



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

Overseas Territories Directorate
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
King Charles Street
London SW1A 2AH

Website: <https://www.gov.uk>

05 March 2018

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: 0975-17

Thank you for your email of 17 October 2017 asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You asked:

To recap, I am requesting copies of the despatches written by High Commissioners/Ambassadors/Governors to the Foreign Secretary/Foreign Office reporting back on the success of State/Commonwealth visits by HM The Queen between 1994 and 1996.

COMMONWEALTH VISITS BY HM THE QUEEN

18 February 1994 Anguilla
26–27 February 1994 Cayman Islands
8–10 March 1994 Bermuda

I am writing to confirm that we have now completed the search for the information which you requested.

I can confirm that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does hold information relevant to your request.

We have carefully considered if we can release this information and conducted the appropriate Public Interest Tests. As a result, parts of the information have been withheld as we judge it is exempt from release under the following exemptions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA):

- section 41 (Information provided in confidence);
- section 27 (1) (c) (International relations);
- section 40 (Personal information).

Section 41 Information Provided in Confidence

Some of the information that you requested has been withheld under Section 41 (1) of the Freedom of Information Act – information provided in confidence. This allows for information

to be exempt if it was obtained by the public authority from any other person and the disclosure of the information to the public (otherwise than under this Act) by the public authority holding it would constitute a breach of confidence actionable by that or any other person. Section 41 also confers an absolute exemption on disclosure, and therefore a public interest test is not required.

Section 27 (1) (c) International Relations

Some of the information you have requested is being withheld under section 27 (1) (c) of the FOIA. Section 27(1)(c) is a qualified exemption and as such we have considered where the greater public interest lies. Disclosure could meet the public interest in transparency and accountability. However, the effective conduct of international relations depends upon maintaining trust and confidence between governments. If the UK does not maintain this trust and confidence, its ability to protect and promote UK interests through international relations will be hampered, which will not be in the public interest. The disclosure of information setting out the thoughts of an official on our relationship with various states could potentially damage the relationship between the UK and those states. The relationships are on-going and comments - even dating back some time - could be taken into account by those states. This could reduce the UK Government's ability to protect and promote UK interests which would not be in the public interest. For these reasons we consider that the public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

Section 40

Some of the information you have requested, is personal data relating to third parties, the disclosure of which would contravene one of the data protection principles. In such circumstances sections 40(2) and (3) of the Freedom of Information Act apply. In this case, our view is that disclosure would breach the first data protection principle. 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, s.40 confers an absolute exemption on disclosure. There is, therefore, no public interest test to apply.

Yours sincerely,

Overseas Territories Directorate



We keep and use information in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. We may release this personal information to other UK government departments and public authorities.