

Ref: FOI2026-036

21 July 2026

We refer to your request for the following information:

"I am the Librarian for BAE Systems Land I am looking for the document Design Substantiation for Non-Compliance with Relative Humidity Requirement for the Processing of Sensitive Explosive Devices in High Consequence Process Facility. D Newton AWE Aldermaston. February 2008."

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, we are withholding it under Sections 24(1) and 26(1) of the Act.

These exemptions provide that information may be withheld where disclosure would prejudice both national security and the defence of the United Kingdom.

Whilst AWE recognises the public interest in openness and transparency concerning its activities, we have concluded that this is outweighed by the strong public interest in safeguarding national security and the defence of the United Kingdom. Accordingly, the requested information is withheld in its entirety under Sections 24 (1) and 26 (1)(a) of the Act.

Both exemptions are qualified exemptions and are therefore subject to the public interest test. We have set our reasonings for the conclusion below.

Section 24 (1) – National Security

AWE recognise there is a strong public interest in promoting transparency and accountability regarding the activities of public authorities, particularly those involved in matters of significant public interest. Information disclosure enhances public understanding and promotes confidence in the management of government-funded programmes.

The requested document contains highly classified technical information that underpins the United Kingdom's nuclear weapons programme and wider national security interests.

AWE acknowledges the compelling public interest in protecting national security and the defence of the United Kingdom, releasing detailed technical information would enable hostile actors to improve their understanding of the UK's capabilities, vulnerabilities and operational methodologies.

Having considered the competing public interest factors, we have concluded that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

Section 26 (1)– Defence

Section 26 (1) is also engaged as disclosure would provide highly classified technical information into the public domain, enabling threat actors which would prejudice the capability, effectiveness and security of the armed forces and the UK's defence infrastructure.

Having weighed these factors, we consider that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

For the reasons set out above, the requested document is withheld in its entirety under Sections 24(1) and 26(1)(a) and (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