



# Ministry of Defence

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Our Reference: FOI2020/09218

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Dr Emma L Briant <[request-591309-7171410b@whatdotheyknow.com](mailto:request-591309-7171410b@whatdotheyknow.com)>

11 September 2020

Dear Dr Briant,

Thank you for your email dated 13 August 2020, acknowledged on 14 August 2020, requesting the following information:

*'Apologies for the slow reply and thank you for the invitation to refine my request. I will do this by reducing the specificity to one company, asking only the time span, and giving a likely time range to help aid your search.... Could I request simply to know when (between the dates 2009 and 2011) Strategic Communication Laboratories (SCL) first obtained this status and how long the status applied to individuals within the company - ie when it ended (which is likely to have occurred some time between 2014-18).'*

Your email dated 27 August 2019, acknowledged on 29 August 2019, and replied to on 25 September 2019 under Ministry of Defence (MOD) Reference FOI2019/09830, requested the following information:

*'Strategic Communication Laboratories (SCL) and/or IOTA Global (a related company) were placed on the List X database which applies to contractors carrying out work that bears a UK Government classification of SECRET or above. The classification is applied to individuals or groups of individuals and not the whole company. Therefore it is my understanding that individuals within the company must have undergone security checks. I believe individuals are classified by UK Government as follows: Counter Terrorist Check (CTC), Security Check (SC), Developed Vetting (DV) and Enhanced DV*  
*(<https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fguidance%2Fsecurity-vetting-and-clearance&data=02%7C01%7CSPODSR-SecretariatOffice%40mod.gov.uk%7Cb3a8cae2239d4ecef7808d72af79571%7Cbe7760ed5953484bae95d0a16dfa09e5%7C0%7C0%7C637025115158776688&data=yxI0HWuROd%2FWFiZFKsgtyJDE%2BoCq1MXQFZ53yERCnyY%3D&reserved=0>),*  
*and that there are different time limits for renewal of each of these security checks for individuals in companies with List X status*  
*(<https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fguidance%2FUnited-kingdom-security-vetting-applicant&data=02%7C01%7CSPODSR-SecretariatOffice%40mod.gov.uk%7Cb3a8cae2239d4ecef7808d72af79571%7Cbe7760ed5953484bae95d0a16dfa09e5%7C0%7C0%7C637025115158776688&data=GWMHhoAyyWPaKLE4Nmpz6uf3MMBghLElcyxZR4b6aio%3D&reserved=0>).*  
*This is the 'classified status' I referred to in my initial request. I am interested in the dates from 2005-2018, and how many individuals it applied to, which individuals and for how long please? Please could this include specific dates when the status was granted/removed please.'*

Your email dated 22 July 2019, acknowledged on 30 July 2019, and replied to on 20 August 2019 under Ministry of Defence (MOD) Reference FOI2019/08514, requested the following information:

*'I'm writing to request information regarding who was granted classified status among staff at the UK Defence contractor Strategic Communication Laboratories (SCL), Behavioural Dynamics Institute (BDI) and IOTA Global please. Please could you tell me when this status was obtained and how long the status applied to each individual.'*

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

A search has now been completed within the MOD and we can confirm that some information in scope of your request is held.

Q1. When did Strategic Communication Laboratories (SCL) first obtained List X status.

SCL Group was first awarded List X status in January 2008.

Q2. How long the status applied to individuals within the company.

Under Section 16 (Advice and Assistance) and Section 21 (Information Reasonably Accessible to the Applicant by Other Means) please note that it is Cabinet Office policy that a Counter Terrorist Check (CTC) and a Security Check (SC) clearance must be formally reviewed after 10 years (5 years for non-List X contractors), and that a DV clearance must be formally reviewed after 7 years (3 years for non-List X contractors).

United Kingdom Security Vetting (UKSV) is the single government provider of National Security Vetting (NSV). In April 2020, UKSV transitioned from MOD into the Cabinet Office and now sits in the Government Security Group (GSG) to enable a closer integration of policy and operational delivery.

Further information on UKSV, UK Security Vetting Clearance Levels and the Security requirements for List X contractors can be found on Gov.UK.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/united-kingdom-security-vetting>  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/united-kingdom-security-vetting-clearance-levels/national-security-vetting-clearance-levels>  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/security-requirements-for-list-x-contractors>

Please be aware that any future requests may be subject to FOIA exemptions including Section 40 (Personal Data).

If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance.

If you wish to complain about the handling of your request, or the content of this response, you can request 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.gov.uk](mailto:CIO-FOI-IR@mod.gov.uk)). Please note that any request for an internal review should be made within 40 working days of the date of this response.

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, <https://ico.org.uk/>.

Yours sincerely,  
Directorate of Security & Resilience