



**Headquarters Land Forces
Land Forces Secretariat
IDL 24
Marlborough Lines
Monxton Road
ANDOVER
SP11 8HJ**

E-mail: lf-sec-group@mod.uk
Website: www.army.mod.uk



Ms Nishma Doshi
[request-62734-1387963c@whatdotheyknow.com](#)

Our Reference: HQLF/Sec/04/02/64752
FOI Ref: 21-02-2011-095411-005
Date: 21 April 2011

Dear Ms Doshi,

Your email of 20 February 2011 about the UK's defence training engagement with Bahrain and your concern about the current situation in that country has been considered to be a request for information in accordance with the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000. You requested the following information:

Given the methods used by the Bahraini officers to crush non-violent civilian uprisings in the last few days, I would like to be informed on a few details:

- 1. How many Bahraini officers were trained at Sandhurst from 1995.*
- 2. What skills these were officers trained in.*
- 3. The methods of crowd management Bahraini army officers were trained in, or was offered to them.*
- 4. Whether there are still Bahraini officers at Sandhurst.*
- 5. If yes to (4), how many.*

First, let me apologise for the delay in getting a response to you. Before I turn to your specific request, I would like to assure you that the UK Government is also gravely concerned with recent events in Bahrain. The Secretary of State for Defence, Under Secretary of State for Defence, the Foreign Secretary and, most recently, The Prime Minister have all met or spoken by telephone to the Crown Prince of Bahrain, the Foreign Minister and King Hamad bin Isa al-Khalifa respectively, calling for an end to the violent suppression of street protests in Bahrain. The UK Government is calling on all security forces in the country not to use violence against the demonstrators and on the demonstrators not to engage in provocative or intimidating actions. The Bahraini Government and the security forces must respect the civil rights of peaceful protestors, the right to freedom of expression and freedom of assembly.

It may be helpful if I explain that Bahrain is considered a key defence ally in the Gulf and as part of our long-standing positive bilateral relationship the UK Armed Forces have provided training for the Bahraini Armed Forces in-country, and here in the UK, for many years. Bahrain has been a firm supporter of the UK's operations in Afghanistan and has deployed forces in support of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission there. Bahrain contributes to Gulf maritime security and wider regional stability by providing vessels and regularly taking operational control of a maritime Combined Task Force on a rotational basis. In addition, Bahrain, along with the other Gulf states, are key partners in the fight

against terrorism and the proliferation of nuclear weapons. They face a real and growing threat from Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and partners must work closer together to combat that threat. It is therefore right that the UK remain engaged with them to ensure they remain a professional and capable force to contribute to these objectives.

Turning to your specific questions, and in line with my letter to you of 21 March (ref: HQLF/Sec/04/02/64752), I can confirm that I have considered whether the information you requested would fall under the exemption in Section 27 (International Relations) of the FOI Act. As Section 27 is a qualified exemption, so it was also necessary to decide whether, in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosure, a so called 'Public Interest Test'. It has been decided that the Ministry of Defence could not withhold the information in the public interest as it is already available to the cadets at Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (RMAS) and I list the answers to each of your questions in turn below:

1. *How many Bahraini officers were trained at Sandhurst from 1995?*

A. 61 (including current cadets)

2/3. *What skills these were officers trained in / the methods of crowd management Bahraini army officers were trained in, or was offered to them?*

A. Sandhurst delivers Officer leadership training for the British Army. Sandhurst commissions junior officers who can think, communicate, act and inspire soldiers whilst under pressure in a complex, changing and potentially dangerous environment. Sandhurst seeks to develop junior leaders who can interpret a situation, make judgements about the consequences of their actions and then make a good decision. Respect for human rights, accountability and the rule of law are central themes throughout the Sandhurst training.

Crowd control is a standard part of the Peace Support Operations phase of Officer training at Sandhurst but forms less than 1% of the year long course. It is not intended to be a comprehensive course in public order training and does not qualify the Officer cadets in the field. Public order training is a specialised area and the provision of training for any country's armed forces would have to be carefully considered on a case by case basis and tailored to the needs of the country.

4 *Whether there are still Bahraini officers at Sandhurst and how many?*

A. Yes, 5.

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, 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

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 this answers your questions satisfactorily.

Chris Millward
Land Forces Secretariat