



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

23 July 2009

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT REQUEST

Thank you for your Freedom of Information request of 20 May, in which you asked for details of all helicopter flights taken by ministers in each of the last two years, including date, origin, destination, purpose and cost. You also asked for details of other personnel on the aircraft, whether the helicopters were private or government owned, and if the latter, which department.

I can confirm that the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) holds some information relevant to your request.

Meg Munn MP

Date of trip:	16 April 2008
Origin:	Belmopan (Belize)
Destination:	Flores (Guatemala)
Purpose:	To observe Guatemalan settlement activity on the jungle border and meeting with authorities to discuss progress
Cost to department:	Nil
Other personnel:	Ben Muxworthy (APS, Meg Munn) Ian Hughes (Ambassador, Guatemala City) John Yapp (High Commissioner, Belmopan)
Private or government:	Government owned
Which govt department:	British Army Training Support Unit Belize (BATSUB) Ministry of Defence

The Rt Hon Lord Malloch-Brown

Date of trip:	16 July 2008
Origin:	Ratmalana
Destination:	Tangalle (via China Bay and Trincomalee)
Purpose:	To assess the political and humanitarian situation outside Colombo
Cost to department:	£3,511.61 (includes cost of return flight on 17 July)
Other personnel:	Roz Griffiths (APS, Lord Malloch-Brown) Peter Hayes (High Commissioner, Colombo)
Private or government:	Private charter from Deccan Aviation (Lanka) PVT Ltd

The Rt Hon Lord Malloch-Brown

Date of trip:	17 July 2008
Origin:	Tangalle
Destination:	Ratmalana (via Hambantota and Midigama)
Purpose:	To assess the political and humanitarian situation outside Colombo
Cost to department:	Nil (cost included in outward flight on 16 July)
Other personnel:	Roz Griffiths (APS, Lord Malloch-Brown) Peter Hayes (High Commissioner, Colombo)



Private or government: Private charter from Deccan Aviation (Lanka) PVT Ltd

Gillian Merron MP

Date of trip: 10 December 2008
Origin: Rio de Janeiro
Destination: Rio de Janeiro
Purpose: Brief on the Rio Olympics bid and then helicopter tour of sporting sites
Cost to department: Nil
Other personnel: Alexandra Davison (PS Gillian Merron)
Tim Flear (Consul General, Rio de Janeiro)
Marcia Lins (State Secretary for Sport & Leisure)
Leslie Kikoler (Communications Manager, Rio 2016)
Private or government: Chartered by the Government of Rio de Janeiro

The Rt Hon Lord Malloch-Brown

Date of trip: 8 January 2009
Origin: Freetown Lungi Airport
Destination: Freetown
Purpose: Airport transfer
Cost to department: Nil
Other personnel: Fiona Grant (APS, Lord Malloch-Brown)
Rachel Cooper (Deputy High Commissioner, Freetown)
Mark Ravnkilde (Defence Attaché, Freetown)
Private or government: United Nations chartered from UT Air

The Rt Hon Lord Malloch-Brown

Date of trip: 9 January 2009
Origin: Freetown
Destination: Freetown Lungi Airport
Purpose: Airport transfer
Cost to department: Nil
Other personnel: Fiona Grant (APS, Lord Malloch-Brown)
Rachel Cooper (Deputy High Commissioner, Freetown)
Mark Ravnkilde (Defence Attaché, Freetown)
Rob Gordon (Third Secretary Political & Projects, Freetown)
Private or government: United Nations chartered from UT Air

Foreign Secretary

Date of trip: 29 April 2009
Origin: Colombo
Destination: Colombo (via Vavuniya and Embilipitiya)
Purpose: Visit IDP camps in Vavuniya and meet the President of Sri Lanka
Cost to department: Nil
Other personnel: Peter Hayes (High Commissioner, Colombo)



Catherine Brooker (PS/Foreign Secretary)
Carl Newns (Head of Press Office)
Madlin Sadler (Special Adviser/Foreign Secretary)
Niruban Muttiah (Press & Political Officer, BHC Colombo)
Charlotte Smith (Office Manager/Foreign secretary's Office)
Charles Haviland (BBC Correspondent)
Jayampathy Palihena (BBC Cameraman)
Two Close Protection Officers for the Foreign Secretary
Sri Lankan Ministry of Defence

Private or government:

The FCO can neither confirm nor deny whether the above information represents all the information held that would meet the terms of your request, as the duty to comply with section 1(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 does not apply by virtue of sections 23(5) and 24(2).

In so far as section 24(2) applies, the FCO has determined that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exclusion of the duty to confirm or deny outweighs the public interest in confirming whether or not the information is held. The reason this exemption applies is that in relation to any request relating to the provisions of logistical support to the government the FCO may hold or make reference to information supplied by the security bodies covered by section 23 of the Act. To confirm or deny whether this was in fact the case would harm national security. If we were to confirm or deny that that information existed in one case, inferences, whether correct or not, might be drawn in those instances where we were unable to do so, which would have similar harmful effects. It is important that consistency is maintained. For those reasons, we consider that in this case the public interest favours neither confirming nor denying whether further information is held. This is in line with usual practice in not commenting on the existence of reporting from the security and intelligence agencies and should not be taken as evidence that any such information does or does not exist.



Data Protection Act 1998

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