



National Audit Office

The UK's independent public spending
watchdog

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CONTRACT REGISTER, PROCUREMENT STRATEGY AND CONTACT DETAILS

Thank you for your request dated 11 June 2025 for the National Audit Office's (NAO) contract register, procurement strategy for 2025/26, and the names and contact details of various NAO officers. Your request has been considered under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

We can confirm that we hold some of the information you requested. We do not have a procurement strategy and as such we do not hold this information.

We have provided our contract register as an Excel spreadsheet attached with this response. This includes details of all 384 active contracts over £12,000. Contracts with a value below £12,000 are not included in the register as they are below the threshold for publication.

Our contract management system does not contain all the information you requested. We have provided the information to the extent that we hold it. We would also like to highlight that our system is designed in a way that the "lifetime contract value" shows values without the extensions unless the extension is activated. This is to avoid double counting. We publish all our awards on Contracts Finder/Central Digital Platform.

We have withheld a small amount of information in accordance with Section 40(2) (Personal Information) and Section 43 (Commercial Interests) of the FOIA. Details of these exemptions can be found in **Annex A**.

Section 40(2)

We have applied this exemption to the contract owners in Column N of the spreadsheet, the name of an inward secondee and consultant in Column M, and the contact details of various NAO officers that you requested.

We are not obliged to provide personal information if releasing it would contravene the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018. In this instance we believe the release of this information would contravene the first data protection principle which requires the processing of personal data to be lawful, fair and transparent. We do not believe it would be fair to the individuals concerned to disclose their personal information, and we therefore consider section 40(2) is engaged.

We have considered whether there is any legitimate interest in disclosure of this information and have provided a contact email (NAO.Procurement@nao.org.uk) should you or anyone else have a query about our contracts.

Section 43

We have applied this exemption to a very small amount of information in Column K (Description of Goods/Services) of the spreadsheet.

There is a risk that release of the sensitive information we have redacted would prejudice the NAO's ability to negotiate in a commercial environment and attract unique bids for any future contracts. In addition, disclosing contract particulars may well cause other suppliers to decline to bid for future NAO contracts and therefore may prove detrimental to the NAO achieving adequate competition in tenders published in the future. This would reduce the NAO's ability to obtain value for money and may result in a less advantageous outcome for the taxpayer. Therefore, we have concluded that the release of the information we have redacted would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of the NAO and our existing suppliers, and that Section 43(2) (commercial interests) of the FOIA is engaged.

Reasons why the public interest in maintaining the exclusion outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information:

We recognise that there is a strong public interest in organisations operating with openness and transparency and being accountable for the spending of public money.

However, this needs to be weighed against the public interest in protecting commercial interests and strong competition. We are releasing the descriptions of goods and services being provided for each contract and have only redacted those parts of the information that we deem to be sensitive, and which would be useful to our existing contractors' competitors. Competitors would be able to take advantage of our existing suppliers' commercial information, causing detriment to one supplier over another, and this would not be in the public interest. In conclusion we believe that maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing this information.

I hope this information is helpful and you are happy with the way we have handled your request. If you are not happy with this response, you can ask for an internal review within 40 working days by writing to the NAO FOI Team at FOI@nao.org.uk. 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 primary way of escalating your concerns to the Information Commissioner is at: <https://ico.org.uk/foicomplaints>.

Yours sincerely,

FOI and Correspondence Officer

Annex A

This annex sets out the exemptions we have applied to your request.

Section 40, Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Personal information

Section 40, paragraphs 1-4, of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) provides that:

- (1) Any information to which a request for information relates is exempt information if it constitutes personal data of which the applicant is the data subject.*
- (2) Any information to which a request for information relates is also exempt information if—*
 - (a) it constitutes personal data which does not fall within subsection (1), and*
 - (b) the first, second or third condition below is satisfied.*
- (3A) The first condition is that the disclosure of the information to a member of the public otherwise than under this Act—*
 - (a) would contravene any of the data protection principles, or*
 - (b) would do so if the exemptions in section 24(1) of the Data Protection Act 2018 (manual unstructured data held by public authorities) were disregarded.*
- (3B) The second condition is that the disclosure of the information to a member of the public otherwise than under this Act would contravene Article 21 of the GDPR (general processing: right to object to processing).*
- (4A) The third condition is that—*
 - (a) on a request under Article 15(1) of the GDPR (general processing: right of access by the data subject) for access to personal data, the information would be withheld in reliance on provision made by or under section 15, 16 or 26 of, or Schedule 2, 3 or 4 to, the Data Protection Act 2018, or*
 - (b) on a request under section 45(1)(b) of that Act (law enforcement processing: right of access by the data subject), the information would be withheld in reliance on subsection (4) of that section.*

Section 43 – Freedom of Information Act 2000 - commercial interests

Section 43 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) provides that:

- (1) Information is exempt information if it constitutes a trade secret.*
- (2) Information is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any person (including the public authority holding it).*
- (3) The duty to confirm or deny does not arise if, or to the extent that, compliance with section 1(1)(a) would, or would be likely to, prejudice the interests mentioned in subsection (2).*