



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

Arabian Peninsula & Iran Department
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
King Charles Street
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Website: <https://www.gov.uk>

03 July 2017

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST: Ref 0097-17

Thank you for your email of 25 January 2017 in which you asked for the following information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA);

- a) The number of times FCO staff and officials met with Colonel Mansoor al Mansoor, including corresponding dates, details of who was in attendance, meeting minutes and recorded information from 2011 to 2017.*
- b) Communications by the FCO, including both internally and amongst other departments and public bodies that reference Colonel Mansoor al-Mansoor (and all other variant spellings) during 2011-2017.*

On 3 February you revised the scope of your request,

Below is the amended request, to receive information pertaining to communications within the year of 2016:

I am writing to confirm that we have now completed the search for information which you requested. I can confirm that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does hold some information relevant to your request. Apologies for the time taken to reply to your request.

Officials from British Embassy Riyadh have had regular contact with members of the Joint Incidents Assessment Team (JIAT) in the course of normal diplomatic activity. Officials attended a press conference on 4 August 2016 held by the JIAT, in which outcomes of eight investigations were announced. There were also discussions about these investigations in the margins of the press conference. A digest of information that we can release to you is attached.

Some information is being withheld under section 27 and section 40 of the FOIA.

Section 27(1)(a) International relations, applies here to some of the information requested because disclosure would be likely to prejudice the relationship between the United Kingdom and Saudi Arabia. The application of section 27(1)(a) requires us to consider the public interest test arguments in favour of releasing and withholding the information. We

acknowledge that releasing information on this issue would increase public knowledge about our relations with Saudi Arabia. But section 27(1)(a) recognises that the effective conduct of international relations depends upon maintaining trust and confidence between States. The disclosure of information detailing our relationship with Saudi Arabia could potentially damage the bilateral relationship between the UK and Saudi Arabia. This would reduce the UK Government's ability to protect and promote UK interests through its relations with the Saudi Arabia, 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 disclosing the information.

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.

Under Section 21 of the Act, we are not required to provide information in response to a request if it is already reasonably accessible to the applicant. There are links, to information that is publically available, provided in the digest.

Yours sincerely

Arabian Peninsula & Iran Department



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.