



# Foreign & Commonwealth Office

30 May 2013

## **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: 0397-13**

Thank you for your e-mail of 29 April asking for information about the number of Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) staff referred for therapy.

I am writing to confirm that we have now completed the search for the information which you requested. I can confirm that the FCO does hold some information relevant to your request.

The responses to your questions are as follows:

**1. The number of Foreign and Commonwealth Office employees since 2010 that have been advised by the Office to seek anger management therapy.**

We are not aware of any member of staff who has been formally recommended to seek such treatment. However, local line managers may have made informal recommendations to staff to seek help from their GP or the FCO's Employee Assistance Programme (see the answer to question 2 below for more information on the Employee Assistance Programme). This information is not recorded.

**2. The number of Foreign and Commonwealth Office employees since 2010 that have been advised by the Office to seek therapy for stress related behaviour within the work place.**

The FCO provides all staff with access to an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) which, amongst other services, offers a limited number of professional counselling sessions. The EAP is widely recommended as part of our package to support staff who may be suffering from work-related stress. We do not record the number of times EAP is recommended as a source of support.

Since 1 January 2010 the EAP has responded to 227 requests for counselling from FCO staff.

The FCO operates an occupational stress policy based on the Health & Safety Executive management standards. As well as the EAP we also offer stress risk assessments and the support of health & welfare and occupational health teams.

**3. Of these cases, how many individuals had their therapy partially, or wholly paid for by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office?**

The FCO meets the cost of services provided by the EAP through an arrangement shared with a number of other Departments.

In a small number of cases the FCO has agreed specifically to cover the costs of a limited therapeutic intervention by an external specialist. Such situations are rare and since 1 January 2010 there have been 19 (nineteen) referrals and all are closely monitored by our in-house occupational health team. Referrals are approved when it is clear that the nature of the staff member's work has led them to be directly exposed to a traumatic situation, for example a terrorist incident or a particularly distressing consular case.