



40/42 Friars Walk
Lewes
East Sussex
BN7 2XW

foi@secamb.nhs.uk

21st July 2016

Email:

Dear

I am writing in response to your enquiry under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) reference FOI/16/06/36.

You requested the following information:

I am researching the financial efficiency of the public sector. Please provide the following information under the FOI Act.

1) Does the organisation use an external provider for VAT advisory services? If so please state the name of the organisation used? (E.g. Ernst Young, Berthold Bauer, Liaison, CRS, KPMG etc.)?

Berthold Bauer VAT Consultants Ltd

2) Please state the contract start and end date.

1st April 2015 to 31st March 2017

3) Please confirm the total value of VAT recovered by the provider in 2015/16

£65,582

a. Please state the total value of under-claims recovered

£232,505

b. Please state the total value of over-claims recovered

£166,923

4) Please state the total amount spent by the organisation for these services in 2015/16

I have to advise that I am unable to provide any further information on the basis of the exemption contained within s43 (2) of the FOI Act (Commercial Interests). The Trust accepts that there is a public interest in how public money is spent; however there is also a need to withhold information that would prejudice the commercial interest of the Trust and/ or third parties. In assessing the public interest, the Trust takes the view that this would be the case in this instance. The Trust considers that this information, in conjunction with other information that might already or will be in the public domain, could lead to the commercial interests of the Trust together with the companies we use being adversely affected.

5) Did the organisation use an external provider to re-review VAT recovered in the last financial year (15/16)?

No

a. If so please state the name of the company used.

6) Please state the total amount of additional VAT recovered by the provider in 2015/16

Not applicable

7) Please state the total amount spent by the organisation for these services

Not applicable

8) Please state the total number of Accounts Payable invoices processed by the organisation in the last financial year (15/16)

27,548

9) Please state the total value of Accounts Payable invoices in the last financial year (15/16)

£87,692,056

10) In the last five years, please state the name(s) of all external organisation(s) used to review AP and identify and recover erroneous payments, and the period(s) reviewed by each.

Liaison VAT Consultancy Ltd were used in the period 2014/2015.

11) Please state the total value of moneys recovered by each provider in the period(s) reviewed.

£34,740

12) Please state the total amount paid to any external parties for this review work.

I have to advise that I am unable to provide any further information on the basis of the exemption contained within s43 (2) of the FOI Act (Commercial Interests). The Trust accepts that there is a public interest in how public money is spent; however there is also a need to withhold information that would prejudice the commercial interest of the Trust and/ or third parties. In assessing the public interest, the Trust takes the view that this would be the case in this instance. The Trust considers that this information, in conjunction with other information that might already or will be in the public domain, could lead to the commercial interests of the Trust together with the companies we use being adversely affected.

I hope you find this information helpful.

If, for whatever reason you are unhappy with our response, you are entitled to pursue any dissatisfaction through South East Coast Ambulance NHS Foundation Trust's (SECAmb) Internal Review Procedure at:

South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust
40-42 Friars Walk
Lewes
East Sussex
BN7 2XW
Email:complaints@secamb.nhs.uk

Should you remain unhappy with the outcome of any such internal review , you may request a decision from the Information Commissioner at:

The Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

If I can be of further assistance to you, please do not hesitate to contact me, quoting the above reference number.

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information Coordinator
South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust