21 October 2013

Dear [Name],

FOI 13-1318

Thank you for your e-mail to myself on the 21st September 2013 in which you requested:

"I would like to redefine my request, to be a list of all bodies that comprise both civil servants and industry that are concerned with Typhoon exports. The group may be exclusively concerned with Typhoon, or it may deal with exports of other equipment as well. Please indicate the approximate dates that each group was started (and disbanded, if applicable)."

You narrowed your request by limiting the question to Typhoon group, however, you also expanded the search by stating all groups which may deal with other equipment as well. As I said before we do not hold list of groups therefore to fulfil your request to find groups that may include Typhoon it would be necessary for us to search the records of most DSO staff. We estimate that complying with your request would exceed the cost limit of £600 provided under Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act. This represents the estimated cost of spending 3.5 working days: (i) determining whether the department holds the information, and (ii) locating, retrieving and extracting the information. The Act provides that we are not obliged to comply with requests where the estimated cost of complying would exceed this limit.

However, I have been able to construct a list of groups which are concerned with Typhoon (below).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Start Date</th>
<th>End Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Campaign Steering Board (Malaysia)</td>
<td>Apr-11</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DSO Campaign Review (Malaysia)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DSO Project Matrix Review (Malaysia)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typhoon Project Board (Oman)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan Campaign Steering Board</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan Typhoon ICT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Redacted] Typhoon ICT</td>
<td>Apr-10</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oman Typhoon ICT (now discontinued)</td>
<td>Apr-08</td>
<td>May-12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Whereas every effort has been made to ensure that the information given in this document is accurate, neither UK Trade & Investment nor its parent Departments (the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, and the Foreign & Commonwealth Office), accept liability for any errors, omissions or misleading statements, and no warranty is given or responsibility accepted as to the standing of any individual, firm, company or other organisation mentioned.
Oman Support & Training Working Group
Joint Export Team | Ongoing
Senior Export Governance Group
Bahrain Typhoon ICT | Ongoing
Canada Typhoon ICT | May-13
India Typhoon ICT | Aug-06
UAE Typhoon ICT

ICT – Integrated Campaign Team

I have redacted one piece of information under the following exemptions:

Section 27 sub section (1) (a)(c) of the Act exempts information if its disclosure under this act would, or would be likely to, prejudice relations between the UK and any other state or the interest of UK abroad. It is a qualified exemption and we have considered the public interest test arguments.

We acknowledge there is a public interest in the Department whenever possible providing transparency about its engagement with Overseas Governments and the release of this information would increase public knowledge of the UK’s diplomatic relations. However, against this it can be argued that the effective conduct of international relationships depends upon maintaining trust and confidence of Governments of other nations.

There is a strong public interest in withholding information that concerns another state and disclosure of this information is likely to prejudice the relationship between UK Government and the Government of another nation. This may lead to a breakdown of cooperation and have a detrimental impact on current and future negotiations and diplomatic relations. In this case the existence of a group to discuss Typhoon for a country that has not publically expressed an interest could damage the diplomatic relations and UK interests in that country. Therefore, after careful consideration of each document where section 27 has been applied, we have decided that the balance of the public interest favours withholding the information requested.

Section 43(2) (Commercial information). Section 43(2) is subject to a public interest test. In this context, we recognise that there is a general public interest in the disclosure of information as greater transparency makes Government more accountable. Against this there is a public interest in ensuring that the commercial interests of external businesses are not damaged or undermined by disclosure of information which is not common knowledge and which could adversely impact on future business. In this case disclosing a potential customer who has not publically announced an interest could be detrimental to any potential future bid and therefore we consider that the public interest in favour of disclosing such information is outweighed by the necessity to protect the commercial interests of the department and companies concerned.

Please also note that we have problems defining a group/body. Clearly we can have one off meetings on specific subjects with these campaigns or untitled meetings etc which I believe do not constitute a group and even if they did could prove enormously difficult to find as the broad searches required would not pick up these meetings. The list above is therefore the more formal groups established to deal with export campaigns.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter and should be addressed to the Information Rights Unit (FOI.Requests@bis.gsi.gov.uk).

Information Rights Unit
Department for Business, Innovation & Skills
1 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0ET

Please remember to quote the reference number in any future communications.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner’s Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wimslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF.

Yours sincerely,

Signed

UKTI Defence & Security Organisation
Policy & Resources Secretariat