



27 June 2019

Dear ,

### Request for Information – ATISN 13197

I wrote to you on 6 June regarding your request for information.

You asked for the following information:

1. How many loans has the Welsh Government given to firms working in the construction sector in each of the last five financial years?
2. Which companies have benefited from these loans, and the amounts given to each?
3. How much of the money has been paid back to the Government in each of the last five financial years?

I can confirm that we hold information relating to your request. I explained in my letter dated 6 June that your original request was likely to be very time consuming to deal with and asked that you refine your request. I suggested ways in which you could provide a more focused request. Because you have not done so, I have considered your request as you originally submitted.

Requesting a broad scope of information as described makes the search very difficult and time consuming. Given that the construction sector can encompass a multitude of disciplines and business supply chain, this would mean searching hundreds if not thousands of files to retrieve the information you have requested. You have also specified a very broad time frame for your 3<sup>rd</sup> question which again means searching through thousands of files. The information captured by your first two questions will potentially go back for many years, some of the information may also be in paper files, some of which may be in storage which will necessitate requesting a number of box files from our



BUDDSODDWR | INVESTORS  
MEWN POBL | IN PEOPLE

E&T FOI Team  
Welsh Government  
Treforest - QED Centre  
Main Avenue  
Treforest Industrial  
Estate  
Ponty pridd  
CF37 5YR

[FOI.EconomyandTransport@gov.wales](mailto:FOI.EconomyandTransport@gov.wales)  
[RhyddidGwyb.EconomiaThrafnidiaeth@llyw.cymru](mailto:RhyddidGwyb.EconomiaThrafnidiaeth@llyw.cymru)  
[www.gov.wales](http://www.gov.wales)

Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

archives. It is also unclear how many boxes there may be in this instance and it would require manually sifting through each file and paper within these files and boxes.

A substantial volume of the information requested is stored on our Electronic Document and Records Management System, known as iShare, and within Outlook e-mail accounts for individual officials. iShare is the corporate repository for the majority of information created and received by Welsh Government Officials in the course of their duties that must be retained for business or historical purposes. Further information about iShare can be found under Section 7 of our Information and Records Management policy, which is available on the Welsh Government [website](#).

Documents are saved on iShare using naming conventions appropriate to the effective recording of information for our own purposes. Setting our systems in this way, and in line with our Records Management policy, enables effective delivery and will not necessarily lend themselves to being easily interrogated for generic requests for information. Where the Welsh Government believes providing such information would involve tasks that would be time consuming to deal with, in line with our obligations under the section 45 Code of Practice, we inform the requester of that fact and invite them to narrow down or re-focus their requests.

A general iShare search using the search terms 'loans for construction sector' and 'construction sector firms' yielded tens of thousands of results. At an average estimate of one minute per result to check whether it is relevant to your request and then extracting the relevant information, it would take one official at least a full working week, but it is very likely the work would extend beyond that timeframe. Additionally, based on current criteria, the search may potentially cut across many Welsh Government departments which would involve numerous members of staff and numerous teams which would extend the timeframe even further.

I have therefore concluded that it will cost more than the appropriate limit set out in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004 to deal with your request. I have therefore decided to refuse your request under Section 12 of the FoIA as to comply with it would exceed the appropriate limit.

The appropriate limit specified for central government is £600. This represents the estimated cost of it taking over 24 hours of time to determine whether we hold the information and to thereafter locate, retrieve and extract it. As outlined above, I estimate it would take at least 1 person a whole week to retrieve and extract the information. .

If you are dissatisfied with the Welsh Government's handling of your request, you can ask for an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this response. Requests for an internal review should be addressed to the Welsh Government's Freedom of Information Officer at:

Information Rights Unit, Welsh Government, Cathays Park, Cardiff, CF10 3NQ  
or Email: [Freedom.of.information@gov.wales](mailto:Freedom.of.information@gov.wales). Please remember to quote the ATISN reference number above.

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire,

SK9 5AF. However, please note that the Commissioner will not normally investigate a complaint until it has been through our own internal review process.

Yours sincerely