26 April 2012

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: 0369-12

Thank you for your email 27 March 2012 asking printer and printing related questions.

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 some of the information relevant to your request, which is provided below.

How much did your department spend on printing equipment and print related costs in:
• 2010
• 2011

Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act makes provisions 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 therefore wish to refine your request to narrow its scope to bring it within the appropriate limit. As individual Posts and Departments within the FCO run their own budgets you could refine your request by specifying the Post or Department in which you are interested.

Is your department working towards a target to reduce spending on printing?
• Yes

If you answered yes, what is the spending target in £s?
We aimed to reduce UK paper consumption 10% over the 2011/12 financial year and although final figures are yet to be calculated, we believe we hit out target as at the end of Q3 paper consumption was down by 11% for the year. The resultant savings on printing equates to approximately £15,294 in paper and £26,744 in toner or a reduction of over 2 million sheets of paper. We will be striving for a reduction in printing spend going forward by aiming to introduce default modes across the network for duplex printing, grayscale and economode.

Have you increased / decreased the number of printers in your offices in the last year?
We are unable to gather this information given that we are spread so widely across the world and printers can be purchased for both stand alone computers and those networked into the core FCO IT system. I can confirm that it is our aim to reduce the number of printers across the estate as we strive for a greener and more efficient operation. Departments/Posts are encouraged to consider whether extra printers are needed or whether existing hardware is sufficient, in our print policy.

If yes, by how many have you increased or decreased? Please state the number.
N/A

Do you currently have a managed print service in place to control and manage your printer estate and print output?
No

If you answered no, do you intend to implement a managed print service in the next year?
We are actively looking at the option at the moment. We have introduced Webjet Admin to help us see where networked printers are not being used frequently across the FCO so we can either remove or redeploy printers already on the estate and streamline printer use.

What percentage of the printer paper that you purchase do you reckon is then recycled because of printing errors?
• 0-10%
• 10-20%
• 20-30%
• More than 30%

We are unable to say, an exercise to ascertain this has not been carried out and given our global reach, it would be very hard to collect such data for our Department.