



Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office

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

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

16 August 2016

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: 0470-16**

Thank you for your email of 04 May 2016 asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. In your request you asked for;

*I would like to make a Freedom of Information request to receive digital copies of all documents in current possession of the Foreign & Commonwealth Office that were made between 1 January 2007 until 4 May 2016 concerning Tristan da Cunha coins.*

You clarified your request on 10 May,

*More specific I would like to find out of which Tristan da Cunha coins the issuance has been approved by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office. Also I would like to know per coin which company made the proposal. I will make the scope of this part of my request smaller and will only ask for this information between 2012 and the date of my request.*

*Furthermore I would like to receive copies of documents concerning proposed issuances of Tristan da Cunha coins that have been rejected by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office between 2012 and the date of my request.*

*Lastly I would like to receive copies of all documents concerning the series of "circulation-like" coins that were issued by Tristan da Cunha and depicted themes of: Tristan da Cunha (2008), Stoltenhoff Island (2008), Gough Island (2009) and Nightingale Island (2011). These series can be seen [here](#). The date between parenthesis is the year of issuance.*

and for the last part of your request on 18 May,

*I would like to receive digital copies of the documents that were received by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office with the proposal to issue these series of coins and furthermore I would like to receive digital copies of the documents that show that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office has approved the issuance of these series of coins.*

In relation to the first two paragraphs of your request of 10 May, you may be aware that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does not approve or reject coin designs. It is Her Majesty the Queen who approves coin designs following advice from the FCO and I can confirm the FCO does hold information relating to proposed designs. However, this is

exempt under section 37 (1)(a), which relates to communications with, or on behalf of, the Sovereign and section 43 (2) of the Act, which relates to commercial interests.

We are withholding some information under section 37(1)(a) as it would constitute communications with, or on behalf of, The Queen. This is an absolute exemption which is not subject to a public interest test.

Some of the information is exempt under s.43(2), this is a qualified exemption and is subject to the public interest test. The factors in favour of disclosure of this information, including the general public interest and greater transparency and accountability, were carefully weighed against the need to allow business-people and commercial organisations the space to conduct their lawful business competitively and without fear of disclosure of sensitive commercial information. We consider that this transparency also poses risks to the protection of commercially confidential information. In this case after such consideration we believe that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in its release.

In addition, you may be aware that information in relation to coin designs which have been approved and gone into production, is publicly available. 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. Details are available on the Commonwealth Mint website <http://www.thecommonwealthmint.co.uk/>.

During the timeframe you have requested, The Commonwealth Mint has had the right to issue commemorative coins in Tristan da Cunha.

In relation to the final paragraph of your request of 10 May, as supplemented on 18 May, dealing with circulation-like coins, I can confirm that we have now completed the search for this information. I can confirm that the FCO does not hold information relevant to this part of your request.

Once an FOI request is answered, it is considered to be in the public domain. To promote transparency, we may now publish the response and any material released on [gov.uk](http://gov.uk) in the [FOI releases](#) section. All personal information in the letter will be removed before publishing.

Yours sincerely,

Overseas Territories Directorate

