



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

Knowledge Management Department
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
King Charles Street
London SW1A 2AH

By email:

Website: <https://www.gov.uk>

7 May 2014

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: 0431-14

Thank you for your email of 15 April asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You asked:

I am writing to you under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to request the following information.

For the last three years, broken down by year:

- 1. The number of unauthorised incidents/breaches of the data protection act by members of the department accessing databases and personal information which they are not authorised to have access to, including the month of each incident.***
- 2. In each incident/data protection breach what information was accessed or attempted to be accessed.***
- 3. In each incident/data protection breach whether any disciplinary action was taken against the member of staff which was involved and the nature of the disciplinary action – where they are of an appropriate level for disclosure please include the position of the member of staff, i.e. senior civil servant.***
- 4. Details of the any members of staff resigning due to incidents/data breaches – where they are of an appropriate level for disclosure please include the position of the member of staff, i.e. senior civil servant.***

Please provide the information in the form of an electronic spreadsheet.

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 information relevant to your request. Please see the attached spreadsheet, containing details of all recorded incidents that occurred in the period 2011-2014 (1 April to 31 March financial years) in which FCO staff either accessed or attempted to access databases or personal information they were not authorised to have access to.

The FCO takes its data handling responsibilities very seriously. Our policies and procedures are designed to ensure that we are compliant with the Data Protection Act 1998 and HMG's Security Policy Framework. All our staff, including those who work for our delivery partners, have a responsibility to manage personal data effectively and securely in line with those policies and procedures. Training in data handling is mandatory for all staff.

Any incidents involving the loss or compromise of personal data are thoroughly investigated and appropriate action is taken to deal with the consequences, in line with our security procedures.

As an organisation with a global presence, including 260 overseas posts, we are responsible for a large volume of sensitive information. Whilst any incident is regrettable, we are confident that, overall, we have a good record on protecting the information for which we are responsible.

In keeping with the spirit and effect of the Freedom of Information Act, all information is assumed to be releasable to the public unless it is exempt. The information we have supplied to you may now be published on our website together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context.

The information supplied to you continues to be protected by the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. You are free to use it for your own purposes, including any non-commercial research you are doing and for the purposes of news reporting. Any other re-use, for example commercial publication, would require the permission of the copyright holder. Most documents supplied by the FCO will have been produced by government officials and will be protected by Crown Copyright. You can find details on the arrangement for re-using Crown Copyright information on the [TNA](#) website.

Information you receive which is not subject to Crown Copyright continues to be protected by the copyright of the person, or organisation, from which the information originated. You must ensure that you gain their permission before reproducing any third party (non-Crown Copyright) information.

I hope you are satisfied with this reply. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF.

Yours sincerely,

FOI & DPA Team



We keep and use information in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. We may release this personal information to other UK government departments and public authorities.