



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

Human Resources Directorate
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
King Charles Street
London SW1A 2AH

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

01 June 2015

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: 0434-15

Thank you for your email of 1st May 2015 asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You asked:

- *Could you please tell me how many working days have been lost to sickness absence in the department in every one of the five financial years since 2010/11, with a breakdown by occupational grade (e.g., EO, HEO, SCS1)?*
- *Could you please tell me the staff turnover rate for the department in every financial year since 2010/11? For this request, staff turnover refers to the number of employees who have left as a proportion of the total number of people employed in the department. Could you please also tell me the reasons for staff leaving the department in each of these years? Reasons for departure might include - but not be limited to - the following:*
 - *Moving outside the public sector;*
 - *Moving to another government department;*
 - *Compulsory redundancy;*
 - *Voluntary redundancy;*
 - *Dismissal (for inefficiency, misconduct or failed probation);*
 - *Retirement.*
- *Could you please tell me how many civil servants have been made surplus by the department in every financial year since 2010/11? Could you also please tell me how many civil servants are currently surplus in the department? For this request, a surplus employee is a civil servant whose job has been identified as surplus to business requirements but wishes to avoid compulsory redundancy and awaits redeployment to another business unit or department within the civil service.*

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.

The number of working days lost to sickness absence in the FCO from years 2010/11 to 2014/15, and broken down by grade, is set out in the tables below. The information you have requested is compiled and reported on a quarterly basis with the last complete set of data for the period up to 31 December 2014. We have therefore provided information for the period 1 April 2010 to 31 December 2014 on FCO UK based staff. Sick absence data for Locally Engaged staff overseas is not held centrally:

**Total Annual Working Days
Lost (AWDL), Apr 2010 to Dec
2014**

Year	AWDL
2010/11	4.0
2011/12	3.7
2012/13	3.4
2013/14	3.5
Jan 2014 to Dec 2014	3.4

Annual Working Days Lost by grade, Apr 2010 to Dec 2014

Grade	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	Jan 2014 to Dec 2014
AA	10.5	19.3	9.2	5.9	12.0
AO	5.9	6.6	6.7	6.2	7.6
EO	4.8	4.7	4.6	6.0	5.3
HEO	3.3	2.8	2.9	3.3	2.2
SEO	3.8	4.0	3.5	4.4	3.6
Grade 7	3.5	2.0	2.0	1.5	2.3
Grade 6	2.5	1.1	2.4	1.3	1.7
SCS	0.3	0.8	0.8	0.5	1.7

The FCO figure remains lower than the average Civil Service wide figure of 6.3 days, which is at its lowest since 1999.

The FCO staff turnover rates from years 2010/11 to 2014/15 have been calculated using your definition outlined in your FOI request and set out in the table below. Turnover rates for Locally Engaged staff overseas are not held centrally:

FCO staff turnover rate, 2010/11 to 2014/15

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Total Leavers	252	218	157	216	177
Headcount	4786	4576	4836	4609	4469
Turnover rate	5.27%	4.76%	3.25%	4.69%	3.96%

The reasons for staff leaving the FCO are defined below for each of the last five financial years.

- ✓ Record exists
- × No record

Leaving Reason	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Discharge on Inefficiency Grounds during Probationary/Trial Period	✓	×	×	✓	×
Dismissal on Disciplinary Grounds without Compensation	×	×	×	✓	✓
Dismissal for Inefficiency with Compensation	✓	×	✓	×	×
Dismissal for Inefficiency without compensation	✓	✓	✓	×	✓
Gross Misconduct	✓	✓	✓	×	×
Actuarially Reduced Retirement ¹	×	×	×	×	✓
Approved Early Retirement ²	✓	×	×	×	✓
Compulsory Early Retirement on Structural Grounds ³	✓	×	×	×	×
Flexible Early Retirement on Structural Grounds ⁴	✓	×	×	×	✓
Retirement on Age Grounds above the Minimum Age	✓	✓	×	×	✓
Retirement on Age Grounds at the Minimum Age	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Retirement on Grounds of Ill Health	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Permanent Transfer to Other Government Department	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Transfer of Function to Private Sector	×	×	×	✓	×
Career Break	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Compulsory Early Severance on Redundancy ⁵	×	×	×	×	✓
Flexible Early Severance on Structural Grounds ⁶	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Resignation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Voluntary Redundancy, Compulsory Early Severance Terms	✓	✓	×	×	×
Death in Service	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

¹Retiring before pension age and does not qualify for a full pension

²Retiring before pension age with full pension

³Forced early retirement

⁴Voluntary early retirement

⁵Forced redundancy

⁶Voluntary redundancy receiving compensation

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has not made any civil servants surplus during the period requested. FCO positions have set tour lengths (of generally between 2-4 years) so there is a regular turnover of staff within the organisation. A 'Corporate Pool' exists to ensure that staffs between substantive positions are deployed where there are temporary gaps. If a job is identified as surplus to business requirements then the officer in the position

is invited to apply for other vacant positions within the FCO, but may be deployed from the Corporate Pool in the interim. These staff are not considered surplus.

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.

The copies of information being supplied to you continue to be protected by the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. You are free to use it for your own purposes, including any non-commercial research you are doing and for the purposes of news reporting. Any other re-use, for example commercial publication, would require the permission of the copyright holder. Most documents supplied by the FCO will have been produced by government officials and will be protected by Crown Copyright. To re-use Crown Copyright documents please consult the [Open Government Licence v3](#) on the National Archives website.

Information you receive which is not subject to Crown Copyright continues to be protected by the copyright of the person, or organisation, from which the information originated. You must ensure that you gain their permission before reproducing any third party (non-Crown Copyright) information.

Yours sincerely,

Human Resources 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.