



Ministry
of Defence

Air Command Secretariat
Spitfire Block
Headquarters Air Command
Royal Air Force
High Wycombe
Buckinghamshire
HP14 4UE

Our Ref: FOI2014/03884

[REDACTED]

30 July 2014

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 28th July 2014 requesting the following information:

“The december 1980 ufo incident (full) at r.a.f. bentwaters, woodbridge uk”

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

We have now completed a search of our paper and electronic records for the information you have requested and I can confirm that the MOD does hold some of the information within the scope of your request.

Some of the information you have requested is already available in the public domain and is therefore exempt under Section 21(1) and Section 21(2)a of the FOIA – “information available to the applicant by other means” or “information may be reasonably accessible to the applicant even though it is accessible only on payment.”

Section 16 of the FOIA requires the public authority to provide advice and assistance wherever possible. It may therefore be helpful to note that until 2009 the MOD recorded and examined reports of UFO solely to establish whether what was seen might have some Defence significance, i.e. to determine whether there was any evidence that the UK's airspace may have been compromised by hostile or unauthorised air activity. In more than fifty years of recording this information no report of a UFO sighting made to the Ministry of Defence revealed any evidence of a potential threat to the United Kingdom. In order to make best use of Defence resources, in 2009 the Department stopped recording and examining reports of UFOs. From 2009 this matter was no longer classed as Defensive business.

Noting the continued interest in the topic of UFOs by the general public, the MOD in 2010, decided to publish all remaining files relating to this matter to The National Archives (TNA). The programme to publish all remaining files is nearing an end with all files identified and

being prepared for onward release to the TNA. The scheduled end date for this programme is December 2014. To date over 100 files have been published, therefore further information relating to this subject can be accessed via TNA website via the following link:

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ufos/>

If you are not satisfied with this response or you wish to complain about any aspect of the handling of your request, then you should contact me in the first instance. If informal resolution is not possible and you are still dissatisfied then you may apply for an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights Compliance team, 1st Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk). Please note that any request for an internal review must be made within 40 working days of the date on which the attempt to reach informal resolution has come to an end.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may take your complaint to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website, <http://www.ico.gov.uk>.

Yours sincerely,

Air Command Secretariat