



Ministry of Defence

Our Ref: FOI2021/06048

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23 July 2021

Dear 

Thank you for your email of 8 June 2021 confirming your request of 23 April 2021 for the following information relating to the recruitment of the Chair of the Nuclear Research Advisory Council:

- 1. What was the field?*
- 2. What was the scoring mechanism used? I would like to see details of this, including any guidelines offered to the selectors please.*
- 3. Apart from the panel I met, who was involved in the scoring/sift process and what are their relevant biographies?*
- 4. How did I score? Did those who evaluated me leave any additional comments? I would like to see these details held about me please. These should include individual score sheets and comments so I understand whether and how individuals judged the application before coming to a group decision*
- 5. Where did the scoring place me in the overall cohort?*
- 6. Given my profile, was there anything I could have done better to be placed higher under the selection process used?*
- 7. Was I recommended to the minister for appointment? What was the panel's rationale for recommendation/non-recommendation? What was the minister's rationale behind the final decision?*
- 8. Is the selection process itself reviewed? How?*

On 28 May 2021 clarification was sought on how you wanted your 23 April request to be administered. We explained that a request under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act) would be the most appropriate approach for your questions 1, 2, 3 and 8 above, but that, as questions 4,5,6,and 7 are for personal information, they would be subject to data protection restrictions and would be more appropriately handled under a separate Subject Access Request to the Ministry of Defence (MOD). On 8 June 2021, you authorised us to channel your questions to different parts of the MOD as appropriate. Accordingly, we can advise you that your questions 4, 5, 6 and 7 are being considered by Defence Business Services as a Subject Access Request; we have considered your questions under the terms of the Act and can confirm we hold some information in scope of your questions, as follows:

Question 1

The following information is in scope of your request and is provided at Annex A:

- Extracts from document – Commissioner for Public Appointments’ Interview Panel Report - Chair of the Nuclear Research Advisory Council dated 27 January 2020

Question 2

The following information is in scope of your request and is provided at Annex B:

- Extract from document – NRAC Chair Recruitment Shortlisting Record dated 6 November 2019

Question 3

The following information is in scope of your request and is provided at Annex C:

- Extract from document – DNO 10.01.02 - RECRUITMENT OF THE NUCLEAR RESEARCH ADVISORY COUNCIL CHAIR – dated 12 September 2019

Questions 4, 5, 6 and 7

We have identified information in scope of your request for questions 4, 5, 6 and 7. However this information must be withheld under the absolute exemption set out at Section 40(1) of the Act (Personal Information), as release of this information would contravene data protection principles under the Data Protection Act 2018. As we have advised above, these questions are being considered under a Subject Access Request by Defence Business Services.

Question 8

No information in scope was located. The Act entitles individuals to request recorded information from a public authority but places no obligation on the authority to answer questions by creating recorded information where it does not already exist. However, under Section 16(1) of the Act, whereby public authorities should provide advice and assistance to requesters, so far as it is reasonable to do so, you may find the following information helpful.

The Nuclear Research Advisory Council Chair appointment is a Ministerial Regulated Public Appointment. All such appointments must comply with the 2016 Governance Code which can be found at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/578498/governance_code_on_public_appointments_16_12_2016.pdf. The Office for the Commissioner for Public Appointments routinely audits the MOD to ensure its appointments meet the requirements of the Governance Code. Appointments are made by the Minister on individual merit, to ensure fair and open competition. The Advisory Assessment Panel (AAP) supports the Minister by identifying appointable individuals and outlining how each candidate meets the essential and desirable criteria for the role. All APP’s must include an Independent Panel Member (IPM), whose role is to ensure the AAP complies with the Governance Code. The IPM must be independent of the MOD and independent of the committee which is being recruited for. The Minister approves the composition of the AAP and the IPM at the beginning of the recruitment campaign.

If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, 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 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 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 Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not normally investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. They 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 their website at <https://ico.org.uk/>.

Yours sincerely,

Defence Nuclear Organisation Secretariat

Extracts from document – Commissioner For Public Appointments’ Interview Panel Report - Chair of the Nuclear Research Advisory Council dated 27 January 2020

Following the closing date for applications on 30 October 2019; the total number of applicants who have applied for the Chair positions was five.

For each candidate the panel had their CV and an expression of interest, giving evidence and examples of their ability to meet the criteria in the role and person specification. The Panel selected a shortlist of 3 candidates for interview.

Extract from document – NRAC Chair Recruitment Shortlisting Record dated 6 November 2019

***Please grade all candidates between 0 – 5 using the following system.**

- 0 – No evidence provided against criteria
- 1 – Insufficient evidence provided against criteria
- 2 – Limited evidence provided against criteria
- 3 – Sufficient evidence provided against criteria
- 4 – Good evidence provided against criteria
- 5 – Strong evidence provided against criteria

**Extract from document – DNO 10.01.02 - RECRUITMENT OF THE NUCLEAR RESEARCH
ADVISORY COUNCIL CHAIR – dated 12 September 2019**

PROPOSED MEMBERSHIP OF THE ADVISORY ASSESSMENT PANEL

It is suggested that the Panel for the recruitment of a new Chair to the Nuclear Research Advisory Council comprises of:

Dr Paul Hollinshead, DNO Director Warhead (Panel Chair)

Paul is the Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) of the Nuclear Warhead Programme, responsible to Parliament, SofS and PUS for setting the customer requirement for Warhead and the Nuclear Warhead Capability Sustainment Programme (NWCSP), ensuring the programme is effectively governed and independently assured, delivering the nuclear R&D programme for Warhead and reviewing Nuclear propulsion.

Professor Robin Grimes, CSA(N)

Robin was appointed Ministry of Defence Chief Scientific Adviser (Nuclear) in 2017. Since 2002 Robin has been Professor of Materials Physics at Imperial College London. From 2013 - 2018 he was the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Chief Scientific Adviser. He joined the Materials Department at Imperial College in 1995 as Governors' Lecturer. Prior to this he was Assistant Director of the Davy Faraday Research Laboratory at the Royal Institution. He spent the year 2000 at Los Alamos National Laboratory as Bernd T. Matthias Scholar.

Yvette Long, Independent Panel Member

Yvette regularly undertakes a range of recruitment activities including sitting on MOD senior selection boards. Her previous experience includes working in the MOD HQ HR team (retired 2013). She currently has a portfolio career specialising in recruitment and development.