



Home Office

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BritCits
[request-234642-
9e92db14@whatdotheyknow.com](mailto:request-234642-9e92db14@whatdotheyknow.com)

11th August 2016

Freedom of Information request (our ref: 33251): internal review

Dear BritCits,

Thank you for your e-mail of 23rd October 2015, in which you ask for an internal review of the Home Office's handling of your request, titled "Stats on refusals/grants of entry clearance visas". I apologise for the delay in you receiving the outcome.

In part (a) of your request, you asked for the number of entry clearance applications received from 1st July 2012 to "*as recently as your stats allow*". In part (b) of your request, you asked for the number of the applications which were (i) refused, (ii) granted; and (iii) still pending. In part (c) of your request, you asked for the number of applications that were reviewed by another ECO or an ECM and the number of applications that were refused and granted following this review. Your original request can be found in Annex A.

In the response, the Home Office provided you with the information you requested, covering 1st July 2012 to June 2014. The full response can be found in Annex B.

After receiving the response, you asked for further information relating to the information provided in response to part (c) of your request. You asked how many of the 368,005 ECO reviews were granted and refused, prior to the ECM review. You also asked how the 368,005 cases for review were selected. Your follow-up questions can be found in Annex C.

You asked for an internal review as you did not receive a response to your follow-up request. Your full request for an internal review can be found in Annex D.

I have now completed the review. I have examined all the relevant papers and have consulted the policy unit which provided the original response. I have considered whether the correct procedures were followed. I confirm that I was not involved in the initial handling of your request.

The Home Office should have assigned your follow-up request a new reference number and issued a response within 20 working days. Unfortunately this was not done due to an administrative error. I apologise on behalf of the Home Office for this oversight.

Your follow-up request will be responded to as part of this review.

You asked:

“How many of the numbers in [part] (b)(i) and (ii) were reviewed either by another ECO or an ECM and the numbers refused and granted, post this review”.

To retrieve this information, the original information you requested also had to be gathered. When doing so, I established that the data differed from the information you were provided with in the original response. This is likely because the search that was originally conducted did not cover the full timeframe (1st July 2012 to June 2014). The accurate data - and the information requested above - can be found in Annex E.

In your follow-up request, you also asked:

“Please provide any information on how the 368,005 cases for review were selected. Were they all for example at the request of the applicant or their representative for a reconsideration?”.

As you will see from the information in Annex E, 375,244 applications were reviewed by the ECM in the timeframe specified. There is no field on the database to search for the reason for the review, so each case would need to be manually assessed to retrieve this information. This search would far exceed the 24 hour cost limit, defined in section 12(1) (cost) of the Act, due to the number of cases that would need to be assessed.

You could refine this part of your request by significantly reducing the timeframe.

Yours sincerely

L. Picton
Information Rights Team

Switchboard 020 7035 4848
E-mail FOIRequests@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

Annex A – Original request (ref 33251)

Dear Home Office

Please provide information on

a) the number of entry clearance applications, covering the period 1 July 2012 to as recently as your stats allow.

b) The initial decision in the applications referred to in a) being a i) refusal ii) grant iii) still pending

c) how many of the numbers in b) i) and a ii) were reviewed either by another ECO or an ECM, and the numbers refused and granted, post this review.

I am trying to assess the impact of a review by an ECM or ECO to see in how many cases the original decision is upheld.

Regards

BritCits

Annex B – Original response (ref 33251)

Dear Sir/Madam

Thank you for your letter of 17 October requesting information on entry clearance data, specifically:

- 1- Please provide information on the number of applications received covering 1 July 2012 to as recently as stats allow.
- 2- How many were (a) granted (b) refused (c) still pending?
- 3- How many of those granted or refused were reviewed by another ECO or ECM and post review how many were refused and granted?

Your request is being handled as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. I can confirm that the Home Office holds the information you have requested.

Please find the data below relating to your request and note that the figures quoted are not provided under National Statistics protocols but have been derived from local management information. They are therefore provisional and subject to changes.

- 1- 5,462,780 applications were received between 1 July 2012 and June 2014.
- 2- A) 4,578,935 applications were issued, (b) 607,880 were refused & (c) 38,440 are currently pending.
- 3- 368, 005 applications were reviewed by the ECM, 292,445 applications were issued following the review and 75,560 refusals were maintained post review.

If you are dissatisfied with this response you may request an independent internal review of our handling of your request by submitting a complaint within two months to the address below, quoting reference [33251]. If you ask for an internal review, it would be helpful if you could say why you are dissatisfied with the response. The contact address for requesting an internal review is below:

Information Access Team
Home Office
Ground Floor,
Seacole Building
2 Marsham Street
London SW1P 4DF
E-mail: FOIRequests@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk.

As part of any internal review the Department's handling of your information request will be reassessed by staff who were not involved in providing you with this response.

If you remain dissatisfied after this internal review, you would have a right of complaint to the Information Commissioner as established by section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act.

Yours sincerely
A. Ojewale (Mrs)

FOI Practitioner – Midlands, East of England & International Responder Hub
UK Visas & Immigration

Annex C – Follow-up request

Dear VSD - FOI Enquiries

Thank you for the information. On point 3, you indicate that 368,005 applications were reviewed by an ECM. Could you please clarify

1) I note your use of the word 'maintained' suggests all the 368,005 reviewed were refusals. However could you please confirm this or otherwise indicate how many of the 368,005 reviews were a grant by an ECO, and how many were a refusal by an ECO, prior to the ECM review.

2) Please provide any information on how the 368,005 cases for review were selected. Were they all for example at the request of the applicant or their representative for a reconsideration?

Yours sincerely

BritCits

Annex D – Request for an internal review

Dear Home Office,

Please pass this on to the person who conducts Freedom of Information reviews.
I am writing to request an internal review of Home Office's handling of my FOI request
'Stats on refusals/grants of entry clearance visas'.

severe time delay!

A full history of my FOI request and all correspondence is available on the Internet at this
address: <https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/s...>

Yours faithfully,

BritCits

Annex E – Information for disclosure

Information originally requested

This data covers 1st July 2012 to June 2014:

- (a) *The number of entry clearance applications, covering the period 1st July 2012 to as recently as your stats allow***

5,468,257

- (b) *The initial decision in the applications referred to in (a), being:***

- (i) *A refusal***

602,190

- (ii) *Granted***

4,579,391

- (iii) *Still pending***

33,788

- (c) *How many of the numbers in (b) (i) and (ii) were reviewed either by another ECO or an ECM and the numbers refused and granted, post this review.***

375,244 applications were reviewed by the ECM. Following ECM review, 299,305 applications were granted and 75,939 were refused.

Information asked for in the follow-up request

How many of the 368,005 reviews were a grant by an ECO and how many were refused by an ECO, prior to the ECM review.

280,318 applications were granted prior to the ECM review and 94,926 were refused.

Annex F

This completes the internal review process by the Home Office. If you remain dissatisfied with the response to your Fol request, you have the right of complaint to the Information Commissioner at the following address:

The Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9 5AF