Please remember to quote the reference number at the top of this letter in all future communications.

Yours sincerely

Colin Bendall  
Information Officer

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If you are unhappy with the way your request has been handled and wish to make a complaint or request a review of our decision, please write to the Head of Freedom of Information at Network Rail, Freedom of Information, The Quadrant, Elder Gate, Milton Keynes, MK9 1EN, or by email at [FOI@networkrail.co.uk](mailto:FOI@networkrail.co.uk). Your request must be submitted within 40 working days of receipt of this letter.

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

**Web:** [www.networkrail.co.uk/foi](http://www.networkrail.co.uk/foi)