



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

8 June 2009

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

Thank you for your request dated 8 May 2009, under the Freedom of Information Act. You asked that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) should disclose:

1. All reports or similar documents, published in the past six years, examining or assessing people management (specifically line management) capability in FCO or its predecessor departments.
2. All documents providing outlines or details of any strategy or plan aimed at improving people management (specifically line management) capability in FCO or its predecessor departments, produced in the last six years.
3. All documents providing outlines or details of any interventions or other constituent elements forming part of any strategy or plan aimed at improving people management (specifically line management) capability in FCO or its predecessor departments, produced in the last six years.

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

From 2005 onwards, there have been Capability Reviews of each Government Department. One of the key findings from the initial review of the FCO was that we needed to strengthen the strategic management of our human resources. You can find out more about the Capability Reviews at:

<http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/crossgovernment/capability/introduction.aspx>.

Prior to our review, FCO Human Resources Directorate had already produced a People Strategy. This provides a framework for the FCO Board, managers, staff and Human Resources Directorate, setting out the standards to which the FCO aspires in managing its staff. I'm attaching a copy of the document with this letter (it is currently being updated) along with a copy of the FCO's latest Strategic Workforce Plan. This second document provides an overview of staffing in the department, both now and looking forward over the next five years. It seeks to answer some of the findings of the Capability Reviewers and

provide a guide for people in the office about how the shape of the organisation may develop over the next few years. Alongside this, we have also produced a targeted Local Staff Strategy, which focuses on the management and development of staff who are recruited in country. This is also attached for your reference. The Reviewers have recognised the progress we have made in their most recent report which you can read at: http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/Assets/FCO-WEB_tcm6-6654.PDF

The FCO is also committed to managing people in accordance with the principles set down in the Investors in People (IiP) standard. In the 2005 IiP Report the Independent Assessor noted that the FCO Board had commissioned action to improve management effectiveness as well as management of performance which was to include new leadership training for Heads of Mission as well as mandatory performance management for all senior managers. In the 2006-2008 IiP review the Independent Assessor confirmed that UK training and the Regional Training Centre overseas' network offered management training to support managers at all levels and to provide them with the skills required in order to discharge their responsibilities to their staff in an effective and professional manner.

The FCO Management Development Programme provides a range of courses in the UK and overseas aimed at developing and improving people management skills. Competencebased development training is provided at specific Band levels and additional courses are offered for newly appointed managers and those requiring refresher training for a new management role. We also provide all staff with a range of resources via our Virtual Learning Resource Centre. These include performance management learning guides and workbooks, line managers' guides and other associated materials.

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