



Ministry
of Defence

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Ref. FOI2015/04538

William

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23 June 2015

Dear William

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST

Thank you for your email of 25 May 2015 in which you requested the following information:

How much money does your department spend on cyber security. How is this budget split up?

An initial search for the information you requested has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence and I can confirm some information in scope of your request is held.

Section 12 of the FOI Act makes provision for public authorities to refuse requests for information where the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate limit, which for central government is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3.5 working days in determining whether the department holds the information, locating, retrieving and extracting the information. The FOI Act does not oblige the MOD to seek the information if not centrally held in order to create a response.

Following a search to identify and collate the information you have requested, it has become apparent that we will not be able to answer your requests fully without further clarification in accordance with section 1(3) of the FOI Act for the reasons outlined below.

The subject of cyber security is a very wide subject area covering the policy and strategy adopted by the MOD, physical and procedural measures, and the purchase and maintenance of equipment required to combat cyber threats. Security and cyber defensive features are an integral part of any system, platform or equipment and are not recorded separately. In the main, the MOD has a large number of contracts that have cyber security features embedded within them and therefore these costs could not be readily or separately identified and broken out from the overarching contract. There is no business requirement to keep a central, all encompassing database of equipment and services purchased across the MOD, including that used specifically for cyber security.

Given the lack of a central, all encompassing database of expenditure on measures to prevent cyber attacks and e-crimes, in order to provide you with an answer to your request, each contract would need to be individually scrutinised and the relevant costs separated out and captured.

This would bring the cost of replying to your request to at least £18,000.

Section 16 of the FOI Act also requires Government departments to offer advice and assistance on how to reduce or refine a request to bring the cost of compliance under the limit. As such, you may wish to refine your request by narrowing its scope, for example to a particular cyber security measure.

However, I should point out that any information relating to cyber security is likely to fall within the scope of FOI exemptions, including Section 24 (National Security), Section 26 (Defence), Section 31 (Law Enforcement), and Section 43 (Commercial Interests). It is therefore probable that a Public Interest Test would be required to decide whether the public interest in releasing some or all of the information is out-weighed by that for withholding it.

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, 1st 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.org.uk>.

Yours sincerely,

ISS HQ-MB Secretariat