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Ref. 09-03-2012-155636-021

Mr Ernie Skillen

request-108762-6f550a66@whatdotheyknow.com

4 April 2012

Dear Mr Skillen

Thank you for your email of 9 March 2012. Your request has been considered to be a request for information in accordance with the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000. You asked:

The former Secretary of State for Defence let it be known to the Daily Telegraph and Sun newspapers that he wished the MOD to sell the following items from the MOD art collection: a set of paintings by Zil Hoque called Nimbus I, II, III, IV and a set of four paintings by Louise Cattrell - Eyrie, Aerial, Tempest and Keep. He further suggested that the proceeds of the sale be given to charity (Help for Heroes was mentioned).

For each of the above listed paintings please would you let me know:

- 1. their current location*
- 2. were any sold*
- 3. if sold by what means*
- 4. if auctioned what auction house was used and how was it selected*
- 5. who owns these items now*
- 6. if sold how much was raised (gross and net of any commission).*
- 7. what portorage, storage, transport costs have been incurred*
- 8. if any of these works are no longer in MOD Main Building were they replaced by other items and at what cost*
- 9. did any money raised go to charity. If so, how much and how was the charity chosen.*
- How was it possible to dispose of public assets and give the proceeds to charity if public accounting rules require Departments to dispose of assets for the benefit of the taxpayer*
- 10. was an Accounting Officer's direction given in respect of this activity.*
- 11. were any artworks in the Secretary of State's office or official flat disposed of*

This letter is to confirm that we do hold information within scope of your request. The paintings you listed were not sold and they remain in the Ministry of Defence Art Collection. The items are currently displayed in MOD buildings in London (Hoque) and Scotland (Cattrell). Artworks within the MOD Art Collection can be moved for a number of reasons; the Cattrell paintings were moved to take advantage of an opportunity that would allow the Artworks to be seen by a different audience. The cost of de-installing and reinstalling the paintings at their new location was some £2000. The positions formerly occupied by the Cattrell paintings have now been filled by four large, portable photographic image printed screens. The production and installation costs of these was some £1700.

No artworks were disposed of from the Secretary of State's office or official flat.

If you are not satisfied with this response or you wish to complain about any aspect of the handling of your request, then you should contact me in the first instance. If informal resolution is not possible and you are still dissatisfied then you may apply for an

independent internal review by contacting the Head of Corporate Information, 6th Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk). Please note that any request for an internal review must be made within 40 working days of the date on which the attempt to reach informal resolution has come to an end.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may take your complaint to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website, <http://www.ico.gov.uk>.

I hope you find this response helpful.

Chris Read