



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

Arabian Peninsula and Iran Department
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
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Website: <https://www.gov.uk>

14 December 2015

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: 1120-15

Thank you for your email of 23 November asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You asked:

I would like to clarify that I am asking for the total, and not individual, pro-rata salary costs. This would not, I believe, breach the first data protection principle.

Therefore I would like to ask as a follow-up freedom of information request: what was the total (not individual) pro-rata salary costs for the above-referenced delegation?

I can confirm that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) does hold information relevant to your request.

The FCO publishes the salaries of all staff by band on our transparency pages. I have included a link to this information below.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/foreign-office-staff-and-salary-data>

The document that is most relevant to your request is 'Junior staff and salary data, December 2013'. The two FCO staff members who were part of the delegation are both C4 band officers and they come under Middle East & North Africa Directorate. They each spent three days preparing for and at the conference.

The other three members of the delegation were from the Causeway Institute, Northern Ireland Co-operation Overseas and HM Inspectorate of Prisons.

We regret that their costs have been withheld under Section 43 (2) of the Act, which relates to commercial interests. The use of this exemption was carefully considered. The factors in favour of disclosure of this information, including the general public interest and greater

transparency and accountability, were carefully weighed against the need to allow business-people and commercial organisations the space to conduct their lawful business competitively and without fear of disclosure of sensitive commercial information. Failure to protect such commercially sensitive information would limit the sources of information and interlocutors available to the FCO and limit the FCO's ability to promote the British economy and lobby for the interests of British businesses overseas. In this case after such consideration we believe that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in its release.

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](https://www.gov.uk) in the [FOI releases](#) section. All personal information in the letter will be removed before publishing.

Yours sincerely,

Head of Arabian Peninsula and Iran Department



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.