

## Press release: 'Strictly', vampires and sausages – 2018's oddest requests from Brits abroad

The FCO has released details of some of the oddest enquiries it received in 2018, to highlight what it can and cannot do to help Brits in trouble abroad.

Ten of the more unusual enquiries received included:

1. A caller in the USA asking which contestant had been voted off Strictly Come Dancing the previous night.
2. A man asking where he should send a 5-foot piece of wood that he'd found on a beach that he thought may be from a British warship from the 1700s.
3. A caller in the Netherlands who had just watched Braveheart and had some questions about the plot.
4. A person in Italy asking the embassy to help arrange their wedding, recommend a florist and get them tickets to see the Pope.
5. A caller in the Canary Islands requesting that we persuade his hotel to give him a different room as a stray cat had "broken into" his existing one and peed on his bed.
6. A man enquiring if there were vampires in Poland because a woman he met online asked what blood type he was before they met for their first date.
7. A man in New Delhi asking what time the British High Commission opened, as he'd heard we sold vegetarian sausages and wanted to buy some.
8. A man in Kuwait asking if any of our staff wanted to adopt his puppies.
9. A caller asking if we could provide a list of women in Argentina who he might be able to marry.
10. A man requesting we speak to massage parlour in Bangkok on his behalf, as he fell asleep during a massage and felt he shouldn't have to pay for it.

While the FCO can't help with the types of problems listed above, we can help British people in trouble while they're abroad in a number of ways, including:

- Getting in touch with family or friends for you if you can't contact them yourself;
- Providing details of local services like lawyers, interpreters and doctors;
- Offering information on how to transfer money if you need to make payments;
- Issuing emergency travel documents;
- Visiting people in hospital or who have been imprisoned.

So far in 2018\*, the FCO has received more than 330,000 calls from British people who needed our help. This included more than 3,400 people who had been hospitalised and 4,900 who had been arrested. We issued more than 29,600

emergency travel documents to help people who had lost their passports make onward journeys.

The work of the FC0's consular staff was also featured on [Inside the Foreign Office](#) which aired on BBC 2 in November.

An FC0 spokesman said:

I can regretfully confirm that the Foreign Office isn't able to offer advice on vampires, rogue stray cats or 'Strictly' contestants. And our capacity to deploy veggie sausages remains sadly lacking.

But in all seriousness, getting into trouble abroad can be daunting and upsetting. If you find yourself in an emergency in another country, contact the nearest British Embassy, High Commission or Consulate and our consular staff will do everything they can to help.

- If you are in the UK and worried about someone overseas, you can call the FC0 in London on 020 7008 1500.
- If you are a British person who is overseas and needs help, you should call the nearest British Embassy, High Commission or Consulate: Contact details are here: [contact details](#).
- \*Figures are from January – November 2018 (inclusive).
- We recommend people read our travel advice before going abroad. It is available here: [FC0 Travel Advice](#).

## **Further information**