

10 March 2008

Our ref: R00030

**Subject: FOI request – Tourism**

You requested information about the following:

1. How much the agency spent on tourism in each of the last three years?
2. How much the agency plans to spend on tourism in the current year and in future years for which figures are available?
3. A breakdown of the agency's tourism spending in the last financial year including (a) how much was spent on marketing (b) how much was spent on staff (c) how much was spent on overseas offices (d) other spending
4. How many members of staff are employed by the agency to promote tourism in the region?
5. A copy of the agency's strategy for promoting tourism.
6. How many offices the agency has overseas for the promotion of tourism in the region.
7. The location of each overseas office the agency has for promotion of tourism in the region.
8. How much was spent on marketing the region as a tourist destination to domestic tourists.

Please allow me to set out the RDAs role in relation to tourism before answering to your specific questions:

In 2003 RDAs were given the strategic responsibility for regional tourism. Although they were given no new monies for this responsibility the RDAs recognised the important role of tourism in their regional economies and the need to invest in order to improve the skills, quality of product and productivity of the sector. Although across the country there will be significant variations in the contribution tourism makes to regional Gross Value Added (GVA), collectively the RDAs have agreed a common approach to tourism which looks at the tourism industry in its widest sense and does not simply concentrate on destination marketing. The RDAs have reacted to the needs of the industry in their regions. They have collectively focused on three areas:

**Product development** - Amongst other things this means developing skills strategies to ensure that those employed in the industry have the right skills to deliver a high quality level of service. Quality of product is key and the RDAs work with businesses and local authorities to co-ordinate destinations.

**Sustainability** - All the RDAs are committed to ensuring the sustainability of the tourism industry in the UK. The RDAs are working with all those who are stakeholders in the industry through the Partners for England initiative to develop economies of scale and reduce bureaucracy and duplication.

**Structures** - The RDAs have now developed long term strategies for the effective delivery of the above aims. They have also created individual structures which are best suited to take advantage of, and capitalise on, their regional strengths and opportunities in order to address areas for improvement.

In the South East SEEDA supported the creation of a single body, Tourism South East, as its preferred strategic partner to deliver regional tourism support.

1. SEEDA expenditure in support of tourism for each of the last three financial years was:

<u>2004/05</u>	<u>2005/06</u>	<u>2006/07</u>
£1.8m	£2.4m	£2.2m

These figures comprise expenditure on specific tourism projects (see 3d) and investment through SEEDA's delivery partner Tourism South East. The expenditure figures do not include spend within regeneration projects as part of a greater scheme, for example, support for culture led tourism at Chatham; the creative industries in Hastings; Oxford Castle; or Brighton Stadium, Conference Centre and International Ice centre, because such projects have wider purposes and the tourism element cannot be separated out. They also do not include support from generic programmes that support skills and business advice.

2. In the current year ending March 2008 SEEDA will invest £2.2m. SEEDA is in the process of determining what we plan to spend directly on tourism in future years. As in previous years this will be primarily through Tourism South East and we would expect to maintain support broadly at the current level, although we are facing cuts in our total grant.

3 SEEDA's direct tourism spending is through its partner Tourism South East.

- a) None.
- b) A single member of staff supports this programme as part of his job.
- c) Neither SEEDA nor Tourism South East has overseas tourism offices.
- d) In addition to the £2.2m programme through Tourism South East, SEEDA incurred a total of £144k on a number of specific research, skills and promotional projects in the last financial year.

4. The agency employs the equivalent of 0.5 FTE directly to support the sponsorship of its delivery partner, Tourism South East. Tourism promotion as such is not part of the employee's job description.

5. Tourism South East produced a regional strategy for tourism in 2004. An electronic copy of this strategy is attached.

6./7. SEEDA has no overseas offices for the promotion of tourism in the South East.

8. SEEDA did not incur any such expenditure directly.