



Foreign, Commonwealth  
& Development Office

Information Rights Unit  
WH 2.177  
King Charles Street  
London  
SW1A 2AH

Email: [information.rights@fcdo.gov.uk](mailto:information.rights@fcdo.gov.uk)

Ms Jenna Corderoy

[Request-  
6770892cea087c@whatdotheyknow.com](mailto:6770892cea087c@whatdotheyknow.com)

14th September 2020

Dear Ms Jenna Corderoy,

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 - REQUEST REF: FOI2020/14812**

Thank you for your email of 14th July asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You asked:

I understand that the FOI round robin list is issued daily to Whitehall departments, and that it comprises of FOI requests across departments that either (a) are identical requests that have been sent to multiple departments or (b) are asking about sensitive subjects that have been reported to the Cabinet Office Clearing House. Once a request is added to the list, other government departments who receive the same request also notify Clearing House.

In light of this, I would like to request the following information:

- (1) What criteria does the department use - or refer to - when it flags requests to the round robin list? Please provide a copy of the criteria, or guidelines.
- (2) What criteria does the department use - or refer to - when it flags requests to the Cabinet Office Clearing House? Please provide a copy of the criteria, or guidelines.
- (3) Does the department have a list of sensitive subjects which prompt requests being flagged to the Cabinet Office Clearing House? Please disclose it if it exists.
- (4) For the past two weeks, please provide a copy of all requests that have been sent to the Cabinet Office Clearing House by this department (please redact requesters' names).
- (5) For the past two weeks, please provide a copy of round robin lists received by the department (please redact requesters' names).

I would like to remind the department that in Decision Notice FS50841228, the ICO ruled that the Cabinet Office had to release past round robin lists.

I would like to receive this information in an electronic format. If you feel that a substantive response to this request is not possible within a reasonable time frame, I would be grateful if you could contact me and provide assistance as to how I can refine the request. If you need any clarification, please contact me. I look forward to receiving a response in 20 working days. Many thanks.

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

I can confirm that the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) does hold information relevant to your request.

Some of the information in scope of your request has been withheld under section 36(2) of the FOIA.

Sections 36(2)(b)(i)&(ii) and 36(2)(c) cover information which, if released, would prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs. It is the opinion of an FCO minister that, in this case, the disclosure of the information concerned would be likely to inhibit the free and frank provision of advice and the free and frank exchange of views when considering requests received under the FOIA. In addition it would be likely otherwise to prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs by adversely affecting our ability to handle FOI requests effectively, in line with our legal obligations. The latter would clearly not be in the public interest, so, whilst we acknowledge the public interest in understanding more about how the FCO handles FOI requests, we consider that, in this case, the public interest in withholding the information concerned outweighs that in its disclosure.

Please find attached the information that the FCO can release to you.

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](https://www.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 FCDO 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.

If you wish to make a complaint or if you would like a review of our decision, please write to the Information Rights Unit, Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, Room WH 2.177, King Charles Street, London, SW1A 2AH. E-mail: [information.rights@fcdo.gov.uk](mailto:information.rights@fcdo.gov.uk) You have 40 working days to do so from the date of this letter.

If you are not content with the outcome of your complaint, you may then apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. Generally, the Information Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the complaints procedure provided

OFFICIAL

by the FCDO. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF, or online at: <https://ico.org.uk/make-a-complaint/>

Yours sincerely,

**Information Rights Unit**