



# Ministry of Defence

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Ref: FOI2020/08708

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E-mail: [REDACTED]

10 August 2020

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your E-mail of 27 July requesting the following information:

*“According to Part 2 of the JSP, 'The guidance laid out in this JSP should be followed at all times' and in section 4 the 'initial assessment of PR value of the proposed idea' isn't optional or only carried out in certain circumstances. I am uncertain why the letter you reference claims otherwise. Part 2 also outlines the scale of PR ratings (from 0 to 3, though there are two different kinds of 3) and how, depending on which rating the project/idea receives it can be treated differently with regards to access, charging costs and so on. This is what I refer to by 'which track' - essentially I mean what PR rating the projects got, since the different versions of the MOD support process, the different 'tracks', are determined by that rating.*

*Indeed, it appears that this information - the PR ratings for different projects - would likely be included in the Defence Communications Planner, which sounds like a central repository for all such requests and projects, whether or not they ended up being supported by the MOD. If that is true then I hereby change my second request to ask for a copy of this Planner, from 2015 to present, and from there I can submit further requests on projects that are of particular interest to me. I do appreciate that the way I originally worded this request would likely be too burdensome and run over the cost limit for FOI requests.*

*I hope this clarifies matters, please get back to me explaining more about what the Defence Communications Planner is and whether it contains these PR ratings, or if there is any separate document, database, spreadsheet or similar that contains these PR ratings for ideas/projects that have requested MOD support in recent years.*

The Directorate of Defence Communications (DDC) has been asked to respond to your request as the main communications area within the MOD.

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). I can confirm that the Ministry of Defence (MOD) does not hold information within the scope of your request.

This request is a clarification of your previous FOI reference FOI2020/06500. Your request has been interpreted to mean any information held by DDC on PR ratings as part of initial PR assessments of film projects which have been recorded in the Defence Communications Planner which for the purpose of this FOI you have assumed is a central repository for all such film projects.

Under Section 16 of the FOI Act (Advice and Assistance) it may be helpful if I explain in detail about how the Communications Planner works and how projects are initially dealt with, so that you could see how we have come to the above conclusion.

DDC does manage a Communications Planner database for planning purposes. However, it is not a decision making tool. It is just a logging and tracking system for all communication events across the MOD. It is not specifically for recording film projects, neither is there a way of categorising the data in it into just film projects. I have however undertaken a search using the term film for the last year and nothing was found in scope of your request. It is not possible to search back further due to the volume of entries the system which prohibits a larger search parameter. Your assumption that we would record any projects that were rejected after initial assessment is incorrect. The Communications Planner only records events that are going ahead.

Please note if you were to ask for a list of all entries held on the Communications Planner regardless of whether they are related to films or not, then this would most likely be classed as a burdensome request in view of the amount of data held.

Turning to the assessment process for film projects. There is no set forum or structure for discussing the initial PR value of any bid for film projects the DDC receives. Requests could come into the department to any desk officer within the communications area, be it within DDC, or any of the other areas of the MOD such as the single services, the Royal Navy, Army and RAF. This could be an email or phone call. In the case of DDC we would discuss the project informally and then decide either not to proceed or to begin the process of further formal assessment. Therefore if you were to ask for any correspondence showing these assessments it would require contacting all communications staff within the MOD and it is likely that this would be cost prohibitive within the FOI Act. Please note other areas of the MOD may have a different process in place. Plus other exemptions would be likely to apply such as commercial in confidence for example were you to ask for any correspondence between the MOD and film companies.

If you are not satisfied with this response or you wish to complain about any aspect of the handling of your request, then you should contact us in the first instance at the address above. If informal resolution is not possible and you are still dissatisfied then you may apply for 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](mailto:CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk)). Please note that any request for an internal review must be made within 40 working days of the date on which the attempt to reach informal resolution has come to an end.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may take your complaint 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. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website, <http://www.ico.org.uk>.

Yours sincerely,

DDC Secretariat Parliamentary.