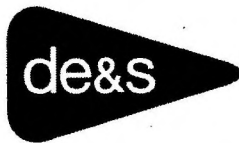




Ministry  
of Defence



DE&S Secretariat (Land Equipment)

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Defence Equipment & Support  
Maple 0a # 2043  
MOD Abbey Wood  
Bristol BS34 8JH



Via:

10<sup>th</sup> January 2019 Our Ref: FOI2018/16118

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your letter of 19th December 2018 requesting the following information:

*I recently purchased an ex-MOD Land Rover (38KL56). It was refurbished under Project Tithonus (according to the original civilian seller, Witham Specialist Vehicles, and the vendor from whom I purchased it, Gateway Auctions).*

*When Gateway applied for a Civilian Registration, DVLA issued a V5 as L286DUE, showing the vehicle to be built in 1994. I downloaded the MERLIN database from a previous answer you folks made to an FOI request; it shows the vehicle as entering service in 1987.*

*I have seen, on the internet, various references to the 'fact' that vehicles going through the Project Tithonus program were 'issued with new VIN plates showing they were some years younger'.*

*I should like to know:*

*1) Is this true?*

*If so*

*2) Under what statutory power was this done? (If I 'refurbished' a vehicle and applied for a new VIN showing the date of my refurbishment as the date of manufacture, I suspect DVLA would have a good laugh).*

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

A search for the information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence, and I can confirm that information in scope of your request is held.

The archived files on Project TITHONUS confirmed that the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) plates were moved to a more obvious location to allow easier access to them. There is no evidence that information, including the date into service, was changed.

I have highlighted below the section of the MERLIN report that shows the date into service of the vehicle you mention in your request as being 31<sup>st</sup> January 1994 not 1987.

38KL56	232099908742 3	NB17203111	LV2A/181	TRUCK UTY MED FFR HARD TOP 12/24V 4X4 2.5 LTR MK6B DSL LAND ROVER 110 DEFENDER LEP	Army/NATO Green IRR	VEHICLE NO LONGER IN SERVICE	31/01/1994
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If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance.

If you wish to complain about the handling of your request, or the content of this response, you can request an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights Compliance team, Ground Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail [CIO-FOI-IR@mod.gov.uk](mailto:CIO-FOI-IR@mod.gov.uk)). Please note that any request for an internal review should be made within 40 working days of the date of this response.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may raise your complaint directly to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not normally investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website at <https://ico.org.uk/>.

Yours sincerely,

DES SEC Pol Sec Land Equipment