



Ministry  
of Defence

Ministry of Defence  
Main Building  
Whitehall  
London SW1A 2HB  
United Kingdom

Ref: FOI2019/00641

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

January 2019

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email of 15 January requesting the following information:

*“Please can you confirm if there is a British military presence in the Yemeni province of Al Mahra and if so which regiment?”*

*If there are UK personnel in Al Mahra please can details be provided on exactly what it is they are doing in the country and who they are supporting and working alongside and why, and where they are based.*

*Please also provide details on the number of personnel, how long they have been in Al Mahra, when they are expected to leave, and who authorised the decision to deploy the personnel in Al Mahra.”*

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

Under sections 23(5) (Information supplied by, or relating to, bodies dealing with security matters), 24(2) (National security), 26(3) (Defence) and 27(4) (International relations) the MOD neither confirms nor denies whether it holds any information in scope of your request. Section 23 is an absolute exemption and not subject to a public interest test. Sections 24, 26 and 27 are qualified exemptions and are subject to a public interest test. A public interest test has been conducted and the balance of public interest lay in neither confirming nor denying whether the MOD held any information in scope of your request. This should not be used as an indication that such information is or is not held.

We have determined that in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exclusion of the duty to confirm or deny outweighs the public interest in confirming whether or not the information is held, and to give a statement of the reasons why the exemption applies could itself involve the disclosure of exempt information. Therefore, under section 17(4) of the Act the MOD is not obliged to give such a statement.

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 at the address above. 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.gov.uk](mailto:CIO-FOI-IR@mod.gov.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 normally 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, [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk).

Yours sincerely,

**NATIONAL SECURITY DIRECTORATE  
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE**