



Ministry of Defence

Ministry of Defence
Main Building
Whitehall
London
SW1A 2HB

Reference: FOI2016/00397

Reply to: [REDACTED]

8 March 2016

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email of 11 January 2016 in which you have requested the following information:

“Subsequent to the announcement that the MoD civilian workforce will be reduced by almost 30%, to 41,000, by the end of this parliament I would like to ask the MoD to provide me with details or a list of;

- a) Change programmes already in progress that will reduce civilian workforce numbers;*
- b) Change programmes that are known to civilian staff including those ready for consultation;*
- c) Studies completed or presently underway aimed at identifying opportunities for more efficient, innovative and flexible ways of working that will have a known or estimated net civilian workforce reduction*

For each change programme or study listed, where possible, please provide me with the estimated civilian workforce numbers that will be reduced.

In addition please can you provide me with an estimate of the additional number of MoD civilians that will need to be reduced that are not presently represented within any known change programme or study in order to achieve the reduction to 41,000.”

Your correspondence has been treated as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. I can confirm that the Ministry of Defence (MOD) holds information within the scope of your request.

As advised in our letter dated 27 January 2016, a Public Interest Test (PIT) was held to determine whether your request could be met in whole or part. I can now advise that the PIT has concluded that your request cannot be answered fully because it is predominately exempt under Section 35(1)(a) - Formulation of Government Policy - Policy Formulation.

However under Section 16 of the FOI Act (Advice and Assistance) I can provide the following basic advice concerning the civilian workforce reductions resulting from the Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015:

Following the 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review the MOD established the Defence Transformation programme which incorporated a range of change programmes which contributed to reductions in the number of MOD civilian employees. Some of those programmes were completed by 2015 while others were scheduled to complete by 2020. The work which will follow SDSR15 will look to deliver those programmes already planned as well as taking forward other improvement programmes which are at different levels of maturity.

The following response relates to those large programmes where information is collected centrally. There are many smaller change programmes which are managed locally within the business where information is not held centrally and could only be collected a disproportionate cost.

In response to your specific questions:

a) *Change programmes already in progress that will reduce civilian workforce numbers;*

The main change programmes which are in progress and expected to deliver significant civilian workforce reductions are Army re-basing, the US Visiting Forces restructuring, and transformation of Information Systems and Services. In addition the Logistics Commodity Services Transformation programme which was implemented in July 2015 resulted in a transfer for 1130 posts which are included within the SDSR15 baseline.

b) *Change programmes that are known to civilian staff including those ready for consultation;*

There are a range of further programmes which are intended to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery of defence outputs and the support provided to the Armed Forces. These programmes include: plans to reduce the overall Defence Estate footprint; provision of Defence Fire and Emergency services; transforming the provision of hard and soft Facility Management, arrangements for infrastructure policing, options for the delivery of the MOD Guarding service and for the provision of shared corporate services.

Civilian employees who are likely to be impacted by individual change programmes have been briefed on the proposals and there has been engagement and consultation with employee representatives reflecting the maturity of individual programmes. The number of civilian workforce reductions which can be associated with each of these programmes is subject to individual consultation with employee representatives and may change as final decisions are taken and implementation proceeds (i.e. a decision to select an in-house solution for delivery of a Service would achieve less civilian reductions than an outsourced option).

c) *Studies completed or presently underway aimed at identifying opportunities for more efficient, innovative and flexible ways of working that will have a known or estimated net civilian workforce reduction*

Following the announcement of SDSR15 the Business Improvement Review has been launched to identify opportunities for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of support activities across Defence. The Review team will consider change programmes underway that could make a contribution to meeting the reduction target as well as new opportunities.

The Department expects the civilian workforce to reduce to around 41,000 by 2020. However, the timing and reductions associated with individual programmes are still to be determined and final decisions will be subject to consultation with employee representatives, value for money considerations and, where appropriate, commercial negotiation.

The estimated civilian workforce reductions associated with individual programmes, the details of studies completed or underway and the number of MOD civilians who are outside of known change programmes is being withheld as an exemption under Section 35(1) of the Freedom of Information Act as these details relate to the formulation or development of Government policy.

We are confident these programmes will deliver the required reductions to meet the efficiency and reform savings announced in the Spending Review and Autumn Statement 2015.

If you are not satisfied with this response or 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 Deputy Chief Information Officer, 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 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 People Secretariat