

Ref: FOI2026-055

23 September 2026

Dear Mr [REDACTED],

We refer to your request for the following information:

“Under the Freedom of Information Act, I would like to know the following information:

Please detail the number of email attacks blocked by your organisation, broken down by spam, phishing, malware and edge block, each year for the past three years from September to August (including this year).

E.g.

September 2025- August 2026

- 250,000 total email attacks blocked*
- 100,000 spam emails blocked*
- 75,000 phishing emails blocked*
- 50,000 malware emails blocked*
- 25,000 edge block emails blocked”*

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

Under Section 24(2) (Safeguarding National Security), AWE neither confirms nor denies whether it holds the information in scope of your request.

The exemption provided for under Section 24 is a qualified exemption and is therefore subject to a public interest test. We can confirm that a public interest test has been carried out.

The Act contains a presumption in favour of public authorities confirming or denying whether requested information is held, and there is a public interest in transparency regarding the cyber threats faced by public bodies and the measures used to protect public assets, systems and information. Confirming or denying whether information is held could contribute to public understanding of the scale and nature of cyber threats affecting organisations and provide reassurance that appropriate controls are in place to protect sensitive information.

However, there is a very strong public interest in safeguarding national security. Confirming or denying whether AWE holds information relating to the volume, categorisation, monitoring or reporting of blocked email attacks would itself provide information about AWE's cyber security arrangements and protective security posture. This could enable hostile actors to build a more detailed understanding of AWE's capabilities, priorities, threat environment and security measures. Even where assumptions drawn from such

information are inaccurate, attempts to confirm or refute them would provide valuable intelligence to those seeking to understand or undermine the security of the UK's most sensitive organisations.

It is longstanding Government policy not to disclose information that could assist adversaries in developing a clearer picture of the capabilities, vulnerabilities or protective measures associated with organisations whose work directly supports the UK's national security interests. FOIA disclosures are effectively disclosures to the world at large and any confirmation or denial could be combined with other information already in the public domain to inform hostile activity.

The balance of public interest was found to lie in neither confirming nor denying whether AWE holds any information in scope of your request. This should not be taken as an indication that the information requested is, or is not, held by AWE.

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