



Ref: FOI2022-035

Email: [REDACTED]

18th November 2022

Dear [REDACTED]

Further to our letter of 24th October 2022 regarding your request for the following information:

I'd like to make a supplementary request for further information related to this release about blood and urine records of servicemen and civilians serving at nuclear weapons trials.

- 1. First, you have not answered pt 2 of my initial question, for a number of how many records you hold. You state there is a "small number" of blood and urine records. If you know there is a small number, you must know a rough figure. Please define this as well as you can - 6, 60, dozens, hundreds, a handful? I imagine it is possible 'records' you hold may each contain details for a number of individuals - for clarity, in this instance, I am seeking the number of individuals you hold such records about. If this is too expensive or time-consuming to obtain (eg a document containing hundreds of individual records), please provide the number of such documents, and a rough estimate of how many individuals may have information contained therein.*
- 2. You state records were retained "where these were of particular interest". Please define this interest - which characteristic did these records need to display to be worth retaining?*
- 3. Please could you explain what happened to the records that were not "of particular interest".*
- 4. If they were destroyed, can you tell me how many, when, by what means, and on whose instruction.*
- 5. Please define "individuals". Are these servicemen, civilians, AWE staff, indigenous people at the sites of nuclear weapons tests?*
- 6. Please answer questions 1-5 for a) blood records you hold and b) urine records you hold.*
- 7. You state that AWE does not hold summary records of the numbers of individuals, years, or operations they were concerned in. What summary records DO you hold on these documents, if any?*
- 8. You state "no records were found regarding the sharing of this information". I understand it was most likely for such records to be automatically shared with MoD and service archives. Can you tell me what rules were in place, at the time these records were taken, that could indicate with which other departments or agencies they may have been shared?*
- 9. Can you tell me the rule or instruction or order which generated the recording of blood or urine analysis of servicemen involved in the nuclear weapons trials.*



10. You state there are "no documents" found about the overall analysis of blood records, and no overall analysis of the urine samples. This implies there was an overall analysis done of the blood, but you have no documents about it. Do you believe an overall analysis of these blood samples was done, and if so, on what do you base this if there are no documents about it? Are such documents elsewhere, and if so, where?

11. The Parliamentary written questions on this topic to which you direct me all state that the MoD believes any such analyses would be detailed in individual servicemen's records. When servicemen who had blood taken obtain these records, blood analyses are not included. Is there any indication within your archives as to why these records are not in individual servicemen's records.

I hope this extensive list of questions does not push this request over the £600 FOI cost limit. If it does, to save time, please can you answer questions 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, and 11.

Your request has been handled as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act).

A search for the requested information within the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) has now been completed, and we can confirm that AWE holds information in scope of part of your request, the exemption s 21 information for where information is reasonably accessible is invoked as documented below .

We have addressed your questions in turn:

- 1. First, you have not answered pt 2 of my initial question, for a number of how many records you hold. You state there is a "small number" of blood and urine records. If you know there is a small number, you must know a rough figure. Please define this as well as you can - 6, 60, dozens, hundreds, a handful? I imagine it is possible 'records' you hold may each contain details for a number of individuals - for clarity, in this instance, I am seeking the number of individuals you hold such records about. If this is too expensive or time-consuming to obtain (eg a document containing hundreds of individual records), please provide the number of such documents, and a rough estimate of how many individuals may have information contained therein.*

AWE have located the results of 1 blood test for 1 member of the service personnel.

Please note that AWE does not hold or have access to service medical records.

In terms of urine data, we can confirm that at least 20 individuals had urine monitoring at Operation Hurricane, but AWE does not hold the results.

In order to determine the numbers of AWE personnel that attended the trials would entail looking at the medical and dosimetry records for the relevant individuals, which could not be done within the cost limitation of the FOIA.



2. *You state records were retained "where these were of particular interest". Please define this interest - which characteristic did these records need to display to be worth retaining?*

AWE holds no information to be able to define the category 'documents of particular interest'.

3. *Please could you explain what happened to the records that were not "of particular interest".*

As instructed, we have not answered this question to keep below the cost limit of £450-00 for departments outside central government.

4. *If they were destroyed, can you tell me how many, when, by what means, and on whose instruction.*

AWE holds no information to be able to respond to this question.

5. *Please define "individuals". Are these servicemen, civilians, AWE staff, indigenous people at the sites of nuclear weapons tests?*

Please see response to 1.

6. *Please answer questions 1-5 for a) blood records you hold and b) urine records you hold.*

This has been answered by the responses above.

7. *You state that AWE does not hold summary records of the numbers of individuals, years, or operations they were concerned in. What summary records DO you hold on these documents, if any?*

Referring back to the responses provided in FoI2022-028 - Although no overall analysis of results was found, some interpretation of the urine results mentioned previously is made in the reports they were found in.

8. *You state "no records were found regarding the sharing of this information". I understand it was most likely for such records to be automatically shared with MoD and service archives. Can you tell me what rules were in place, at the time these records were taken, that could indicate with which other departments or agencies they may have been shared?*

AWE holds no information to be able to respond to this question

9. *Can you tell me the rule or instruction or order which generated the recording of blood or urine analysis of servicemen involved in the nuclear weapons trials.*

In the time available within the cost limit we could find no further information to the note titled 'UK Personnel for Duty at Maralinga' which is available at [blood-doc01.jpg \(1500×2122\)](#) (mirror.co.uk)



10. *You state there are "no documents" found about the overall analysis of blood records, and no overall analysis of the urine samples. This implies there was an overall analysis done of the blood, but you have no documents about it. Do you believe an overall analysis of these blood samples was done, and if so, on what do you base this if there are no documents about it? Are such documents elsewhere, and if so, where?*

This is not a question under the FoI regime, however, under s 16, the duty of a public authority to provide advice and assistance, we can advise that our responses provided to FoI2022-028 were drawn from the information held by AWE.

The UK's official archive is The National Archives at Kew.

11. *The Parliamentary written questions on this topic to which you direct me all state that the MoD believes any such analyses would be detailed in individual servicemen's records. When servicemen who had blood taken obtain these records, blood analyses are not included. Is there any indication within your archives as to why these records are not in individual servicemen's records.*

No information held.

Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications. If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance.

If you are unhappy with the way your request has been handled you have a right to request an internal review within 40 days of receiving this letter, by writing to information.requests@awe.co.uk or our postal address: Information Requests Team, AWE Aldermaston, Reading, RG7 4PR. If you are still unhappy after an internal review has been completed, under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 you have the right to take your complaint to the Information Commissioner's Office. Please note the Commissioner will generally not consider a complaint until you have exhausted AWE's internal complaints process.

Yours sincerely,

AWE Information Requests Team