



Ministry
of Defence

Army Secretariat
Army Headquarters
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Ref:
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Dr Emma Briant
Via: whatdotheyknow.com

16 July 2020

Dear Dr Briant,

I am writing regarding your four requests of the 20 May for the following information:

- 1) *Correspondence & documents relating to training provided for 15 Psychological Operations Group by SCL in 2011;*
- 2) *Information about the contract for the training provided by SCL in 2011;*
- 3) *The DSTL evaluation of the methodology trained by SCL;*
- 4) *Any documents or communication relating to the DSTL evaluation*

I am treating your correspondence as requests for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act) and for administrative purposes have grouped them into a single case.

Unfortunately, the current circumstances have delayed us being able to complete reasonable searches for the material that you have requested, for which I apologise. However, this letter is to now confirm that the MOD holds information related to your request but that we consider that some may fall within the scope of the following qualified exemptions: Section 26 (Defence) and Section 38 (Health & Safety). As such it may be necessary for us to decide whether, in the circumstances of this case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

The Act requires us to respond to requests promptly, and in any case no later than 20 working days after receiving your request. However, when a qualified exemption applies to the information and the public interest test has to be conducted, the Act allows the time for response to be longer than 20 working days. A full response must be provided within such time as is reasonable in all circumstances of the case and, in relation to your request, we estimate that it will take until 5 August to make a final decision on where the balance of public interest lies. If it appears that it will take longer than this to reach a conclusion, we will let you know.

If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance. Following this, 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,

Army Secretariat