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Our ref: FOI/2324/301

Name: Millie Sullivan
By email to: millie@ded1.co

26 March 2024

Dear Millie,

With apologies for the delay, a response to your request for information received on 21 February is provided below. The questions asked are in *italics* followed by our responses in **bold**.

In the below request, the phrase 'arms trade companies' relates to, but not limited to: BAE Systems, Babcock, QinetiQ , Rolls-Royce , Serco, Cobham, Raytheon, Airbus, General Dynamics, Leonardo MW, Lockheed Martin, Thales, MBDA, Elbit Systems, Caterpillar, MOD, DSTL, Atomic Weapons Establishment, GKN, and 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 holds information; however, it is withheld because it falls under the exemption provided by Section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) relating to "requests where the cost of compliance exceeds the appropriate limit".

Section 12(1) FOIA provides that an authority is not obliged to respond to a request for information if it is estimated that the cost of complying with that request would exceed the "appropriate limit". The "appropriate limit" for universities set by the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulation 2004 is 18 hours and considers the activities involved in determining whether the requested information is held, locating, retrieving, and extracting the information from the record containing it.

The departments responsible for this information have confirmed that to find the information requested it would be necessary to search our consultancy and research contracts records for contracts with any of the identified organisations or indeed "any other arms companies" that we can think of (with no guarantee of completeness). The terms "arms trade" is not used within the University to identify individual companies. Once we have identified any contracts with start and/or end dates that fall within the financial years listed, we must find the contracts file from either hard copy files or from the University's shared drive to review confidentiality clauses for restrictions for each contract and contact the relevant individual in the external partner to obtain agreement for disclosure as required. We would then need to interrogate our financial records for fees invoicing to the identified organisations (or similar) for the years in question.

From an initial search, we have identified 50+ possible instances which could come within the scope of your enquiry. We estimate that it could take up to an hour to review each instance and therefore would exceed the cost limit with the Act. This acts as our Refusal Notice.

Section 16 of FOIA places an obligation on the University to provide you with advice and assistance. Due to the nature of the request and the volume of records held it would not be possible to narrow the scope of your request to fall within the fee regulations.

If you are unhappy with the way we have handled your request, you have a right under Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act to ask the University to review it. You must do so within 40 working days of the date of this response. Your request should include our reference number and explain the reason for requesting a review. Email foi@liverpool.ac.uk or write to the Freedom of Information Reviewer, Legal & Governance, University of Liverpool, Foundation Building, 765 Brownlow Hill, Liverpool L69 7ZX. We will respond to your request for an internal review within 20 working days of receipt.

Following an internal review, if you are still dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have a right to appeal to the Information Commissioner. Information on how to do this is available at http://ico.org.uk/complaints. There is no charge for making an appeal.

Yours sincerely

Kirsty Rothwell

Kirsty Rothwell
Freedom of Information Officer / Data Protection Co-ordinator