



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

Protocol Directorate
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
King Charles Street
London
SW1A 2AH

23 July 2015

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST – REF: 0620-15

Thank you for your email of 25 June asking for the following information:

- *Can you send me a copy of the guidelines or instructions (if any) you give to foreign diplomats when they arrive to the UK?*
- *With the closure of DVLA local offices, how will diplomatic licence plates be issued when Wimbledon VRO closes?*
- *What is the wording used on the Foreign Office Identity Cards given to foreign diplomats?*
- *As diplomats private residences are covered by diplomatic immunity (the same as the embassy) how would the police or authorities know it was a diplomatic residence? When unlike an embassy it is not readily identifiable by signs or flags, etc?*

I can confirm that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does hold information falling within the terms of your request.

The FCO does not provide any formal guidelines or instructions to foreign diplomats when they arrive in the UK: primary responsibility for induction rests with the sending state. However, the FCO does share information about privileges and immunities and living in the UK on a website available to all missions and the FCO provides oral briefings to missions.

Upon the closure of the Wimbledon DVLA office in November 2013, all diplomatic vehicle and driver licensing services transferred to the DVLA Headquarters in Swansea.

The FCO ID cards issued to foreign diplomats have details of the diplomat, mission or organisation, designation, reference number, and validity. The card indicates that the holder may be entitled to certain privileges and immunities in the United Kingdom under the Diplomatic Privileges Act 1964, the Consular Relations Act 1968 and the

International Organisations Act 1968. It gives contact telephone numbers to call to verify the status of the holder and a return address in case of loss.

The FCO notifies the Parliamentary and Diplomatic Protection of the Metropolitan Police Service and local authorities of all diplomatic premises and residential addresses of all diplomats notified to the FCO by diplomatic missions and international organisations based in the UK.

Once an FOI request is answered, it is considered to be in the public domain. To promote transparency, we may now publish the response and any material released on gov.uk in the [FOI releases](#) section. All personal information in the letter will be removed before publishing.

The copies of information being supplied to you continue 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. To re-use Crown Copyright documents please consult the [Open Government Licence v3](#) on the National Archives 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.

Yours sincerely

International Organisations and International Organisations
Protocol Directorate