



Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office

Consular Directorate  
WH 4.2  
King Charles Street  
London  
SW1A 2AH

Email: [FOI/DPATeam.Consular@fco.gov.uk](mailto:FOI/DPATeam.Consular@fco.gov.uk)  
<https://www.gov.uk>

Dear

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION UNDER THE FREEDOM OF ACT 2000: REF 1097-13**

Thank you for your e-mail of 20 November to the FOI and DPA Team in which you requested, under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), information relating to lost and stolen passports.

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

Your request stated:

***"Please provide the following information for each of the years 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013 to date.***

- 1. The number of UK passports reported to FCO offices outside the UK as (a) lost; (b) stolen.***
- 2. Please provide a breakdown of the figures in 1 by country where the loss or theft happened (where this information is recorded).***

The attached table shows the number of UK passports reported as lost/stolen to FCO offices outside the UK, between 2008 and 2013, broken down by region, with total numbers highlighted below:

2013 (Jan-Oct)	22,459 - 22,623
2012	27,648 - 27,792
2011	26,009 - 26,129
2010	25,979 - 26,103
2009	27,657 - 27,769
2008	30,300 - 30,404



The data is taken from COMPASS, our global assistance database, and reflects only cases that were reported to the FCO. Please note that accurate management information with regards to lost and stolen passports has only been captured and recorded from January 2008 onwards. Also prior to 2012 (when COMPASS was upgraded), the Regional Processing Passport Centre (RPPC) and Counter Fraud Centre (CFC) recorded their data on COMPASS under the relevant post.

We are unable to provide a breakdown of the number of cases recorded for some cities owing to the small number of cases; we judge that it could lead to the individuals being identified. The disclosure of such information, which constitutes personal data, would contravene one of the data protection principles. In such circumstances, Section 40 (2) and (3) of the FOIA applies. 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, Section 40 confers an absolute exemption on disclosure.

Also we are unable to differentiate between lost and stolen passports as this would involve manually checking each case file for the relevant information. We believe that the time needed to extract this information would exceed the cost limit under Section 12 of the FOIA. As you may be aware, the FCO is not obliged to comply with requests for information where the cost of dealing with them would be likely to exceed 'an appropriate limit'. Section 12 of the FOIA allows public authorities to refuse requests for information where the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate limit. 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 figure represents the estimated cost of one or more persons spending 3½ working days in determining whether the government department concerned holds the information, and to find, retrieve and extract the relevant material. For your request, we believe that checking Compass for details and extracting the data on the number of children involved in each case would exceed the cost limit.

You may wish to consider refining this part of your request to bring it within the appropriate limit. We would like to be as helpful as possible and are happy to consider a reformulated request. For example, restricting the time frame may make it possible to conduct manual searches of cases recorded. However, we are unable to guarantee release in advance as any information must be assessed under the FOIA or that a search will produce any meaningful data.

***3. If statistical information is held about particular cities or regions overseas where loss or theft has been particularly common, please provide this information.***

We have provided figures for all Posts, partially because it was hard to define what counted as "common".

***4. If statistical information is held about thefts from UK embassies/consulates/diplomatic posts overseas, please provide this information, including numbers of thefts for each of the locations involved."***



We don't hold this information. I therefore suggest you contact Her Majesty's Passport Office: [hqenquiries@hmpo.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:hqenquiries@hmpo.gsi.gov.uk).

The information supplied to you continues to be protected by the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. You are free to use it for your own purposes, including any non commercial research you are doing and for the purposes of news reporting. Any other re-use, for example commercial publication, would require the permission of the copyright holder. Most documents supplied by the FCO will have been produced by government officials and will be protected by Crown Copyright. You can find details on the arrangements for re-using Crown Copyright on the Office of Public Sector Information website.

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I hope you are satisfied with this reply. If you have any queries about this letter, or are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request and you wish to make a complaint or if you would like a review of our decision, please write to the FOI and DPA Team, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Room K4.10-13, King Charles Street, London, SW1A 2AH. E-mail: [foi-dpa.imd@fco.gov.uk](mailto:foi-dpa.imd@fco.gov.uk). Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications. You have 40 working days to do so from the date this letter.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) for a decision. Generally, the ICO cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaint procedure provided by the FCO. The ICO can be contacted at The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF.

*Yours sincerely,*

Consular FOI/DPA team

