



Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office

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

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

23 December 2016

Dear

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: FOI 1093-16**

Thank you for your email of 25 November asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You asked:

*I request the following by way of Freedom of Information Act request:*

- 1. Please provide the current guidance or policy on the the conduct of monitoring or accessing information published on social media, if there is any in addition to that in the answer to question 53227.*
- 2. Please confirm whether or not the Department has purchased software and/or hardware to conduct overt social network monitoring and/or in relation to sentiment analysis?  
(a) If yes please state the name of the company / provider.  
(b) if no please state whether the Department has developed internal methods to conduct social network monitoring.*
- 3. Please confirm, if not stated in the guidance (question 1), the policy on deletion of data obtained from social networking sites.*

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. To answer your questions:

1. Foreign Office guidance for using social media can be found on GOV UK website:
  - [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/foreign-commonwealth-office/about/social-media-use](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/foreign-commonwealth-office/about/social-media-use)
  - [www.gov.uk/government/publications/fco-social-media-guidance](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fco-social-media-guidance)

2. a) The Foreign Office has purchased subscriptions to the following services:
  - RipJar - [www.ripjar.com](http://www.ripjar.com)
  - Hootsuite - [www.hootsuite.com](http://www.hootsuite.com)
3. Any data collected is stored and protected in line with Foreign Office privacy and security policies and is not kept for longer than is necessary.

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

Yours sincerely

Digital Transformation Unit  
*Communication 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.