



Ministry
of Defence

Army Secretariat
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Ref: Army/Sec/21/02/FOI2020/05538

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Dr Emma L Briant
Via whatdotheyknow.com
request-664495-04a2cdcd@whatdotheyknow.com

10 June, 2020

Dear Dr Briant,

Thank you for your email of 12 May in which you requested the following information:

whether 77th Brigade have been involved in messaging audiences or briefing the media to counter coronavirus disinformation. Could I see a list of audiences or countries?

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

A search for the information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence and I can confirm that information in scope of your request is held. However, the information is exempt under Section 21 of the Act because it is reasonably accessible to you by other means: it is already in the public domain as information about the brigade's activity as part of the Army's support to the COVID-19 crisis can be found at the links below. Section 21 of the Act is an absolute exemption and there is therefore no requirement to consider the public interest in deciding to withhold the information.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-support-force-the-mods-contribution-to-the-coronavirus-response>

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-04-27/40641/>.

Under Section 16 (Advice and assistance) of the Act, I can advise that activity 77th Brigade have been engaged in within the scope of the request is conducted under the same rules as the civil servants they are working alongside.

If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance. Following this, 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.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 raise your complaint directly 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. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website at <https://ico.org.uk/>.

Yours sincerely,

Army Secretariat