



Home Office

Shared Services  
Directorate  
2 Marsham Street  
London SW1P 4DF

020 7035 4848  
(switchboard)

[www.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk)

Wayne Pearsall  
[request-168508-507f03b9@whatdotheyknow.com](#)

15 October 2013

Dear Mr Pearsall,

**Freedom of Information request: internal review (reference: 28134)**

Thank you for your email of 8 August, in which you asked for an internal review of the Home Office's response to your Freedom of Information (Fol) request on the cost of supplying armed UK police services at the American embassy.

I have now completed the review. I have considered the substance of the response provided to you. I can confirm I was not involved in the handling of your initial request.

Please note that the following response addresses your original Fol request in relation to the cost of supplying armed UK police services at the American embassy and the response provided to you. It does not take into account your further request for information, which will now be treated as a new request and a response provided by 7 November.

The initial response cited the exemptions at sections 24(1) and 23(5) towards your request. The response however, incorrectly referred to section 24(2) meaning to refer to 24(1). Having considered the response and the public interest arguments I am content that the response was correct and the exemptions were properly engaged. Disclosure of the information requested would cause material harm.

I have considered the arguments advanced in your email of 8 August. It is a longstanding Home Office policy not to provide information (including costs) in relation to the protection of individuals and institutions. To provide a 'simple financial figure' would give insight into the level of protection in place. This would provide anyone intent on committing acts of terrorism with vital intelligence as to the level of police protection, afforded to the embassy and therefore the level of resistance that they may encounter. It is therefore not in the public interest to release this information.

The security of the UK is of paramount importance and the Home Office will not disclose information if to do so would undermine national security. Whilst there is a public interest in knowing the cost of supplying police services at the American embassy, there is a stronger public interest in safeguarding national security. This public interest will only be overridden in exceptional

circumstances. Whilst it is accepted that the public should have a right to know how public money is being spent, the public also expect the police service to provide protection from those who would seek to undermine UK's national security.

Please see the following link to an ICO decision notice on the engagement of the national security exemption in relation to providing information on the cost of police protection.

[http://www.ico.org.uk/~media/documents/decisionnotices/2011/fs\\_50368290.ashx](http://www.ico.org.uk/~media/documents/decisionnotices/2011/fs_50368290.ashx)

Having considered the initial response and the arguments advanced, I therefore conclude that the harm that would arise from disclosing the information requested outweighs the public interest in favour of disclosure.

Yours sincerely

**B. Efunshile**  
**Information Access Team**

Switchboard: 020 7035 4848

E-mail: [info.access@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:info.access@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk)

## **Annex**

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