



Ministry  
of Defence

Defence Business Service

Rm 6303

Tomlinson House

Norcross

Thornton-Cleveleys

Lancashire

FY5 3WP

Ref: FOI2017/00623

E-mail: DBSRES-Secretariat@mod.uk

Mr Arthur Boyd

E-mail address:  
whatdotheyknow.com  
request-372512-  
f7efdf64@whatdotheyknow.com

20 January 2017

Dear Mr Boyd,

Thank you for your email of 20 December 2016 requesting the following information:

***“Human Health Harms***

***The science on DDT’s human health impacts has continued to mount over the years, with recent studies showing harm at very low levels of exposure. Studies show a range of human health effects linked to DDT and its breakdown product, DDE:***

***Breast & other cancers***

***Male infertility***

***Miscarriages & low birth weight***

***Developmental delay***

***Nervous system & liver damage”***

I assume the email forwarded to the Department on 20 December 2016 was a response to our letter of 19 December 2016 suggesting you redefine your request, for example, by providing a list of medical conditions which you wish the Ministry of Defence to search for.

Regrettably, the Ministry of Defence requires further information in order to determine whether it holds any information within the scope of your request.

War pensions are paid for disablement and case law confirms this means a discrete diagnosable injury (which includes wound or disease). The War Pension Computer System only records medically certified conditions that can be causally linked to Service.

After seeking Medical advice, I would like to explain that a number of the illnesses provided in the list above relates to “*symptoms*” of a condition as opposed to the actual condition itself. For example, nerve and liver damage could be related to many conditions, therefore, the description is too vague to trace on the system.

In addition, miscarriages and low birth weight cannot be attributed to male veterans as they are solely related to woman/babies. However, the Department may be able to trace claims for Male Infertility.

As there is no generally accepted medically robust list of causally linked disorders relating to Nuclear Testing on Christmas Island and the relation between human health and DDT is not established in the robust evidenced way of say the link between smoking and lung cancer or ischaemic heart disease. You may wish, therefore, to specifically request a search for a specific type of cancer, for example, Male Breast Cancer.

Once you have clarified your request, I will be pleased to consider it again.

Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

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 Information Rights Compliance team, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail [CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk](mailto: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.org.uk>.

Yours sincerely,