



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

Consular Directorate
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29 June 2015

Dear,

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 - REQUEST REF: FOI 0517-15

Thank you for your email of 01 June 2015 asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You asked:

We are writing to request confirmation of whether the Foreign and Commonwealth Office holds any information regarding complaints of torture or mistreatment within the criminal justice system in the United Arab Emirates in the last 5 years. Specifically, we are seeking confirmation on whether any individual has complained of:

- **Torture**
- **Corporal punishment**
- **Physical beatings**
- **Forced confessions**
- **Cruel and unusual punishments**
- **Deprivation of legal advice**
- **Discrimination on the grounds of race or religious belief**
- **Failure to provide court interpreters at hearings**
- **Arbitrary detention for indefinite periods.**

If you hold the information above, we request the following further details of the complaints:

- **The date the complaint was raised and the period of time it relates to**
- **The nature of the complaint (as per the list above)**
- **The region/Emirate the complaint relates to**



Outcome of Search and Disclosure

We have now completed our search and consultation process and I can confirm that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does hold some information relevant to your request.

Complaints of Torture and Mistreatment Statistics

The FCO holds no information relating to complaints by non-British nationals of torture or mistreatment within the justice system in the United Arab Emirates.

Consular Directorate is aware of 43 cases of complaints by British nationals of torture or mistreatment within the justice system in the United Arab Emirates over the last five year period. Of these 43 cases, 37 relate to Dubai and six to Abu Dhabi. We are unable to break these figures down further to individual Emirate.

Withheld Information

The FCO are withholding details of when the individual complaint(s) were raised with us or the period to which it relates. Releasing this information may lead to individual(s) being identified. The disclosure of this information constitutes personal data and is therefore exempt from disclosure under Section 40 (2) and (3) of the FOIA as it would contravene the first of the data protection principles. This states that personal data should be processed fairly and lawfully. It is the fairness aspect of this principle which, in our view, would be breached by disclosure. In such circumstances, Section 40 confers an absolute exemption on disclosure.

Categories

Physical Beating

The FCO is aware of 19 complaints made in the period noted above that fall under the category 'Physical beatings'.

Other

The figures for all of the other categories set out in your request are less or equal to five. The FCO are unable to provide the figures due to the low numbers, as doing so may lead to the individual being identifiable. The disclosure of this information, which constitutes personal data, would contravene one of the data protection principles as set out above.



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Yours sincerely,

Desk Officer

Consular Directorate

