



Ministry
of Defence

[REDACTED]

FOI2019/13585

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

[REDACTED]

15 January 2020

Dear [REDACTED],

Release of Information

Thank you for your correspondence of 13 December 2019 in which you requested the following information:

'I would appreciate documentation that shows the MV Laertes was either requisitioned or chartered to head south' [For the 1982 Falklands conflict]

Your enquiry has been considered to be a request for information in accordance with the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000.

I can confirm that the Ministry of Defence (MOD) holds information in scope of your request. Along with all UK Armed Forces units engaged in the Falklands conflict, the MV Laertes is listed amongst the vessels of the Merchant Navy as "Ships Taken up from Trade"; this is in Admiral Sir John Fieldhouse's Despatch on the conflict "Published by Authority" in the Supplement to The London Gazette dated 14 December 1982. A copy of the Supplement can be found at the following link:

<https://cb786b42ab2de72f5694-c7a3803ab0f7212d059698df03ade453.ssl.cf1.rackcdn.com/821213%20Op%20Crop%20Despatch%20%28653-20%29.pdf>

The MOD is permitted to withhold information where an exemption is considered justifiable. As the information you have requested is already available to the public, we have assessed your request falls under the absolute exemption at section 21 – information reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means – of the FOI Act. Consequently, we are not obliged to provide you with this information.

Under Section 16 (Advice and Assistance) of the FOI Act, you may wish to note that in accordance with the Public Records Act MOD is required to transfer records considered to

be of historical interest to The National Archive (TNA) for opening to the general public at the 30 year point except for records of particular sensitivity for national security or other reasons where MOD is permitted to hold the records for a longer period. Consequently, if documentation of that age has survived, it will be held at TNA, Kew

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