

14 April 2016

Ref. FOI2016/03263

Dear

Thank you for your email of 15 March 2016 requesting the following information:

1. All information in any format relating to the presence of asbestos materials in the construction and continued maintenance of the bunkers in 1964/1965 to 1965/1966.
2. All information in any format relating to the contractor at the site of the bunkers, John Howard & Co Ltd in 1964/1965 to 1965/1966, and the use of any materials in their employment at the site.
3. All information in any format relating to the discovery and/or removal of asbestos materials in the bunkers from 1964/1965 to the present day.

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

Under items 1 and 2, I can confirm that Ministry of Defence (MOD) do not hold the information you have requested.

For item 3, MOD may hold the 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 the information in scope of your request would involve at least 20 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, locating, retrieving and extracting it.

The MOD may be able to provide some information in scope of your request if you reduce or refine your request to bring the cost of compliance under the limit. For part 3 of your request, you may wish to consider requesting a shorter date range. Please contact me if you would like to refine your request or require advice on doing so.

Under Section 16 of the Act (Advice and Assistance) you may find it helpful to note that asbestos records are destroyed after a 40 year period.

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 DIO Secretariat 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,

DIO Secretariat