



Ministry of Defence

Ministry of Defence
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Our Ref: FOI2019/00843

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Via email: [REDACTED]

14 February 2019

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email received on 21 January 2019 requesting the following information:

1. *Has there ever been a credible cost analysis and comparison regarding the following two options, namely the total cost to the taxpayer of maintaining the nuclear submarine industry and MOD/RN costs in total vs. the cost of giving up this entire industry and RN Nuclear Submarine capability?*
 - a. *If so, what body undertook this research under what defined commission or brief, and what were the findings?*
 - b. *If not, why has this never been done? And is such an analysis due at any stage?*
2. *What would the net effect cost wise be of Scottish Independence, to the MOD/RN, and if possible, the related Industry and areas of employment in Scotland and the rest of the UK?*

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

A search for the information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence and I can confirm that no information in scope of your request has been located.

Note that Section 1 of the Act does not provide a right to ask questions of public authorities, only for a right to request recorded information on a particular topic. We have interpreted your questions 1 and 1a as requests for recorded information. Under Section 16(1) of the Act whereby public authorities have a duty to provide advice and assistance to requesters, you may find it helpful to note the following:

Regarding your question 1b, there are no plans currently to conduct a cost analysis and comparison such as you describe. This is because successive UK Governments, including this Government, have concluded that for as long as nuclear weapons exist a nuclear deterrent is an essential part of our insurance against the uncertainties and risks of the future. The Government's view is that this is not the right time for the UK to give up its nuclear deterrent. In the current security climate, the Government believes we can best protect ourselves by the continued operation of a minimum, credible nuclear deterrent based on a continuous at sea deterrence posture delivered by four submarines.

Regarding your question 2, the people of Scotland voted to remain part of the UK in 2014, and they will continue to benefit from the security the deterrent provides.

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

If you wish to complain about any aspect of 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). Please note that any request for an internal review must 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: 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 <http://www.ico.org.uk/>.

Yours sincerely,

Defence Nuclear Organisation Secretariat