



Ministry
of Defence

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Mr T Ata
request-1189488-a2b67171@whatdotheyknow.com

14 November 2024

Dear Mr Ata,

Release of Information

Thank you for your correspondence of 26 September 2024 in which you requested the following information:

‘The Royal Navy produced the TV show *Commando: Britain's Ocean Warriors* with Seadog TV & Film Productions.

Please provide the following:

- the Project Initiation Document.
- the post-documentary analysis conducted on the TV show.’

Your enquiry has been considered to be a request for information in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act).

A search for the information has been completed within the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and I can confirm that some information in scope of your request is held. However, in considering your request, it has been determined that some of the information you have requested falls under the qualified exemption at section 43 (Commercial) of the Act.

Under section 43(2) of the Act, information is exempt if its disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any person (including the public authority holding it).

As section 43 is a qualified exemption, it has been necessary for the Department to decide whether, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure. The Public Interest Test has now been completed and I can advise that after careful consideration of the information and for

the reasons detailed below, the balance of public interest was found to be in favour of withholding information relating to project costs detailed within the Project Initiation Document (PID), in entirety. It may assist you to understand our decision if I outline the factors that were considered.

It is accepted that disclosure of all of the information contained within the PID would demonstrate the MOD's commitment to openness and transparency and provide public reassurance that the Department operates in a fair and open market. However, there are also compelling reasons to protect the commercial interests of the MOD and its commercial partners. The use of competition is at the heart of Government procurement and the effectiveness of this strategy depends largely on the integrity of the competitive process and the MOD's ability to protect commercially sensitive information. As such, it is considered that release of information detailing the project costs between the MOD and Seadog TV and Film Productions Ltd, could jeopardise future projects and arrangements. Disclosure of such information could potentially allow companies to gain an unfair advantage and prejudice, not only current and future commercial interests of the film company but may also prevent the MOD from securing best value for money for future projects.

The information I am able to provide to you, in respect of the PID for the programme "Britain's Ocean Warriors", which has been redacted for the reasons cited above, is enclosed with this letter.

Please be advised that some personal information and contact details relating to individuals contained within the document have been withheld under Section 40 (Personal Information) of the FOI Act. Section 40(2) applies to personal data relating to third parties, the release of which would contravene the Data Protection Act 2018.

Finally, in response to your request for post-documentary analysis data for the programme, "Britain's Ocean Warriors", no recorded information in scope of your request is held by the Department.

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.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

Navy Command Secretariat - FOI Section