



Ministry
of Defence

Our Reference: FOI2017/05276

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Thank you for your email dated 5 May 2017 requesting the following information:

"I am writing to request information on the numbers of service-issued firearms in use with the Regular or Reserve Forces of the Army, Royal Air Force, Royal Navy, Royal Marines or MOD Police that have been reported as lost or stolen to the Service Police or the Ministry of Defence Police during the calendar years 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016. For each service-issued firearm that has been reported as lost or stolen, please provide the following information:

- a. *A description of the type of weapon lost.*
- b. *The location of the weapon theft or loss (UK or overseas).*
- c. *The Unit responsible for the weapon at the time of theft or loss.*
- d. *If the firearm(s) have been recovered"*

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

A search for the information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence (MOD), and we can confirm that all the information in scope of your request is held.

The information you have requested can be found below, but some of the information falls entirely within the scope of absolute exemptions provided for at Section 21 (Information reasonably accessible to the applicant) and qualified exemptions provided for at Section 31 (Law Enforcement) of the FOIA, and has been withheld.

Under Section 16 (Advice and Assistance) of the Act you may find it helpful to note that the statistics released in the FOI response dated 8 December 2016 cover reported losses up to November 2016.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/foi-responses-published-by-mod-week-commencing-14-november-2016>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/foi-responses-published-by-mod-week-commencing-december-12-2016>

In addition to the above, in December 2016, the following were reported, and remain, missing:

In-Use MOD Firearms:

Type	Quantity	Reported by
0.22 Anschutz Biathlon Rifle	3	Army
0.22 Bolt Action Biathlon Rifle	4	Army
H&K MP 7 Carbine	1	MOD Police

Ammunition:

Type	Quantity	Reported by
5.56mm	1	Army

Explosives

Type	Quantity	Reported by
N/A	Nil	N/A

Section 31 is a qualified exemption and is 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 31 has been applied because releasing details of weapon thefts and losses, broken down by year, type, and more specifically unit responsible, could be prejudicial to the prevention and detection of crime. When a public interest test was conducted relating to the use of this section, it was deemed that the balance of public interest lay against the release of location for the aforementioned reasons.

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

Yours sincerely,

Directorate of Security & Resilience