



Ministry  
of Defence

Army Secretariat  
Army Headquarters  
IDL 24 Blenheim Building  
Marlborough Lines  
Andover  
Hampshire, SP11 8HJ  
United Kingdom

Ref: FOI2015/09080

E-mail: Army Sec-group@mod.uk

Website: www.army.mod.uk

E-mail address: [REDACTED]

12 November 2015

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 15 October in which you requested the following information relating to the Defence Fire and Rescue Project:

*"Could you please supply the full cost of the projects & reviews and also the costs of any other agencies and consultants which have/are working on the project directly or in-directly; i.e. Defence Fire Risk Management Organisation staff & assets, staff & assets involved with the Value for Money Bench mark team including staff and consultants contracted in to assist? Trade Union cost for involvement in the project? Training given to the evaluation processes? All & any other aspects I may missed, which MoD will be aware of, should be covered to provide a conclusive & comprehensive cost to this project?"*

*The overall savings assumed to be made if the contract is awarded to a private bidder against the current running cost & the cost to run the project? Please give annual and length of contract savings?*

*Previously to the above reviews a project called; Airfield Support Services Project (ASSP) took place spanning around 5 years of work. This project was eventually cancelled. Please provide the cost for this project and all its agency's in there entirety, ex-gratis payments approved by HM Treasury for cancellation, work prior & post Initial Gate and the projects cancellation?"*

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

I can confirm that some of the information requested is held and that some of the information held about the current cost of the Defence Fire and Rescue capability, potential savings, consultancy costs is exempt under section 43 – commercial interests - of the Freedom of Information Act and is therefore being withheld. I should explain that section 43 is a qualified exemption under the Act, which means I have undertaken a public interest test of the arguments both for and against the release of the information requested.

Arguments for the release for the information are the public interest in knowing the costs of the Defence Fire and Rescue service, the potential savings to the tax payer of any commercial solution to run the service in future and the cost of external assistance provided to assist the process. The release of this information would also show the workings of the Ministry of Defence in an open and transparent way. Balanced against this are the arguments that the release of the information requested at this time may, should an industry solution be recommended, influence the value of the final bids received from industry and result in a loss of value for money to the MOD. The consultancy expenditure costs should not be released at this stage as to do so may compromise the commercial confidentiality of the consultancy involved. I have concluded that the release of the

information at this stage of the commercial competition would likely to be prejudicial to the Ministry of Defence's ability to conduct an effective competition and should, therefore, be withheld.

Moving to the information that can be released, the capitation cost of military and civilian personnel (including civilian fire officers) employed in the Defence Fire and Rescue Project team and in the Value for Money Benchmark Team from June 2011 to October 2015 is approximately £2.3M. The contract length (should a commercial solution demonstrate value for money and be recommended) is 12 years as stated in the Invitation to Participate in Dialogue issued to industry on 17 October 2015. The cost of contracted support to the evaluation process and the associated use of the evaluation software is approximately £89,000. Other Ministry of Defence staff costs and the cost of Trade Union involvement in the project are not held by the Ministry of Defence.

Moving to the Airfield Support Services Project, most of this information is not held. However, the ex-gratia payments authorised by Her Majesty's Treasury can be found on page 192 of the Ministry of Defence Annual Report and Accounts 2004/2005, which can be found at:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/235153/0464.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/235153/0464.pdf)

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, <https://ico.org.uk>.

Yours sincerely,

A large, bold, handwritten signature in black ink, resembling a stylized 'Z' or '2'.