



Ref: FOI2023-047

[REDACTED]

10th January 2024

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.

The release referred to a list of 150 documents, the majority not released to the National Archives and some with all or parts of them retained by the department, which relate to blood and urine testing done during nuclear weapons tests.

I understand two files - one reference ES1/745, the other a 1997 relating to nuclear test veterans with no reference number - were locked in part or in whole by a Lord Chancellor's Instrument.

I wonder if it would be possible to confirm whether the remaining 148 files in this list were a) retained by LCI b) if so, what exemption was cited c) the dates the LCI was activated for each file. d) the number for the LCI in each case.

If this request would exceed the statutory cost limit, please restrict your searches to the following sample of documents:

- * *'Medical report - blood count data' dated 29/12/53*
- * *'Appendix A to administrative instruction 35/36 - special medical examinations - blood test period 19/8/56 - 21/8/56' dated 18/8/56*
- * *'Maralinga - health - Radiological protection - medical examinations - x-ray - inoculations - blood counts' dated 24/8/56*
- * *'Report on Medical examinations of natives at Coober Pedy' dated 6/4/60*

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

A search for the requested information within the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) has now been completed, and we can confirm that some of the information in scope of your request is held.



Aldermaston ▪ Reading
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We are able to disclose that AWE currently employs the Lord Chancellor's Instrument (LCI) numbered 118, activated in 2014, the grounds for retention are National Security, Security against possible terrorist activity and regard for the UK's international obligations.

The 150 documents discussed form part of the 'Merlin database', 'a collection' which is required to be maintained as a whole, is classified as a whole, at the level of the highest individual document.

The database has been covered by various LCI throughout its lifetime.

Under Section 16 Advice and Assistance, it might be useful to note that Individual documents within the collection are available for scrutiny under the Act, each request being assessed on its own merits.

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 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