



Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office

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

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

Dear

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: 0769-17**

Thank you for your email of 10<sup>th</sup> August 2017 asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You asked:

*With Government Digital Service's (GDS) guidance on 'Public sector use of the Public Cloud' we are looking to create an industry report on how this new guidance may have changed the Cloud landscape for public sector organisations. In particular, we're keen to ascertain if the guidance has helped ease concerns around moving to Public Cloud and what Public Cloud is being used for within your IT environments.*

1. *Have you got a Cloud adoption strategy?*
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  
2. *If yes does that strategy cover On-Premises, Private Cloud, Public Cloud or a Hybrid mix?*
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  
3. *What are the issues you are concerned about with regards to Public Cloud:*
  - a. Skills and Staffing
  - b. Service Level Agreements
  - c. Fear of Lock-in
  - d. Security / Audit
  - e. Data Sovereignty
  - f. Service Availability
  - g. Integration
  - h. Migration
  - i. Governance (e.g. spend control)

4. *Are you currently using any Public Cloud resources at the moment?*
  - a. *Yes*
  - b. *No*
  
5. *If 'No' are you looking to add Public Cloud into your Cloud adoption strategy over the next 12 months?*
  - a. *Yes*
  - b. *No*
  
6. *Which Public Cloud resources are you using or planning on using?*
  - a. *Amazon AWS*
  - b. *Microsoft Azure*
  - c. *VMware*
  - d. *Google Cloud*
  - e. *IBM*
  - f. *Oracle*
  - g. *Other*
  
7. *What are your drivers for moving to Public Cloud? (multiple answers)*
  - a. *Reducing costs*
  - b. *Scalability*
  - c. *Innovation & Experimenting*
  - d. *Efficiency*
  - e. *Improving business IT agility*
  - f. *Improve data resiliency*
  - g. *Improve productivity*
  
8. *What workloads would you look to move into Public Cloud? (multiple answers)*
  - a. *Backup*
  - b. *DR*
  - c. *Test & Dev / DevOps*
  - d. *Data Analytics and BI (Business Intelligence)*
  - e. *Non Personally identifiable information (PII) applications*
  - f. *Personally identifiable information (PII) applications*
  
9. *Which business functions would you move to the Cloud? (multiple answers)*
  - a. *CRM*
  - b. *HR / Payroll*
  - c. *ERP / SCM*
  - d. *Finance*
  - e. *Field Service Management*
  - f. *Website hosting*
  
10. *Do you have the skills in-house to transition to the Cloud?*
  - a. *Yes*
  - b. *No*
  
11. *If you have adopted Public Cloud how have you classified the outcome?*

- a. *Failure*
- b. *Partial or qualified success*
- c. *Success*

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.

- 1. a. Yes
- 2. a. Yes.
- 3. All of the above
- 4. a. Yes
- 5. Not applicable
- 6. Information relating to Public Cloud resources is withheld under Section 24 (1) – national security - and Section 31 (1) (a) – law enforcement - of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

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 disclosure could undermine the confidentiality and integrity of departmental systems leading to IT systems being compromised or disrupted and consequently adversely impact on UK's security. We have therefore concluded that the exemption applies and that non-disclosure serves the public interest better than release in this instance.

The exemption in section 31 (1) (a) is designed to cover all aspects of the prevention and detection of crime. Section 31 is a qualified exemption, which means that it is subject to a public interest test. We acknowledge the public interest in openness and transparency and we recognise that releasing this information would provide the public with assurance that we are protecting our IT infrastructure. However, section 31 is engaged because releasing the information will prejudice the prevention of crime by facilitating the possibility of a criminal offence being carried out. Hacking into an IT system is a criminal offence. The FCO takes the protection of its IT infrastructure very seriously. We implement the mandatory requirements of the Cabinet Office Security Policy Framework and follow Her Majesty's Government's Information Assurance standards and best practice which covers all areas of security.

For the reasons set out above, we have assessed that the public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

- 7. All of the above

8. Information relating to workloads moving to the Cloud is withheld under Section 24 (1) – national security - and Section 31 (1) (a) – law enforcement - of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).
9. Information relating to business functions moving to the Cloud is withheld under Section 24 (1) – national security - and Section 31 (1) (a) – law enforcement - of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).
10. a. No, we have a mix of in house and outsourced skills.
11. c. Success

Yours sincerely

Knowledge and Technology 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.