



Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office

**Arabian Peninsula and Iran Department**  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
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29 March 2016

## **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: 1065-15**

Thank you for your email of 4 November 2015 asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You asked:

*I would like the full diary/itinerary/agenda of the SoS's trip to Saudi Arabia, which began at the end of October 2015. I would like this to include names of those he met. I would like a list of ministers and officials who accompanied the trip, to the extent that is compliant with rules in the FOI Act.*

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.

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

Some of the information you have requested, is personal data relating to third parties, the disclosure of which would contravene one of the data protection principles. In such circumstances sections 40(2) and (3) of the Freedom of Information Act apply. In this case, our view is that disclosure would breach the first data protection principle. This states that personal data should be processed fairly and lawfully. It is the fairness aspect of this principle, which, in our view, would be breached by disclosure. In such circumstances, s.40 confers an absolute exemption on disclosure. There is, therefore, no public interest test to apply.

We apologise for the delay in replying. We had considered that some of the information be withheld under Section 27 – International Relations. I am pleased to say that no information has been withheld under Section 27.

Some information has been withheld under Section 38(1)(b) as its release is likely to endanger the safety of individuals. In applying the public interest test we took into consideration the factors in favour of disclosure; in this case that releasing such information would demonstrate openness and public accountability towards the arrangements for the visit of the Foreign Secretary and his delegation. We balanced these against the grounds for non-disclosure. We felt that disclosure of details with regard to the security and transport arrangements for the Foreign Secretary's visit to Saudi Arabia could be used by others in the

future to pose a significant risk to any individual's personal safety during similar visits. There is a strong public interest in withholding information, for example, FCO planning and procedures for preparing overseas visits, particularly where disclosure could endanger the safety of individuals. On balance we concluded that the public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

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](http://gov.uk) in the [FOI releases](#) section. All personal information in the letter will be removed before publishing.

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Yours sincerely,

Arabian Peninsula and Iran Department



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