



Ministry of Defence

Our Reference:
FOI2016/04154

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25 April 2016

[REDACTED]

Your correspondence dated 11 April 2016 has been considered to be a request for information in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000. You requested the following information:

Can you tell me in what year the document security classification, 'UK eyes only' was created and can you tell me why it was necessary to create that classification?

A search for information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and we can confirm that some information is in scope of your request. Under Section 16 of the Act (Duty to provide Advice and Assistance) this information is provided below. We would explain, however, that the Cabinet Office was and is responsible for the Security policy on how HM Government (HMG) classifies information assets and will be able to assist you further.

The HMG National Security Caveat of 'UK Eyes Only' (UKEO) was introduced following a review of Government Security Protective Markings in the 1990s. Prior to that the National Caveats of UK Eyes Alpha and UK Eyes Bravo restricted access to UK citizens in Government service (including Defence) and Government/List X Industry.

Information posted on HMG Security Classifications by the Cabinet Office on GOV.UK can be accessed via the below link. Paragraph 25 provides background information on the current National Caveats.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/government-security-classifications>

If you wish to submit a FOIA request for details of the policy decision taken by HMG taken prior to the introduction of UKEO in the 1990s the email address for FOIA requests to the Cabinet Office is: foi-team@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

If you are not satisfied with this response or you wish to complain about any aspect of the handling of your request, then you may apply for an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights Compliance team, 2nd 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 of this letter.

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,

Defence Security & Resilience