



Ministry  
of Defence

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Chris Cole

Ref: 11-03-2014-151308-010

Address: Drone Wars UK  
Peace House  
19 Paradise Street  
Oxford  
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Date: 08 April 2014

Email: chris@dronewars.net

Dear Mr Cole,

Thank you for your email of 11 March 2014 requesting the following information:

**'In February 2012 the RAF published as part of its weekly 'RAF Operational Updates' a report dated 25 February 2012. The report contained the following:**

**"The 39 Sqn Reaper detachment, operating from Kandahar airfield continue to provide detailed imagery and intelligence crucial to ground commanders. This week they have delivered approx 180 hours of full motion video (FMV). The FMV products are used extensively by ground forces operating as part of Task Force Helmand and the US Marine Corps of Task Force Leatherneck. During one event this week the Reaper crew had been undertaking a prolonged operation when it was cued on to a 'high value' insurgent who was transporting weapons north of Lashkar Gah. He was then joined by a two further insurgents. Over a period of approximately 8 hours the Reaper crew maintained 'eyes on' before eventually seizing the opportunity to strike when there was no risk of civilian casualties or collateral damage."**

**Please can you tell me what documents, reports or other information is held by the Ministry of Defence pertaining to the incident detailed. Please can I have copies of any such information'.**

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.

The Ministry of Defence holds three items pertaining to the incident you have detailed in your request; Mission Report, Guided Missile Firing Report and Weapon System Video. However these items fall entirely within the scope of the qualified exemptions provided for

at sections 26 (Defence) and 27 (International Relations) of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and have been withheld.

Section 26 and 27 are 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 has been applied to the documents and video footage because they contain details which are operationally sensitive and would prejudice the capability and effectiveness of our armed forces in our current and future operations. The balance of public interest was found to be in favour of withholding the items as to do so would prejudice the security of UK personnel serving abroad by providing tactical and operational advantage to our enemies.

Section 27 has also been applied because the information you have requested has the potential to adversely affect relations with our allies. The balance of the public interest test concluded that release of the documents and video footage could harm relations between the UK and other International Security Assistance Force nations.

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 Deputy Chief Information Officer, 2nd Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail [CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk](mailto: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.gov.uk>.

Yours sincerely,

J8 FOI Secretariat