



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

Human Resources Directorate
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
King Charles Street
London SW1A 2AH

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

18 November 2014

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: FOI 0943-14

I am writing in response to [] questions in your email of 3 October asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You asked:

I am writing to obtain information about the number of employees who received remuneration of more than £100,000 in 2013-14.

Remuneration includes, but is not limited to: salary, fees, allowances, bonuses, benefits in kind, compensation for loss of office and employers' pension contributions.

Please make clear if the response includes staff from schools or subsidiary companies under your remit and list those organisations. Please also indicate which employees work for each subsidiary.

To outline my query as clearly as possible, I am requesting:

Question 1 - The total number of employees who received remuneration equal to, or in excess of £100,000 in 2013-14.

Question 2 - For those who received remuneration In excess of £150,000:

- i. The employee's name*
- ii. The employee's job title*
- iii. The remuneration received by the employee*

iv. An itemised list of expenses claims made by the employee. If an itemised list is not available, please provide the amount the employee claimed in expenses in 2013-14

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.

1) The number of staff with a full time equivalent salary greater than £100,000 is 37.

2) *For those who received remuneration In excess of £150,000:*

The latest disclosure figures for the FCO from December 2013 are available at the link below. This information which is relevant to your request is, in our view, already reasonably accessible to you. 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.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/foreign-office-staff-and-salary-data> .

This document provides i. the employee's name, ii. the employee's job title and iii. salary received by the employee.

The Cabinet Office produce an annual publication of all civil servants who are paid more that £150k, please see the link from March 2013.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/senior-officials-high-earners-salaries>.

The data for 2014 will be published in December 2014. This information is exempt from disclosure under section 22 (information intended for future publication). Section 22 is a qualified exemption subject to a public interest test. We have considered the public interest in releasing the information that falls under section 22 against the interest in withholding it:

There is a public interest in transparency being demonstrated by releasing the information with this reply. However, transparency is also achieved by the Government publishing this information on the FCO website.

There is a public interest in government departments providing information they hold that falls within the scope of a Freedom of Information request as quickly as possible. But this needs to be balanced with the public interest in government ensuring the maximum cost effectiveness. Providing this information in response to a Freedom of Information request is not the most cost effective way of placing this information in the public domain, when it will be published in due course on the FCO website.

We have therefore concluded that the public interest in withholding this information in our response to your request outweighs the public interest in releasing it.

Your question also asks for an itemised list of expenses claims made by the employee or the amount the employee claimed in expenses in 2013-14. The information you requested is not

held centrally and to obtain it would entail contacting every overseas post within the FCO to ask them to search their records. This would exceed the appropriate cost limit.

Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act makes provision for 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 represents the estimated cost of one or more persons spending 3 ½ 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 Act to comply with your request.

You may wish to narrow your request to a particular remuneration type or expense. Any reformulated request will be treated as a new request under the Act and any information found may be subject to exemption.

In keeping with the spirit and effect of the Freedom of Information Act, all information is assumed to be releasable to the public unless it is exempt. The information we have supplied to you may now be published on our website together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context.

Yours sincerely,

Human Resources 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.