



Ministry of Defence

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Alba

request-865179-f4daf694@whatdotheyknow.com

Ref: FOI 2022/06524

14 June 2022

Dear Alba,

Thank you for your email of 26 May 2022 requesting the following information:

"Please can you supply the number of occasions and agreed duration of rentals, split by street. The agreements having been made with personnel who have lost entitlement to an SFA (as an example this could be due to a change in status, or having terminated their service with MOD), and who continue to reside at the address and pay 'market rent'.

The properties within in the catchment area of interest are defined hereafter, and the time frame of interest is also identified below.

Please report back on the following locations (A and B), where there are DIO managed SFA properties, the period to be reported back with the details requested above between 1 June 2014 and 31 May 2022.

Please also confirm the the total number of SFA properties that are covered by this request.

- A. [REDACTED] [all properties]
B. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] [all Defence properties]."

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

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) neither confirms nor denies (NCND) whether it holds any information in scope of your request.

We are not obliged to confirm or deny whether we hold the information you have requested as if held, confirming its existence would potentially put at risk the security of our Armed Forces personnel and the safety of their families and dependants. Section 26(3) and Section 38(2) of the FOIA provides that there is no duty to confirm or deny whether we hold the information.

Section 26(3) and Section 38(2) are qualified exemptions and therefore public interest tests have been conducted to determine whether the balance of the public interest lies in favour of the MOD meeting its Section 1 duty to confirm or deny whether it held information in scope of your request, or not.

The arguments for the application of the exemptions provided for at Section 26(3) and Section 38(2) are closely linked. Whilst there is a public interest in assuring service families and members of the public that Service Family Accommodation (SFA) is properly managed, it does not outweigh the very strong public interest in protecting the safety and security of those who live in SFA properties. If the MOD confirmed that information was held in relation to the specified address this would provide public confirmation that the address provided a home for Armed Forces personnel. Providing such confirmation would give anyone with malicious intent the address of a service person which would potentially place them and their family, or indeed anyone who occupied the property in the future, at risk of harm.

I am satisfied in this case that the balance of the public interest lies in the application of the NCND position as provided for at Section 26(3) and Section 38(2) of the FOIA.

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). 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 FOIA. 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

DIO Secretariat