



Ministry
of Defence



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Our reference:
FOI2015/04987

17 June 2015



Dear 

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

- 1. Published photographs of the launch show a curved fairing or 'bilge keel' running aft from under the fin. I have no recollection of any such feature. Was this a temporary fitting just for the launching? (Regrettably my photo of the model in the Science Museum only shows the cutaway side, so does not include this.*
- 2. My recollection of the aft hydroplanes was that they were rectangular. This is borne out by the Science Museum model. The commercial plan shows them raked. Can I have confirmation that they were rectangular.*
- 3. The VSL commissioning book of build photos shows a pair of large (c. 3ft diameter) round holes, one each side of the nose casing about 20ft aft. Were they temporary, for build, or were they water inlets for the torpedo system?*
- 4. Similarly, their photos of the missile tube hull sections show circular openings about 2ft across, off-centre under each missile tube. Were these temporary, or a permanent part of the missile tube system? (Explosion release hatch or some such feature)?*
- 5. Were the six torpedo tube bow shutters round or square? And what dimensions?*
- 6. May I know the size and positions of the 12 main ballast tank flood holes, and the arrangements of the grills over them? And how far from the center line they were? Obviously they were near the lowest point of each tank, and I recollect the approximate size of the flooding bonnets, but precise positions and dimensions would be better.*
- 7. I should like to know the positions and sizes of the rather few other hull and casing openings, and the details of their grills. E.g Main Circ. Inlets and outlets, Sea Water Service inlet, garbage ejector hatch, secondary propulsion motor cover plate, anchor cover plate; and one of the few topside features not yet found in published photos, the distance apart of the aft main vents (at that time there were six separate vents, operated from 3 inboard actuators.) A de-classified docking plan would be ideal -where to plug in the sewage pipe etc!*

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8. *The approximate size and route outline of the towed array guide tube fitted in 1976 around the aft fixed plane then up to the casing where it replaced the port ALP. And if possible the position and extent of the huge dent in its casing, above the manoeuvring room flat, which appeared so dramatically near the bottom on our first deep dive, when the cylindrical casing inverted as a result of too much syntactic foam filler having been used on dockies' cars, instead of used to fill the void under the casing!*

9. *The location, dimension and purpose of the many minor casing hatches and plugs would be useful - many appear in published plans and photos, and are obvious, but there are numerous small ones that I cannot recall.*

10. *May I be shown the boundary of the application of the anechoic tiles, which were on the hull but not the casing, at this time. I know they were on the after ballast tanks, but cannot recall where they ended forward. (Before they all came unglued, a bit like the crew on long patrols.*

11. *I should also like to know the size and extent of the various transducers fitted under the hull, but I appreciate that these may still be a bit sensitive.*

12. *In general these are simple shapes, visible from outside, and of not possible security risk- it would greatly enhance my model if I were able to get these details correct.*

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

I am writing to advise you that we will not be able to answer your request without exceeding the appropriate limit. This is because to locate and retrieve the information in scope of your request would involve searching through 15,000 drawings, that are not catalogued, and at least some 33 man 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, and 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 example, it may be possible to provide information in the form of a docking plan (this is a drawing which has dimensions on) Please contact me if you would like to refine your request or require advice on doing so.

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 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>.

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Yours sincerely,

