



Foreign & Commonwealth Office

Foreign and Commonwealth Office
King Charles Street
London SW1A 2AH

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

01 December 2017

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: 1010-16

Thank you for your email of 3 November 2016 asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You asked for the following information:

- 1. Please provide the number of employees (including any contractors) that are employed within your FOI department or unit.*
- 2. How many FOI requests did the Unit receive this reporting period and for the previous 3 reporting periods?*
- 3. How do you track FOI requests and how are they managed?*
- 4. What is the average resolution time in answering an FOI request?*
- 5. What are the most challenging factors in managing FOI requests? Why are these issues difficult to manage?*

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 some information relevant to your request.

- 1. Please provide the number of employees (including any contractors) that are employed within your FOI department or unit.*

The FOI-DPA Team comprises nine full-time officers. The team acts as the central point of contact for help and advice on FOI issues within the FCO although it does not routinely draft the responses to requests.

- 2. How many FOI requests did the Unit receive this reporting period and for the previous 3 reporting periods?*

The information on the number of FOIs received in the three previous reporting periods (1 October 2015 – 31 December 2015, 1 January 2016 – 31 March 2016 and 1 April – 31 June 2016) is exempt under section 21 of the FOIA (information accessible by other means). This information can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/government-foi-statistics>

Information on the number of requests received in the third quarter of 2016 is exempt under section 22 of the FOIA (information intended for future publication). This information will be published in due course at the link provided above.

Section 22 of the FOIA is a qualified exemption which is subject to the public interest test and I have therefore considered the public interest in releasing the information you have requested prior to its publication.

There is public interest in the awareness of the number of FOI requests received by government departments. However, as we already have a long-standing system of publishing these figures, and the latest figures will be released shortly, I consider that the public interest is already served through our publication scheme.

3. How do you track FOI requests and how are they managed?

The majority of FOI requests are received via our dedicated mailbox and are then allocated to the department responsible for the information requested. Cases are logged on a database and monitored by the FOI-DPA team.

4. What is the average resolution time in answering an FOI request?

We do not hold information relating to this part of your request.

5. What are the most challenging factors in managing FOI requests? Why are these issues difficult to manage?

We do not hold information relating to this part of your request.

Yours sincerely,

Knowledge Management Department

