

10 August 2012

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: 0760-12

Thank you for your email received on Friday 19th July 2012. In your request you asked for information relating to the amount of funding and staff time given to trade unions.

I can confirm that FCO Services holds some information relevant to your request

You asked the following questions:

1) The total amount of money paid to all trade unions for financial years a) 2010-11 and b) 2011-12. Where possible please provide a list of total payments made to each different trade union. However if this disaggregated information is not available please continue to provide a total figure for trade union payments. In response to this question, please only include direct payments to the unions from your organisation, not membership dues deducted from staff salaries.

Answer

FCO Services (a Trading fund of the FCO) does not pay any money to any trade unions. Members of staff who belong to a trade union pay their own subscriptions. These are either deducted from their salaries and paid to the unions or paid directly by the staff in the form of direct debits. Union membership is a private matter between staff members and unions.

2) Please state:

a. Which trade unions your organisation provide staff time to work on trade union duties and / or activities (sometimes called 'Trade Union facility time') in i) 2010-11 and ii) 2011-12.

b. The number of full time equivalent staff that were provided for each trade union in i) 2010-11 and ii) 2011-12.

Answer

a) FCO Services provides facility time to three trade unions: Public and Commercial Services Union; Diplomatic Service Association (part of the First Division Association); and Prospect.

b) FCO Services (excluding FCO) had 2 full time trade union secretariat posts in 2010-11 and 1.5 in 2011-12.

3) Does your organisation automatically deduct trade union subscriptions from staff salaries in the payroll process in order to pass them on to the union? If so, how much did your organisation charge each union for this service in a) 2010-11 and b) 2011-12?

Answer

The FCO payroll deducts trade union subscriptions from FCO Services staff salaries as part of the payroll process where authorised by staff to do so. The FCO and therefore FCO Services does not charge trade unions for this service.