

22 February 2012

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 - REQUEST REF: 0095-12**

Thank you for your email of 17 January in which you requested the following information under the Freedom of Information Act:

1. The number of staff (measured in headcount) currently directly employed by the department
2. The number of staff known to have a disability (measured in headcount) currently directly employed by the department
3. The number of staff known to have a disability (measured in headcount) who were directly employed by the department as of May 2010
4. The number of staff (measured in headcount) directly employed by the department as of May 2010.

I am writing to confirm that we have now completed the search for the information you have requested.

1. UK based strength staff on 1 January 2012 was 4529.
2. Of this 186 declared a disability.
3. The number of staff declaring disability in May 2010 was 155.
4. We have recently changed the way in which we report staff numbers and cannot produce a workforce total for May 2010 which is compatible with the figure for 1 January 2012. However, it was then of a similar size to the current workforce.

The Equality Act 2010 defines a person as having a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out day-to-day activities. We strongly encourage staff to make voluntary declarations of disability. Not all staff choose to do so. The current overall declaration rate for disability status (i.e. whether declaring a disability or non-disability) is around 30%. The figures given above for disability may therefore not reflect the proportion of disabled staff in FCO workforce as a whole. The increase in number of staff recorded as disabled does not indicate an increase in disabled staff. In the past few years the FCO have encouraged staff to update their personal records so the FCO can centrally record data related to diversity. This request for more accurate information accounts for the change in numbers.