



Foreign &
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25 January 2016

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 - REQUEST REF: FOI 0003-16

Thank you for your email of 2 January 2016 asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You asked for:

“This request is for the last twelve months from 2nd January 2016:

- A how many complaints of foreign embassies have not been upheld***
- B and for what reason***
- C and how many complaints has been upheld***
- D and for what complaints***
- E in addition, what were the penalties – in detail – were inflicted on the person or person who was found to be in the wrong”***

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.

Disclosure

- A. 152 complaints of foreign embassies (British Embassies overseas) have not been upheld between 2 January 2015 and 2 January 2016.



B. The complaints were not upheld because the evidence did not support the complaint or there was a lack of sufficient evidence.

C. 54 complaints were upheld during the same period.

D. The complaints upheld related to: incorrect advice given by Consular staff; situations in which Consular staff had failed to provide appropriate services as outlined in the Consular Guide; or related to the behaviour of Consular staff, who had failed to conduct themselves in line with the consular customer service standards laid out in the Consular Management Guidance and as set out in the [Customer Charter](#).

E. In this period, Consular took a number of actions in response to complaints and feedback. Where members of Consular staff have provided an inappropriate service or have not upheld the service standards that we would normally expect, further training and supervision was recommended to address specific identified issues. Internal working practices, access to Consular offices and customer information published on embassy websites have been improved or reassessed following feedback. As an organisation, we seek to learn lessons from every complaint, including those which are not upheld.

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.

You can also find out more about previous FOI replies published on our website at [Publications - Inside Government - GOV.UK](#).

Yours sincerely,

Consular FOI/DPA team
Consular Directorate

