

Our Ref: 2018-035

Date: March 2018

**Subject: Mutual Legal Assistance**

This request asked:

The number of Mutual Legal Assistance (MLA) requests submitted by the Serious Fraud Office (SFO) to foreign law enforcement authorities each year.

Please provide the data for each of the last five years with a year-end 31<sup>st</sup> December or whichever year-end is most convenient. If you cannot provide data for each of the last five years, then please data for each of the last three years. If that is not possible, then please data for each of the most recent two years.

Please note that the Serious Fraud Office (SFO) actually sends, either directly or via the United Kingdom Central Authority (UKCA), Mutual Legal Assistance (MLA) requests to courts, judicial authorities and central authorities abroad, not to law enforcement authorities.

The SFO holds a central record of the number of such requests. However, this is maintained solely for our own administrative purposes and the figures are therefore not quality assured. Furthermore, we do not hold data covering the whole period outlined in your request and the data we do hold is collated in financial years (year to 31 March).

The information we hold in respect of your first question is as follows:

Year to	
31 March 2015	– 95
31 March 2016	– 78
31 March 2017	– 78
28 February 2018	– 53*.

*\*Please also note that the European Investigation Order (EIO) came into force during the current financial year and has replaced mutual legal assistance in the prosecution and investigation of criminal matters in participating states of the European Union. I have included EIOs in the figure for 2018.*