



Ministry
of Defence

[REDACTED]

FOI2019/02268

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

[REDACTED]

9 May 2019

Dear [REDACTED],

Release of Information

Further to our correspondence of 17 April 2019, I am now in a position to provide you with a substantive response to your request for information in relation to the number of assets the UK has contributed to NATO's Operation SEA GUARDIAN.

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

In our previous correspondence, we confirmed that a search had been conducted within the Ministry of Defence and that information in scope of your request is held. In the same correspondence we also explained that it was determined that to provide some of the information you require could fall within the scope of the qualified exemption under section 26 (Defence) of the FOI Act.

With regard to section 26, as this is a qualified exemption, it has been necessary to decide whether, in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure. Under section 26(1)(b), information is exempt if its disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the capability, effectiveness or security of any relevant forces.

After careful consideration of the information concerning the assets provided by the UK in contribution to NATO's Operation SEA GUARDIAN, while we would normally withhold information that would give an indication of our capabilities and operations, in this instance it has been concluded that the public interest in releasing the information outweighs the public interest in maintaining the exemption. As such, the table in the attached Annex provides information on the number and complement of UK Royal Navy, Royal Marines and Royal Fleet Auxiliary assets that contributed to the NATO Operation SEA GUARDIAN in 2017 and 2018. I should explain that the assets identified at Annex A that contributed to

this operation's broad range of tasks did so in the form of direct and associated support which was network-based and not reliant on permanently assigned units/forces.

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

FOI2019/02268

The table below shows the number of Royal Navy (RN), Royal Marines and Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) assets that the UK contributed to the NATO Operation SEA GUARDIAN in 2017 and 2018.

Year	Number of RN and RFA Ships	Aircraft Carried	Total Complement
2017	7	3	879
2018	7	3	1,165

Notes:

1. The number and type of helicopters embarked will vary depending on the activity.
2. In respect of complement, the table above is an estimate based on typical complemented positions for each platform when in their normal operating role.
3. Ships' complements are not fixed and will vary, even across a class, depending on equipment fits and in response to specific tasking.