



Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office

Visits, Protocol  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
King Charles Street  
London SW1A 2AH

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

04 December 2015

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: 1035-15**

Thank you for your email of 28 October 2015 asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You asked:

1. *Please state the total amount of money spent by the UK government on the State Visit by the President of the People's Republic of China, Mr Xi Jinping, accompanied by Madame Peng Liyuan, to the UK in October 2015.*
2. *Please provide a full cost breakdown.*
3. *Please provide copies of all guidance issued to government staff in relation to the State Visit of Mr Xi Jinping.*

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 part of your request.

As part of our commitment to demonstrate transparency in government spending we will be releasing full costs relating to the State Visit in due course. However, the information you have requested is currently exempt under Section 22 of the Freedom of Information Act as this information is intended for future publication. Section 22 provides that:

1. Information is exempt information if -
  - (a) the information is held by the public authority with a view to its publication, by the authority or any other person, at some future date (whether determined or not),
  - (b) it is reasonable in all the circumstances that the information should be withheld from disclosure until the date referred to in paragraph (a).

The exemption under Sections 22 of the Freedom of Information Act recognises that it must be reasonable in all the circumstances to withhold the information until the

date of publication. Given the necessary preparation and administration involved in publishing the information, which includes collation from a number of different sources, we consider that our publication timetable is reasonable.

Once costs are confirmed, they will be published on the following website.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/costs-relating-to-state-and-guest-of-government-visits>

We have also completed the search for the information you requested about specific guidance issued to staff in relation to the State Visit of Mr Xi Jinping. I can confirm that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) holds some information relevant to your request. However, this information is exempt under Section 24 (1) (National Security) of the Freedom of Information Act.

Section 24 is a qualified exemption, which means that it is subject to a public interest test. We acknowledge the public interest in openness and transparency, but we consider that there is also a public interest in the FCO protecting national security. Having reviewed the requested material, we are concerned that its release would undermine the FCO's security procedures, and consequently adversely impact on the UK's security. We have therefore concluded that the exemption applies and that withholding the material serves the public interest better than release in this instance.

Finally the FCO can neither confirm nor deny whether the information disclosed represents all the information held that would meet the terms of your request, as the duty to comply with section 1(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 does not apply by virtue of section 23(5).

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,

Protocol Directorate

