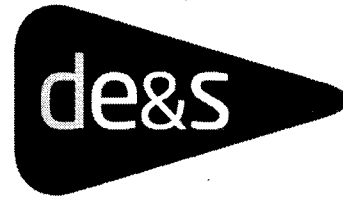




Ministry
of Defence

DE&S Policy Secretariat Ships
Maple 0a #2043
MOD Abbey Wood
Bristol BS34 8JH



E-mail:
DESSEC-PolSecShipsandSubs@mod.uk

Our Reference:
FOI2014/02215

Date:
1 July 2014

Dear

Request for Information under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000

Thank you for your email of 17 April 2014, to the Ministry of Defence (MOD), in which you requested information to determine whether asbestos was used on board HMS Sheffield, and if so, where it was used. Your request has been passed to the Policy Secretariat within the Defence Equipment and Support organisation and has been handled in accordance with the requirements of the FOI Act 2000. I can confirm that the MOD holds information that is broadly within the scope of your request, and the details are outlined in the following paragraphs.

The MOD does not hold information related to your specific request for information about whether asbestos was used in the construction of HMS Sheffield. However, in recognition of the obligation under Section 16 of the FOI Act to provide help and assistance, I have been able to provide relevant information about another ship in the same class, HMS Cardiff. As you may be aware HMS Sheffield was a Type 42 (T42) Destroyer and was one of 14 ships of the class built for the Royal Navy. She was sunk in May 1982 during the Falklands conflict. The T42s were built in three batches, with six ships, including HM Ships Sheffield and Cardiff in Batch 1, and the remaining eight ships built in Batches 2 and 3. The information provided in response to your request is an Asbestos Survey, which was commissioned by the MOD as part of the documentation required when the MOD sold the ship for recycling in 2008. The report provides information to the ship recycling company to enable it to adopt appropriate measures to deal with the asbestos identified in the ship.

I should emphasise that I am not able to confirm that the materials used in the construction of HM Ships Sheffield and Cardiff were identical, as it is common for production processes to evolve throughout a production run. To give an indication of the time gaps between the ships, HMS Sheffield was the first ship in the class and entered service in February 1975; HMS Cardiff was the sixth and last ship in Batch 1 and entered service in September 1979. Notwithstanding the elapsed time between the two vessels entering service, as they formed part of the same Batch, the information about HMS Cardiff will give an indication of how asbestos was used in the ships' construction.

I have therefore, attached the relevant extracts from the asbestos survey report on HMS Cardiff that provides a full record of all the areas from which positive samples of asbestos were taken. As I explained to you last week, due to the size of the document, the report has been provided on a CD Rom.

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,