



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

FCO Services
King Charles Street
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Website: <https://www.fcoservices.gov.uk>

9 October 2018

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: FOI 0961-18

Thank you for your email of 29 August 2018 asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You asked:

This is a request for information that relates to the organisation's contracts around ICT contract(s) for Server Hardware Maintenance, Server Virtualisation Licenses and Maintenance and Storage Area Network (SAN) Maintenance/Support, which may include:

- Server Hardware Maintenance- contracts relating to the support and maintenance of the organisation's physical servers.*
- Virtualisation Maintenance/Support/ Licensing (VMware, Solaris, Unix, Linux, Windows Server)*
- Storage Area Network Maintenance/Support (EMC, NetApp etc)*

For each of the type of contract described above, please can you provide me with the following data. If there is more than one contract please split the information for each separate supplier this includes annual spend

- 1. Contract Title:** *Please provide me with the contract title.*
- 2. Type of Contracts (ABOVE):** *Please can you provide me with one or more contract types the contract relate to: Server Hardware, Virtualisation, SAN (Storage Area Network)*
- 3. Existing/Current Supplier:** *Please provide me with the supplier name for each contract.*
- 4. Brand:** *Please state the brand of hardware or software*
- 5. Operating System / Software (Platform):** *(Windows, Linux, Unix, Vsphere, AIX, Solaris etc.) Please state the operating system used by the organisation.*
- 6. Annual Average Spend:** *Please provide me with the most recent annual spend for this contract?*
- 7. Contract Duration:** *(Please can you also include notes if the contract includes any contract Extension periods.)*
- 8. Contract Expiry Date:** *Please can you provide me with the date of when the contract expires.*

9. **Contract Review Date:** (An approximate date of when the organisation is planning to review this particular contract.)

10. **Purchase of Servers:** Could you please provide me with the month and year in which most/bulk of servers were purchased.

11. **Number of Physical Server:** Please can you provide me with the number of physical servers.

12. **Number of Virtual Servers:** Please can you provide me with the number of Virtual servers' servers.

13. **Brief Contract Description:** I require a brief description of the service provided under this contract. Please do not just put maintenance I need at least a sentence.

14. **Contract Owner:** (The person from within the organisation that is responsible for reviewing and renewing this particular contract. Please include their full name, job title, direct contact number and direct email address.)

If this service is part of a managed contract please can you send me the contract information for this managed service including Hardware Brand, Number of Users, Operating System, and contact details of the internal contact responsible for this contract

I am writing to confirm that we have now completed the search for the information which you requested.

I can confirm that the FCO Services does hold information relevant to your request.

FCO Services holds a Framework Agreement with Microsoft. The contract title is Premier Support Agreement which covers our internal core infrastructure. Additional Maintenance contracts remain in place with:

- CISCO
- NetApp
- VMWare

These are individual maintenance agreements linked to the initial product purchases, and are on 1 or 2 year contracts with an option to extend. Additional support is carried out in-house.

FCO Services uses a number of key brands including, but not limited to Dell, HP and CISCO.

FCO Services can provide the brand names of the operating systems in line with the reply to the previous FOI submitted by you which is Ref FOI 0154-15.

These are:

- MS Windows Server
- MS Windows
- Linux
- Apple iOS
- Various Embedded Device OS including NetApp, Cisc, Juniper, F5 and Palo Alto

All other information on the operating systems used by FCO Services are withheld under section 24(1) (National Security) and section 31(1) (a) (law enforcement). Please see below for additional information.

FCO Services can provide the approximate spend in line with the response to your previous FOI Ref FOI 0154-15.

The approximate spend for CISCO is <£200K

The approximate spend for VMWARE is <£100K

The approximate spend for Netapp is <£200K

The actual value of the contracts is withheld under Section 43 (commercial interests) of the FOIA. Section 43 has been used to withhold information which is commercially sensitive.

The details of any internal contacts are withheld under Section 40 of the Freedom of Information Act which relates to personal information.

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 FCO Services protecting national security. Having reviewed the requested material, we are concerned that disclosure of details about the architecture and infrastructure of our IT systems could allow individuals to assess the strength of our defences and undermine the confidentiality and integrity of departmental systems and consequently adversely impact on the 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.

For these reasons, we consider that the public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

Section 31

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, disclosure of the information requested could aid a criminal who was intent on launching an attack on the Department's ICT systems and could expose the FCO Services to potential threats such as targeted e-crime and expose the FCO Services to potential threats of a criminal nature. FCO Services takes the protection of its IT infrastructure very seriously.

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

Section 40

The information you have requested is personal data relating to third parties, the disclosure of which would contravene one of the data protection principles. In such circumstances sections 40(2) and (3) of the Freedom of Information Act apply. In this case, our view is that disclosure would breach the first data protection principle. This states that personal data should be processed fairly and lawfully. It is the fairness aspect of this principle which, in our view, would be breached by disclosure. In such circumstances section 40 confers an absolute exemption on disclosure. There is, therefore, no public interest test to apply.

Section 43

Section 43(2) of FOIA exempts from disclosure information which would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of any person. Section 43(2) is a prejudice-based exemption, so the test for exemption is whether or not the individual's commercial interests would be prejudiced by disclosure and again, it is subject to balancing the public interest. It is recognised that there is a general public interest in the disclosure of commercial information to ensure, for example: transparency in the accountability of public funds; proper scrutiny of government action; and the effective use of public money.

However, where disclosure would make it less likely that companies or individuals would provide the department with information in the future or where disclosure would make it more difficult for individuals to be able to conduct commercial transactions, or have future dealings with public bodies, without fear of suffering commercially as a result, these are factors that weigh in favour of non-disclosure.

We considered the commercial interests of third parties and the benefit to the public for the release of this information. We also considered the impact that this may also have on our future business relationships. In considering this case and the details required, we consider that the public interest in favour of disclosing such information is outweighed by the obligation to protect the commercial interests of third parties. We have therefore taken the decision to withhold the information.

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.

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If you would like a review of our decision, or if you wish to make a complaint, please write to the Central FOI Unit, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Room WH2.177, King Charles Street, London, SW1A 2AH. E-mail: foi-dpa.pmcs@fco.gov.uk. You have 40 working days to do so from the date of this letter.

You can apply directly to the Information Commissioner. However, the Information Commissioner will not normally make a decision unless you have first exhausted the complaints procedure provided by the FCO. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF.

Yours sincerely,

FOI Officer

FCO Services



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.