



Ministry  
of Defence

**DE&S SEC Policy Secretariat**

Defence Equipment and Support  
MOD Abbey Wood  
Bristol  
BS34 8JH



Email: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Our Reference:  
FOI2015/09938

Via [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Date: 9 March 2016

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 10 November 2015 requesting the following information:

*"Please confirm that Rainwater Readings were not taken of the rainfall following the 1/Short Granite detonation 15 May 1957.  
I am aware Rainwater Readings were taken of subsequent detonations-- 2/Orange Herald  
3 Purple Granite etc."*

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, and I can confirm that the Ministry of Defence holds information that falls within scope of your request. I apologise for the delay in responding to this request. From the information available to us today, it is believed that rainwater readings were not taken of the rainfall following the Short Granite detonation on 15 May 1957.

Under Section 16(1) of the Act, public authorities have a duty to provide advice and assistance to requesters, so it may be helpful if I provide some additional background.

One document entitled "Environmental Monitoring at Christmas Island 1957-1958" states that rainwater sampling did take place – extract copied below.

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## ***Environmental Monitoring at Christmas Island 1957-1958***

### **Logistics and Timing of Radioactivity Measurements**

14. The radioactivity in air, on sticky paper and in rainwater for Operations GRAPPLE (Malden Island) and GRAPPLE X (Christmas Island) was counted at Christmas Island as part of the Pacific-Wide sampling programme.

Short Granite, also known as Operation Grapple 1 was a high air burst test conducted over the sea off Malden Island, some distance from Christmas Island on 15 May 1957. The extract cited above may be inconsistent with a key contemporaneous document entitled "Operation Grapple Fall-out Measurements on Short Granite" which summarises the methods used to measure fallout from 'Short Granite'. The methods used to analyse radiation are discussed; but no mention is made of rainwater sampling. This record also includes the original analysis results with dates covering the whole period of the Grapple 1-3 tests, ie May-June 1957, and does not include any rainwater information.

A similar document covers the two other rounds of the operation Grapple 1-3 series ('Orange Herald' and 'Purple Granite'). This report also makes no mention of rainwater sampling analysis.

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, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail [CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk](mailto: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.org.uk>.

Yours sincerely

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