



Ministry
of Defence

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Ref. FOI2015/04460

17 June 2015

Dear

Thank you for your email dated 19 May 2015 requesting the following information:

I asked for the "release of the minutes of the MOD's Accommodation Delivery Forum (ADF) (formerly the Housing Forum) and any related committee minutes or any other names this has been known by for the last 10 years" though.

The reference to "formerly the Housing Forum" was in the MOD's own words – however, it transpires from the inaugural minutes of the ADF (20130117) that the ADF was a merger of the Housing Forum and Joint Customer Board. Fortunately I requested related minutes and other names of the committees. Unfortunately, these have not been supplied for the last 10 years (or part thereof).

The Housing Forum minutes have only been supplied for the last 5 years not 10 as requested.

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

Please be advised that the response provided to you on 19 May 2015 in respect of FOI03962 was all the information held within the Ministry of Defence (MOD) in relation to the MOD's Accommodation Delivery Forum (ADF) and the Housing Forum.

A further search undertaken in respect of this new request has now been completed within the MOD and I can confirm that there is no further historical information held in relation to the ADF or the Housing Forum that has not already been supplied to you.

In relation to your request about Joint Customer Board (JCB) minutes, your original request (FOI03962) was interpreted to provide minutes only in relation to the ADF and/or Housing Forum or any committee's that were a predecessor to the ADF, which the Joint Customer Board was not, only a meeting which was later amalgamated with the Housing Forum.

The MOD has undertaken a search for the information requested in relation to the JCB and I can confirm that information in scope of your request is held.

The information you have requested can be found attached within the 10 documents, but some of the information falls entirely within the scope of absolute exemption provided for at section 40 (Personal Data) and qualified exemptions section 27 (International Relations), section 38 (Health & Safety) and section 43 (Commercial Interests) of the FOIA and has been redacted.

Sections 27, 38 and 43 are qualified exemptions and subject to public interest testing which means that the information requested can only be withheld if the public interest in doing so outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

Section 27 has been applied to some of the information because it contains information which may prejudice relations between MOD and other countries (and/or their governments). The balance of public interest was found to be in favour of withholding the information given that overall, the public interest is best served in not releasing information which may damage international relations with these countries.

Section 38 has been applied to some of the information because it contains details of MOD buildings (including accommodation) and specific services for Service Personnel and their families which if disclosed could provide information in relation to MOD sites and their locations. The balance of public interest was found to be in favour of withholding the information given that, overall, the public interest is best served in not releasing any details which could endanger the health and safety of individuals.

Section 43 has been applied to some of the information because it contains details of pricing and budgetary information in relation to contracts held, which is commercially sensitive. The balance of public interest was found to be in favour of withholding the information given that, overall, the public interest is best served in not releasing any details on the pricing or budgetary structure of the contracts let as this would prejudice the commercial interests of the contractor(s) and also the commercial relationship it has and other organisations have with the MOD. For these reasons I have set the level of prejudice against release of the exempted information at the lower level of 'would be likely to' rather than 'would'.

Specifically this has meant:

- Information in relation to Service Personnel's families and locations of Service Family Accommodation under item 9 and 31 from minutes of 10 June 2009 has been redacted under section 38 (Health and Safety); financial information has been withheld from item 37 under section 43 (Commercial Interests) and specific building information in relation to under item 40 has been redacted under section 38 (Health and Safety).
- MOD site specific information for accommodation of Service Personnel and their families has been withheld from the Annex supporting item 29 from minutes of 10 June 2009, under section 38 (Health and Safety).
- Financial information in item's 4.4, 5.4 6.3 and 6.4 has been withheld from minutes of 16 October 2009 under section 43 (Commercial Interests); specific MOD site and accommodation information from items 6.2, 6.3, 6.5 and 7.1 has been withheld under section 38 (Health and Safety); information in relation to MOD's international relationships in item 6.4 has been withheld under section 27 (International Relations).
- Financial information in item 5.4 and 11.1 from minutes of 11 February 2010 has been withheld under section 38 (Health and Safety); accommodation information has been withheld from items 6.1 and 6.3 under section 43 (Commercial Interests).
- MOD site information has been withheld from item 4.5 from the minutes of 14 October 2010 under section 43 (Commercial Interests).
- Contractual information in item 4.3 from minutes of 10 February 2011 has been withheld under section 43 (Commercial Interests).

- Contractual information in item 6.2 and 6.3 from minutes of 8 June 2011 has been withheld under section 43 (Commercial Interests).
- MOD site information under item 4.2 from minutes of 6 October 2011 has been withheld under section 38 (Health and Safety); information in relation to MOD's international relationships in item 5.1 has been withheld under section 27 (International Relations).

Other various redactions throughout the documents supplied have qualified under section 40 (Personal Data).

It should be noted that the JCB disbanded in 2012; therefore there are no minutes after this date. Prior to 2009 any JCB minutes and supporting documents previously held by the MOD either centrally or in archiving has been destroyed due to the Department's retention policy and therefore these are not available and can not be supplied.

Yours sincerely,

DIO Secretariat

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>.