



Ministry  
of Defence

[REDACTED]  
DE&S Policy Secretariat Air

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



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Your Reference:

Our Reference:  
FOI2014/06813

Date:  
1 December 2014

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Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your correspondence of 6 November 2014, requesting the following information:

*Can the Ministry of Defence confirm whether during the tests conducted on the Taranis, it tested the autonomous detection, selection or engagement of targets?*

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

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

The information you have requested can be found below:

During the tests conducted with Taranis, both in flight and in the laboratory, automatic detection of potential targets was tested. Autonomous selection and/or engagement of targets were not tested, as these would contravene MOD policy.

Under Section 16 of the Act (Advice and Assistance) you may find it helpful to note that MOD policy on the development or employment of autonomous weapons is set out in Joint Doctrine Note 2/11, The UK Approach to Unmanned Systems, which is available at:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/33711/20110505JDN\\_211\\_UAS\\_v2U.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/33711/20110505JDN_211_UAS_v2U.pdf)

The position has also been made clear in Parliament, for example by Lord Astor of Hever on 26 March 2013:

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201213/ldhansrd/text/130326-0001.htm#13032658000808>

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

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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,

