

Ref: FOI2024-038

[REDACTED]

23rd August 2024

Dear [REDACTED]

Further to our previous correspondence regarding your request for the following information:

On May 21, 2024, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Defence published a cache of documents held on the Merlin database. One of them, Merlin ref ES010825_018, can be found here: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66169d003fe61a4f683ea7d1/ES010825_018_Redacted.pdf.

Pages 3 and 4 of the document have been redacted in their entirety, which presumably is for reasons other than identifying information of a third party. I therefore request:

- i) the legal basis relied on for the redactions on pages 3 and 4, citing clause and legislation;*
- ii) confirmation whether this particular redaction was individually approved by the minister prior to publication.*

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 AWE has now been completed, and we can confirm that information in scope of your request is held.

We are able to disclose the following information:

- i) Officials reviewed the 151 documents in the Merlin database, containing 4033 pages – many of which are handwritten – to determine their suitability for release into the public domain. It was determined by officials that redactions were required to many of the documents to protect both personal information, as governed by the Data Protection Act 2018, and national security concerns, ensuring information that may be useful to nations or terror groups attempting to design and build nuclear weapons was not released. During the review, our reviewer was not able to confirm the content of all the handwriting on pages 3 and 4 of the document you refer to, so it was redacted. Following a further review, we have determined that the redactions went beyond protecting personal information and national security concerns. We are therefore releasing these pages in full without redaction. Please see attached the updated document which will also be made available on gov.uk.
- ii) AWE does not hold any information to be able to respond to this part of your request. Under Section 16, advice and assistance, it may be helpful to note that the 151 records held by AWE were examined by the then Minister for Defence People and Families, following a review by officials, to determine their suitability for release into the public domain in March 2024. Officials made the necessary redactions to the records to protect personal information, as governed by the Data

Protection Act 2018, and where they assessed there to be national security concerns. The then Minister accepted these redactions in principle following advice from officials but did not approve each individual redaction.

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



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1-13 ST. GILES HIGH STREET,
LONDON, W.C.2

3rd Feb. 1953

Dear Brooking,

Sorry to hear that you
have had the flu and hope
you are recovering quickly.

I had a talk with the
Air Ministry yesterday and their
Chief of Operations, Braadhurst,
promised the loan of the four
Mobile Dash Rooms; I am now
putting the request in writing.

About the Panel. Of course
I would expect you to remain
on it, and that papers should

come to you, likewise to
Penney and Tyle. I have
spoken to Walker, and his
staff tell me that - the Toteur
papers have gone to all and
will continue to do so.

yours sincerely

James Stewart