



Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office

Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
King Charles Street  
London SW1A 2AH

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

18 March 2015

Dear

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: 0177-15**

Thank you for your email of 18<sup>th</sup> February, 2015 asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You asked:

*Please provide the following information:*

- 1) *The number of tablet computers issued by the department in the years 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015?*
- 2) *The cost of tablet computers issued by the department in the years 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015?*

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.

The FCO does not maintain a centrally held record of tablet computers being issued before 2014.

Centrally funded tablet computers issued between 2014 and 2015 total 166 in number. The cost of providing these tablets was £148,375

Of the 166 tablets, 161 were issued in 2014 at a cost of £146,125 and 5 (five) tablet computers have been issued since January 2015 at a cost of £2,250.

The FCO employs over 14,000 people in a worldwide network of nearly 270 diplomatic offices. There may have been additional purchase of tablet computers by these posts and/or

other Directorates out of devolved budgets. This information is not centrally tracked and we estimate that the cost of providing the information to comply with your request would exceed the appropriate limit.

Tablet computers are issued on a case by case basis to officers that travel frequently and need a device that allows them to communicate while they are on the road. The tablet computer will ultimately become a replacement for their laptop and desktop computers, rather than an addition.

Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 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 Act to comply with your request. You may therefore wish to refine your request to narrow its scope to bring it within the appropriate limit.

Section 16 of the Freedom of Information Act requires that I provide advice on how you may refine your request in order that bring it within the appropriate cost limit. In this case I would suggest that you focus your request on a particular Department, Embassy or Consulate.

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Yours sincerely,

Open Government Liaison Officer  
Knowledge & Technology Directorate



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