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FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 - REQUEST REF: FOI 0851-14

Thank you for your email of 1 September 2014 asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You asked:

- 1) How many new cases of parental child abduction and international custody cases were the FCO involved in the following years: 2014 (to date), 2013, 2012, 2011, 2010, 2009.
- 2) Of these abduction cases, how many were 'wrongful detention of a child' cases?
- 3) For each of the years listed above, how many new cases were from India and from Pakistan.

We have now completed our search and consultation process and I can confirm that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does hold some information relevant to your request.

The table below shows the total number of child abductions and custody cases reported to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) between January 2009 and July 2014.

Child Abduction and Custody *	All Posts	India	Pakistan
2009	448	16	29
2010	547	8	31
2011	462	12	10
2012	609	21	41
2013	610	18	49
2014	263	15	19
Total	2,939	90	179

* January 2009 to July 2014

This data has been taken from the FCO's global consular assistance database, and includes cases that were recorded by consular officers where the main or secondary reason that consular assistance was provided was in connection with child abduction or child custody.



Unfortunately, we are unable to provide you with any information on how many were 'wrongful detention of a child' cases as we do not automatically record this information.

We would have to search each individual case on our database to see if we hold any information relevant to your request, which would exceed the appropriate cost limit. Section 12 of the FOIA makes provision 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 FOIA to comply with your request.

It is also possible to obtain our statistics on the GOV.UK website – the link for this is as follows: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/consular-data>. The information is available by month, for each of our diplomatic missions overseas.

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Yours sincerely,

Consular FOI/DPA team

