



Ref: FOI2023-040

[REDACTED]

9th November 2023

Dear [REDACTED]

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

I would like to make a Freedom of Information request pursuant to an earlier FOI you dealt with in September, ref FOI2023-026.

That answer refers to a number of files, one of which is titled 'Signals out - Antler Trials' dated 6/9/57 and with a TNA reference ES1/745. Although open at the National Archives, a small number of pages have been redacted from this file, each one replaced with a note stating those pages were 'retained by department under S3 (4)' and a date of 22/7/97. A screenshot is attached.

I understand this to mean the pages were removed in 1997 under the exemptions of the Public Records Act S3 (4), a process which requires approval by a Secretary of State. These redactions are subject to a review every 10 years.

For the pages removed from the file ES1/745 only, I would like to request a list of which Cabinet ministers approved their removal, and on what date, from 1997 to the present day. I anticipate this may be a list of job titles, ie Culture Secretary or Defence Secretary, and a corresponding date. If it is possible to provide the name of the minister concerned, as this should really be a matter of public record, please do so.

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

Thorough searches have been carried out to locate the information you requested and we can confirm that the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) has only been able to locate the following relevant information:

The record in question (Retained Extracts for ES1/745) is a collection of classified documents that is part of a larger file most of which was deposited in TNA. The precise date of deposit is not recorded.

Retention would have been under an LCI and therefore, at that time, the Ministerial Responsibility of the Lord Chancellor. Examination of the database for one of the deposited records in the ES1/745 collection quotes LCI 76. It is a reasonable assumption that all ES1/745 records would have been processed during 1997 and under this LCI.

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.



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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 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

