



Ministry of Defence

Fraud Defence
Ministry of Defence
MOD Main Building
03.N.01
Whitehall, London
SW1A 2HB

Telephone: +44 (0)20 7218 9000
E-mail: FraudDefence-Engagement@mod.gov.uk

Reference: FOI2020/13514

28 January 2021

email to: [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 8th December 2020 requesting the following information:

“Please could you send me the following information:

1. How many weapons for which the Department has responsibility have been recorded as lost or stolen in the 12 months from 1 October 2019 to 30 September 2020. Please break down by type and provide as much detail as possible about specific occasions.
2. How many munitions for which the Department has responsibility have been recorded as lost or stolen in the 12 months from 1 October 2019 to 30 September 2020. Please break down by type and provide as much detail as possible about specific occasions.
3. How many pieces of other hardware costing in excess of £1000 for which the Department has responsibility have been recorded as stolen in the 12 months from 1 October 2019 to 30 September 2020. Please break down by type and provide as much detail as possible about specific occasions.
4. How many department computers, laptops, and memory sticks for which the Department has responsibility have been recorded as lost or stolen in the 12 months from 1 October 2019 to 30 September 2020. Please break down by type and provide as much detail as possible about specific occasions.”

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.

1. How many weapons for which the Department has responsibility have been recorded as lost or stolen in the 12 months from 1 October 2019 to 30 September 2020. Please break down by type and provide as much detail as possible about specific occasions.

2. How many munitions for which the Department has responsibility have been recorded as lost or stolen in the 12 months from 1 October 2019 to 30 September 2020. Please break down by type and provide as much detail as possible about specific occasions.

The information you have requested can be found below, but some of the information falls entirely within the scope of absolute exemptions provided for at Section 21 (Information reasonably accessible to the applicant) and qualified exemptions provided for at Section 31 (Law Enforcement) of the FOIA and has been withheld.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/foi-responses-released-by-mod-week-commencing-12-october-2020>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/foi-responses-released-by-mod-week-commencing-26-october-2020>

In addition to the above, since 1 January 2020, the following firearm(s) and ammunition were reported, and remain, missing:

Explosive munitions: Type	Quantity	Lost/Stolen
9mm	76	Lost
5.56mm	2419	Lost
7.62mm	789	Lost
4.6mm	7	Lost
20mm	2	Lost
.22	19	Lost

The MOD takes the security of firearms and ammunition very seriously and have robust procedures to deter and prevent losses and thefts which are constantly reviewed. The ammunition losses reported have occurred as a result of accidental loss during exercises or on operations.

Section 31 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 in disclosure. Section 31 has been applied because releasing details of the unit responsible/location of loss or theft could be prejudicial to the prevention and detection of crime. When a public interest test was conducted relating to the use of this section, it was deemed that the balance of public interest lay against the release of unit responsible for the afore-mentioned reasons.

3. How many pieces of other hardware costing in excess of £1000 for which the Department has responsibility have been recorded as stolen in the 12 months from 1 October 2019 to 30 September 2020. Please break down by type and provide as much detail as possible about specific occasions.

All Hardware (interpreted as MOD Assets/equipment) centrally reported stolen and with a value recorded between October 2019 and September 2020. Please note that this response only lists those items where the cases have been closed within the time frame specified and the completed investigations established that items were stolen. *source - Fraud Defence*

Item stolen	Location	Items recovered
Vehicle part	Kenya	No
2 x 30 HP Outboard Motors	Leicestershire	No
Vehicle Trailer tilt	Falkland Islands	No
Generator	Gloucestershire	No
2 x Headlights	Colchester	No
Bowman user data terminal without hard drive	Croatia	No

Under section 23(5) (Information supplied by, or relating to, bodies dealing with security matters) the MOD neither confirms nor denies whether there is additional information in scope of your request. This is an absolute exemption and not subject to a public interest test. This should not be taken as an indication that additional information is or is not held by the department.

The MOD works hard to detect and deter theft and there are robust processes in place to raise awareness of the need for vigilance in all aspects of security. Just as theft occurs in wider society, the MOD is not immune, and we actively encourage individuals to report any evidence of loss or suspicion of theft. It is important to note that in some cases of reported theft the property is later recovered. In the case of key assets however, MOD sites have a wide range of additional security measures to ensure their safety.

4. How many department computers, laptops, and memory sticks for which the Department has responsibility have been recorded as lost or stolen in the 12 months from 1 October 2019 to 30 September 2020. Please break down by type and provide as much detail as possible about specific occasions.

Using the Defence Incident Management Database, the following numbers were retrieved for the Loss/Theft of Department Computers, Laptops and USB sticks by month since 1st October 2019 to 30 September 2020. Some of the losses can be attributed to accounting errors.

Source - ISS Defence Assurance and Information Security (DAIS)

Month	Computers	Laptops	USBs	Total
Oct-19	3	19	7	3
Nov-19		26	8	0
Dec-19	1	17	1	1
Jan-20		13	3	0
Feb-20		21	8	0
Mar-20		8	11	0
Apr-20		179**	2	0
May-20	1	10	0	1
Jun-20		28	4	0
Jul-20	2	22	7	2
Aug-20	3	6	3	3
Sep-20	1	8	3	1
Total	11	357	57	425

*There may be a reduction in these losses where investigations are ongoing.

** The losses in April include items requiring a system update that were recorded as lost until such time the relevant Department could confirm their current location.

The MOD is a very large organisation which employs over 280,000 personnel worldwide. All breaches of security are taken very seriously. MOD Policy requires all breaches to be reported

regardless of whether there is firm evidence of loss or just an inability to account for some devices. All incidents are subjected to an initial security risk assessment with further action taken on a proportionate basis.

It is also MOD policy that all laptop, tablet computers and removable media are encrypted to minimise the impact if a loss were to occur. Investigations indicate that many of the losses identified are in fact accounting errors highlighted by security mustering processes.

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

Fraud Defence