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27 April 2015

Ref. FOI2015/02390

Dear

Thank you for your email of 02 March 2015 requesting the following information:

"Copies of the following internal mod documents

i) current and/or former editions of the 'integrated land management plan' or 'integrated rural management plan' for the Aldershot, Hankley, Ash, Pirbright and Longmoor military training areas in ATE Home Counties

ii) Reference is made in a 2003 MOD commissioned report that:

"EN and DE have produced 'Guidelines for Assessment of Recreational Events by Defence Estates' for all of the MOD sites within the Thames Basin Heaths pSPA and Thursley Ash, Pirbright and Chobham cSAC. This guidance outlines the possible impacts of recreational events/recreation and best practice to minimise the impact."

Copies of both former and current guidelines."

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 some information in scope of your request is held. A copy of the Aldershot Integrated Land Management Plan and a copy of the current guidelines for assessment of recreational events by Defence Estates can be found enclosed. However please note that Section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 has been applied to some of the information in order to protect personal information as governed by the Data Protection Act 1998. Section 40 is an absolute exemption and there is therefore no requirement to consider the public interest in making a decision to withhold the information.

Some of the information in scope of your request falls entirely within the scope of qualified exemptions provided for at Sections 22(1) (Intended for future publication) of the FOIA and has been withheld.

Section 22 (1) is a qualified exemption and is subject to a 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.

The outcome of the public interest test clarifies that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information, as it is important for the public authority to place information in the public domain proactively and to avoid damaging the reputation of the government bodies.

Under Section 16 of the Act (Advice and Assistance) you may find it helpful to note that plans for future publication are followed by a legal obligation to release the integrated rural management plans.

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-JR@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>.