



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

Commercial & Procurement Department
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
King Charles Street
London SW1A 2AH

Website: <https://www.gov.uk>

04 April 2016

Dear

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: 0193-16

Thank you for your email of 11th February asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You asked:

I would like to request the following information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000:

- 1) The amount paid to Breakthrough Media in each of the last five years.*
- 2) Such details as can be revealed about these payments - e.g. outline descriptions of the services provided, the directorate of the Foreign Office from which the payment was made.*

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.

In answer to your first question I can confirm that over the past five years the FCO has paid the following amounts to Breakthrough Media Network Ltd, broken down by financial year.

Financial Year	Spend
2011-12	0
2012-13	£ 9,650.00
2013-14	£ 193,499.01
2014-15	0
2015-16	0

We are withholding details of the payments; this information is exempt under Section 24 (1) National Security and Section 27 (1) (d) International Relations.

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 its release would undermine effective operation of the relevant contracts and consequently adversely impact on the UK's security. We have concluded that the exemption applies and that withholding the material serves the public interest better than release in this instance.

In addition, releasing the information could prejudice the interests of the UK abroad and has therefore been withheld under Section 27 (1) (d). In applying the public interest test we again took into consideration the factors in favour of disclosure; in this case that releasing such information would demonstrate openness and public accountability. Against this is the need for the FCO to maintain effective international relations based on trust and confidence with other States. This relationship of trust allows for the free and frank exchange of information on the understanding that it will be treated in confidence. If the UK does not respect such confidences, its ability to protect and promote UK interest through international relations will be prejudiced. States and international organisations may be reluctant to share sensitive information with the UK Government in future and less likely to respect the confidentiality of information supplied by the UK Government, to the detriment of UK interests. For all these reasons, we consider that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining this exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information covered by section 27 (1)(d).

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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Yours sincerely,

Commercial & Procurement Group

