Northumbria University
Pandon Building
Newcastle Upon Tyne
NE1 8ST

Information Rights Coordinator
Sarah Owen

E: sarah5.owen@northumbria.ac.uk
W: northumbria.ac.uk

13th December 2023

OUR REFERENCE: FOI/RFI-3986/Sullivan

Dear Millie Sullivan,

Your request received on 23rd November 2023 has been considered under the Freedom of information Act 2000 (FOIA). You requested:

In the below request, the phrase 'arms trade companies' relates to, but not limited to:
1.BAE systems
2. Babcock
3. QinetiQ
4. Rolls-Royce
5. Serco
6. Cobham
7. Raytheon
8. Airbus
9. General Dynamics
10. Leonardo MW
11. Lockheed Martin
12. Thales
13. MBDA
14. Elbit Systems
15. Caterpillar
16. MOD
17. DSTL
18. Atomic Weapons establishment
19. GKN
20. Boeing

In the below request, the phrase 'research project' related to, but not limited to:

Any academic research collaborations that involve any staff members or any member of the active student body with companies or institutions who have stakes in the defence industry and arms trade companies.

Could you please provide me with all research projects with any connection to arms trade companies in the last five years. Connections can include sources of funding and/or collaborative research partnership on the research project.

Please can these be broken down by financial year, and categorise them accordingly:

- **Title and aim of research project Players (list of companies involved in the research project)**
- **Name of university department(s) involved (if applicable)**
- **Source of funding for the research project (to be included the source of funding does not have to be an arms trade company)**
- **The total amount, in pounds sterling, that the university has received in research funding for this project in the last five financial years. Details should be broken down for this project year-by-year.**
- **Timescale of research project - start and end (exact day/month if applicable/available, otherwise by financial years).**

We can confirm that the University of Northumbria holds some of the information you requested. However, we are withholding that information since we consider that your request falls under the exemption permitted under Section 14 (2) FOIA relating to repeated requests. This letter therefore acts as a refusal notice under Section 17 FOIA.

Section 14 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) allows public authorities to classify requests as vexatious and/or repeated. In such circumstances a public authority is not obliged to comply with the request.

Section 14(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act) provides:

14 Vexatious or repeated requests.

1) *Section 1(1) does not oblige a public authority to comply with a request for information if the request is vexatious.*

2) *Where a public authority has previously complied with a request for information which was made by any person, it is not obliged to comply with a subsequent identical or substantially similar request from that person unless a reasonable interval has elapsed between compliance with the previous request and the making of the current request.*

Section 14(2) may be applied when all three of the following criteria have been fulfilled:

- the request is identical or substantially similar to a previous request from the same requester;
- you have previously provided the information to the requester or confirmed that you do not hold it in response to an earlier FOIA request; and
- a reasonable interval has not elapsed between the new request and your compliance with the previous request.

This exemption applies as we have deemed this request to be substantially similar to requests you have previously submitted on 22/09/23 (RFI3943) and 23/10/23 (RFI3960) (see Appendix 1 at the end of this letter).

These requests, submitted within a period of 62 days, have been deemed substantially similar in scope in that all of these requests ask the variations on the theme of ‘a relationship/involvement between Northumbria University and specified “arms trade companies” in the last five years’.

Your definition of “Academic Partnerships” and ”research projects” have sufficient cross references to make the information referred to in your requests within the same scope and the these requests responses and the questions asked are identical in some cases. It is clear that all of these requests could have been submitted as one request or ‘spread out’ across multiple requests in an effort to avoid the cost limitation.

These requests were responded to on 16/11/23 and 17/11/23 therefore there is one week in between the response to the previous requests and the new FOI request being received. One week is not considered a reasonable interval for requesting substantially similar information so the exemption permitted under Section 14 is applied.

Section 14 is an absolute exemption and is not subject to the public interest test.

If you are unhappy with our response or the way your request has been handled, you have the right to ask for an internal review. To request a review, please contact the Records and Information Manager, in writing at the above address or via email. The review would be undertaken by Jay Wilson, the University's Head of Legal.

Please remember to quote the reference number above in any future communications.

Should you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may then appeal to the Information Commissioner at www.ico.org.uk

Yours sincerely

Sarah Owen
Information Rights Coordinator

RFI3943 Submitted 22/09/23 Responded 16/11/23	**RFI3960** Submitted 23/10/23 Responded 17/11/23	**RFI3986** Submitted 23/11/2023
In the below request the phrase the phrase ‘arms trade companies’ relates to, but not limited to: 1.BAE systems 2. Babcock 3. QinetiQ 4. Rolls-Royce 5. Serco 6. Cobham 7. Raytheon 8. Airbus 9. General Dynamics 10. Leonardo MW 11. Lockheed Martin 12. Thales 13. MBDA 14. Elbit Systems 15. Caterpillar 16. MOD 17. DSTL 18. Atomic Weapons establishment 19. GKN 20. Boeing ‘Academic partnership’ refers to ‘arms trade companies’ involvement of any of the following:	In the below request, the phrase ‘arms trade companies’ relates to, but not limited to: 1.BAE systems 2. Babcock 3. QinetiQ 4. Rolls-Royce 5. Serco 6. Cobham 7. Raytheon 8. Airbus 9. General Dynamics 10. Leonardo MW 11. Lockheed Martin 12. Thales 13. MBDA 14. Elbit Systems 15. Caterpillar 16. MOD 17. DSTL 18. Atomic Weapons establishment 19. GKN 20. Boeing Please may you provide:	In the below request, the phrase ‘arms trade companies’ relates to, but not limited to: 1.BAE systems 2. Babcock 3. QinetiQ 4. Rolls-Royce 5. Serco 6. Cobham 7. Raytheon 8. Airbus 9. General Dynamics 10. Leonardo MW 11. Lockheed Martin 12. Thales 13. MBDA 14. Elbit Systems 15. Caterpillar 16. MOD 17. DSTL 18. Atomic Weapons establishment 19. GKN 20. Boeing In the below request, the phrase ‘research project' related to, but not limited to: Any academic research collaborations that involve any staff members or any member of

• Graduate schemes/apprenticeships/Careers fair appearances • Directly sponsored PhDs or Studentships • Company involvement in university departments - i.e. MoD Laboratories, EPSRC centres for doctoral research. • Any consultancy role. Please may I request any relevant information or appearance of arms trade companies in the aforementioned capacities in the past five years: • May this be broken down by financial year, with the start/end date where applicable • The name of the arms company involved • The financial value of the relationship • The name of the relevant university department • The name and description of the research being conducted in the studentship	1) Any investment made into an arms trade company, detailing the name of the arms trade company/organisation, amount invested, and type of investment (e.g. bonds, stocks and shares, capital etc.) of that financial year, for the past five financial years. 2) Any investment made into an arms trade company by the university endowment fund organised by name of company/organisation, amount invested of that financial year, for the past five financial years 3.) The name of any investment management firm or bank the university uses to make investments, and the amount given to them annually. If they do provide a list of the names of companies/organisations/investments they make on the university's behalf, please include any investments in arms trade companies provided by this information.	the active student body with companies or institutions who have stakes in the defence industry and arms trade companies. Could you please provide me with all research projects with any connection to arms trade companies in the last five years. Connections can include sources of funding and/or collaborative research partnership on the research project. Please can these be broken down by financial year, and categorise them accordingly: • Title and aim of research project Players (list of companies involved in the research project) • Name of university department(s) involved (if applicable) • Source of funding for the research project (to be included the source of funding does not have to be an arms trade company) • The total amount, in pounds sterling, that the university has received in research funding for this project in the last five financial years. Details should be broken down for this project year-by-year. • Timescale of research project - start and end (exact day/month if applicable/available, otherwise by financial years)