



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

Thank you for your request dated 22 April 2009, under the Freedom of Information Act. This covered the Government's joined up approach to delivering a Comprehensive Approach to Stabilisation and Security overseas. You asked that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) should disclose what training we make available to our staff, and what training we provide for staff from our Partners across Government, specifically Ministry of Defence, DFID, and Stabilisation Unit in support of this approach. You also asked us to provide details of how many staff from each department have undertaken each opportunity each year since FY 2003 / 2004.

I can confirm that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office does hold information to answer your request.

The Stabilisation Unit is jointly owned by the Department for International Development (DFID), Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and Ministry of Defence (MOD) (the three "parent Departments"). It provides specialist, targeted assistance in countries emerging from violent conflict where the UK is helping to achieve a stable environment that will enable longer term development to take place.

In 2007, the FCO launched a specialist induction course for people joining us from other government departments, on secondment or recruited specifically to do specialist jobs. 117 people attended this programme. In February 2009, this was replaced by an induction course designed for all staff who join us from our Partners Across Government. It is primarily for those who will serve overseas. To date, 10 members of staff have taken part in the course.

The Stabilisation Unit currently offer the following training for staff across Whitehall (numbers provided by the Unit, where available):

- Stabilisation Course module I: a brief introduction to the concept of stabilisation, and the cross Whitehall architecture. There have been 10 courses to date with a total of 386 participants, out of which 278 were core departmental staff (Ministry of Defence (MoD), FCO, DfID, Treasury, Cabinet Office)
- Stabilisation Course module II: more practical training about how to be a stabilisation adviser. This provides a taster on integrated planning. There have been two courses to date: 39 participants from the FCO, MoD, Cabinet Office and Stabilisation Unit.



- HEAT: one-week scenario Hostile Environment Awareness Training. 19 courses to date with a total of 259 Deployable Civilian Experts, 57 Stabilisation Unit core staff and 12 DFID, FCO, MoD participants.
- MRX: Mission Rehearsal Exercise. This is the military pre-deployment training for the brigade going into Helmand. We now encourage outgoing stabilisation advisers who will work with the military to take part in the MRX as well. Takes place twice a year. We do not hold specific numbers to show how many people have attended this training.

In addition the FCO and Stabilisation Unit sponsor an Inter-Departmental Conflict Foundation Course. The course is run by NGOs International Alert and Saferworld. It is a basic introduction to key concepts and analysis, primarily for non-specialist staff working on conflict issues and is open to staff from across Whitehall and overseas. Our records show that approximately 130 people from across government attended this course in FY2008/2009. We do not have records for previous financial years.

The Unit are also working towards developing a new course on Integrated Planning and more targeted training on specific skills for Field Team Leaders.

In keeping with the spirit and effect of the Freedom of Information Act, all information is assumed to be releasable to the public unless exempt.