



Ministry
of Defence

Defence Equipment and Support
Secretariat
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Ministry of Defence
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Email: DES SEC-PolSec LE-JSC-WPNS@mod.uk

Mr P Ashby
request-759903-941bb92e@whatdotheyknow.com

Our Reference:
FOI2021/05655
Date:
18 June 2021

Dear Mr Ashby

Thank you for your email to the Ministry of Defence (MOD) of 27 May 2021 asking the following:

The L81 Was a single shot bolt action rifle designed for use by the cadet forces in 7.62mm cal to replace the No4 303 rifle.

The rifle was introduced in the Mid 70's and was withdrawn in the early 90's. The rifle was designed by Parker Hale Ltd.

Could you please confirm that these facts are correct and also state how many of these weapons was manufactured and why they was withdrawn from service.

Also what happened to these weapons when they were withdrawn. Over all approx how much did the L81 cost the MOD and was any of this money recovered when the weapons where withdrawn

Your request has been handled in accordance with the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000.

A search has determined that MOD records no longer exist that can answer most of your request. This includes: a description of the L81 rifle; the quantity that were manufactured and their total cost; why the gun was withdrawn from service; and whether there was any recovery of money as a result of their being withdrawn from service.

The sale of all small arms is strictly regulated by the UK Firearms Act 1968 and other legislation as the International Non-Proliferation and arms Control Regimes. It is MOD policy that does not allow for weapons to be sold in the commercial marketplace. Weapons declared surplus may be sold to other Governments for use by acceptable military, paramilitary and police organisations. Any surplus weapons not sold to Governments, including all automatic weapons, are destroyed in line with tightly controlled procedures and sold as scrap metal.

A search of disposal records has confirmed that no out of service L81 rifles were sold. There are, however, some currently being stored pending a decision about disposal.

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).

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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

DE&S Secretariat