



Ministry
of Defence

Defence Equipment and Support
Secretariat
#2043 Maple 0a
Ministry of Defence
Abbey Wood
Bristol BS34 8JH



Email: DES SEC-PolSec LE-JSC-WPNS@mod.uk

Our Reference:
FOI2021/06656
Date: 02 July 2021

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 22 June 2021 to the Defence Equipment and Support (DE&S) area of the Ministry of Defence (MOD), concerning the wreck of the 'Empress of India'. You have requested assistance trying to locate documents about this ship.

Your email was in response to the letter to you dated 9 June 2021 from the Navy Command Secretariat, advising you to contact the Defence Equipment Sales Authority (DESA); part of DE&S. This advice followed several pieces of correspondence between you and Navy Command regarding your initial query on behalf of [REDACTED] formerly of [REDACTED] as follows:

'We have advised to contact you by [REDACTED] from the Receiver of Wrecks in regard to the Empress of India. We are the owners of the wreck having purchased it when advertised in Lloyds List. We have a document to prove this as attached. (Certificate of the purchase of the Empress of India dated 7 June 1978 confirming purchase took place 10 April 1978.)

We were informed at time of purchase that the propellers were removed prior to sale to us. We have however since been informed the wreck has been sold to a German based company that the engine rooms have been removed. We invite your comments.'

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 and I can confirm that after an extensive search of DESA's records, no information in scope of your request is held.

In accordance with Section 16 (Advice and Assistance) of the FOI Act, and as previously advised by Navy Command Secretariat in their letter dated 25 February 2021, you may wish to consider approaching The National Archives, at: <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk>. They may hold additional information to help you with your enquiry.

You may also be aware of the government website on Wreck and Salvage Law: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/wreck-and-salvage-law>. However, this website also goes into detail about the law relating to wreck and salvage, and provides contact details for

Defence Equipment & Support

organisations that can provide help, advice and information on wrecks. You may find this of use in your efforts to establish ownership of the Empress of India.

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 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 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

DE&S Secretariat