



From: **XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX** FOI Focal Point,
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
 Level 4, Zone J, Main Building, London SW1A 2HB

Switch Board: 0207 218 9000

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Reference:
 21-09-2006-112024-005

Date:
 12th January 2007

Dear **XXXXXXXXXXXX**,

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

1. Thank you for your email of 18th September 2006 in which you raise three Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests. I am replying in response to the second of your three requests in which you ask for ‘Copies of any documents relating to “so-called remote viewing”. Your request has been considered as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000 and I can confirm that the Ministry of Defence does hold one document on this subject.

2. I apologise for the length of time taken to reply to this request but, as you are aware from the updates that have been sent to you, the document is quite substantial and has required various discussions between a number of relevant parties to determine the releasability of the information. These discussions have now concluded and, whilst we have tried to release as much of the information as possible, it has been necessary to remove some details. Where this is the case, the appropriate FOIA exemption(s) have been indicated beside the redactions. The exemptions used are: Absolute exemptions 40(2) (Personal Information) and 41(1)(b) (Information Provided in Confidence), and Qualified exemptions 26(1) (Defence), 27(1)(a) and 27(3)(International Relations), and 43(2) (Commercial Interests).

3. Please also note that although the original document contains seven Annexes (A to G), it has been necessary to withhold four of the Annexes in total. Annexes A and G are both commercial documents and have been withheld under exemption 43(2), Annex C is also a commercial document and contains personal information and has been withheld under exemptions 40(2) and 43(2), and Annex E is information which was provided in confidence and has been withheld under exemption 41(1)(b).

4. As exemptions 26, 27 and 43 are Qualified exemptions, in accordance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, we have looked at the balance of public interest for and against disclosure for each Section. Details of the public interest test and our conclusions are detailed below:

Section 26 (Defence). This exemption has been used to withhold information regarding the nature of work of a particular Ministry of Defence organisation and a Defence Intelligence Staff (DIS) Branch. It has also been used to withhold information relating to a classified DIS security compartment. In favour of disclosing this information is the public interest in promoting the understanding of the work of the MoD. However, it is essential that the work of particular areas of the MoD remain withheld, as disclosure of this information would have an adverse effect on their ability to carry out their responsibilities. We therefore conclude that the balance of the public interest is firmly in favour of withholding the information in accordance with Section 26(1)(a) & (b).

Section 27 (International Relations). This exemption has been used to withhold information concerning our working relationship with another nation. In favour of disclosing this information is the public interest in disclosing the interest of other nations in the subject area. Against the public interest is the need to maintain the UK's ability to effectively share information from other nations on issues of mutual interest with a degree of confidentiality. The release of this information would prejudice the future exchange of such information and may also damage the UK's relationship with the other nation. We therefore conclude that the balance of public interest is in favour of withholding this information in accordance with Section 27(1)(a) & 27(3).

Section 43 (Commercial Interests) – This exemption has been used to withhold information relating to the activities of a particular company who were involved in the remote viewing task and in the compilation of the subject document. In favour of disclosing this information is the public interest in providing more background information. Disclosure of this information would prejudice current and future commercial relations between the company concerned and the Ministry of Defence. We therefore conclude that the balance of public interest is in favour of withholding this information in accordance with Section 43 (2).

5. If you are unhappy with the response or wish to complain about any aspect of the handling of this request, then you should contact the undersigned in the first instance. Should you remain dissatisfied, then you may apply for an internal review by contacting the Director of Information Exploitation, 6th Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (**e-mail Info-XD@mod.uk**).

6. If you are still unhappy 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 **normally** 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.informationcommissioner.gov.uk>.

Yours sincerely,