



# Ministry of Defence

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Ref. FOI 2022/06644

Dear [REDACTED]

27 June 2022

Thank you for your email of 31 May 2022 requesting the following information:

- 1) *"How the MOD/DIO polices and/or monitors hunts on land for which it has the authority to issue trail hunting licences;*
- 2) *the number of times in the calendar years 2006, 2010, 2019 and 2022 that the DIO/MoD has monitored hunts on land for which it has the authority to issue trail hunting licences;*
- 3) *the number of complaints or allegations the DIO/MoD have received regarding illegal hunting in the calendar years 2006, 2010, 2019 and 2022;*
- 4) *whether the DIO/MoD records or is aware of other complaints or allegations about hunts it has licensed, and if so, whether it assesses the likelihood of an offence by licensed hunts on land for which the DIO/MoD has authority to issue trail hunting licences;*
- 5) *the number of investigations DIO/MoD carried out as a result of a complaint about or allegation of illegal hunting, whether on its land or not, in the calendar years 2006, 2010, 2019, and 2022.*
- 6) *the number of trail hunting licenses suspended or revoked as a result of these investigations or for other reasons in the years 2006, 2010, 2019 and 2022, and the reasons for suspension or revocation;*
- 7) *what assessment the DIO/MoD have made of the potential for illegal hunting activity on land for which it has the authority to issue trail hunting licences in the light of the conviction of Mark Hankinson;*
- 8) *what assessment the DIO/MoD have made on the impact on wildlife of trail hunting and illegal hunting on its land;*
- 9) *if the DIO/MoD have not made the assessments mentioned in points 7 and 8, whether they intend to make any such assessment."*

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 (MOD) and I can confirm that some information in scope of your request is held.

The information you have requested can be found below:

Q1) *How the MOD/DIO polices and/or monitors hunts on land for which it has the authority to issue trail hunting licences;*

A1) The terms of the MOD's licence are clear; that only trail hunting and drag hunting carried out in accordance with the provisions of the Act are permitted. Anything else would be a breach of licence but, more importantly, contravene the Hunting Act 2004.

MOD may monitor hunting activities to ensure compliance with the law and the terms of the licence. A visual check may also be undertaken by Training Safety Marshals, to ensure that those participating in the hunt are in the correct area and that the activities do not prejudice the operational use or safety of the MOD property

*Q2) The number of times in the calendar years 2006, 2010, 2019 and 2022 that the DIO/MoD has monitored hunts on land for which it has the authority to issue trail hunting licences;*

A2) None.

*Q3) The number of complaints or allegations the DIO/MoD have received regarding illegal hunting in the calendar years 2006, 2010, 2019 and 2022;*

A3) Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) has received no complaints or allegations regarding illegal hunting for the listed calendar years of 2006, 2010, 2019 and 2022. The wider MOD has received 10 complaints or allegations dated from August 2021 to date.

*Q4) Whether the DIO/MOD records or is aware of other complaints or allegations about hunts it has licensed, and if so, whether it assesses the likelihood of an offence by licensed hunts on land for which the DIO/MoD has authority to issue trail hunting licences;*

A4) Information not held.

*Q5) The number of investigations DIO/MoD carried out as a result of a complaint about or allegation of illegal hunting, whether on its land or not, in the calendar years 2006, 2010, 2019, and 2022.*

A5) DIO have not carried out any investigations as a result of a complaint or allegation about illegal hunting in the listed calendar years of 2006, 2010, 2019 and 2022. From August 2021 to date, the wider MOD has carried out 7 investigations.

*Q6) The number of trail hunting licenses suspended or revoked as a result of these investigations or for other reasons in the years 2006, 2010, 2019 and 2022, and the reasons for suspension or revocation;*

A6) Information not held. Under Section 16 of the FOIA (Advice and Assistance), you may find it helpful to know that no trail hunting licences have been suspended or revoked.

*Q7) What assessment the DIO/MoD have made of the potential for illegal hunting activity on land for which it has the authority to issue trail hunting licences in the light of the conviction of Mark Hankinson;*

A7) Trail and drag hunting are legal activities authorised by the Hunting Act 2004. Until the Government amends the legislation to disallow these types of hunting, they will be conducted on the Government estate subject to the provisions of the Act.

MOD's position is that any organisation wishing to hunt on MOD land must be an organisation with a recognised governing body, hold an MOD issued licence, and all persons participating in a hunt must be a member of such an organisation and comply with the law.

If MOD officials suspect that an offence has taken place, they will report the matter to the police, as the police deal with complaints of illegal hunting. Decisions on the arrest and prosecution of those taking part in illegal hunting activities are matters for the police and prosecuting authorities.

*Q8) What assessment the DIO/MoD have made on the impact on wildlife of trail hunting and illegal hunting on its land;*

A8) Information not held.

*Q9) If the DIO/MoD have not made the assessments mentioned in points 7 and 8, whether they intend to make any such assessment.*

A9) Information not held. Under Section 16 of the FOIA (Advice and Assistance), you may find it helpful to know that there is currently no intention to carry out any such assessment.

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.gov.uk](mailto:CIO-FOI-IR@mod.gov.uk)). Please note that any request for an internal review should be made in writing 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

DIO Secretariat