



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

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

12 January 2016

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF 1221-15

Thank you for your email of 14 December 2015 asking for information that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) might hold in relation to the Exceptional Assistance Measures (EAM) Review which was completed in December 2015.

You asked:

“I intended to ask for the report of the review including the list of stakeholders consulted, so I would be grateful if these could be supplied. This may give us some understanding as to how the outcome was reached, following due process”

Your request has been considered under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000.

Outcome of Search and Release

I am writing to confirm that the FCO does hold information relevant to your request. We are not able to release the Review report itself (for the reasons set out below). However we are able to release the questionnaire data in relation to our consultation with stakeholders which is attached for your information (redacted to protect the identity of individuals). In addition to the questionnaire data, the FCO also took into consideration the comments you and other representatives of Disaster Action supplied via email to, or in conversation with, FCO staff.

FOIA Exemptions Applied

Section 35 Formulation of Government Policy

We have decided not to release the EAM Review report because on balance we do not believe that is in the public interest for us to do so. We are entitled to withhold this information under Section 35 of the FOIA (Formulation of Government Policy)

For section 35(1)(a) - it is recognised that there is a public interest in the greater transparency in the decision making process to ensure accountability within public authorities. However, officials need to be able to conduct rigorous and candid risk assessments of their policies and programmes without there being premature disclosure which might close off better options and inhibit the free and frank discussion of all policy options. We therefore believe that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in its release.

You also asked for a list of the stakeholders consulted. While we are unable to provide the names of individuals (as this would constitute a breach of the Data Protection Act 1998), we can advise that we invited representatives of the following organisations to contribute to the review:

- FCO;
- Cabinet Office;
- Crown Prosecution Service;
- National Crime Agency;
- Home Office;
- Ministry of Justice;
- Disaster Action;
- Red Cross;
- Victim Support;
- Victims Commissioner;
- Support after Murder and Manslaughter (SAMM) Abroad;
- Metropolitan Police;
- Justice Across Borders;
- Members of Parliament.

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 this letter will be removed before publishing

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. Please remember to quote the reference number noted above in any future communications. Once an FOI request is answered, it is considered to be in the public domain.

Yours sincerely,

Head of Customer Interaction Team

Consular Directorate



We keep and use information in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. We may release this personal information to other UK government departments and public authorities.