

Ref: FOI2025-050

10th November 2025

Dear [REDACTED]

Regarding your request for the following information:

"As the recently-disclosed documents 900252.pdf and 900253.pdf, titled 'Third meeting of panel N5' and dated 16/4/69, were not on the list of 152 documents, could you therefore tell me:

- * Where, in which named archive, and in what format, documents 900252.pdf and 900253.pdf, titled 'Third meeting of panel N5' and dated 16/4/69 are kept;*
- * The security classification of that archive;*
- * How many other documents that reference the word 'blood' are stored on it."*

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

We can advise that whilst AWE may hold some information in scope of the subjects you have requested, we will not be able to answer your request without exceeding the appropriate limit set out at Section 12 of the Act.

Section 12 of the Act makes provision for public authorities to refuse requests for information where the cost of dealing with these would exceed the appropriate limit, which for public authorities is set at £450. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 2.25 working days in determining whether the department holds the information, locating, retrieving and extracting it. This is because the documents are held in the Merlin database and would require manual examination of over 28,000 documents in order to accurately locate the information and take around 4,600 hours to complete, costing over £110,000.

Under Section 16 of the Act, we have a duty to provide advice and assistance where possible. However, we regret that we are unable to offer a meaningful refinement of your request. The previous results from the searches of the word 'blood' in the Merlin database were identified by using keyword search terms; there may be further documents that contain the word 'blood', which cannot be identified from a keyword search. The recently disclosed documents (900252.pdf and 900253.pdf), titled *Third meeting of panel N5* and dated 16/04/1969, were not included in the previously identified list of 151 documents from the Merlin database because they are not tagged with the word 'blood'.

Although we cannot answer your request at the moment, we may be able to answer a refined request within the cost limit. Please be aware that we cannot guarantee at this stage that a refined request will fall within the FOIA cost limit, or that other exemptions will not apply.

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