



Ministry
of Defence

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Our Ref: FOI2015/07375
Your Ref: 02/15

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Dear [REDACTED],

Following your e-mails dated 16 August and 23 August 2015 to [REDACTED] (DES SEC-PolSecShips and Subs), her subsequent acknowledgement e-mail to you dated 25 August 2015 and our letter dated 10 September 2015, your correspondence under your reference 01/12 has been considered to be a request for information in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000. You requested the following information:

"Dear Sir,

I should be grateful if you would provide me with a copy of the project definition document or equivalent document for the Trident Holbrook warhead programme.

I note that, in responding to my previous request, you did not comply with your duty under section 16 of the Freedom of Information Act to provide advice and assistance to a person making a request for information.

I should therefore also be grateful if you would provide me with the following background information under section 16 of the Freedom of Information Act, which will help me in preparing a request to address other points from my previous request:

- What is the Trident Holbrook warhead?*
- How does the Trident Holbrook warhead differ from the UK Trident Mark 4 warhead?*
- Is the Trident Holbrook warhead the same as the UK Trident Mark 4A warhead, and if not, how does it differ?*
- Over what approximate period does the Ministry of Defence hold files relating to the Trident Holbrook programme".*

This letter is to inform you that although we hold an equivalent project definition document relating to the Trident Holbrook warhead programme, this information falls entirely within the scope of the absolute qualified exemptions provided for at section 24 (National Security) and Section 27 (International Relations).

Section 24 qualified exemptions are 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 24 (1) has been applied to the information because it contains sensitive details necessary to safeguard national security. The balance of the public interest was found to be in favour of

withholding the information given that, overall, the public interest is best served in not releasing this information.

Section 27 qualified exemptions are 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 (1) has been applied to the information because the release of certain UK and US warhead information would be likely to adversely impact upon relations with the US. The balance of the public interest was found to be in favour of withholding the relevant information.

In view of the application of Section 24 and Section 27, this information cannot be provided. If 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 formal resolution has come to an end.

With regards to your other requests, the following information is provided:

What is the Trident Holbrook warhead?

The Trident Holbrook warhead is the warhead the UK fields as part of the Trident Strategic Weapons System.

How does the Trident Holbrook warhead differ from the UK Trident Mark 4 warhead?

It does not. They are the same thing.

Is the Trident Holbrook warhead the same as the UK Trident Mark 4A warhead, and if not, how does it differ?

The MK4A Arming, Fuzing and Firing System is a non-nuclear component being introduced into the UK Trident warhead to replace similar component which is becoming obsolete.

Over what approximate period does the Ministry of Defence hold files relating to the Trident Holbrook programme. From the 1980s to the present.

If you are not satisfied with this response or you wish to complain about any aspect of the handling of your request, 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 of this letter.

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,

DST Secretariat Strategy Secretariat