



“The FCO is committed to joining in with Civil Service Reform wherever we can. We have made a good start, through our Diplomatic Excellence campaign. We will build on this in the year ahead, particularly through the One HMG overseas agenda, which seeks to unify the Civil Service and other representatives of the British Government in each of our 270 posts overseas.”

- Simon Fraser, Permanent Under Secretary

Departmental Programme and Administration Budgets

2010/11 - 2014/15 (resource DEL excluding depreciation represented as % cumulative real growth): -24%

Total FTE Reduction between Q2 2010 - Q1 2013: -4% (250 FTE)¹

Employee Engagement Index in 2012 (CS benchmark 58%): 67% (up 1 percentage point on 2011)

Progress against department-focused actions in the Reform Plan

Action 2: Digital by Default

FCO's [Digital Strategy](#) was published in November 2012. A new online registration tool for British nationals in crisis is being developed. There is currently a shortage of digital expert resource in the department, however the Foreign Secretary and FCO Board have approved the establishment of a Digital Transformation Unit and recruitment has commenced. FCO has also put in place more enabling social media guidance, provided access to social media on its IT and increased consular customer service online.

Actions 3 and 4: Shared and Sharing Services

The FCO will continue to operate a separate shared service centre providing support to over 30 departments, arms-length bodies and Non-Government Organisations with an international presence. FCO is engaging with the Cabinet Office Crown Oversight initiative to benchmark our activities and to ensure that the FCO continues to offer effective and efficient corporate service support for departments operating overseas.

FCO will continue to engage with other departments to share and inform policy advice, legal, audit and commercial services. For example, FCO Internal Audit Department is now one of 12 new groups which form the Government Internal Audit Service (GIAS) and provide audit support to a number of different departments. FCO also uses TSol when necessary to receive specialist legal advice regarding litigation, commercial and employment.

FCO currently shares “virtual” communication hubs with other Departments on foreign policy issues.

Action 5: Open Policy Making

FCO has not yet submitted a bid to the Contestable Policy Fund. We are currently examining co-operation with think tanks (due to complete in

¹ Includes Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Foreign and Commonwealth Office Services, and Wilton Park Executive Agency.

October 2013) but already regularly and extensively engage with them.

Action 6: Matching Resources to Government Priorities	FCO has a model in place, with both the Foreign Secretary and Permanent Under Secretary heavily involved in priority setting. Individual Directorates are also moving to flexible models.
Action 9: Management Information	The Quarterly Data Summary completion rate for Q3 was 96%. MI is used by the departmental board. A strategy for improving the use of MI will be finalised and implemented in October 2013.
Action 12: Skills, Learning and Development	FCO will make a decision on whether to adopt the new Civil Service Competency Framework in Autumn 2013. We offer 5 days of learning and development to all staff. 80% of staff have signed-up to Civil Service Learning. The Civil Service Capabilities Plan is being implemented and communicated through the Diplomatic Excellence programme.
Action 14: Secondments and Interchanges	FCO has a secondment strategy in place. In 2012/13, 9 FCO staff took up secondments to the private sector and 1 secondee from an external organisation took up a secondment with the FCO. In addition, 189 officers from other government departments joined the FCO on interchange loans and 31 FCO officers took up interchange loans to other government departments.
Action 16: Departmental Improvement Plans	FCO was one of the five pilot departments. Our first Improvement Plan was published by June 2013.
Action 17: Creating a Modern Employment Offer	FCO has adopted the new Civil Service performance framework. FCO plans to introduce modernised terms and conditions of service for those new to the delegated grades from 1 January 2014.
Creating a Modern Workplace	Plans are in progress to make our London HQ more flexible and open, including moving to 8:10 desk ratio and issuing more mobile technology.

Wider reform in FCO:

We are working with other Government departments to join up our efforts overseas. Our five-pronged approach involves:

- **Collaboration** - everyone working as one team, supporting each other to achieve their own departmental objectives and those of the Government as a whole, led in each country by the Head of Mission.
- **Co-location** of all parts of HMG overseas.
- **Regionalisation** - through our consular and corporate services hubs.
- **Consolidation** - establishing a single corporate services team in every post.
- **Harmonisation** - of terms and conditions for UK-based staff serving overseas as well as for locally engaged staff.