



**Defence Business Services
Veterans UK
Secretariat Team
Room 6303
Tomlinson House
Norcross
Thorton-Cleveleys
Lancashire FY5 3WP**

Our Ref: FOI2015/09990

[REDACTED]

November 2015

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 29 October 2015 requesting the following information:

I accept your point that number 7 would require you to email all the claimants. So I amend my request to remove number 7.

Please release to me:

- 1. Amount expended in £*
- 2. The name and rank/job title of the claimant*
- 3. The item being expensed*
- 4. The reason for the claim*
- 5. The date of the claim and date expense was incurred*
- 6. Whether the claim was accepted or rejected*

The ICO guidance on datasets points out that you are obliged to release any information that satisfies any part of my request. Therefore you should release the data relating to 1, 3, 5 and 6 now, regardless of the points below.

But you should also release the data relating to 2 and 4, even though you say it contains "personal information" in free text fields, because of the following ICO guidance:

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

Travel by our military and civilian staff makes a key contribution to achieving Defence objectives. The MOD has sites in many parts of the country, and internationally, and staff need to travel between them. For example, travel enables senior leaders to visit troops on operations or to hold discussions with other governments aimed at reducing conflict.

All staff incurring business expenses of any kind must demonstrate the highest standards of financial propriety and a level of restraint that is commensurate with being a Crown

Servant, and sensitive to the need to give full value for money to the taxpayer and maximise the funding available for the front line.

We plan to make savings of 10% in non-operational business travel over the next five years. These savings will be delivered in a number of ways, including a reduction in travel where the business need can be met by alternative arrangements such as video or audio conferencing.

We are committed to being open about the business expenses claimed by our staff and publish a quarterly list of those expenses incurred by our most senior civil servants and military officers.

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

The information you have requested can be found on the enclosed spreadsheet, but the information requested at point two falls entirely within the scope of the absolute exemptions provided for at section 40 and has therefore been withheld.

Section 40 (2) has been applied to the answer to question two in order to protect personal information as governed by the Data Protection Act 1998. Section 40 is an absolute exemption and there is therefore no requirement to consider the public interest in making a decision to withhold the information.

Under Section 16 of the Act I have enclosed a copy of the abbreviations used within the Ledger Item Type field which provides details of the item being expensed/ reason for the claim. All items claimed within the spread sheet were accepted.

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.org.uk>

Yours sincerely,

Defence Business Services (Secretariat)