



Ministry
of Defence



DE&S Secretariat



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Ref: FOI2021/04795

Caroline Chandler
request-752846-f4fa6aac@whatdotheyknow.com

03 June 2021

Dear Ms Chandler,

Thank you for your email, dated 05 May 2021, requesting the following information:

I am requesting a copy of the List X companies you hold.

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

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 you have requested falls within the scope of the qualified exemptions provided for at Section 26 (Defence) and Section 24(1) (National Security).

Section 26 and Section 24(1) are both qualified exemptions and are subject to public interest testing which means that the information requested can only be withheld if the public interest in doing so outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

Section 26(1)(b) and Section 24(1) have been applied to the information because its release would prejudice the capability and effectiveness of our armed forces. The balance of public interest was found to be in favour of withholding the information given that, overall, the public interest is best served in not releasing lists of defence contractors who have List X Status. These exemptions have been applied to this information because providing a list of defence contractors would be counter to the fundamental technique of security through obscurity, and therefore would increase the security risk to their facility, staff and the work being carried out. This in turn, could impact on operational capability and national security.

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,

DE&S Secretariat