



Ministry
of Defence



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Thank you for your email dated 26 May 2016. In reply to my letter to you dated 19 May 2016 (FOI2016/05212) about Disposal Services Authority (DSA) sales you asked:

...You mentioned there is no central database, but there must be some level of centralisation and coordination, even if it is split across several sites and departments for different clients. Can you give an indication about this?

What's the closest equivalent to the example table I provided in the original request? Is there any kind of tabular record of sales? Or any kind of electronic system in use?...

One thought process is that a better narrowing of the request would be by department, rather than by specific subsets of equipment as suggested in the response. Would it be possible to target the same broad question to specific sub-teams? I.e the Capital Equipment Disposal Team, Commercial Disposal Team and the Overseas Disposal Team. Being a Bristol-based publication we'd be most interested in the Filton-based departments.

You mentioned that the data is not collated in a consistent manner. Just so I understand what your concerns about this, can I ask what the inconsistencies are?...

...how much of an undertaking is it [to collect all the invoices?]. I'd like to have a good idea of at least the number of pieces of paper, or digital files, that we're talking about and at how many locations they're stored.

I am treating your email as a request for information in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). A search for the information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence (MOD), and I can confirm that information in scope of your request is held.

The DSA is the sole authority for the sale of MOD equipment and provides a disposal service to the MOD and Other Government Departments. The DSA is split into two main teams: Capital Equipment Sales, based at DE&S Abbey Wood Bristol and Commercial Disposals based, primarily, in Bicester Oxfordshire.

Capital Equipment Sales (CES)

The team manages Government-to-Government (G2G) sales of major platforms and systems. Sales are generally low in quantity but high in value. Full details of the sales are captured and this data is fed into the Strategic Exports Control Report, which is publicly available. (I provided an internet link in my letter dated 19 May 2016.) CES also has a Post-Sales Support section and sales are manually recorded on to a Microsoft access database; again, this is relatively low volume.

Commercial Disposals (CD)

The CD team manages all non-G2G sales. For the UK based Commercial Disposal team the process, in its simplest terms, is as follows:

- a. The holder of the equipment receives authority from the equipment owner that the item is surplus to the wider MOD.
- b. The holder formally declares the item to the DSA for disposal using the appropriate declaration form
- c. The DSA selects the appropriate disposal route which will mainly be through one of our contractors but would also consider selling directly in the case of ships and aircraft through competitive tender, sale by auction for unusual items such as ships bells or direct sale by negotiation; In the event that a contractor is selected, the DSA tasks the contractor and advises the holder of the equipment that action has been taken.
- d. Contractor removes items from site.
- e. Contractor disposes of item in appropriate manner (sale, recycle, destroy etc.); DSA manages the contractor during the disposal process.
- f. Money for sale of item is returned to MOD.

It is important to note that a Declaration may include more than one individual item, for example, the Declaration may be for one ship or 90,000 Jerri Cans; the declaration may even simply state 20 boxes of miscellaneous items. Once the Declaration is received CD staff record the details on a bespoke tracking system known as e-Dart, the declaration is given a Tasking Number, and that number is used as the reference from that point forward. CD team leaders have monthly meetings with the individual contractors where progress on sales and marketing are discussed.

Each contractor submits a monthly sales report and details from this are then manually updated to the e-Dart system. The contractors' sales reports can be quite lengthy and run into thousands of lines, for example a declaration of 50 pairs of boots may result in 50 individual sales.

The DSA team based in Germany manage disposals in a slightly different way, the main differences are that sales are not recorded on e-Dart (for technical reasons it is not available in Germany), and there is one main contractor. The contractor does produce sales reports which are sent to the DSA Germany office, these reports then have to be translated into English and manually entered on to their tracking system.

Overseas Sales (excluding Germany) are dealt with in a different way again. Dependent upon the items there are different procedures; certain commodities must be returned to the UK for disposal (for example classified items); if items do not fall into that category the next step is to determine if it would be better value for money to return to items to the UK for disposal. If items

are disposed of locally the appropriate route is selected and details of the disposal are recorded. Transfer of funds is in accordance with local procedures (these vary from country to country). In most cases the DSA receives a generic summary of the sale and not the fine detail; this has to be manually cross-referenced.

The CD team may on occasion sell items on a private treaty/tender basis. These sales are managed exclusively by the DSA and there is no private contractor engagement. Details of sales in this manner are recorded and captured in the DSA financial returns.

Financial Return

Regardless of the method of disposal the financial return is captured and reported, the data will generally be at an aggregated level and not down to the final detail. However, the exception to that would be high value sales such as those on a G2G basis or large items such as ships.

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 (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


DE&S Secretariat