

Ref: FOI2026-026

28 May 2026

We refer to your request for the following information:

"I write to request the following information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

*"Operation Grapple - 1957 - Fallout Measurements Including Fish Sampling",
Merlin Ref. 04000382.pdf*

Please note that the exact title may have a different name. I am specifically seeking the fish sampling data referred to at footnote 4 in paragraph 4.1 of the attached report - the fish sampling data for 8th November 1957."

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

We can confirm that AWE holds the requested document. However, it is exempt from disclosure under section 22 (1)(b) of the Act. The requested file is scheduled for publication to The National Archives (TNA) during the summer of 2026, therefore, it is exempt from disclosure under section 22(1)(b) of the Act. It is reasonable in all circumstances for the information to be withheld until the planned publication takes place.

Section 22 is a qualified exemption which is subject to a Public Interest Test (PIT). Accordingly the information requested can only be withheld if the public interest in doing so outweighs the public interest in disclosure. We confirm that the public interest test has been conducted and the outcome supports withholding the document in full.

We will now set out arguments for and against disclosure in terms of the public interest with the reasons for our conclusion.

Section 22

AWE recognises the strong public interest in openness, transparency and accountability in accordance with the Act. In considering the public interest in maintaining the exemption, AWE notes that the information is intended for future publication and is currently subject to an established pre-publication processes. Disclosure at this stage would undermine those processes and would result in diverting the attention from the small team of specialists involved in the publication exercise.

While there is a general public interest in disclosure, we consider that it is reasonable for the public to wait until the planned publication has taken place. On balance, we have concluded that the public interest is better served by withholding the information at this time under Section 22 (1)(b) of the Act.

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