



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

Knowledge and Technology Directorate
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
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Website: <https://www.gov.uk>

21 March 2017

Dear Robert Walker

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: 0130-17

Thank you for your email of 1st February 2017 asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You asked:

Please give me any information you hold on:

- the make and model of laptops, desktop computers, and other computer devices that will be issued to London-based staff as part of the 'Tech Overhaul' IT reform project;
- which categories of staff will be issued with which devices;
- the estimated time frame against which the issuing of new devices will take place.

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 information relevant to your request.

FCO staff are being issued with Windows 10 laptops and desktops under the Technology Overhaul programme. FCO-supplied tablets and smartphones to support mobile working will be provided where there is a business case to support this. New devices will be issued over the next 18 months. Further information on Tech Overhaul can be found in the FCO Annual Review 2015 to 2016: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/foreign-and-commonwealth-office-annual-report-and-accounts-2015-to-2016>

The FCO is unable to release further more detailed information on make or model under Section 24 (1) – national security, and Section 31 (1) (a) – law enforcement of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

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 the FCO protecting national security. Having reviewed the requested material, we are concerned that disclosure could undermine the confidentiality and integrity of departmental systems leading to IT systems being compromised or disrupted and consequently adversely impact on 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.

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, section 31 is engaged because releasing the information will prejudice the prevention of crime by facilitating the possibility of a criminal offence being carried out. Hacking into an IT system is a criminal offence. The FCO takes the protection of its IT infrastructure very seriously. We implement the mandatory requirements of the Cabinet Office Security Policy Framework and follow Her Majesty's Government's Information Assurance standards and best practice which covers all areas of security. For the reasons set out above, we have assessed that the public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

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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I hope you are satisfied with this reply. However, if you wish to make a complaint or if you would like a review of our decision, please write to the FOI and DPA Team, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Room K4.04, King Charles Street, London, SW1A 2AH. E-mail: foi-dpa.imd@fco.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 by the FCO.
The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office,
Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF.

Yours sincerely,

Knowledge and Technology Directorate



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