



Ministry
of Defence

Navy Command FOI Section
Navy Command Headquarters
MP 1-4, Leach Building
Whale Island
PORTSMOUTH
PO2 8BY

FOI 2018/08631

E-mail: navyse-foimailbox@mod.gov.uk

26 November 2018

Dear [REDACTED]

Release of Information

Further to our letter of 24 October 2018, I am now able to respond in full to your request for the following information:

Could I please request, in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act, records covering the Ships' Names Committee's advice to the Navy Board, the Secretary of State and finally the Sovereign, to name the four 'Vanguard' class submarines: HMS Vanguard, HMS Vigilant, HMS Victorious and HMS Vengeance. Please include all correspondence, memos, papers etc. covering all proposed names for the submarines, the reasons the above names were accepted and the reasons alternatives were rejected.

I believe the decision to name the first of class, HMS Vanguard was made sometime between 1982 and 1986. The name 'Vanguard' was released into the public domain when the contract for the submarine was let to VSEL (now BAE) in Barrow in April 1986.

There may also be some Ships Names Committee' records from the early 1990s as the names for additional submarines appear to have been subject to debate. The third submarine, HMS Vengeance was ordered in November 1990, but at some point between then and the ordering of the fourth submarine in November 1992, the name was changed to HMS Vigilant as Vengeance was considered to be politically incorrect. The fourth submarine was reportedly named HMS Vindictive, but this was also regarded as politically incorrect and changed to HMS Valiant before later being changed to HMS Vengeance.

The records of the Ships Names Committee should be self contained. There is a file in The National Archives, Kew, London, covering the naming of the 'Resolution' class Polaris submarines, the predecessors to the 'Vanguard' class.

Refined to:

Could I refine my original request to a period spanning 1984 - 1986

Your enquiry is being treated as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

As explained in our initial interim reply, a search was completed within the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and it was confirmed that some information in scope of your request is held. However, it was felt that some of this information fell within the scope of the qualified exemptions at Section 27(1)(b) (International Relations) and Section 36(2)(b)(i) (prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs) of the FOI Act.

The Department has now conducted the Public Interest Tests for both exemptions and in consideration of whether release of the information would, or would be likely to, be likely to, prejudice the effective conduct of public affairs under Section 36(2)(b)(i). After careful consideration of the information, the Department has concluded that the public interest in disclosure outweighs the public interest in maintaining this exemption.

Under s27(1)(b), information is exempt if its disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the interests of the UK abroad or the promotion or protection by the UK of its interests abroad. Some of the information may, if disclosed, impact negatively on, or prejudice the UK's international relationships and interests. The Department has concluded that the public interest in withholding the information outweighs the public interest in release.

Following this decision, the information the Department is able to provide you with can be found within the attached documents which are extracts from the papers of the Ships Naming Committee covering the period 1984-1986. As the information was designed for internal purposes only and not intended for public distribution, these papers have been redacted to remove any personal information in accordance with Section 40(2) of the FOI Act.

Section 40(2) applies to personal data relating to third parties. The release of personal information relating to other individuals would contravene the principles of the Data Protection Act 2018.

If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance.

If you wish to complain about the handling of your request, or the content of this response, you can request 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 should be made within 40 working days of the date of this response.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may raise your complaint directly to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not normally investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website at <https://ico.org.uk/>.

Yours sincerely

Navy Command Secretariat – FOI Section

MINUTES OF SHIPS' NAMES AND BADGES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 3 MAY 1984
XXXXXXX

Those present: Commodore C A F Buchanan CNSA Chairman XXXXXXXX/S.
 Sir XXXXXXXX XXXXXXXX
 XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX Head of Naval Historical Branch XXXXXXXX
 Cdr XXXXXXXX XXXX DNOT
 Cdr XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX DNAV
 Lt XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX CNSO
 XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX RW310 Secretary

Item 2 SSBNs

4. The meeting then turned to consider SSBN names, and discussed the proposals put forward on Head of NHB's list of 20th Century Battleship names. Hercules was ruled out as it had XXXXXXXXXXXXX connotations, and Indomitable and Inflexible had been taken by the French submarine force. It was agreed that there was no need to keep to names beginning with the same letter and after some discussion the following were proposed in order of preference:-

- 1. VANGUARD
- 2. DEFENCE
- 3. ORION
- 4. MAJESTIC

spares FORMIDABLE
COLOSSUS

The Secretary was asked to prepare a submission accordingly.

ACTION : SECRETARY

D/SSC/RW310(B)/50/1/14
24 January 1985

MINUTES OF MEETING OF SHIPS' NAMES AND BADGES COMMITTEE 22 JANUARY 1985

Those present:

XXXXXXXXX
Commodore C A F Buchanan, CNSA - Chairman XXXXXXXXX
Sir XXXXXXXXX Surrey Herald of Arms Extraordinary
XXXXXXXXXXXXX Head of Naval Historical Branch
Captain XXXXXX DNSD
Captain XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX, RFA
CommanderXXXXXXXXX DNSD
CommanderXXXXXXXXX DNOT
CommanderXXXXXXXXXXXXX DNW
Lt Commander XXXXXXXXX, CNSO
XXXXXXXXXXXXX, DRP(W) - Secretary

SHIPS' NAMES BUSINESS

Item 2 - SSBNs

3. The Committee was well aware, said the Chairman, of lobbying going on concerning SSBN names and that the 'V' names were the next series to be selected, after the 'U' class - UPHOLDER etc. However, the Committee has already selected the following names for the SSBNs:

1. VANGUARD
2. DEFENCE
3. ORION
4. MAJESTIC

Spares FORMIDABLE, COLOSSUS

and of the 'V' names VENGEANCE and VINDICTIVE in particular were unlikely to receive Board approval for political reasons.

4. CaptXXXXXX had a copy of the note concerned, which mentioned four options:
- a. V class - VANGUARD, VINDICTIVE, VENGEANCE, VULCAN, VIGILANT etc.
 - b. Battleship names - VANGUARD, MAJESTIC, POWERFUL etc.
 - c. I class - INDOMITABLE etc.
 - d. RODNEY, ANSON, HOWE, NELSON.

The Secretary observed that the name VULCAN was already in use at NRTE Downreay and Cdr XXXXXXX said that it was unfortunate that a good number of suitable names were being held by shore establishments. The Chairman undertook to seek JSL's views.

ACTION: CNSA

3

BRIEF FOR FIRST SEA LCDR
(in advance of call 12 Feb)

NAMES FOR SSBN 05 AND CLASS

1. The Ships' Names Committee is currently discussing names for the TRIDENT SSBNs. When I raised the subject with Controller during a recent call he recommended that I sought your views, informally as SOSM, before you relinquish office.

BACKGROUND

2. Following the alphabetical sequence of the RESOLUTION, SWIFTSURE, TRAFALGAR and UNDAUNTED classes it might be expected that the new SSBNs would be V's. Happily, the premise that submarine classes follow a sequential rule does not bear close examination. Having re-started with the A Class, (E)XPLORER and (E)XCALIBUR may have been a nod towards the previous sequence; PORPOISE and her theme sisters eccentrically preceded CBERON; DREADNOUGHT, VALIANT, WARSPITE and CHURCHILL are distinguished exceptions to any single rule. We are not constrained by precedent.

OPTIONS

3. The Committee has discussed several options including:
- A. Old V Class Discarded as unsuitable for Capital Ships.
 - B. V Capital Ships Difficult to find 4 and 2 spares. VANGUARD and VICTORIOUS are starters; VENGEANCE and VINDICTIVE could be difficult politically; VENERABLE is not recommended; VALIANT may overlap; VULCAN and VIGILANT are bespoke.
 - C. I Class INDOMITABLE etc. Discarded due to similarity to CVS's and the French SSBN force.
 - D. Capital Ship Names This is a very fruitful area and enables us to draw on punchy names, fine histories and good Battle Honours. It is our preferred option and our initial selection is VANGUARD, DEFENCE, ORION and MAJESTIC with FORMIDABLE and COLCASSUS as spares.
Not OK * No
4. I would be grateful for your views.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

C A F EUCHAWAN
COMMODORE NAVAL SHIP ACCEPTANCE
CHAIRMAN, SHIPS' NAMES COMMITTEE

(4)

SHIPS' NAMES AND BADGES COMMITTEE 7 MAY 1400 HRS
ROOM 2501 ESB

AGENDA

Minutes of the last meeting (held on 22 January) and update. 281

SHIPS' NAMES BUSINESS

1. SSBN names (the final round).

Distribution:

CNSA

Sir (XXXXXXXX)

Head of NHB

DNW Capt (XXXXXXX) (with copy of previous Minutes)

DNSD Cdr XXXXXXXX.

DNOT Cdr XXXXXXXX

CNSO Lt Cdr (XXXXXXXX)

DGST(N) Capt XXXXXXXXXXXXX

DRP(W) XXXXXXXXXXXXX.

unclass/NPM

OK

~~MANAGEMENT IN CONFIDENCE~~

unclass/NPM

D/SSC/RW310/50/1/14

MINUTES OF SHIPS' NAMES AND BADGES COMMITTEE 7 MAY 1987

Those Present:

- Cdr C A F Buchanan - CNSA - Chairman
- Sir XXXXXXXXXX - Surrey Herald of Arms Extraordinary
- XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX - Head of Naval Historical Branch
- Capt XXXXXXXXXX - DNW
- CdrXXXXXXXXXXXX - DNSD
- XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX - DST(SF)ST75C
- Lt Cdr XXXXXXXXXX - CNSO
- XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX - DRP(W) - Secretary

ACTION

SHIPS' NAMES BUSINESS

Item 1: SSBNs

4. The Chairman said that the range was now down to old capital ship names; ISL would be content with FORMIDABLE, VICTORIOUS, VANGUARD and PRINCE OF WALES. The Committee discussed these and other names and the final list was agreed as follows:

- a. VANGUARD
- b. FORMIDABLE
- c. VICTORIOUS
- d. BULWARK

Spares: PRINCE OF WALES, MAJESTIC

Secretary

unclass/NPM

MINUTES OF THE SHIPS' NAMES AND BADGES COMMITTEE 15 JANUARY 1986

6
435

Those present:

Cdre J B D Read

SirXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

XXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Cdr XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Cdr XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Lt Cdr XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Capt XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

XXXXXXXXXXXXXX

CNSA Chairman

Surrey Herald of Arms Extraordinary

AD/NSD (DD)

DNSD

DNOT

CNSO

DGST(N)

Secretary

3. The Secretary gave a short resume of actions since the last meeting:

the SSBN names had yet to be cleared by the Admiralty Board. The Chairman said that, on the C of N's instructions, the committee was to reconsider the SSBN names.

this underlined the urgency of obtaining approval for both SSBN and AOR names in view of their imminent order dates.

Ships Names Business

7. New Item SSBN Names

The Chairman had been advised by C of N that there needed to be more of a 'pattern' in the selection of the SSBN names - either all beginning with 'V' or capital ship names should be used that would be associated in the public mind with capital ships. C of N likes VANGUARD and VICTORIOUS and the Chairman said he favoured VENGEANCE. VALIANT was also mentioned (since the name could be introduced after the present VALIANT had decommissioned). The Secretary expressed reservations on the choice of VENGEANCE as he thought it unlikely that Ministers would approve its selection, and recommended VIGILANT instead. Head of NHB proposed VENERABLE but as usual (!) not all the committee were in favour of this name. After much discussion the final choice was made as follows:

- a. VANGUARD.
- b. VICTORIOUS.
- c. VENGEANCE.

d. VIGILANT.

Spares

VALIANT (if VIGILANT not chosen)
VENERABLE

The Secretary was asked to minute C of N forthwith.

Action Secretary

unclass/NPM

CNSA

SHIPS' NAMES AND BADGES COMMITTEE MEETING ON TUESDAY 24 JUNE AT 1400 HOURS

CHAIRMAN'S BRIEF

SHIPS' NAMES BUSINESS

4. SSBN names Item 2

You can ask Cdr XXXXXXXXXXXX to speak as he wanted this item on the agenda. It concerns CDS who feels that his recommendations (VANGUARD, FORMIDABLE, VICTORIOUS, BULWARK) were not taken account of because we switched in January to 'V' class names. Actually we have met him halfway into VANGUARD and VICTORIOUS so I don't think he can grumble. As you said it looks as though C of N did not discuss the matter with him.

CONFIDENTIAL
SHIP NAMES
24 JUNE 1985
116

MINUTES OF THE SHIPS' NAMES AND BADGES COMMITTEE 24 JUNE

Those present:

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Cdre J B D Read | CNSA Chairman |
| Sir xxxxxxxxxxxx | Surrey Herald of Arms Extraordinary |
| xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx | AD/NSD (D&D) |
| Capt xxxxxxxxxxxx | DNW |
| Cdr xxxxxxxxxxxx | DNSD |
| Cdr xxxxxxxxxxxx | DNOT |
| Capt xxxxxxxxxxxx | DGST(N) |
| Lt Cdr xxxxxxxxxx | CNSO |
| xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx | Secretary |

2. The Secretary was asked to give members an update since January. He said the following names have been announced:-

SSBN 05 VANGUARD in April

Ships' Names Business

Item 2 SSBN Names

Cdr xxxxxxxxxxxx was concerned that the revised list of names agreed at the last meeting had not taken into account the views of CDS, expressed when he was ISL, which had been reflected in the May 1985 selection. The Chairman reassured him that the revised proposal for the 'V' Class has been made in the knowledge of CDS's views and that it reflected them, at least in part; he had understood that CofN had intended to write to CDS explaining the change. Apparently, this had not happened, and the Chairman would write accordingly to rectify the situation.

Action CNSA

Before any more submarine names were chosen FOSM would be consulted informally by CNSA.

Action CNSA

MINUTES OF THE SHIPS' NAMES AND BADGES COMMITTEE TRAFALGAR DAY MEETING, 21 OCTOBER 1986

Those present:

Cdre J B D Read	CNSA Chairman
Sir (XXXXXXXXXXXXXX)	Surrey Herald of Arms Extraordinary
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	AD/NSD (D&D)
Capt (XXXXXXXXXXXXXX)	DNW
Cdr (XXXXXXXXXXXXXX)	DNSD
Cdr (XXXXXXXXXXXXXX)	DNOT
Lt Cdr (XXXXXXXXXXXXXX)	CNSO
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	DRP(W) Secretary

SHIPS' NAMES BUSINESS

ITEM NO 2 - SSBN NAMES

The Chairman informed the committee he proposed to start the submission for approval of VICTORIOUS for the second SSBN (Trident) name (subject to consultation with FOSM). This was endorsed by members and in response to a query from the Secretary he affirmed that the choice of names for the two remaining hulls would remain open for the time being.

ACTION: SECRETARY