



Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office

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

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

21 July 2016

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: 0622-16**

Thank you for your email and letter of 25 June 2016 asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

You wrote:

***Pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act please can you confirm the following:***

- 1. The number of British Citizens or their families who have complained (or are otherwise know of) to the British Embassy in Dubai / or and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of torture or mistreatment in the UAE prisons, police stations or detention centres in***
  - a. 2012***
  - b. 2013***
  - c. 2014***
  - d. 2015***
  - e. 2016***
  
- 2. The number of British Citizens or their families who have complained (or are otherwise know of) to the British Embassy in Dubai / or and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of poor medical treatment, refusal of medical treatment, refusal or denial or medications in the UAE prisons, police stations or detention centres in***
  - a. 2012***
  - b. 2013***
  - c. 2014***
  - d. 2015***
  - e. 2016***
  
- 3. The number of British Citizens or their families who have complained (or are otherwise know of) to the British Embassy in Dubai and/ or the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the death of British citizens in, police stations or detention centres in***
  - a. 2012***
  - b. 2013***
  - c. 2014***
  - d. 2015***
  - e. 2016***

4. *The number of British Citizens or their families who have complained (or are otherwise know of) to the British Embassy in Dubai and/ or the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the death of British citizens in as a result of the acts of the UAE authorities in, police stations or detention centres in*
  - a. 2012
  - b. 2013
  - c. 2014
  - d. 2015
  - e. 2016
  
5. *The number of British Citizens or their families who have complained (or are otherwise know of) to the British Embassy in Dubai and/ or the Foreign and Commonwealth Office an unfair criminal or civil trial in the UAE in:*
  - a. 2012
  - b. 2013
  - c. 2014
  - d. 2015
  - e. 2016

### **Outcome of Search Disclosure**

We have completed our search and I can confirm that the FCO does hold some information relating to your request. We provide assistance to British Nationals, which is a wider category than just British Citizens (there are six types of British Nationality, for more details please see: <https://www.gov.uk/types-of-british-nationality>). All our data refers to this broader group, and we are unable to break it down any further.

### ***Summary Total of Arrest and Detention Cases of British Nationals in the UAE 2012 - 2016***

- 2012 = 241
- 2013 = 259
- 2014 = 248
- 2015 = 293
- 2015 (as at 31 May) = 183
- **Total = 1,224**

For each year there were less than 5 or fewer deaths in custody that we are aware of (i.e. for whom we had a consular case file).

### ***Torture and Mistreatment Allegations***

In answer to your first question, the FCO Consular Directorate is aware of 11 allegations made by British nationals of torture or mistreatment in prisons, police stations or detention centres in 2012.

Allegations in each of the years since 2012 are less than 6 and we are therefore not obliged under the Data Protection Act 1998 to disclose this information for the reasons set out below.

In answer to your question 3 the number of complaints is less than 6 for each year.

We are unable to comply with your questions 2, 4 and 5 as our information is not categorised in this way so manual searches would be required, and the cost limit therefore applies.

### **Withheld Information and Exemptions Applied**

We have withheld some of the information you have requested which relates to:-

- Personal Information
- Cost Limit

#### ***Personal Data Section 40***

It is our view that disclosure of this information would breach the first data protection principle, which states that personal data should be processed fairly and lawfully. Section 40(2) and (3) of the Freedom of Information Act therefore apply. It is the fairness aspect of this principle which we believe would be breached by disclosure in this case. In such circumstances section 40 confers an absolute exemption on disclosure. We do not therefore have to apply the public interest test.

#### ***Cost Limit Section 12***

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 narrowly-framed, but given the way our data is stored I estimate that it will take more than 3 ½ working days to locate, retrieve and extract this precise information.

A high level summary data search yielded approximately 1,224 manual consular assistance records from 1 January 2011 to 30 April 2016 covering arrest and detention in the UAE. Each record totalled an average of 50 pages of data. I estimate that in one working day I would be able to assess approximately 30 records. To manually search 1,224 cases would take approximately 40 working days.

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.

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Yours sincerely,

*FOI/DPA Desk Officer*



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.