



Ministry
of Defence

[REDACTED]
DE&S SEC Policy Secretariat

Defence Equipment and Support
MOD Abbey Wood
Bristol
BS34 8JH



[REDACTED]
Our Reference:
FOI2015/02624

Date: 11 August 2015

Dear [REDACTED]

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

I am writing further to [REDACTED] letter of 7 May 2015, in which he informed you that the clarification of your request for information about 'any occurrences in the past 20 years that met the Oxburgh definitions' would be processed as an information request under the above reference number. I am now in a position to provide a substantive response to your request and apologise for the delay in doing so.

I can confirm that MOD may hold information on the subject you have requested. However, I have to advise you that we will not be able to answer your request without exceeding the appropriate limit. This is because to locate, retrieve and extract information in scope of your request would involve at least 11 man days of effort.

Section 12 of the Act makes provision for public authorities to refuse requests for information where the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate limit, which for central government is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3.5 working days in determining whether the department holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting it.

Under section 16(1) of the Act, public authorities have a duty to provide advice and assistance to requesters. As such, you may find it helpful if I explain that there have been no accidents within the scope of your request but it is determining information held regarding Oxburgh-defined 'incidents' that we are unable to progress within the appropriate limit. This information is not held centrally, crosses a number of different areas of MOD which each hold their own records in different formats, either electronically or in hard copy files. The definitions used by Sir Ronald Oxburgh in his report of 1992 were used by the MOD to categorise events up until 2011. At this point they were revised and updated and the extant definitions are available in the document JSP471-Defence Nuclear Emergency Response which is available online at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/260613/20131114-JSP_471_V1_1-U.pdf.

Defence Equipment & Support

The MOD may be able to provide some information in scope of your request, if you reduce or refine it to bring the cost of compliance under the limit. Therefore, I would suggest that you select a shorter timeframe and one specific subject matter area for us to focus our searches on.

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 & Support Policy Secretariat