



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

**Royal, Ceremonial & Honours Unit
Protocol Directorate**
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
King Charles Street
London SW1A 2AH

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

11 January 2016

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: 1048-15

Thank you for your email of 24 October asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You asked:

I would like to know the cost of providing ceremonial dress to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's diplomatic mission staff in each year since 2007-08. I would also like to know the number of staff to whom ceremonial dress has been prescribed, as well as the diplomatic missions whose staff have been so prescribed.

I am writing to confirm that we have now completed the search for the information which you requested.

We have made the assumption that, by asking about ceremonial dress, you are requesting information about diplomatic uniforms worn by Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) staff worldwide. I can confirm that the FCO does hold information relevant to your request.

Diplomatic uniforms are currently required for certain roles in the United Kingdom where FCO staff work in support of Her Majesty The Queen and in some countries where the British Ambassador is required by local protocol to wear diplomatic uniform to represent the UK at ceremonial occasions.

Please find the list of such roles below:

Permanent Under Secretary and Head of the Diplomatic Service
Chief Operating Officer of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Vice-Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps and

Director, Protocol Directorate
Assistant Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps and Deputy Director, Protocol Directorate
British Ambassador to Thailand
British Ambassador to the Holy See
British Ambassador to Spain

The Director and Deputy Director of Protocol are Foreign and Commonwealth officials who are at the same time Members of the Royal Household as Vice Marshal and Assistant Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps.

We do not hold information about how many individual staff members, holding these roles, have been issued diplomatic uniforms in this period. But by way of a guide, our staff usually serve 3-4 years in a particular role. To keep costs to a minimum the FCO also, wherever possible, re-uses uniforms rather than purchasing new ones. According to our records, the following has been spent on altering existing, or purchasing new, diplomatic uniforms in each financial year since 2007/08.

2007/08	£2,823.00
2008/09	£7.00
2009/10	£6,873.00
2010/11	£2,142.00
2011/12	£5,197.00
2012/13	£4,369.00
2013/14	£3,880.00
2014/15	£9,783.00

These figures do not include any information about uniforms which may have been issued to Governors of British Overseas Territories which are the responsibility of each Overseas Territory and where, if a uniform is issued, it is paid for by the relevant Overseas Territory government.

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.

Yours sincerely,

Deputy Head

Royal, Ceremonial and Honours Unit

Protocol Directorate



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.