



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

Defence Equipment & Support Secretariat
#2043 Maple 0a
Ministry Of Defence
Abbey Wood
Bristol BS34 8JH



[Redacted]

Our Reference:

[Redacted]

Date:

9 July 2014

Dear [Redacted]

Thank you for your email of 11 June 2014 about the Government Pipeline and Storage System (GPSS) and compensation that may be paid to landowners. It has been handled as a request in accordance with the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act. The details of your request are:

Please provide me with the following information, in relation to the Oil & Pipeline Agency:

- 1: What sum is paid to landowners who have pipelines on their land?*
- 2: Is the an annual sum or a single payment*
- 3: Is the a wayleave or an easement*
- 4: Is this per metre or some other unit, or for the entire length?*
- 5: How much is paid annually in easements or wayleaves (specify which!) for what length of pipeline*
- 6: Please provide a PDF or ArcGIS Shapefile of all Pipeline routes*

A search has been carried out of records held by the Oil and Pipelines Agency (OPA) which manages the GPSS on behalf of the Ministry of Defence (MOD). I can confirm that some information is held that falls within the scope of your request.

**What sum is paid to landowners who have pipelines on their land?
Is this an annual sum or a single payment?
Is this per metre or some other unit, or for the entire length?**

There is no set amount of compensation paid to owners of property where part of the Government Pipeline and Storage System (GPSS) runs under their land. Rather, one-off payments are negotiated on a case-by-case basis as a result of claims submitted by landowners following; for example, inconvenience and interference caused as a direct result of maintenance to the pipeline. The length of the pipeline that runs under the property would be a factor considered when deciding the amount of the compensation claim.

**Is this a wayleave or an easement?
How much is paid annually in easements or wayleaves (specify which!) for what length of pipeline?**

As previously stated, the compensation payments are one-off and are not covered by wayleave or easement agreements.

At the time the GPSS was constructed, agreements were reached with individual landowners to provide officials with responsibility for maintaining the pipeline access their land for maintenance purposes. Generally, these agreements would have been negotiated some years ago, in some cases in the 1940s, when it is likely that one-off payments were provided to the then current landowner. Given the age of the agreements, as the OPA did not exist at that time, and as the MOD has undergone many organisational changes since then, information about individual agreements is no longer held.

Please provide a PDF or ArcGIS Shapefile of all Pipeline routes

The GPSS is a strategic defence asset, comprising 2,500 kilometres of pipeline and 46 other facilities across the UK. As well as providing aviation fuel to MOD sites, the pipeline interconnects with several private networks, supplying fuel to UK civil airports. The pipeline is also used to provide contingency storage capacity across the UK, both for government and commercial purposes.

Given this, detailed plans of the pipeline, including ArcGis Shapefile schematics, fall within the scope of qualified exemptions of the FOI Act, specifically Section 24 (National Security) and Section 26 (Defence). Both exemptions are qualified and it has been necessary to carry out a Public Interest Test to determine the public interest between releasing and withholding.

Of course, there is public interest in disclosing the information which would demonstrate transparency within the MOD, safeguard democratic processes, and promote greater public understanding of the GPSS and how it is operated. However, the arguments for withholding are stronger given that knowledge of the precise route of the GPSS could assist those people with malicious intent to plan and prosecute attacks against the pipeline system. This would impact on the effectiveness of the GPSS to provide aviation fuel to both MOD and UK civil airports which would not be in the best security interests of the nation as a whole. I have considered it necessary

to apply the higher level of prejudice against the release of essential information at the higher level of "could" rather than "would be likely to".

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

Defence Equipment and Support
Secretariat