



Ministry
of Defence

J9 Secretariat
Permanent Joint Headquarters
(United Kingdom)
Northwood Headquarters
Sandy Lane
NORTHWOOD
Middlesex
HA6 3HP

Email: UKStratCom-PJHQ-J9-FOI-Mbx@mod.gov.uk

FOI2020/13361

18 December 2020

Mr Chris Cole
chris@dronewars.net

Dear Mr Cole,

Your correspondence dated 4th December 2020 has been considered to be a request for information in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000. You requested the following information:

'a) Are UK forces deployed to Mali for peacekeeping operations equipped with Puma AE and DefendTex D40 UAVs, and if so how many?

b) Whether the version of DefendTex D40 deployed is equipped with munitions or if it is just being used for ISR'

This letter is to inform you that we believe that some of the information falls within the scope of the following qualified exemption(s): Section 26 (defence of the British Isles of the capability, effectiveness or security of any relevant forces). As such it is necessary for us to decide whether, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

The Freedom of Information 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 an additional 20 working days to take a final decision on where the balance of public interest lies. We therefore plan to let you have a response by 27 January 2021. If it appears that it will take longer than this to reach a conclusion, we will let you know at the earliest opportunity.

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 Information Rights Compliance team, 1st Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail 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.org.uk>.

Yours sincerely,

PJHQ J9 Secretariat