



Ref: FOI2023-029

[REDACTED]

7<sup>th</sup> August 2023

Dear [REDACTED],

Further to our previous correspondence regarding your request for the following information:

*I'm looking to understand what your organisation is spending on Salesforce products between the dates 1st August 2019 to 1st August 2023. This includes all quotes (preferably in PDF format) with associated costs, units and discounts relating to Salesforce products (which could include) -*

1. *Salesforce Sales Cloud*
2. *Salesforce Service Cloud*
3. *Salesforce Revenue Cloud*
4. *Salesforce Marketing Cloud*
5. *Pardot*
6. *Salesforce Experience Cloud*
7. *Commerce Cloud*
8. *Salesforce Analytics Cloud*
9. *Salesforce Apps Cloud*
10. *Salesforce IoT Cloud*
11. *Tableau*
12. *MuleSoft*

*(these will likely be billed together)*

*I am investigating your organisation's Salesforce costs against other organisations in assessing if you are getting value for money from Salesforce.*

Your request has been handled as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act).

The Act provides applicants with two rights under section 1. These are:

- s.1(1)(a) The right to be told (in writing) whether the authority holds the information that has been requested, and
- s.1(1)(b) The right to have that information communicated to them.

The duty under s.1(1)(a) is referred to as the duty to confirm or deny. When responding to a request for information, it may be necessary for the authority to Neither Confirm Nor Deny (NCND) that it holds the information.

The Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) neither confirms nor denies that it holds the information that you requested pursuant to the following sections:



- Section 24(1)
- Section 26 (1)
- Section 43 (2)

Sections 24(1), 26(1) and 43(2) are qualified exemptions subject to a Public Interest Test (PIT) which means that the information requested can only be withheld if the public interest in doing so outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

For each of the exemptions applied, we will now set out arguments for and against disclosure in terms of the public interest with the reasons for our conclusion.

#### Section 24(1) – Safeguarding National Security

Section 24(1) applies where withholding the information is “required for the purposes of safeguarding national security”. The Act makes a presumption towards disclosure wherever possible and includes a general obligation to promote openness and transparency, and we recognise that there is some public interest in transparency around public spending; in public authorities being held to account for their decisions.

However, there is a strong public interest in safeguarding national security and in withholding any information that might prejudice it. Providing the requested information would impinge on the national security of the United Kingdom (UK). If AWE were to disclose this, it would be highly likely to result in AWE and its assets becoming vulnerable to cyber-attacks instigated by unfriendly actors, both within and external to the UK. If AWE’s systems were to be accessed inappropriately it would provide a better understanding of the UK’s capabilities and potential vulnerabilities in relation to the nuclear deterrent. The very nature of our deterrent requires information on its scope, scale and potential vulnerability to be withheld so that it remains effective in its role as a strategic defensive weapon.

Taking these factors into consideration, the PIT finds that the benefit of promoting openness and transparency relating to public spending must be weighed against the threat to national security that such a release would pose. There is no wider public interest in making the nuclear deterrent more vulnerable.

#### Section 26(1) – Defence

Section 26(1) states that information is exempt if its disclosure under the Act would, or would be likely to, prejudice (a) the defence of the British Islands or of any colony, or (b) the capability, effectiveness or security of any relevant forces.

The factors for release are similar to those provided for the use of section 24 in as much as release of the information would provide greater openness and transparency in relation to public spending and public authorities being held to account for their decisions.

The very nature of the nuclear deterrent however requires information on the IT support infrastructure that underpins the programme to be withheld so that it remains effective in its role as a strategic defensive weapon. By extension, any undermining of the capability, credibility and effectiveness of our defence nuclear programmes undermine the UK’s nuclear deterrent which is the apex of the UK’s national security



strategy. Its credibility is vital to it remaining an effective capability. There is a high likelihood that release of this information would provide the ability to an adversary to access information that underpins the nuclear deterrent programme, consequently prejudicing the capability and effectiveness of the UK's nuclear deterrent and prejudicing the defence of the UK.

#### Section 43(2) – Commercial Interests

Section 43(2) provides that information is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any person (including the public authority holding it). Under the prejudice test we have to consider if disclosure of this information would, or would be likely to, prejudice our commercial interests or the commercial interests of a third party.

Consideration is also given to the harm disclosing this information would be likely to cause, combined with other information already in the public domain or possibly released at a future date. While there is public interest in promoting openness and transparency and the possibility of stimulating more competition and lower prices.

Existing contracts that were negotiated before 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021 (the date AWE became an NDPB) consequently there is a strong public interest in safeguarding their details as the suppliers involved had an expectation of confidentiality. Disclosure may result in suppliers withdrawing from their contracts with AWE, which, as well as prejudicing both AWE's and the third party's commercial interests, would have a direct impact of the deliverability timeline and overall costs of the Continuous at Sea Deterrent, (CASD). The fact that there are a limited number of cloud suppliers in this market also means disclosure of our supplier details would be likely to prejudice AWE's commercial interests.

A public interest test has been completed in respect of each of the stated exemptions and has fallen in favour of neither confirming nor denying whether the requested information is held.

This response should not be taken as conclusive evidence that the information you have requested is or is not held by AWE.

Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications. If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance.

If you are unhappy with the way your request has been handled you have a right to request an internal review within 40 days of receiving this letter, by writing to [information.requests@awe.co.uk](mailto:information.requests@awe.co.uk) or our postal address: Information Requests Team, AWE Aldermaston, Reading, RG7 4PR. If you are still unhappy after an internal review has been completed, under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 you have the right to take your complaint to the Information Commissioner's Office. Please note the Commissioner will generally not consider a complaint until you have exhausted AWE's internal complaints process.

Yours sincerely,

AWE Information Requests Team