22 October 2014

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 REQUEST REF: 0914-14

Thank you for your email of 20 August asking for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You asked:

Further to the FOI response below and attached (REQUEST REF: 0824-14), could someone please clarify for me whether the FCO's position is that no prisoners were held in Diego Garcia's prison between December 2001 and August 2005 (the first date in the response provided)? Or whether there are simply no records held for that period?

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.

The information provided to you in response to your request FOI 0824-14 is the extent of the information held by the FCO. Like other routine matters of domestic administration of the British Indian Ocean Territory, operational policing and detention records are held where they are most appropriately used – on the Territory itself – and are not provided to the senior levels of Administration in London as a matter of course. The records of the British Indian Ocean Territory Administration on Diego Garcia do not fall within the scope of the FOI Act.

However, I can tell you that although the space was designated for use as a detention facility in 2001, construction of the facility was not completed and it did not come into use until 2007. BIOT Administration officials on Diego Garcia have confirmed that the prisoners held there before 2007 were detained in the police cells located adjacent to the current detention facility.

Yours sincerely,

BIOT Section
Overseas Territories Directorate