

10 April 2012

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: 0297-12

Thank you for your email which FCO Services received on Friday 9th March 2012. In your request you asked for information relating to bonuses and benefits paid to officers working for FCO Services.

I can confirm that FCO Services holds some information relevant to your request

You asked the following questions:

1) The total amount of payments of bonuses paid to staff of FCO Services, an Executive Agency of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, for the years 2008/09, 2009/10 and 2010/11.

Answer

Bonuses – or non consolidated performance/contribution payments were introduced by the Treasury in 2002. The 2003-04 Civil Service pay guidance emphasised the need to make greater use of non-consolidated pay to reward performance. Non-consolidated pay is usually paid in the form of a bonus. The benefits of non-consolidation include that:

- ⌚ it rewards and encourages in-year performance, achievement of business objectives and enables specific behaviours to be targeted
- ⌚ it prevents a permanent rise in salary and an increase in pension on the basis of one off performance whilst still allowing good performance to be rewarded
- ⌚ it motivates employees by linking an element of compensation to the achievement of departmental objectives rather than offering payment for time served
- ⌚ it rewards those who make the biggest contribution

1) The total amount of payments of bonuses paid to staff of FCO Services, an Executive Agency, of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office for the year 2008/09 = £1,074,791

2) The total amount of payments of bonuses paid to staff of FCO Services, an Executive Agency, of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office for the year 2009/10 = £1,241,879

3) The total amount of payments of bonuses paid to staff of FCO Services, an Executive Agency, of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office for the year 2010/11 = £1,161,797

The amount paid was 2.82% of the total salary costs in 2008/09, 2.87% in 2009/10, and 2.71% in 2010/11.

2) The total amount of benefits in kind paid/given to staff of FCO Services, an Executive Agency of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, for the years 2008/09, 2009/10 and 2010/11.

Answer

Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act makes provisions for public authorities to refuse requests for information where the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate limit. The information you have requested is not centrally held. The limit has been specified in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004. For central government the appropriate limit is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one or more persons spending 3 ½ days working days in determining whether the Department holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting it.

Your request as presently formulated is widely-framed and I estimate that it will take more than 3 ½ working days to locate, retrieve and extract this information. In these circumstances we are not obliged under the Freedom of Information Act to comply with your request.

As a Civil Service body we do not provide the usual benefits in kind that can be found in other sectors (such as company cars and medical insurance), but you may wish to refine your request to narrow its scope to bring it within the appropriate limit, such as by naming a specific benefit.