



Ministry
of Defence

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Your reference:

Our reference:
FOI2016/00583

Date: 9 May 2017

Dear [REDACTED]

Further to our letter dated 14 February 2016, I am writing to provide you with a substantive response to your FOI request for the following information:

I should be grateful if you could provide me with the following information relating to personnel numbers at the Atomic Weapons Establishment.

- *The number of permanent staff currently employed at the Atomic Weapons Establishment, broken down by discipline according to the classification used in the TP1 plan (or the equivalent classification in the latest version of the TP1 plan)*
- *The number of contractors currently employed at the Atomic Weapons Establishment, broken down by discipline according to the classification used in the TP1 plan (or the equivalent classification in the latest version of the TP1 plan).*

I apologise for the time it has taken to provide you with this response, and that you were not provided with updates to your request on a regular basis.

As previously confirmed, the MOD holds the information you have requested. In our letter dated 14 February, it was indicated that some information may fall within the scope of Section 27 (National Security). This was incorrect, and should have read Section 24 (National Security).

I can confirm that some of the information has been withheld under Section 24 (National Security) and Section 26 (Defence). As these are qualified exemptions, we have been required to decide whether, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exceptions outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

In relation to Section 24 (National Security), it is recognised that there that there is a public interest in releasing the information which has been redacted within the document as it demonstrates the MOD's commitment to openness and transparency on nuclear matters and would provide assurance to the public that work at the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) is undertaken by suitably qualified and experienced personnel. There is also a presumption in favour of release under the FOI Act.

However, there is a strong public interest in maintaining the safety and security of nuclear weapons and defence nuclear material. Release of this material would allow deductions to

be made by individuals, who have the appropriate knowledge, to assess the level of work being undertaken within AWE in relation to nuclear warhead production that could be of use to hostile states or third parties and aid their knowledge and understanding of the UK's nuclear programme.

It is concluded that the balance of public interest lies in ensuring that information is not released to hostile states or third parties that would allow deduction to be made of the nuclear warhead programme in order to safeguard national security. The level of prejudice against release of the exempted information is assessed at the higher level of 'would' rather than 'would be likely to'.

For Section 26 (Defence), it is recognised that there that there is a public interest in releasing the information which has been redacted within the document as it demonstrates the MOD's commitment to openness and transparency on nuclear matters and would provide assurance to the public that work at AWE is undertaken by suitably qualified and experienced personnel. There is also a presumption in favour of release under the FOI Act.

There is a strong public interest in maintaining the safety and security of nuclear weapons and defence nuclear material. Release of this information could indicate the level of staff present within specialist areas at any one time which may be of assistance to hostile forces in targeting or disrupting safety, security and operations at AWE.


It is concluded that the balance of public interest lies in ensuring that information is not released to hostile states or third parties that would aid their knowledge and result in disruption to the nuclear and defence programmes. The level of prejudice against release of the exempted information is assessed at the lower level of 'would be likely to' rather than 'would'.

Please note that the information released consists of the sub disciplines used by AWE plc to record their staff numbers and these are independent of material which appeared in TP1. There have been slight changes to the sub discipline list since those provided with the FOI response for TP1 on 6 June 2013. The figures supplied are the AWE employee and integrated personnel (contractor) total headcount at 31 December 2015 and therefore each employee is counted as 1, i.e. both full and part time staff.

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, 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 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,



Defence Equipment & Support

Discipline - Sub Discipline (Headcount) 31 Dec 2015	Employee	Integrated Personnel	Total
Business Services – Administration	205	20	225
Business Services – Business Support	7	0	7
Business Services – Commercial	13	2	15
Business Services – Communications	18	0	18
Business Services – Executive	10	0	10
Business Services – Finance	34	2	36
Business Services – Human Resources	38	2	40
Business Services – Investment Sanctioning	4	0	4
Business Services – Knowledge & Information Management	76	42	118
Business Services – Learning & Development	40	0	40
Business Services – Procurement	58	38	96
Total - Business Services	503	106	609
Engineering Manufacturing – Apprentice	110	0	110
Engineering Manufacturing – Calibration Engineering	█	█	█
Engineering Manufacturing - Commissioning	█	█	█
Engineering Manufacturing - Construction	█	█	█
Engineering Manufacturing – Craft Engineering	█	█	█
Engineering Manufacturing – Craft Machining	█	█	█
Engineering Manufacturing – Decommissioning Waste	█	█	█
Engineering Manufacturing – Facility Design	█	█	█
Engineering Manufacturing – Facility Engineering	█	█	█
Engineering Manufacturing – Facility Management	█	█	█
Engineering Manufacturing – Frontline work	█	█	█
Engineering Manufacturing – Human Factors	█	█	█
Engineering Manufacturing – Manufacturing	█	█	█
Engineering Manufacturing – Materials Management	█	█	█
Engineering Manufacturing - Operative	█	█	█
Engineering Manufacturing – Production Management	█	█	█
Engineering Manufacturing – Prod Planning	█	█	█
Engineering Manufacturing – System Engineering	█	█	█
Engineering Manufacturing – Technical Authority	█	█	█
Total - Engineering Manufacturing	2452	441	2893
Science – Applied Physics	█	█	█
Science – Computer Science	█	█	█
Science – Material Science	█	█	█
Science – Measurement Science	█	█	█
Science – Nuclear Threat specialists	█	█	█
Science – Radiation Physics	█	█	█
Science – Theoretical Physics	█	█	█
Total - Science	1042	2	1044
Technical Support - Assurance	█	█	█
Technical Support - Audit	█	█	█
Technical Support – Criticality Specialist	█	█	█
Technical Support – Design Support	█	█	█
Technical Support – Emergency Response	█	█	█
Technical Support – Environment	█	█	█
Technical Support – Health and Safety	█	█	█
Technical Support – IT/Telecoms	█	█	█
Technical Support – Project Control	█	█	█

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Technical Support – Project Management	█	█	█
Technical Support – Quality	█	█	█
Technical Support – Radiation Engineering	█	█	█
Technical Support – Safety Cases	█	█	█
Technical Support – Safety Support	█	█	█
Technical Support – Security	█	█	█
Technical Support – Technical Assurance	█	█	█
Technical Support – Transport	█	█	█
Total - Technical Support	1091	330	1421
Total	5088	879	5967