

<b>Section 27(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000</b> <i>S27(1) Information is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act would, or would be likely to, prejudice –</i> <i>(a) relations between the United Kingdom and any other State ...</i>	
<b><i>Factors for disclosure</i></b>	<b><i>Factors for withholding</i></b>
<p>The FOI Act presupposes that disclosure of information generally is to be regarded as being in the public interest.</p> <p>There is general public interest in promoting the transparency of government (leading to greater accountability and an increase in trust).</p> <p>The public may be interested to know how the codes/prefixes are allocated to foreign countries and for their Diplomatic vehicles.</p>	<p>Section 27(1)(a) acknowledges that the successful conduct of international relations is reliant on upholding confidence and trust between Governments and international organisations. Should the United Kingdom (UK) fail to preserve these qualities, the ability to protect and promote UK interests through international relations will be hindered.</p> <p>Disclosing information which relates to diplomats is likely to damage the UK's relationship with the States and international organisations concerned, thereby impeding the UK government's powers to protect and promote UK interests through international relations.</p> <p>If this information is put into the public domain, substantial time and cost will be incurred in amending the diplomatic marks to maintain the international relationships.</p> <p>Effective relationships with diplomats are pivotal to maintaining stable international liaison. The effects of a deterioration or breakdown in such relationships can harm the UK in a number of areas, which would be against the public interest.</p>

*Reasons why public interest favours withholding information*

To disclose details of codes/prefixes which are allocated to foreign countries and international organisations for their diplomatic vehicles, would be likely to prejudice relations between the UK and other States. The UK has a duty to maintain effective conduct of international relations and is obliged to protect information that could compromise such relationships.

For the reasons of sustaining trust, confidence and the promotion of UK interests through international relations, we consider that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing it.