



Ministry  
of Defence

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Ref: FOI2019/06236

E-mail: [ISS-SecretariatGpMbx@mod.gov.uk](mailto:ISS-SecretariatGpMbx@mod.gov.uk)

23 July 2019

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email of 28 May 2019 requesting the following information:

*"I wish to submit a request for some of the organisation's information around the internal plans and strategy documents regarding the ICT department.*

*The ICT documents I require are the 2019 – Onwards iteration. If any of the documents are, for example 2017-2020 they will suffice, but it would be ideal to see the 2019 version of the document. Or the most recent update.*

*I wish to obtain the following documents:*

- 1. ICT/IM&T/IS Strategy- The IT department strategy or plans; highlights their current and future objectives.*
- 2. ICT Org Chart- A visual document that present the structure of the IT department. If possible, please include name and job titles. If this can't be sent, please consider a version with just the job titles, and the names and any other sensitive information redacted.*
- 3. ICT Annual or Business Plan- An annual update on the progress of working according to the ICT strategy / a document that highlights specific goals that you are working towards within your ICT department.*
- 4. ICT Capital Programme/budget- A document that shows financial budget regarding current and future ICT projects or goals."*

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

A search for the information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence, and I can confirm that some of the information in scope of your request is held and can be found attached with this letter.

However, some of the information falls entirely within the scope of the absolute exemptions provided for at Sections 40 (Personal Data). This has been applied to the Information Systems and Services (ISS) Org Chart in order to protect personal information as governed by the Data Protection Act 1998. Section 40 is an absolute exemption and there is therefore no requirement to consider the public interest in making a decision to withhold the information.

Also, some information within the ISS Business Plan falls within either the absolute exemption Section 23 (Information supplied by, or relating to, bodies dealing with security matters) or the qualified exemptions 24 (National Security), 27 (International Relations) and 43 (Commercial Interests) of the FOIA, and has been redacted. This is for the following reasons:

Section 23(1) (Information supplied by, or relating to, bodies dealing with security matters) and Sectionb 24(1) (National Security) are being cited in the alternative as it is not appropriate, in the

circumstances of the case, to say which of the two exemptions is engaged so as not to undermine national security or reveal the extent of any involvement, or not, of the bodies dealing with security matters. Section 23 is an absolute exemption and, if it were engaged in this material the MOD would not be required to consider whether the public interest favours disclosure of this information. Any information that is not exempt from disclosure under Section 23(1) could be exempt under Section 24(1) of the FOI Act, which exempts information from disclosure if the exemption is required for the purposes of safeguarding national security.

Section 24 is a qualified exemption which means that the information requested can only be withheld if the public interest in doing so outweighs the public interest in disclosure. Release of information if Section 24 is engaged would promote accountability and transparency for processing of national security matters; however, conversely, if information that would reveal details of classified projects and activities with national security implications were released, it could compromise the Government's ability to maintain national security. We cannot, however, say which of the two exemptions is engaged, but to the extent that Section 24(1) might be engaged, we acknowledge the public interest in openness and transparency, but we consider that there is a stronger public interest in protecting national security.

Section 27(1) of the FOIA exempts disclosure of information that would, or would be likely to, prejudice relations between the United Kingdom and any other state. In favour of release is the presumption towards disclosure under the FOIA, as answering this question would increase transparency of the level of MOD's IT security interactions with overseas interlocutors. However, the exemption has been applied here because disclosure would be more likely to prejudice the capability of MOD to conduct such interactions, and therefore I have set the level against release of the exempted information at the higher level of "would" rather than "would be likely to".

Section 43 of the FOIA 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 to disclose. In favour of release is the presumption towards disclosure, as releasing this information would increase transparency of MOD's commercial interactions. Section 43(2) has been applied because the information in scope of the exemption would affect the commercial interests of the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and would put the MOD at a disadvantage in future negotiations. For these reasons I have set the level of "would", rather than "would be likely to".

#### Bullet Point 1

Under section 21 of the FOIA, the information you have requested for bullet point 1 is reasonably accessible to the public and I have provided a link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/digital-and-information-technologies-strategy/digital-and-information-technologies-strategy>

#### Bullet Points 2 and 3

For information requested under bullet point 2 and 3 please see attached documents:

- ISS Org Chart
- ISS Business Plan 2018-2019

#### Bullet Point 4

We do not hold any information matching the criteria specified in bullet point 4.

Under Section 16 of the Act (Advice and Assistance) you may find it helpful to note that the MOD publishes its expenditure on IT and telecommunications as part of its annual report and accounts. For more information please use link below:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/727618/CCS207\\_CCS0318104056-1\\_MOD\\_ARA\\_2017-18 - Web PDF.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/727618/CCS207_CCS0318104056-1_MOD_ARA_2017-18_-_Web_PDF.pdf)

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.gov.uk](mailto:CIO-FOI-IR@mod.gov.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,

Information Systems and Services (ISS) Secretariat