



# Ministry of Defence

Ref: FOI2015/06428

Ministry of Defence  
Main Building  
Whitehall  
London SW1A 2HB  
United Kingdom

Telephone [MOD]: +44 (0)20 7218 9000

E-mail: DDC-  
SecretariatParliamentary@mod.uk

01 October 2015

E-mail address: [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your e-mail correspondence of 17 July 2015 requesting the following information:

*"Would you please provide all reactive or "if asked" press statements prepared by the department's press office for possible issue to the media between March 16th 2015 and July 16th 2015?*

*Could these be provided in full and in the format they were prepared in a list. Where possible could the dates they were prepared be given."*

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

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.

Under section 21 of the Act the information you have requested for press statements released by the central Directorate of Defence Communications is reasonably accessible by other means. Press statements and responses can be accessed on the Gov.uk website:

MOD announcements:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/announcements?departments%5B%5D=ministry-of-defence>

Defence in the Media blog:

<https://modmedia.blog.gov.uk/>

Some of the information you have requested has been withheld as it falls entirely within the scope of the qualified exemption under Section 36 of the Act which states that information which, if disclosed and not exempt under Section 35, would prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs.

In MOD, determining whether disclosure would have a detrimental effect, as defined by the section 35 exemption, falls to a minister as the qualified person asked to make the decision. All the relevant information was provided to allow the minister to make a fully informed decision on the application of section 36. The minister has decided that section 36(2)(b)/(c) applies to the information requested.

Releasing press releases or lines to take that have been prepared by the department's press office but not used could give a misleading impression of government policy. Where the government position has not been stated publicly, ministers should have the freedom to alter their decisions. It

has been decided that in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure and the information should be withheld.

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, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail [CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk](mailto: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,

DDC Secretariat Parliamentary