



Ministry
of Defence

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Bridget Coldwell

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12 September 2016

Dear Bridget

Thank you for your enquiry of 12 August 2016 in which you requested the following information:

“In response to Rebecca Long-Bailey's question on 9th June, Mark Lancaster, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence, admitted that a review of archived policy documents indicates that the MoD was aware of the possible psychotic side-effects of Lariam (Mefloquine) "from at least 1997". Under the Freedom of Information Act, I request sight of the policy documents Mr Lancaster refers to”

Your enquiry has been treated as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. A search of Ministry of Defence (MOD) records has identified the following information as being within the scope of your enquiry:

The archived policy document that Mark Lancaster MP refers to is the Surgeon General's Policy Letter 6/97 – Prevention of Malaria. Please find enclosed a copy of this document.

For your information, the vast majority of deployed personnel already receive alternatives to Lariam and, where it is used, it is only prescribed after an individual risk assessment. We have a duty to protect our personnel from Malaria and, as the last Defence Committee report concluded, in some cases, Lariam, will be the most effective way of doing that. No anti-malarial treatments are without associated side effects, but Lariam continues to be recommended as safe by Public Health England and the World Health Organisation. The MOD continues to keep under review its use of all antimalarial drugs and follow the best practice advice from Public Health England.

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 the Headquarters of the Surgeon General 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 Deputy Chief Information Officer, 2nd 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 FOIA. 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.org.uk>.

Yours sincerely,

Headquarters of the Surgeon General