



Ministry of Defence

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Mr Kevin McEvoy
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1 Dec 2020

Dear Mr Kevin McEvoy,

Thank you for your email of 1 November requesting the following information:

"I'd like details of military training given by the UK to Latin American states: Colombia, Bolivia, Ecuador, Brazil, and Honduras, for the years 2018, 2019, and 2020. 1) Which of these countries have sent personnel for military training to the UK 2) How many people from each country have undergone training 3) Where have they undergone training 4) What was the nature of the training 5) What was the date of the training 6) Cost of training (if any)."

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

A search for the information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence (MOD), and I can confirm that some information in scope of your request is held.

The information you have requested can be found enclosed, but some of the information you requested has been assessed to fall within the scope of section 12 of the FOIA and has not been provided. The information you requested in Question 6 (cost of training) falls within the scope of the qualified exemption provided for at sections 27 (International Relations) of the FOIA and has been withheld. Note, there are no records of UK military training conducted with Bolivia, Ecuador or Honduras within the specified years.

Section 12 of the FOIA specifies that public authorities are not obliged to comply when requests are estimated to cost over the 'appropriate limit', which for central government is £600. Section 12(1) has been applied to some of the information you requested, namely training delivered outside the UK and some UK course descriptions, as the MOD does not hold these in centralised records. The information held centrally has been provided in the enclosed. However, retrieving the information not held centrally is estimated to exceed the cost of £600.

Under Section 16 of the Act (Advice and Assistance) you may find it helpful to note that some of the requested information that wasn't provided for Question 4 is available in the public domain via the Army or Defence Academy Websites. However, should you require information on the nature of training for any specific course listed, refining your request in Question 4 to specific courses of interest may bring the estimated cost for complying within the appropriate limit. You may also find it helpful to note that the offering of UK training places can have a direct impact on relations with

international partners or can help secure specific short-term UK goals, particularly in countries where the military are influential and/or defence is a significant element of wider UK engagement.

Section 27 is a qualified exemption and are subject to public interest testing which means that the information requested can only be withheld if the public interest in doing so outweighs the public interest in disclosure. Section 27(1)(a) has been applied to the information you requested in Question 6 because the information has the potential to adversely affect relations with our allies. The balance of the public interest test concluded that whilst there is some public interest in knowing the cost of Defence courses for other nations, the balance of the public interest lay in withholding this information you desire.

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 us in the first instance at the address above. If informal resolution is not possible and you are still dissatisfied then you may apply for an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights Compliance team, Ground 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 normally 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.org.uk>.

Yours sincerely,

International Security Directorate,
Ministry of Defence.