

Section 40



PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR DEFENCE

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
MAIN BUILDING WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB
Telephone 0171-21.....(Direct Dialling)
0171-21 89000 (Switchboard)



D/US of S/JS 0177/99/P

28 January 1999

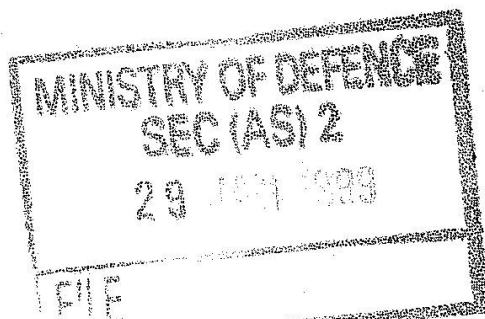
Dear Martin,

Thank you for your letter of 13 January (reference GOVT-01-RO-SP-09-C) to George Robertson about sightings of lights in the sky over Swansea on the evening of 8 October 1998. I am replying as this matter falls within my area of responsibility.

Two Sea King helicopters, one from RAF Chivenor and one from RAF Valley, were given permission to land at Swansea Airport on the evening of 8 October 1998. We believe that the lights from these helicopters hovering near Swansea Airport might have been responsible for what was seen.

I hope this is of help.

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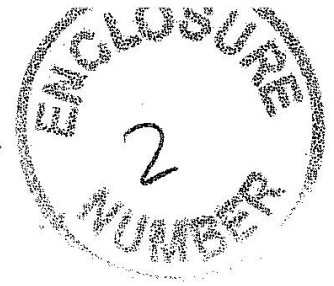


JOHN SPELLAR MP

Martin Caton Esq MP



Recycled Paper



LOOSE MINUTE

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

20 January 1999

PE Unit **Section 40** 20/Jan
(thro **Section 40**)

LETTER FROM MARTIN CATON MP - US0177/99

1. I attach a draft reply for USofS to send to Martin Caton MP who has received several reports from his constituents of strange objects and lights in the sky over Swansea on 8 October 1998.
2. Two Sea King helicopters, one from RAF Valley and the other from RAF Chivenor, were given permission to land at Swansea Airport on the evening of 8 October 1998. We believe the lights from the helicopters hovering around the Airport caused members of the public to report sightings of 'strange lights in the sky'. The Department did not receive any reports of 'UFO' sightings from anywhere in the UK on the night in question.

Section 40

SEC(AS)2A1

MB8245 **Section 40**

CHOTS: SEC(AS)2A1

US/0177/99

January 1999

Thank you for your letter of 13 January (Ref: GOVT-01-RO-SP-09-C) to George Robertson about sightings of lights in the sky over Swansea on the evening of 8 October. I am replying in view of my responsibility for military aircraft activity in the UK.

Two Sea King helicopters, one from RAF Chivenor and one from RAF Valley, were given permission to land at Swansea Airport on the evening of 8 October 1998. We believe that the lights from these helicopters hovering near Swansea Airport might have been responsible for what was seen.

I hope this is helpful.

JOHN SPELLAR

Martin Caton MP

PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRY - FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION**THE GUIDANCE IS NEW : YOU MUST READ IT**TO: SEC (AS) 72PE REF NUMBER: US177 /99MINISTER REPLYING: USOFSDRAFT REQUIRED BY: 27/1 /99DATE: 15/1 /99FROM: **Section 40** PE Unit TEL: **Section 40**

YOU WILL BE HELD TO ACCOUNT FOR THE DRAFT ANSWER AND ADVICE. THEY MUST BE ACCURATE AND NOT MISLEADING IN ANY WAY

ENSURE THE DEADLINE IS MET. IF IN DOUBT, SEEK ADVICE.

ALL DRAFTS MUST BE CLEARED BY A NAMED OFFICIAL AT GRADE 7 LEVEL OR ABOVE.

***** **IMPORTANT UPDATES** *****1. **Ministerial responsibilities changed.**2. **Opening and Closing** All Ministers prefer to start:

"Thank you for your letter of ... (MP's ref if given) on behalf of/enclosing one from your constituent, Mr ... of ... Toytown about..."

If a Minister is replying on behalf of another Minister start:

"Thank you for your letter of ... to George Robertson/Doug Henderson/John Gilbert/John Spellar on behalf etc"

Mr Spellar add "I am replying in view of my responsibility for ..."

Do not end "I hope this is helpful" when the reply is obviously disappointing. Alternatives are:

"I hope this explains the position"

"I am sorry I cannot be more helpful"

"I am sorry to send what I know will be a disappointing reply."

3. **Open Government** A revised Code of Practice on Access to Government Information came into effect in 1998. It is set out in DCI GEN 54/1998.

Replies **MUST** be drafted in accordance with this policy. If you are recommending to Ministers that some or all information is withheld, the answer must specify the law or exception in the Code under which it is being withheld. eg "I am withholding the information requested under exemption 1 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information." It is **NOT** acceptable to rely on past practice.

Deadlines To concur with the Citizens Charter, we have agreed to send a written reply within **15 working days** to this enquiry. It is very important that your draft is with us by the date quoted at the top of this notice. If, exceptionally, you cannot meet the deadline let me know at once, an interim reply might be needed.

Departmental action Action on the same case should be held until the Minister has sent a full reply. Please discuss any questions about the substance of the drafts or other policy aspects direct with the relevant private office.

Ministers place great importance on the content style and speed of the replies. Letters should be polite, informal, to the point and in clear, simple language. Avoid acronyms and MOD jargon. Always emphasise the positive aspects of Government policy. No background note is required unless essential to explain the line taken in the draft reply.

Layout Draft replies should be double spaced. Always include the full PE reference number at the top left of the draft.

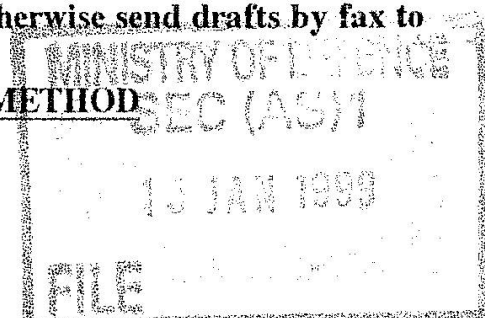
Put the MP's full title at the bottom left of the first page. Only add the address if the letter is from the Minister direct to a constituent.

Should this not be for your branch, please inform us **IMMEDIATELY** by telephone.

Wherever possible drafts should be sent on CHOTS E-Mail to: **PARLIAMENTARY ENQUIRIES, NOT TO PE CLERKS OR PRIVATE OFFICES, otherwise send drafts by fax to**

Section 40

PLEASE USE ONLY ONE METHOD





Martin Caton

Labour Member of Parliament for Gower

House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA

Tel: 0171-219-5111 Personal Assistant: 0171-219-2078 Fax: 0171-219-0905

Constituency Office: 26 Pontarddulais Road, Gorseinon, Swansea SA4 4FE

Tel: 01792-892100 Fax: 01792-892375

USO
8806
Caton

Please quote our reference number on all correspondence.

The Rt. Hon. George Robertson MP

Secretary of State for Defence

Main Building

Whitehall

LONDON

SW1A 2HB

PARLIAMENTARY
SECRETARY
15 JAN 1999
SECRETARY OF STATE

OUR REF: GOVT-01-RO-SP-09-C

13 January 1999

Dear George

**Sightings of "lights" and "objects" over Swansea
and Gower on 8th October 1998**

A very large number of my constituents and residents of the city of Swansea have reported sighting strange objects and lights in the sky on the night of 8th October, last year.

Some people have suggested that military aircraft were involved.

Could you please advise me as to whether this was the case and, in any case, whether the armed forces have an explanation for these mysterious sightings?

With thanks.

Yours sincerely

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Martin Caton MP



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WA 175

Written Answers

[17 DECEMBER 1998]

Written Answers

WA 176

18 October concerning General Pinochet were an expression of personal view and not government policy; and whether they will say (a) how viewers were expected to know that this was so, (b) whether any other of his remarks expressed only personal opinion, (c) whether it is their policy that Ministers being interviewed in their official capacity should mix personal and official views without distinction. [HL39]

Lord Sainsbury of Turville: The views expressed by my right honourable friend were personal, as was made clear by my noble friend Lady Symons of Vernham Dean (H.L. Deb., col. 370).

Agriculture Council, 14–15 December

Baroness Pitkeathley asked Her Majesty's Government:

What was the outcome of the Agriculture Council held in Brussels on 14 and 15 December. [HL354]

Lord Carter: My right honourable friend the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food represented the United Kingdom at a meeting of the European Union Agriculture Council in Brussels on 14 and 15 December.

The Council agreed by qualified majority (Belgium, Spain and Portugal abstaining) a Commission proposal to ban the use of four antibiotics in animal feed as from 30 June 1999. My right honourable friend welcomed the proposal as an appropriate response to advice, including from our own specialist scientific committees, that the use of antimicrobial growth promoters which may impair the efficacy of antibiotics used in human medicines should be phased out. He also welcomed the Council's statement stressing the need for an overall science-based approach to the issue of antibiotic resistance and calling for the Commission to submit a further report on the question of third country compliance with equivalent rules.

The Council also agreed by qualified majority (Italy and the Netherlands opposing, Portugal abstaining) two regulations establishing new agrimonetary arrangements to apply following introduction of the Single Currency on 1 January 1999. My right honourable friend supported these measures which will greatly simplify the agrimonetary system while reducing its costs and making it easier to operate. He was particularly pleased to secure provision that the impact of the ending of the freeze on green rates on 1 January, which benefited our farmers more than any other member state's, will be subject to a gradual transition over three years.

The Council reached unanimous political agreement on a proposal to send food aid to Russia, targeted towards regions most in need. My right honourable friend particularly welcomed this important gesture of EU solidarity with the Russian people.

A discussion of the Commission's proposal for reform of the wine regime concluded with agreement that final decisions should be taken in the context of the Agenda 2000 CAP reforms in the early part of next year. The Commission debated a proposal to establish

EU-wide rules governing organic livestock standards, agreeing guidelines for further negotiations.

A package of proposals concerning the marketing of seeds was adopted by qualified majority (Denmark voting against). Council resolution on an EU forestry strategy was agreed unanimously, as was a decision approving a national aid to certain Greek co-operatives. The Commission also adopted unanimously a further postponement of the implementation of the 1997 Decision on Specified Risk Materials and a short deferral of implementation of new intra-Community health rules on trade in cattle and pigs.

Dr. Bishop

Lord Evans of Parkside asked Her Majesty's Government:

When they intend to reply to the letter sent on 5 October by the Lord Evans of Parkside to the Secretary of State for Health concerning Dr. Bishop of Warrington which was acknowledged on 7 October; and when they intend to reply to a further letter on the same subject which has not so far been acknowledged but which was sent on 26 November. [HL350]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Baroness Hayman): A reply was sent to my noble friend on 16 December including an apology for the delay and the lack of communication with him while detailed inquiries were made into the specific case he raised.

Brazil

Lord Rea asked Her Majesty's Government:

What the United Kingdom is doing to assist Brazil in the light of its current economic difficulties. [HL337]

Lord McIntosh of Haringey: We welcome and support the agreements between the Brazilian Government and the international community to restore confidence in the Brazilian economy. The UK's role in furthering this objective is explained in the written statement laid before both Houses today, pursuant to the International Monetary Arrangements Act 1983.

Unidentified Flying Objects

Lord Hill-Norton asked Her Majesty's Government:

Further to the Written Answers by the Lord Chancellor on 14 October (WA 99–100) and by the Lord Gilbert on 19 November (WA 190), what is the location of the Ministry of Defence files covering the period 1970–1985 which contain information about UFOs; and what are the references and the titles of these files? [HL310]

TOTAL P.04

WA 177

Written Answers

[17 DECEMBER 1998]

Written Answers

WA 178

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Lord Gilbert): Thirty-eight files are held at the Public Record Office for release under the terms of the Public Records Acts 1958 and 1967, the 30-year rule applying:

AIR 2/18564 & 18565 UFO Reports—due for release 2002.

AIR 20/12067, 12297 to 12306 Unidentified flying objects—due for release 2001.

AIR 20/12399 to 12411 UFO reports—due for release 2003.

AIR 20/12544 to 12555 UFO reports—due for release 2004.

BJ 5/311 UFO: Met aspects—due for release 2001

Four files are held by the MoD records management branch pending acceptance and transfer to the PRO, PRO references and transfer arrangements awaiting confirmation:

AF/7463/72 UFO reports—provisionally assigned to PRO reference AIR 2/18831 for release in 2003.

AF/7464/72 UFO reports—provisionally assigned to PRO reference AIR 2/18872 for release in 2004.

AF/7464/72 Pt. II UFO reports—provisionally assigned to PRO reference AIR 2/18873 for release in 2005.

AF/7464/72 Pt. III UFO reports—provisionally assigned to PRO reference AIR 2/18874 for release in 2006.

In the absence of a thematic index of files stored in MoD's archives the identification of files has, of necessity, been limited to those created by the Air Staff Secretariat and predecessor branches. The following files have been identified and are earmarked for review by MoD at future dates, at which point they will be assessed for their suitability for preservation at the PRO. It is possible that some files created by other Headquarters divisions or establishments may contain papers on this topic. These could only be identified at disproportionate cost:

AF/S4f(A)/422—one file—UFOs, BBC Radio Oxford Programme.

AF/S4f(Air) U/506—one file—Statistical Analyses of UFOs.

AF/3459/75—one file—UFOs: Policy and Policy statements—1970.

AF/584 to 595—12 files—UFO reports.

AF/596 to 602—seven files—UFO reports.

AF/447—one file—UFO reports.

AF/607 & 608—two files—UFO reports.

AF/610 to 613—four files—UFO reports.

AF/616 to 619—four files—UFO reports.

AF/419—one file—BBC 2, Man Alive Programme: UFOs.

D/DS8/75/2/1—six parts—UFO reports, correspondence.

D/DS9/75/2/2—12 parts—UFO correspondence.

D/DS8/75/2/3—six parts—UFO reports, edited copies.

D/DS8/75/2/4—three parts—UFO reports.

D/DS8/75/2/5—two parts—UFO reports.

D/DS8/75/3—one part—UFO, Parliamentary Correspondence.

D/DS8/75/6—one part—UFO, TV discussion.

D/DS8/75/7—one part—UFO, satellite debris.

D/DS8/10/209—seven parts—UFO briefs, reports and correspondence.

D/DS8/10/209/1—three parts—general briefs, reports, UFO correspondence.

UN Charter: Article 53

Lord Judd asked Her Majesty's Government:

What is their current interpretation of Article 53 of the Charter of the United Nations on the relationship between regional security measures and the Security Council; and what is their current assessment of the effectiveness of its application. [HL238]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean): Under Article 53 of the United Nations (UN) Charter, enforcement action under regional arrangements described in Article 52 requires Security Council authorisation. As I said in my Written Answer to the noble Lord, Lord Kennet, on 16 November (WA 140) the prohibitions on the use of force contained in the UN Charter do not preclude the use of force by a state or group of states in accordance with Article 51 or under the authority of the Security Council acting under Chapter VII of the Charter. Cases have also arisen when, in the light of all the circumstances, a limited use of force was justifiable in support of the purposes laid down by the Security Council but without the Council's express authorisation when that was the only means to avert an immediate and overwhelming humanitarian catastrophe. Such cases would in the nature of things be exceptional and would depend on an objective assessment of the factual circumstances at the time and on the terms of relevant decisions of the Security Council bearing on the situation in question.

We are working to ensure the closest possible co-operation between the Security Council and regional arrangements. I draw the noble Lord's attention to the 30 November statement by the President of the Security Council "Enhancing Monitoring of Activities authorised by the Council but carried out by member states or Coalitions of States", which has been placed in the Library of the House.

P.04/04

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15-NOV-1999 11:41 FROM MOD WHITEHALL LIBRARY

Accession No.: 956892562

Group : Parliamentary Questions
Type : Lords PQs - oral, written and Private notice

Date : 17/12/98
Reference : 595 c176-8WA
Session : 98/99
Member : Hill-Norton, Lord; Gilbert, RtHonLord

Description : Further to the Written Answers by the Lord Chancellor (593 c99-100WA, 14 October 1998) and by the Lord Gilbert (594 c190WA, 19 November 1998), what is the location of the Ministry of Defence files covering the period 1970-1985 which contain information about UFOs; and what are the references and the titles of these files? [HL310].

Subject Terms: Unidentified flying objects; Disclosure of information

Organisation : Ministry of Defence

Update Date : 07/01/99

MOD HQ LIBRARY
3-5 GREAT SCOTLAND YARD, LONDON SW1A 2HW
ENQUIRY DESK
TEL Section 40
FAX

FACSIMILE TRANSMITTAL SHEET

TO:	Section 40	FROM:	Section 40
BRANCH:	SEC AS	DATE:	15 November 1999
FAX NUMBER:	Section 40	TOTAL NO. OF PAGES INCLUDING COVER:	4
PHONE NUMBER:	Section 40	SENDER'S REFERENCE NUMBER:	
RE:	PQ ON RELEASE OF UFO FILES	YOUR REFERENCE NUMBER:	PHONE CALL 15/11/99
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☒ URGENT ☐ FOR REVIEW ☐ PLEASE COMMENT ☐ PLEASE REPLY ☐ PLEASE RECYCLE

NOTES/COMMENTS:

Please see attached. The House of Lords wasn't sitting between 18th December 1998 and January 10th 1999. The attached PQ was answered on the 17th December 1998. There are no other PQs by Lord Hill-Norton.

ENQUIRY DESK, MOD HQ LIBRARY, 3-5 GREAT SCOTLAND YARD, LONDON SW1A 2HW

P.01/04

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15-NOV-1999 11:40 FROM MOD WHITEHALL LIBRARY

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Tue 15 Dec, 1998 13:56

mailbox standard Page 1

DATE	FROM	SUBJECT	CODES
15/12/98	Hd of CS(RM)1	PQ HILL-NORTON.	[]

Intended:

Sent: 15/12/98 at 12:49

Delivered: 15/12/98 at 12:52

To: SEC(AS)2

CC:

Ref: /GUID:2B85BAE5AA91D211B3BB00005A422BE6

From: Hd of CS(RM)1

Auth by:

Subject: PQ HILL-NORTON.

Text:

Priority: Normal
Reply Request []

SEE PAGE
View Acknowledge []

Attachments [2]
Codes []

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Two still looks
messy" but is better
than it was

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Section 40 copy of our final submission for your records. Section 40

From: Hd of CS(RM)
Sent: 15 December 1998 12:27
To: Hd of CS(RM)1
Subject: FW: PQ 0202J

Section 40 as sent.
Section 40

From: PS/Hd of CS
Sent: 15 December 1998 12:24
To: PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS
Cc: Hd of CS(RM)
Subject: PQ 0202J

PSA PQ 0202J

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TEMPLATE TO BE USED FOR REPLY

Ministry of Defence

THURSDAY 24 DECEMBER 1998

Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB(X) (CB)

LORDS WRITTEN

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answers by the lord Chancellor on 14th October (WA 99-100) and by the Lord Gibert on 19th November (WA 190), what is the location of the Ministry of Defence files covering the period 1970-1985 which contain information about UFOs; and what are the references and the titles of these files. (HL 310).

Minister replying Rt Hon Dr The Lord Gilbert

Thirty eight files are held at the Public Record Office for release under the terms of the Public Records Act, 1958 & 1967 (the thirty year rule applying):

AIR 2/18564 & 18565 UFO Reports - due for release 2002

AIR 20/12067, 12297 to 12306 Unidentified flying objects - due for release 2001

AIR 20/12399 to 12411 UFO reports - due for release 2003

AIR 20/12544 to 12555 UFO reports - due for release 2004

BJ 5/311 UFO: Met aspects - due for release 2001

Four files are held by the MOD records management branch pending acceptance and transfer to the PRO (PRO references and transfer arrangements awaiting confirmation):

AF/7463/72 UFO reports - provisionally assigned to PRO reference AIR 2/18831 for release in 2003.

AF/7464/72 UFO reports- provisionally assigned to PRO reference AIR 2/18872 for release in 2004.

AF/7464/72 Pt II UFO reports - provisionally assigned to PRO reference AIR 2/18873 for release in 2005.

AF/7464/72 Pt III UFO reports - provisionally assigned to PRO reference AIR 2/18874 for release in 2006.

In the absence of a thematic index of files stored in MOD's archives the identification of files has of necessity been limited to those created by the Air Staff Secretariat and predecessor branches. The following files have been identified and are earmarked for review by MOD at future dates at which point they will be assessed for their suitability for preservation at the PRO. It is possible that some files created by other

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Headquarters divisions or establishments may contain papers on this topic but these could only be identified at disproportionate cost:

AF/S4f(A)/422 - one file - UFOs, BBC Radio Oxford Programme
 AF/S4f(Air) U/506 - one file - Statistical Analyses of UFOs
 AF/3459/75 - one file - UFOs: Policy and Policy statements - 1970
 AF/584 to 595 - twelve files - UFO reports
 AF/596 to 602 - seven files - UFO reports
 AF/447 - one file - UFO reports
 AF/607 & 608 - two files - UFO reports
 AF/610 to 613 - four files - UFO reports
 AF/616 to 619 - four files - UFO reports
 AF/419 - one file - BBC 2, Man Alive Programme: UFOs

D/DS8/75/2/1 - six parts - UFO reports, correspondence
 D/DS8/75/2/2 - twelve parts - UFO correspondence
 D/DS8/75/2/3 - six parts - UFO reports, edited copies
 D/DS8/75/2/4 - three parts - UFO reports
 D/DS8/75/2/5 - two parts - UFO reports
 D/DS8/75/3 - one part - UFO, Parliamentary Correspondence
 D/DS8/75/6 - one part - UFO, TV discussion
 D/DS8/75/7 - one part - UFO, satellite debris

D/DS8/10/209 - seven parts - UFO briefs, reports and correspondence
 D/DS8/10/209/1 - three parts - general briefs, reports, UFO correspondence

PQ Ref 0202J

BACKGROUND NOTE

This question follows three recent questions tabled by Lord Hill-Norton, 2 answered by the Lord Chancellor on

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14 October 1998 (WA 99-100) and one by Min(DP) on 19 November 1998 (WA 190).

WA 99 sought the identification of all open files on this subject at the Public Record Office (PRO). By way of reply a list giving details of 23 readily identifiable files was published.

WA 100 sought a list of all closed files at the PRO on this subject. The titles of 33 files, together with PRO references was provided but covered only the years 1967 - 1970. In all cases release into the public domain is subject to the 30-year rule.

WA 190 sought the details of all open and closed files, on this subject, held by the MOD. On the grounds of disproportionate cost the answer was limited to the identification of files held by the Air Staff Secretariat. 76 files were found and covered the period from 1985.

The following should be noted:

A number of files are held by the PRO awaiting release under the 30 year rule. This list includes a number of files in addition to those given in an earlier answer by the Lord Chancellor (WA 100 - 14 October 1998). Our source was our own copy of the PRO lists. It is not known by what process PRO staff briefed the Lord Chancellor, but their list did not include files after 1970, a discrepancy which is likely to be pick-up by Lord Hill-Norton.

There is no thematic index of records stored in the archives. Files are stored in date of review order and then by branch. A manual search for relevant files would not be possible without examining every file record sheet stored, in excess of one million. We have therefore limited our search to trawling for files created by the MOD focal point for all matters relating to "ufos" (Air Staff Secretariat and predecessor branches ie DS 8 and S4(Air)). After a search totalling 10 man hours, a number of files have been identified. All are earmarked for review at future dates, at which point consideration will be given to their suitability for preservation at the PRO.

This submission was prepared with input from, Sec(AS) **Section 40**. A copy has been sent to the PRO - Central Management Department (fax **Section 40**).

REMEMBER you are accountable for the accuracy and timeliness of the advice you provide. Departmental Instructions on answering PQs can be viewed on the CHOTS public area and on DAWN.

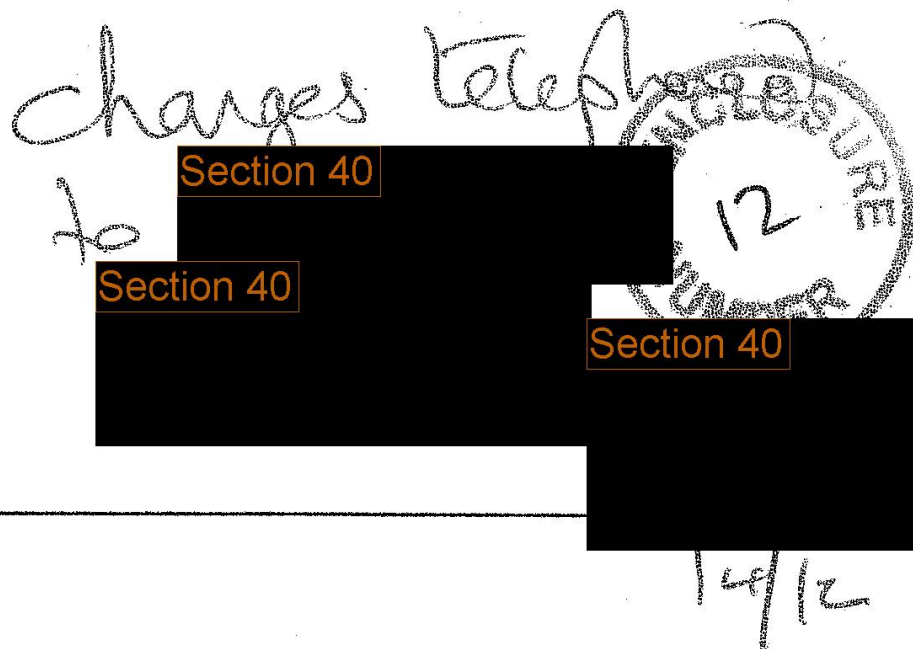
DRAFTED BY : **Section 40** Head CS(RM)1 TEL: **Section 40**
AUTHORISED BY : **Section 40** Head CS TEL: **Section 40**
GRADE/RANK : Grade 5

DECLARATION: I have satisfied myself that the above answer and background note are in accordance with the Government's policy on answering PQs, Departmental instructions (DCI GEN 150/97), and the Open Government Code (DCI GEN 54/98).

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TEMPLATE TO BE USED FOR REPLY

Ministry of DefenceTHURSDAY 24 DECEMBER 1998Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB(X) (CB)**LORDS WRITTEN**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answers by the Lord Chancellor on 14th October (WA 99-100) and by the Lord Gilbert on 19th November (WA 190), what is the location of the Ministry of Defence files covering the period 1970-1985 which contain information about UFOs; and what are the references and the titles of these files. (HL 310).

Minister replying Rt Hon Dr The Lord Gilbert

Thirty eight files are held at the Public Record Office for release under the terms of the Public Records Act, 1958 & 1967 (the thirty year rule applying):

AIR 2/18564 1957 - 71 } UFO Reports: ~~West Freugh~~
 AIR 2/18565 1970 - 71 } UFO Reports

2 files dealing with
 UFO Reports.

AIR 20/12067 1970 Jan Unidentified flying objects
 AIR 20/12297 1970 Feb "
 AIR 20/12298 1970 Mar "
 AIR 20/12299 1970 Apr "
 AIR 20/12300 1970 May "
 AIR 20/12301 1970 Jun "
 AIR 20/12302 1970 Jul "
 AIR 20/12303 1970 Aug "
 AIR 20/12304 1970 Sep "
 AIR 20/12305 1970 Oct "
 AIR 20/12306 1970 Nov "
 AIR 20/12399 1971-72 UFO reports
 AIR 20/12400 1972 Jan "
 AIR 20/12401 1972 Feb "
 AIR 20/12402 1972 Mar "
 AIR 20/12403 1972 Apr "
 AIR 20/12404 1972 May "
 AIR 20/12405 1972 Jun "

12067
 12297 - 12306 inc } under FO
 12399 - 12411 } UFO Reports
 12544 - 12555 }

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AIR 20/12406 1972 Jul	"
AIR 20/12407 1972 Aug	"
AIR 20/12408 1972 Sep	"
AIR 20/12409 1972 Oct	"
AIR 20/12410 1972 Nov	"
AIR 20/12411 1972 Dec	"
AIR 20/12544 1973 Jan	"
AIR 20/12545 1973 Feb	"
AIR 20/12546 1973 Mar	"
AIR 20/12547 1973 Apr	"
AIR 20/12548 1973 May	"
AIR 20/12549 1973 Jun	"
AIR 20/12550 1973 Jul	"
AIR 20/12551 1973 Aug	"
AIR 20/12552 1973 Sep	"
AIR 20/12553 1973 Oct	"
AIR 20/12554 1973 Nov	"
AIR 20/12555 1973 Dec	"

7 BJ 5/311 1968 - 70 UFO: Met aspects

Four files are held by the ^{MOD} records management branch pending acceptance and transfer to the PRO (PRO)

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references to be confirmed):

[AIR 2/18831 provisional]	1972	UFO reports	former reference - AF/7463/72
[AIR 2/18832	"]1972-73	"	" AF/7464/72
[AIR 2/18833	"]1973-74	"	" AF/7464 Pt II
[AIR 2/18874	"]1974-75	"	" AF/7464 / Pt III

In the absence of a thematic index of files stored in MOD's archives the identification of files has been limited to those created by the Air Staff Secretariat (and predecessor branches). Seventy five files have been identified. All are earmarked for review at a future date at which point they will be assessed for their suitability for preservation at the PRO. It is possible that some files created by other Headquarters divisions or establishments may contain papers on this topic but these could only be identified at disproportionate cost:

1 AF/S4f(A)/422 Dec 1972	UFOs, BBC Radio Oxford Programme
2 AF/S4f(Air) U/506 1967 to 1973	Statistical Analyses of UFOs
3 AF/3459/75	UFOs: Policy and Policy statements - 1970
12 AF/584 to 595 Jan to Dec 1974	UFO reports
7 AF/596 to 602 Jan to Jul 1975	"
1 AF/447 Part 1 Aug 1975 to Jun 1976	"
2 AF/607 & 608 Dec 1975 & Jan 1976	"
4 AF/610 to 613 Mar 1976 to Jun 1976	"
4 AF/616 to 619 Sep 1976 to Nov 1976	"
1 AF/419 Dec 1976	BBC 2, Man Alive Programme: UFOs

2 D/DS8/75/2/1 - Parts A & B 1977	UFO reports, correspondence
1 D/DS8/75/2/1 - Part C 1978	"
1 D/DS8/75/2/1 - Part F 1979	UFO correspondence
2 D/DS8/75/2/1 - Parts G & H 1980	"
3 D/DS8/75/2/2 - Parts A to C 1977	UFO reports, edited copies
5 D/DS8/75/2/2 - Parts D to F 1978	"
4 D/DS8/75/2/2 - Parts G & H, J & K 1979	"
2 D/DS8/75/2/2 - Parts L & M 1980	"
6 D/DS8/75/2/3 - Parts D to H & J 1978	UFO reports
2 D/DS8/75/2/4 - Parts A, B & D 1979	UFO reports
2 D/DS8/75/2/5 - Parts A & B 1980	UFO reports
1 D/DS8/75/3 - Part A 1978	UFO, Parliamentary Correspondence
1 D/DS8/75/6 - Part A 1979	UFO, TV discussion
1 D/DS8/75/7 - Part A 1979	UFO, satellite debris

2 D/DS8/10/209 - Parts A & B 1981	UFO briefs, reports, correspondence
2 D/DS8/10/209 - Parts C & D 1982	"
1 D/DS8/10/209 - Part E 1983	"
2 D/DS8/10/209 - Parts F & G 1984	"
1 D/DS8/10/209/1 - Part A 1983	General briefs and reports, UFO
correspondence	
1 D/DS8/10/209/1 - Part B 1984	"
1 D/DS8/10/209/1 - Part C 1985	"

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED
RESTRICTED

PQ Ref 0202J

UNCLASSIFIED
RESTRICTED

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UNCLASSIFIED

BACKGROUND NOTE

~~Lord Hill Norton, aged 83, and Chief of the Defence Staff from 1971-73, has a long standing interest in "UFOs". This question follows three recent questions, 2 answered by the Lord Chancellor on 14 October 1998 (WA 99 100) and one by USofS on 19 November 1998 (WA 190).~~ *tabled by Lord Hill Norton (House of Commons extracts attached)*

WA 99 sought the identification of all open files on this subject at the Public Record Office (PRO). By way of reply a list giving details of 23 readily identifiable files was published.

WA 100 sought a list of all closed files at the PRO on this subject. The titles of 33 files, together with PRO references, covering the years 1967 - 1970 was provided. In all case release into the public domain is subject to the 30-year rule.

WA 190 sought the details of all open and closed files, on this subject, held by the MOD. On the grounds of disproportionate cost the answer was limited to the identification of 76 files held by the Air Staff Secretariat, covering the period from 1985.

This PQ asks specifically about the period 1970 - 1985 and no doubt seeks draw a further list of files on the subject.

The following should be noted:

A number of files are held by the PRO awaiting release under the 30 year rule. This list includes a number of files in addition to those given in an earlier answer by the Lord Chancellor (WA 100 - 14 October 1998). Our source was our own copy of the PRO lists. It is not known by what process PRO staff briefed the Lord Chancellor, but the discrepancy is likely to be pick-up by Lord Hill-Norton. *X*

The process by which files selected for permanent preservation eventually find the way to the PRO can be time-consuming; hence, four files selected for preservation but with transfer arrangement still to finalised. *checked have been*

There is no thematic index of records stored in the archives. Files are stored in date of review order and then by branch; more recently random storage has been introduced. A manual search for relevant files would not be possible without examining each and every file stored, in excess of one million. We have therefore limited our search by trawling through files created by the Air Staff Secretariat (and predecessor branches ie DS 8 and S4(Air)). *Sec (AS) being the MOD focal point for all matters relating to "ufos".* After a search totalling 10 man hours, seventy five files have been identified. All are earmarked for review at a future date, at which point consideration will be given to their suitability for preservation at the PRO. *?*

This submission was prepared with input from, Sec(AS) **Section 40**. A copy has been sent to the PRO - Central Management Department (fax **Section 40**).

REMEMBER you are accountable for the accuracy and timeliness of the advice you provide. Departmental Instructions on answering PQs can be viewed on the CHOTS public area and on DAWN.

DRAFTED BY : **Section 40** Head CS(RM)1 TEL: **Section 40**

~~RESTRICTED~~
UNCLASSIFIED

~~RESTRICTED~~
UNCLASSIFIED

AUTHORISED BY : **Section 40** Head CS TEL: **Section 40**
GRADE/RANK : Grade 7

DECLARATION: I have satisfied myself that the above answer and background note are in accordance with the Government's policy on answering PQs, Departmental instructions (DCI GEN 150/97), and the Open Government Code (DCI GEN 54/98).

~~RESTRICTED~~
UNCLASSIFIED

11 DEC '98 11:25 FROM CS (RM)

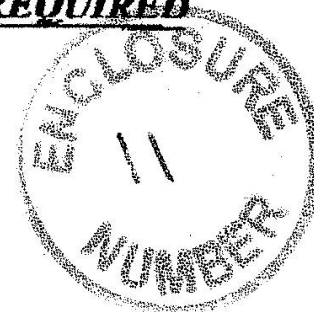
TO **Section 40**

P.01/01

LORDS WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION - URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

DATE FOR RETURN : 12:00 ON 15 December 1998
 PQ REFERENCE : PQ 0202J
 PQ TYPE : LORDS WRITTEN
 MINISTER REPLYING : -NOTFOUND-

LEAD BRANCH: : CS(RM)
 COPY ADDRESSEE(S) :
 SEC (AS)



- The answer and background note must be authorised by a civil servant at Senior Civil Service level or a military officer at one-star level or above who is responsible for ensuring that the information and advice provided is accurate and reflects Departmental Instructions on answering PQs DCI GEN 150/97.
- Those contributing information for PQ answers and background notes are responsible for ensuring the information is accurate.
- The attached checklist should be used by those drafting PQ answers and background material, those contributing information and those responsible for authorising the answer and background note as an aid to ensuring that departmental policy is adhered to.
- If you or others concerned are uncertain about how PQs are answered seek advice from a senior civil servant in or closely associated with your area.

Peer's DETAIL: Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

QUESTION

To ask Her Majesty's Government To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answers by the Lord Chancellor on 14th October (WA 99-100) and by the Lord Gibert on 19th November (WA 190), what is the location of the Ministry of Defence files covering the period 1970-1985 which contain information about UFOs; and what are the references and the titles of these files. (HL 310).

Sec (AS) - *[Signature]*

Section 40

From cc(ou),

*** TOTAL PAGE.01 ***

6414

57

Written Answers

30 NOVEMBER 1998

Written Answers



After the establishment of the Scottish Parliament, Scottish Ministers will be able to make Orders or Directions in relation to initiatives applying in Scotland only, and as appropriate make Directions in relation to the application in Scotland of UK wide initiatives, after consultation with and, where necessary, the consent of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State. My right hon. Friend will remain responsible for Orders or Directions relating to UK wide initiatives, after consultation with Scottish Ministers. The details of these arrangements are still under consideration.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Telephone Lines

Mr. Webb: To ask the Chairman of the Information Committee what plans he has to ensure that hon. Members have access to ISDN telephone lines. [61438]

Mr. Richard Allan: An hon. Member who has a specific communications requirement concerning his Parliamentary duties should raise the matter with the Director of Communications. The provision of communications, including ISDN, at locations outside the Parliamentary Estate is currently being considered, and the Information Committee will be discussing this in the new year.

DEFENCE

Territorial Army

Mr. Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many vacancies there were for the Territorial Army and Voluntary Reserve (a) in May 1997 and (b) at the latest date for which figures are available. [60860]

Mr. Doug Henderson: The Territorial Army establishment in May 1997 was 59,000 posts, of which 55,900 were filled. In October 1998, the latest date for which figures are available, the establishment was also 59,000 posts, of which 53,847 were filled.

Service Personnel (Electoral Roll)

Mr. Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what procedures exist for service personnel to be registered on the electoral roll; and what proposals he has to increase the number of registrations. [60862]

Mr. Doug Henderson: Service personnel may vote only when they are registered as Service Voters. The Representation of the People Act 1993 obliges my Department to ensure that all eligible members of the Armed Forces and their spouses are given the opportunity and adequate assistance to register as Service voters. To register, personnel make a Service declaration to the electoral registration officer for the area in which the applicant's qualifying address is situated, and this single registration remains valid throughout a Service career. Spouses may register as either Service or civilian voters.

Queen's Regulations for all three Services contain detailed information on the timetable for submitting declarations to ensure inclusion in the register of electors for Parliamentary, European Parliament and local government elections.

Instructions on the action required to make initial Service declarations or to make new ones on any change of address are also included in the Regulations. In addition, each Service issues formal reminders annually describing the registration procedures and listing the relevant forms to be completed. The reminders draw attention in particular to the need to re-register or to amend qualifying addresses where necessary. Commanding Officers are made personally responsible for ensuring that unit administrative arrangements are efficient and that units hold sufficient forms, and are regularly formally reminded of their responsibilities.

We will continue to employ these measures to encourage Service personnel to register and to vote, but doing so is, of course, a matter of personal choice.

Soldiers (New Entrants)

Mr. Corbett: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what financial assistance is available to new entrant soldiers who are themselves on income support, or whose parents are, towards the cost of equipment and supplies which they are required to purchase and to meet obligatory insurance costs. [60921]

Mr. Doug Henderson [*holding answer 27 November 1998*]: All new entrant soldiers are given an advance of pay, equivalent to one day's pay, when they are attested at a recruiting office, regardless of whether they, or their parents, are in receipt of income support. This advance is intended to cover the purchase of small personal items a new soldier may require. Any equipment a soldier needs to perform his or her duties is provided by the Army.

My Department places no obligation on new entrants to the Army to take out insurance cover, but applicants are advised to insure their personal belongings, and any military equipment they are issued with against loss or damage for which the holder would be held responsible. New entrants are also advised to consider the purchase of personal accident or life insurance.

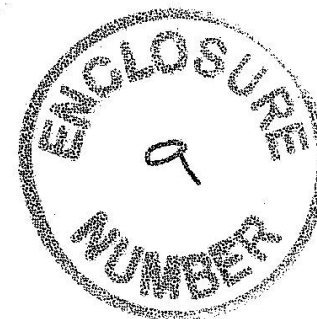


Freedom of Information



Mr. Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the changes in departmental practices which would be required to comply with the planned Freedom of Information Act. [61512]

Mr. Spellar: The Ministry of Defence is already committed to greater openness in its work and currently operates in accordance with the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information. The Department's policy is that staff should take a positive approach towards the release of information. Details of MOD's policy and guidance to staff can be found on the Department's internet site at <http://www.mod.uk/policy/opengovt/index.htm>. Once the details of the draft FoI Bill have been finalised, instructions, advice and training will be available for staff in order to ensure that they are able to implement the Act and to foster an open culture.



Loose Minute

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

3rd December 1998

APS/Minister(DP) - Section 40

Copy to:

APS/USofs

CS(RM) - **Section 40**

DRAFT REPLY FROM MINISTER(DP) TO LORD HILL-NORTON

Reference: Your E-mail of 2 December 1998

1. Thank you for sight of the proposed reply for Lord Hill-Norton. Much of the draft is culled from the background note provided with the PQ answer and I have therefore cleared the text with **Section 40** CS(RM), who provided most of the information.
2. We are concerned that giving Lord Hill-Norton a broad cost estimate for the records search for the Official History of the Falklands War might lead the wider public to assume it as indicative of searches generally and prompt further requests on issues of minor importance. CS(RM) have advised that the £5,000 quoted related to their own staff effort (some 50-70 man days), and did not include costs incurred searching files elsewhere in the Department, including Historical Branches, or the associated typing and reprographic effort involved. It is also the case that the Falklands History is to be an Official Record, and the search criteria concentrated on certain specific identifying words (eg Falklands, Corporate, Belgrano etc).
3. I am also concerned about saying Sec(AS) 'holds a substantial proportion of all the information currently held by the MOD on UFOs.' We simply do not know that we do. We are the MOD focal point and have a number of files opened in recent years, but it may also be the case that there are files at MOD archives and we have no way of knowing what else might be held at Stations and Establishments. We do not know the overall total so we cannot know what proportion we hold.
4. Finally, and without wishing to labour the point, 'closed' files mean different things to the Department and the public. Lord Hill-Norton probably means files that are no longer in use, ie less than 30 years old and containing too great a number of enclosures to continue in use necessitating a subsequent part to be opened. To the Department, a 'closed' file is generally one over 30 years old containing information that continues to be sensitive and not therefore available for scrutiny at the PRO. Following Lord Hill-Norton's lead in respect of 'closed' files runs the risk of perpetuating the myth that MOD knowingly has 'closed' (ie over 30 years old and sensitive) 'UFO' files - it does not.

5. For the above reasons I have amended your draft and attach a revised version. Could we have a copy of the Hill-Norton letter please for our file.

Section 40

Sec(AS)2

MB8247 Section 40

CHOTS: SEC(AS)2

FAX : Section 40

FROM: THE RT HON DR THE LORD GILBERT

D/MIN(DP)/JWG/6/1

December 1998

Thank you for your letter of 25 November seeking clarification of the definition of disproportionate cost.

The Ministry of Defence, like every other Government Department, applies the advisory cost limit to researching written Parliamentary Questions. This limit is currently £500 and I attach a copy of the announcement from Lord McIntosh which explains the background to the limit. In summary, the assessment is based on the value to the taxpayer of Government Departments publishing such information against the cost it takes to provide it. This assessment is, ultimately, made by the Minister responsible for answering the question, based on advice from officials.

Your question concerned the references and titles of all files held by the MOD which contain information about unidentified flying objects, 'UFOs'. As you will know, the MOD does not maintain a Department-wide file database and it is simply not possible to locate all files which might contain such information without a manual search of over one million currently held in MOD archives. Even if manpower could be spared from essential defence tasks to undertake such a search, the cost would be significant. For example, a highly selective search of the archives in support of the Official History of the Falklands War was far in excess of the Parliamentary Question cost limit in terms of staff effort. In addition, we would need to research records held by individual Service units and establishments to ensure that a complete list of all references to UFOs had been compiled. You will know that this is simply not practicable.

Instead, the list I provided detailed all the files currently held by the MOD focal point for matters relating to 'UFOs', the Air Staff Secretariat. I judged that this largely answered your question, without incurring significant cost for what would be only marginal value.

I hope this explains the position.

Classification:

Caveat:

Covering:

F Sigs 927
(Rev 2/95)

Facsimile Transmission Cover Sheet

Serial Number:		Transmission:		Document Reference:	
		Date: 3 Dec 98		6414	
		Time:		Total number of pages including this one: 4	
From:		Fax Number:		To:	
Section 40		Section 40		Section 40	
SEC(AS)2				CS(RM)	
		Tel Number:		Section 40	
Section 40					
Authorised by:			Transmitted by:		
Rank	Name	Appointment	Rank	Name	Tel Number
GA	Section 40		GA	Section 40	
Signature:			Signature:		

Subject: LORD HILL-NORTON LETTER.

Section 40

To follow: APS/Min(DP)'s draft
 Sec(AS)'s proposed reply
 Sec(AS)'s minute to APS/Min(DP)

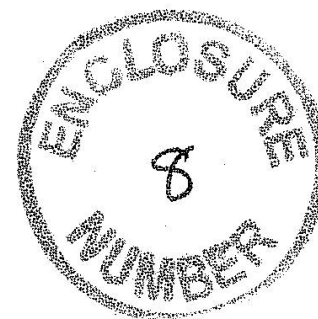
Please confirm by telephone that you are content with
 the proposed reply + minute to APS/Min(DP) asap.

Many thanks.

Classification:

Caveat:

Covering:



Loose Minute

D/Sec(AS)/64/4

2nd December 1998

APS/Min(DP) - Section 40

Section 40

*amendments
involved*

Copy to:

CS(RM) - Section 40

DRAFT REPLY FROM MINISTER(DP) TO LORD HILL-NORTON

Reference: Your E-mail of 2 December 1998

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3. I am also concerned about saying Sec(AS) 'holds a substantial proportion of all the information currently held by the MOD on UFOs.' We simply do not know that we do. We are the MOD focal point and have a number of files opened in recent years, but it is *very* also the case that ~~are~~ *are* files at MOD archives and we have no way of knowing what else might be held at Stations and Establishments. We do not know the overall total so we cannot know what proportion we hold.

4. Finally, and without wishing to labour the point, 'closed' files mean different things to the Department and the public. Lord Hill-Norton probably means files that are no longer in use, ie less than 30 years old and containing too great a number of enclosures to continue in use necessitating a subsequent part to be opened. To the Department, a 'closed' file is generally one over 30 years old containing information that continues to be sensitive and not therefore available for scrutiny at the PRO. Following Lord Hill-Norton's lead in respect of 'closed' files runs the risk of perpetuating the myth that MOD knowingly has 'closed' (ie over 30 years old and sensitive) 'UFO' files - it does not.

5. For the above reasons I have amended your draft and attach a revised version.

S-c(AS) Revision

FROM: THE RT HON DR THE LORD GILBERT

D/MIN(DP)/JWG/6/1

December 1998

Thank you for your letter of 25 November seeking clarification of the definition of disproportionate cost.

The Ministry of Defence, like every other Government Department, applies the advisory cost limit to researching written Parliamentary Questions. This limit is currently £500 and I attach a copy of the announcement from Lord McIntosh which explains the background to the limit. In summary, the assessment is based on the value to the taxpayer of Government Departments publishing such information against the cost it takes to provide it. This assessment is, ultimately, made by the Minister responsible for answering the question, based on advice from officials.

Your question concerned the references and titles of all files held by the MOD which contain information about unidentified flying objects, 'UFOs'. As you will know, the MOD does not maintain a Department-wide file database and it is simply not possible to locate all files which might contain such information without a manual search of over one million currently held in MOD archives. Even if manpower could be spared from essential defence tasks to undertake such a search, the cost would be significant. For example, a highly selective search of the archives in support of the Official History of the Falklands War was far in excess of the Parliamentary Question cost limit in terms of staff effort. In addition, we would need to research records held by individual Service units and establishments to ensure that a complete list of all references to UFOs had been compiled. You will know that this is simply not practicable.

Instead, the list I provided detailed all the files currently held by the MOD focal point for matters relating to 'UFOs', the Air Staff Secretariat. I judged that this largely answered your question, without incurring significant cost for what would be only marginal value.

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December 1998

APs/Mi (DP) draft.

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As far as your specific question is concerned, you asked if we could list the references and titles of all open and closed files held by the MOD which contain information about unidentified flying objects, UFOs. As you will know, the MOD does not maintain a Department-wide file database and, as such, it is not possible to locate all files which might contain such information without a manual search of over one million files currently held in MOD archives. Even if manpower could be spared from essential defence tasks to undertake such a search, the cost would be significant. For example, a highly selective search of the archives in support of the Official History of the Falklands War cost more than £5,000 in staff effort. In addition, we would need to research records held by individual Service units and establishments to ensure that a complete list of all references to UFOs had been compiled. You will know that this is simply not practicable.

Instead, the list I provided detailed all the files currently held by the MOD focal point for all matters relating to UFOs, the Air Staff Secretariat, which holds a substantial proportion of all the information currently held by the MOD on UFOs. I judge that this largely answers your question, without incurring significant cost for what would be only marginal value.

I hope this explains the position.

Secretariat(Air Staff) Fax **Section 40****** Transmit Conf. Report ****

3 Dec '98 9:18

Secretariat(Air Staff)---> Section 40	
No.	1841
Mode	NORMAL
Time	2'13"
Pages	4 Page(s)
Result	OK

WA 199

Written Answers

[19 NOVEMBER 1998]

Written Answers

Lord Gilbert: NATO continues to examine how a requirement for Theatre Ballistic Missile Defence for deployed forces could be met, and is considering the costs of such a requirement and how it could be funded. NATO's work has considered general scenarios rather than potential threats from specific countries.

NATO: Force Structure

Lord Kennet asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether it has been agreed in the NATO Council that NATO's European members should in future "shift more focus to such priorities as mobility, deployability and reinforcement missions [thus to] become better equipped to operate with United States forces in a broader range of contingencies in the years ahead" (Report to the Congress on the Enlargement of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation: Rationale, Benefits, Costs and Implications 1997); and if so, what they understand by this reference to "a broader range of contingencies in the years ahead". [HL3748]

Lord Gilbert: At the NATO Ministerial Meeting of the Defence Planning Committee on 11 June 1998 Ministers agreed that the maintenance and enhancement of interoperability are key elements in the transformation of NATO's force structure, and of the Alliance itself, as it prepares to meet future challenges. The Defence Planning Committee approved requirements to allow the Alliance to carry out collective defence and deterrence, and crisis management, including peace support operations.

Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe

Lord Kennet asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether they are fully informed by the United States, and by the other countries of the scale and scope of their bilateral military relations, including military funding, in the whole Organisation for the Security and Co-operation in Europe area; and, if not, whether they consider the situation satisfactory as regards the transparency that NATO brings to its members' relationships. [HL3784]

Lord Gilbert: Her Majesty's Government has a wide range of contacts with the United States and other countries on the scope and scale of bilateral military relationships with the countries in the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, OSCE, area. These contacts provide transparency and contribute to our overall efforts to promote security and stability in the region.

NATO: Security of Sensitive Information

Lord Hardy asked Her Majesty's Government:

What efforts are being undertaken to ensure that the sensitive information is kept secure within NATO operational planning; and whether security has been breached in recent months. [HL3686]

Lord Gilbert: NATO has mechanisms in place to ensure the security of sensitive information. Her Majesty's Government supports these mechanisms. Any breaches are a matter for the relevant NATO authorities. NATO does not comment on NATO-personnel security issues..

RAF Feltwell: 5th Space Surveillance Squadron

Lord Hill-Norton asked Her Majesty's Government:

Further to the Written Answer by the Lord Gilbert on 20 October (WA 143), whether the United States Air Force 5th Space Surveillance Squadron based at RAF Feltwell searches for or tracks any objects other than satellites, space debris and space probes; and, if so, what these objects are. [HL3908]

Lord Gilbert: Further to the answer given on 20 October, the only role of the 5th Space Surveillance Squadron at RAF Feltwell is to detect, track and identify the status of satellites, space debris and space probes.

Human Rights Obligations: Compliance

Lord Lester of Herne Hill asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether Ministers and civil servants are in a position to comply with the obligations imposed by the European Convention on Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, having regard to the United Kingdom's ratifications of those instruments, the guidance *Questions of Procedure for Ministers* and the Civil Service Code. [HL3768]

The Minister of State, Cabinet Office (Lord Falconer of Thoroton): Yes.

Latin America: Balance of Debts to UK

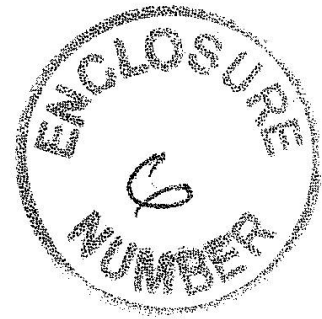
Viscount Exmouth asked Her Majesty's Government:

What is:

- (a) the total amount owed to the United Kingdom by the countries of Latin America;
- (b) the amount owed by each country in the region; and
- (c) the annual repayments, including interest, paid by each country in the region. [HL3843]

~~RESTRICTED~~
UNCLASSIFIED

64/4

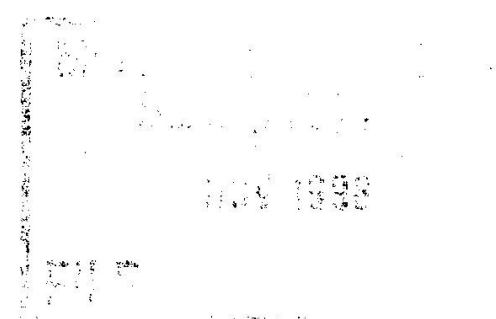
**LORDS WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION - URGENT ACTION REQUIRED**

DATE FOR RETURN : **12:00 ON 18 November 1998**
PQ REFERENCE : **PQ 4144I**
PQ TYPE : **LORDS WRITTEN**
MINISTER REPLYING : **-NOTFOUND-**
LEAD BRANCH: : **SEC (AS)** *Copy to: Sec (AS) 2 for info.*
COPY ADDRESSEE(S) : **-NOTFOUND-**

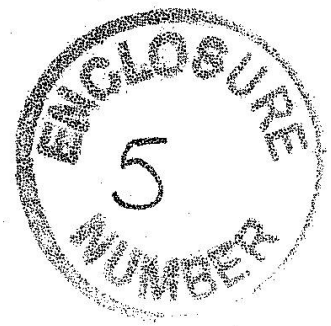
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Peer's DETAIL: Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB**QUESTION**

To ask Her Majesty's Government TO ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by the Lord Gilbert on 20th October (WA143), whether the United States Air Force 5th Space Surveillance Squadron based at RAF Feltwell searches for or tracks any objects other than satellites, space debris and space probes; and, if so, what these objects are. (HL3908)

UNCLASSIFIED
~~RESTRICTED~~

UNCLASSIFIED



TEMPLATE TO BE USED FOR REPLY

Ministry of Defence

THURSDAY 19 NOVEMBER 1998

Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB(X) (CB)

LORDS WRITTEN

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by the Lord Chancellor on 14th October (WA 100), whether they will authorise the opening of the thirty-three closed files at the Public Record Office which contain information about unidentified flying objects. (3909)

Minister replying Rt Hon Dr The Lord Gilbert

The 33 files identified contain correspondence between members of the public and officials and as such we are mindful of our duty to protect third party confidentiality. They will be release routinely at the normal 30 year point..

PQ Ref 41461

*Handed copy of answer
held in
TEJ no 2
(enc 4)*

UNCLASSIFIED

~~RESTRICTED~~
UNCLASSIFIED**BACKGROUND NOTE**

Lord Hill Norton, aged 83, and Chief of the Defence staff from 1971-73, has a long standing interest in "UFOs". On this occasion he has raised three PQs two of which, 4144 and 4145,- Sec(AS) will provide advice.

This particular question has previously been raised by Lord hill Norton.

Earlier this year, 9 March 1998, he asked for all closed files on this subject to be released in advance of the normal 30 year point. A holding reply was prepared by DOMD, 3 April 1998, citing the need to resolve the question of "personal confidentially" before a final reply could be given.

In all some 55 files have been identified, not just the 33 identified by the PRO in their PQ answer. All with planned releases between 1999-2003, with an additional 12 (with a projected release date of 2004) in the early stages of preparation of transfer to the PRO.

A final submission was made to PS/USofS, 24 September 1998, presenting three possible options:

- (1) that we obtain permission from correspondents on an individual basis to release personal details.
- (2) that the personal details (in excess of 55 files) be removed
- (3) that a shorter period, say 25 years rather than 30 years, be acceptable for protection of privacy

Option (1) was considered time-consuming; (2), is possible, but would represent a major diversion of resources, ie some 200 man hours would be required to sanitise in the region of 5,000 pages; for (3) legal advice was sought: the Public Record Act gives an implied override of the Department's duty to protect the third party confidentiality by use of the 30 year rule. Release after that date would present no problems to the MOD, but release in advance would lay the Department open to the risk of legal action for breach of confidence .

We therefore concluded that having rejected all three options we are unable to make a block release of these files in advance of the normal release period.

REMEMBER you are accountable for the accuracy and timeliness of the advice you provide. Departmental Instructions on answering PQs can be viewed on the CHOTS public area and on DAWN.

DRAFTED BY : **Section 40** Hd CS(RM)1 TEL: **Section 40**
 AUTHORISED BY : **Section 40** Hd CS TEL: **Section 40**
 GRADE/RANK : Grade 5

DECLARATION: I have satisfied myself that the above answer and background note are in accordance with the Government's policy on answering PQs, Departmental instructions (DCI GEN 150/97), and the Open Government Code (DCI GEN 54/98).

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RESTRICTED**LORDS WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION - URGENT ACTION REQUIRED**

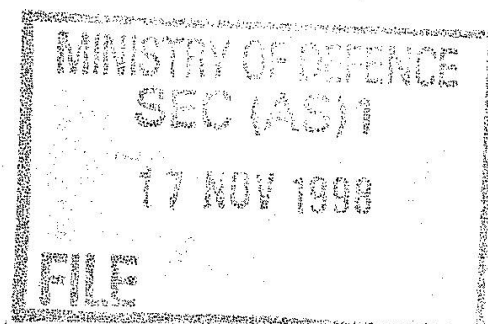
DATE FOR RETURN	:	12:00 ON 18 November 1998
PQ REFERENCE	:	PQ 41461
PQ TYPE	:	LORDS WRITTEN
MINISTER REPLYING	:	-NOTFOUND-
LEAD BRANCH:	:	CS(RM)
COPY ADDRESSEE(S)	:	
Hd Sec (AS)	:	

- The answer and background note must be authorised by a civil servant at Senior Civil Service level or a military officer at one-star level or above who is responsible for ensuring that the information and advice provided is accurate and reflects Departmental Instructions on answering PQs DCI GEN 150/97.
- Those contributing information for PQ answers and background notes are responsible for ensuring the information is accurate.
- The attached checklist should be used by those drafting PQ answers and background material, those contributing information and those responsible for authorising the answer and background note as an aid to ensuring that departmental policy is adhered to.
- If you or others concerned are uncertain about how PQs are answered seek advice from a senior civil servant in or closely associated with your area.

Peer's DETAIL: Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

QUESTION

To ask Her Majesty's Government To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by the Lord Chancellor on 14th October (WA 100), whether they will authorise the opening of the thirty-three closed files at the Public Record Office which contain information about unidentified flying objects. (3909)

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PQ CHECKLIST

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- * YOUR PROPOSED ANSWER MUST BE ACCURATE AND NOT MISLEADING IN ANY WAY
- * MEET THE DEADLINE & CONSULT EARLY IF THERE ARE PROBLEMS
- * YOU WILL BE HELD TO ACCOUNT FOR THE DRAFT ANSWER AND ADVICE
- * IF IN DOUBT, SEEK ADVICE FROM A SENIOR CIVIL SERVANT WITH EXPERTISE IN ANSWERING PQs

PQ ANSWER

- * **DO USE PLAIN AND PRECISE LANGUAGE**
- is the answer unambiguous and free from jargon?
- * **DO BE OPEN, STRAIGHTFORWARD AND HONEST**
- have you included all the facts necessary for a full and unambiguous answer?
- do you fully understand the policy governing the answering of PQs? See attached note on Government Policy
- if you have excluded anything can it be justified under the Open Govt Code (see DCI GEN 54/98)
- * **DO CHECK SOURCES AND ENSURE EVIDENCE IS AVAILABLE TO BACK UP ANSWERS**
- is sufficient documentary evidence available to back up the answer if challenged?
- does anybody outside your management area need to be involved? Have you consulted them?
- * **DO CHECK PREVIOUS ANSWERS ON THE SAME SUBJECT**
- * **DO MAKE CLEAR THE BASIS ON WHICH YOU ARE ANSWERING THE QUESTION**
- if you have gone beyond a literal interpretation of the question have you made it clear?
- * **DON'T RELY ON HEARSAY OR GUESSWORK**
- are you confident that the information provided will stand up to detailed scrutiny?
- * **DON'T BE ABSOLUTE UNLESS YOU HAVE THE PROOF**
- think very carefully before you say "all" or "never" or "not possible"
- does it differ from the views of outside experts, if so why?

BACKGROUND NOTE

- * **DO KEEP IT RELEVANT**
- does it explain the answer?
- * **DO EXPLAIN JUDGEMENTS MADE, AND ANY DOUBTS OR CAVEATS**
- * **DO MAKE IT CLEAR IF INFORMATION IS BEING RELEASED FOR THE FIRST TIME OR IF IT IS DIFFERENT FROM INFORMATION RELEASED PREVIOUSLY**
- have you sought and included advice on the wider implications (including PR)?
- * **DO GIVE A CLEAR EXPLANATION FOR WITHHOLDING INFORMATION**
- details of disproportionate cost included?
- have you explained your justification for exclusion under the Open Govt Code?
- * **DO RECORD THE SOURCES RELIED ON IN PREPARING YOUR PROPOSED ANSWER**
- have you included details of those who have provided you with information?

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QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN ANSWER IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS

ALL DRAFT REPLIES MUST BE CLEARED AT SENIOR CIVIL SERVICE (GRADE 5) OR ONE STAR LEVEL OR

ABOVE

THE CHECKLIST IS TO HELP YOU DRAFT THE ANSWER PROPERLY YOU MUST USE IT

REPLIES SHOULD BE SENT BY CHOTS E-MAIL TO "Parliamentary Questions". DIVISIONS NOT ON CHOTS SHOULD SEND THEIR DRAFTS BY FAX TO THE PARLIAMENTARY BRANCH

Section 40

ALWAYS QUOTE THE QUESTION (PQ) NUMBER AND THE NAMES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS OF THE PERSON WHO DRAFTED THE REPLY AND THE SENIOR OFFICIAL WHO APPROVED IT.

IF YOU REQUIRE ANY ADVICE, PLEASE CALL **Section 40**

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1. WRITTEN PQs

All written PQs **must** be answered within 14 days of being tabled, even if the House is by then in recess.

2. DEADLINE FOR REPLY

a. If, exceptionally, you cannot meet the deadline, you should contact this Branch to see if an extension to the deadline can be given. **You should do this before 12.00 on the day on which you are due to return the PQ answer.**

b. You must provide a full explanation of why you cannot meet the deadline.

c. If it is impossible to answer the question within 14 days the Minister has to write to the Lord concerned explaining the circumstances and undertaking to provide a full answer as soon as possible. You must provide the draft letter.

3. OPEN GOVERNMENT

a. A revised Code of Practice on Access to Government Information came into effect in 1997. It is set out in DCI GEN 54/98.

b. Replies must be drafted in accordance with this policy. If you are recommending

to Ministers that some or all information is withheld, the answer must specify the law or exemption in the Code under which it is being withheld. eg "I am withholding the information requested under exemption 1 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information." It is **NOT** acceptable to rely on past practice.

4. DRAFTING THE ANSWER

- USE THE CHECKLIST -

a. The draft reply should be concise, clear and meticulously accurate. It should have a positive tone where possible.

b. Use clear and direct language to avoid any ambiguity. Short everyday words and short sentences are best. Avoid clichés and MOD/Service jargon. Use abbreviations only after using the words or name in full.

c. The answer must be unclassified.

d. If you refer to a previous PQ answer or document, send a copy.

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5. BACKGROUND NOTE

a. Ministers need a short note explaining the facts and thinking behind the suggested reply if it is not completely obvious from the reply itself.

b. If the answer varies from a previous answer or statement explain fully why this is so.

c. If new information comes to light in your research which might affect this or previous answers or statements you must ring the Minister's Private Office **AT ONCE** as well as stating this clearly in the background note.

6. GROUPED PQs

Related PQs, tabled by an individual Lord for answer on the same day may be grouped together and given a single answer. This Branch can give advice on grouping.

7. PARTIAL REPLIES

If a full reply is not possible you should give what information is available and make it clear in the answer what you are doing.

8. COST OF GIVING A REPLY

If the cost of giving a reply will exceed £500 you can recommend to Ministers that the reply should be along the lines of "This information [is not held centrally] and could only be provided at disproportionate cost". You must explain in the background note how these costs - usually staff costs - would arise. The decision whether or not then to give an answer depends on the merits of the case. As a rough guide use these hourly rates: AO-£8, EO-£13, HEO-£15, SEO-£18, G7-£22, G5-£31. Capitation rates can be increased by 50% for Service equivalents.

9. LONG REPLIES

If the reply is long (ie will fill more than a page

of Hansard) it may, exceptionally, be better to give the information in a letter to the Lord or put information in the Library of the House. In these cases the reply is "I will write to the noble Lord (or "my noble Friend") and a copy of my letter will be placed in the Library of the House" or "I am placing the information requested in the Library of the House". This Branch is responsible for placing material in the Library. We need 6 copies of any document placed in the Library.

10. INFORMATION ALREADY AVAILABLE FROM PUBLIC SOURCES

PQs are expensive in terms of Ministers' and officials' time. Lords should be encouraged to get information from published sources where it is already available in the Library of the House. In such cases the reply is along these lines "The information requested is contained in para X of the Statement on Defence Estimates 1996 (Cm 3223), a copy of which is in the Library of the House".

11. PQs ASKING FOR STATISTICAL INFORMATION

a. PQs which ask for statistical information will be sent normally to the Chief Executive of DASA and copied to the relevant policy branch.

b. If such a question has not been sent to DASA please let us know. In any event you should liaise with DASA about the reply in case there are policy implications of which they are unaware.

12. TRANSFER OF PQs

a. To another Government Department
If you think this PQ is not primarily a matter for MOD tell this Branch **AT ONCE**. We will need the name and Branch of an official in the more appropriate Department who has agreed to take the PQ. Parliamentary Branches in other Government Departments will usually only agree to transfers on this basis.

b. To another Branch
If a PQ has been sent to you incorrectly, please let this Branch know **AT ONCE**. If you know who is responsible for the subject please pass it to them as well.

GOVERNMENT POLICY ON ANSWERING PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS

1. Never forget Ministers' obligations to Parliament which are set out in the Cabinet Office publication "Ministerial Code: A code of conduct and guidance on procedure for Ministers". It states that:

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It is of paramount importance that Ministers give accurate and truthful information to Parliament, correcting any inadvertent error at the earliest opportunity. Ministers who knowingly mislead Parliament will be expected to offer their resignation to the Prime Minister. Ministers should be as open as possible with Parliament and the public, refusing to provide information only when disclosure would not be in the public interest, which should be decided in accordance with relevant statute and the Government's Code of Practice on Access to Government Information" (Second Edition, Jan 1997)

2. It is a civil servant's responsibility to Ministers to help them fulfil those obligations. It is the Minister's right and responsibility to decide how to do so. Ministers want to explain and present Government policy and actions in a positive light. They will rightly expect a draft answer that does full justice to the Government's position.

3. Approach every question predisposed to give relevant information fully, as concisely as possible and in accordance with guidance on disproportionate cost. If there appears to be a conflict between the requirement to be as open as possible and the requirement to protect information whose disclosure would not be in the public interest, you should check to see whether it should be omitted in accordance with statute (which takes precedence) or the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information, about which you should consult your departmental openness liaison officer if necessary.

5. Do not omit information sought merely because disclosure could lead to political embarrassment or administrative inconvenience.

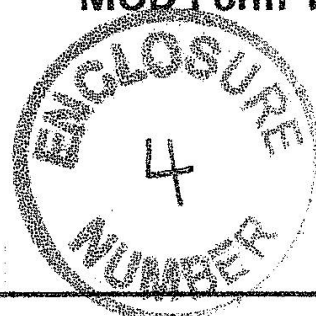
6. Where there is a particularly fine balance between openness and non-disclosure, and when the draft answer takes the latter course, this should be explicitly drawn to the Minister's attention. Similarly, if it is proposed to reveal information of a sort which is not normally disclosed, this should be explicitly drawn to Ministers' attention.

7. If you conclude that material information must be withheld and the PQ cannot be fully answered as a result, draft an answer which **makes this clear and which explains the reasons in equivalent terms to those in the Code of Practice, or because of disproportionate cost or the information not being available.** Take care to avoid draft answers which are literally true but likely to give rise to misleading inferences.

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MOD Form 174D

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MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
TEMPORARY ENCLOSURE JACKET



REGISTERED FILE No. D / SEC(AS) 64/4 Enclosure Jacket No. <u>2</u> DATE OPENED <u>18 NOV 98</u>		DIVISION/DIRECTORATE/BRANCH: SEC(AS)2A	
SUBJECT: PQ 4145 LORD HILL NORTON			
Referred to	Date	Referred to	Date

NOTES

1. A Temporary Jacket will only be used when the Registered File is not available.
2. The contents of a Temporary Jacket must be incorporated in the Registered File at the earliest opportunity, and this incorporation recorded on a transit slip or file record sheet.
3. The movements of Temporary Jackets are recorded by the Registry. Transit is to be recorded on transit slips as for Registered Files.

DOWNGRADING

(to be completed when the jacket is incorporated in the Registered File)

This jacket may be downgraded to:—

RESTRICTED on.....
 UNCLASSIFIED (insert date)

Certifying Officer.....

Date.....

Appointment
 and Branch.....

RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED

EMBER 1998]

Written Answers

WA 190

25—1996–97 Parking Accounts

£000s

Expenditure	Net Income	Comments
1,714	69	Surplus put towards off-setting deficit on off-street car parking account and design and implementation and extension of CPZs
4,544	201	Surplus used for CPZs (25) and carry forward to 1997–98 (176)
18,645	33,598	Surplus used as contribution to capital expenditure: on-street parking (715), off-street parking (468), highways and traffic improvement schemes (9,534), Departmental systems improvement (21), street trees and parks (119) and as a contribution to revenue expenditure: off-street parking (9,684), car parks business unit (517), highways and traffic improvement schemes (3,552), street lighting (1,299), gully cleansing (88), street trees (635), transport planning (90) concessionary fares and taxicard scheme (5,046), home to school transport (635). Remainder of surplus carried forward to 1997–98
91,651	71,786	

In the six weeks that the Veterans' Advice Unit has been operational, the unit has taken nearly 1,100 calls. Most calls can be dealt with immediately, but some require investigative work and a subsequent return call to the enquirer.

The range of problems dealt with has been quite diverse, including homecare and housing, Falklands and Gulf war issues, finance, the tracing of relatives, War Graves and historical records, among others. However, the largest number of calls have concerned pensions, employment, the provision of medals and information about the unit itself.

Unidentified Flying Objects

Lord Hill-Norton asked Her Majesty's Government:

Whether they will list the references and titles of all open and closed files currently held by the Ministry of Defence which contain information about unidentified flying objects. [HL3910]

Lord Gilbert: Within the Air Staff Secretariat, the Ministry of Defence focal point for all matters relating to "UFOs", a total of 76 files dating from 1985 are held. These files contain public correspondence, sighting reports and associated papers and are referenced as follows:

Reference:

D/Sec(AS)/12/1) 5 parts dealing with policy
D/Sec(AS)/64/1) issues.

WA 191

Written Answers

19 NOVEMB

D/Sec(AS)/12/2)

D/Sec(AS)/12/2/1)

D/Sec(AS)/12/5) 27 parts dealing with alleged
D/Sec(AS)/12/6) sightings.

D/Sec(AS)/12/7)

D/Sec(AS)/64/2)

D/Sec(AS)/12/3) 34 parts dealing with public
D/Sec(AS)/64/3) correspondence.

D/Sec(AS)/12/4) 8 parts dealing with
D/Sec(AS)/64/4) Parliamentary business

D/Sec(AS)/64/5) 1 part for media issues.

D/Sec(AS)/64/6) 1 part listing answerphone
messages.

It is possible that some files held in other MoD headquarters divisions or establishments may contain papers relating to this topic, but these could only be identified and provided at disproportionate cost.

Lord Hill-Norton asked Her Majesty's Government:

Further to the Written Answer by the Lord Chancellor on 14 October (WA 100), whether they will authorise the opening of the thirty-three closed files at the Public Record Office which contain information about unidentified flying objects.

[HL3909]

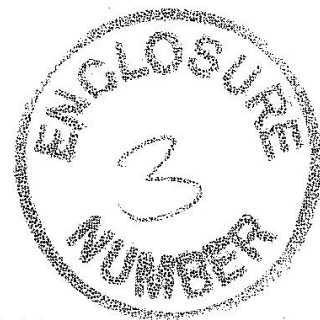
Lord Gilbert: The 33 files identified contain correspondence between members of the public and officials. They will be released at the 30 year point in the normal way.

Operation Granby: Use of Depleted Uranium Ammunition

The Countess of Mar asked Her Majesty's Government:

How many rounds of depleted uranium ammunition were fired by British forces, including tomahawk missiles, tank rounds, and cannon shells fired from aircraft, during Operation Granby; and whether they agree with United States figures that 1,200,000 rounds were fired in total by coalition force. [HL3862]

Lord Gilbert: During the 1990–91 Gulf conflict, UK armoured forces used a new 120mm armour-piercing tank round which contained a solid depleted uranium, DU, penetrator core with a protective, non-DU, coating in its Challenger 1 tanks. The Government's current assessment is that UK tanks fired fewer than 100 of these rounds against Iraqi military forces, which equates to less than 1 metric tonne of DU, although additional rounds were fired during earlier work-up training to establish the round's mean point of impact.



LORDS WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION - URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

DATE FOR RETURN : 12:00 ON 18 November 1998
 PQ REFERENCE : PQ 4145I
 PQ TYPE : LORDS WRITTEN
 LEAD BRANCH: : Sec(AS)
 COPY ADDRESSEE(S) : APS/USofS
 CS(RM)

Peer's DETAIL: Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

QUESTION

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will list the references and titles of all open and closed files currently held by the Ministry of Defence which contain information about unidentified flying objects. (3910)

DRAFTED BY : **Section 40**
 GRADE/RANK: Grade 7 [signed] TEL: **Section 40**
 AUTHORISED BY: **Section 40** [signed] TEL: **Section 40**
 GRADE/RANK: SCS

DECLARATION: I have satisfied myself that the following answer and background note are in accordance with the Government's policy on answering PQs, Departmental instructions (DCI GEN 150/97), and the Open Government Code (DCI GEN 54/98).

ANSWER

Within the Air Staff Secretariat, the Ministry of Defence focal point for all matters relating to 'UFOs', a total of 76 files dating from 1985 are held. These files contain public correspondence, sighting reports and associated papers and are referenced as follows:

Reference

D/Sec(AS)/12/1) 5 parts dealing with policy issues.
 D/Sec(AS)/64/1)

D/Sec(AS)/12/2)
 D/Sec(AS)/12/2/1)
 D/Sec(AS)/12/5) 27 parts dealing with alleged sightings.
 D/Sec(AS)/12/6)
 D/Sec(AS)/12/7)
 D/Sec(AS)/64/2)

D/Sec(AS)/12/3) 34 parts dealing with public correspondence.
 D/Sec(AS)/64/3)

D/Sec(AS)/12/4) 8 parts dealing with Parliamentary business.
D/Sec(AS)/64/4)

D/Sec(AS)/64/5 1 part for media issues.

D/Sec(AS)/64/6 1 part listing answerphone messages.

It is possible that some files held in other MOD headquarters divisions or establishments may contain papers relating to this topic but these could only be identified at disproportionate cost.

BACKGROUND

CS(RM) are answering another of Lord Hill-Norton's PQs (4146) about 'UFO' files. Lord Hill-Norton is keen to have all 'UFO' files not in current use, including those less than 30 years old, released to the Public Record Office.

It is simply not possible to say where all files containing 'UFO' information might be held. We know that a number of archived files less than 30 years old are held by CS(RM), the MOD records branch, responsible for reviewing and transferring records selected for preservation at the PRO. However, in the absence of a Departmental-wide file database and without knowing the details of all originating Branches, a manual search of in excess of one million files at the two main MOD archives would be necessary to locate and list other relevant titles and reference numbers. Even if staff effort could be diverted from essential tasks for this purpose, (and it is difficult to quantify how much but as an example, a highly selective search of these two archives in support of the Official History of the Falklands War cost more than £5,000 in staff effort), we could still not be sure that all 'UFO' information had been found; a more detailed search of enclosures on less obviously titled files would be necessary. It is also the case that Service Units and establishments might have information on local records and this would also need to be recorded.

The draft answer therefore explains that there are difficulties in providing the information requested but, in an effort to be helpful, lists 'UFO' files currently held by Sec(AS)2.

Wed 18 Nov, 1998 12:55 mailbox standard Page 1

DATE	FROM	SUBJECT	CODES
18/11/98	Delivery Report	Ref: 1189	[]

Report For Ref: 1189

Delivered: 18/11/98 12:52

Delivered To:

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS

Not Delivered To:

Codes []

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Wed 18 Nov, 1998 13:03 mailbox standard Page 1

DATE	FROM	SUBJECT	CODES
18/11/98	PARLIAMENTARY QUES	View Acknowledgement	[]

Intended :

Sent : 18/11/98 13:00

Delivered: 18/11/98 13:02

Viewed : 18/11/98 13:00

Ref : 1189

Recipient: PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS

Intended : PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS

Codes []

UNCLASSIFIED
RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED

RESTRICTED/UNCLASSIFIED

Classification:

Caveat:

Covering:

* URGENT *



Facsimile Transmission Cover Sheet

Serial Number: 	Transmission: Date: 17 Nov 98. Time:	Document Reference: 64/4	Total number of pages including this one: 5.
From: Section 40 Sec(AS)2	Fax Number: Section 40 Tel Num: Section 40	To: Section 40 CS(RM) 1	Fax Number: Section 40
Authorised by: Rank: G7 Name: Section 40 Appointment:	Transmitted by: Rank: EO Name: Section 40 Tel Number: Section 40	Signature:	

Subject: PQ 4145 - LORD HILL NORTON.

Section 40

Grateful for your comments, amendments + additions to the attached draft answer asap.

Thank you,

Section 40

Sec(AS)2.

Classification:

Caveat:

Covering:

~~RESTRICTED~~
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TEMPLATE TO BE USED FOR REPLY

Ministry of Defence

WEDNESDAY 18 NOVEMBER 1998

Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB(X) (CB)

LORDS WRITTEN

titles

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will list the references and ~~titles~~ of all open and closed files currently held by the Ministry of Defence which contain information about unidentified flying objects. (3910)



Minister replying Rt Hon Dr The Lord Gilbert

(Please type answer here using as much space as necessary).

PQ Ref 4145I

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DRAFT ANSWER

A full list of files could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Within Sec(AS)2, the Ministry of Defence focal point for all matters relating to 'UFOs', a number of files dating from 1985 are held. The files contain public correspondence, sighting reports and associated papers and are referenced as follows (those annotated 'open' are currently in use):

REFERENCE	TITLE	PART	
D/Sec(AS)/12/1	'UFOs' - Policy	A	
D/Sec(AS)/64/1	'UFOs' - Policy	A	
D/Sec(AS)/64/1	'UFOs' - Policy	B	
D/Sec(AS)/64/1	'UFOs' - Policy	C	
D/Sec(AS)/64/1	'UFOs' - Policy	D	Open
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	A	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	B	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	C	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	D	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	E	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	F	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	G	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	H	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	I	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	J	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	K	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	L	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	M	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	N	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2	'UFOs' - Reports	O	
D/Sec(AS)/12/2/1	'UFOs' - Report	A	
D/Sec(AS)/12/5	'UFOs' - Reports	A	
D/Sec(AS)/64/2	'UFOs' - Sighting Reports	A	
D/Sec(AS)/64/2	'UFOs' - Sighting Reports	B	
D/Sec(AS)/64/2	'UFOs' - Sighting Reports	C	
D/Sec(AS)/64/2	'UFOs' - Sighting Reports	D	
D/Sec(AS)/64/2	'UFOs' - Sighting Reports	E	
D/Sec(AS)/64/2	'UFOs' - Sighting Reports	F	
D/Sec(AS)/64/2	'UFOs' - Sighting Reports	G	
D/Sec(AS)/64/2	'UFOs' - Sighting Reports	H	Open
D/Sec(AS)/12/6	'UFOs' - Alleged 'UFO' Incident - 8 Sept 1970	A	
D/Sec(AS)/12/7	'UFOs' - Alleged 'UFO' Incident - 31 March 1993	A	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	A	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	B	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	C	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	D	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	E	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	F	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	G	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	H	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	I	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	J	

D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	K	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	L	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	M	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	N	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	O	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	P	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	Q	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	R	
D/Sec(AS)/12/3	'UFOs' - Correspondence	S	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	A	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	B	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	C	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	D	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	E	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	F	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	G	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	H	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	I	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	J	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	K	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	L	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	M	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	N	
D/Sec(AS)/64/3	'UFOs' - Public Correspondence	O	Open
D/Sec(AS)/12/4	'UFOs' - Parliamentary Questions & Parliamentary Enquiries	A	
D/Sec(AS)/12/4	'UFOs' - Parliamentary Questions & Parliamentary Enquiries	B	
D/Sec(AS)/64/4	'UFOs' - Parliamentary Questions & Parliamentary Enquiries	A	
D/Sec(AS)/64/4	'UFOs' - Parliamentary Questions & Parliamentary Enquiries	B	
D/Sec(AS)/64/4	'UFOs' - Parliamentary Questions & Parliamentary Enquiries	C	
D/Sec(AS)/64/4	'UFOs' - Parliamentary Questions & Parliamentary Enquiries	D	
D/Sec(AS)/64/4	'UFOs' - Parliamentary Questions & Parliamentary Enquiries	E	
D/Sec(AS)/64/4	'UFOs' - Parliamentary Questions & Parliamentary Enquiries	F	Open
D/Sec(AS)/64/5	'UFOs' - Press Cuttings	A	Open
D/Sec(AS)/64/6	'UFOs' - Answerphone Messages	A	Open

The absence of a central database of files created by MOD Headquarters and Establishments, precludes identification of any other files that might contain information on this topic.

Background

Lord Hill-Norton has tabled two other PQs (4144 and 4146) in his quest for more information about 'UFOs'. He is keen to have all 'UFO' files not in current use, including those less than 30 years old, released to the Public Record Office. Some 33 files covering the period 1968-70 are already lodged with the PRO for release at the 30-year point (PQ 4146 refers).

It is simply not possible to say where all files containing 'UFO' information might be held. In addition to the 33 files held at the Public Record Office pending release, we know that a number of archived files less than 30 years old are held at the MOD Archives at Hayes. However, in the absence of a Departmental-wide file database and without knowing the details of all originating Branches, a manual search of some three million files at Hayes would be necessary to locate and list the relevant titles and reference numbers. Even if staff effort could be diverted from essential tasks for this purpose (likely to take some [x] man hours) we could still not be sure that all 'UFO' information had been found; a more detailed search of enclosures on less obviously titled files would be necessary. It is also the case that Service Units and establishments might have information on local records and this would also need to be recorded.

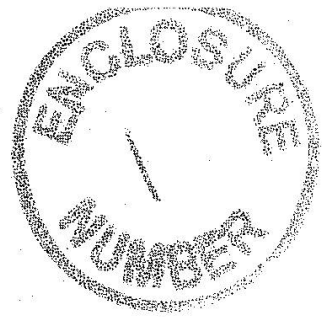
The draft answer therefore explains that there are difficulties in providing the information requested but, in an effort to be helpful, lists the files held by Sec(AS)2.

(Copy to:USofs)

Secretariat(Air Staff) Fax **Section 40****** Transmit Conf. Report ****

17 Nov '98 15:13

Secretariat(Air Staff)---> Section 40	
No.	1666
Mode	NORMAL
Time	2'19"
Pages	5 Page(s)
Result	O K



LORDS WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION - URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

DATE FOR RETURN : 12:00 ON 18 November 1998
 PQ REFERENCE : PQ 4145I
 PQ TYPE : LORDS WRITTEN
 MINISTER REPLYING : -NOTFOUND-
 LEAD BRANCH: : SEC (AS)
 COPY ADDRESSEE(S) : APS/USofS
 CS(RM)

Peer's DETAIL: Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

QUESTION

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will list the references and titles of all open and closed files currently held by the Ministry of Defence which contain information about unidentified flying objects. (3910)

DRAFTED BY : **Section 40**
 GRADE/RANK: Grade 7 [signed] TEL: **Section 40**

AUTHORISED BY: **Section 40** [signed] TEL: **Section 40**
 GRADE/RANK: SCS

DECLARATION: I have satisfied myself that the following answer and background note are in accordance with the Government's policy on answering PQs, Departmental instructions (DCI GEN 150/97), and the Open Government Code (DCI GEN 54/98).

ANSWER

The absence of a central database of files created by MOD Headquarters and Establishments, precludes identification of all files that might contain information on this topic. A full list could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

the Air Staff Secretariat
 Within ~~Sec(AS)2~~, the Ministry of Defence focal point for all matters relating to 'UFOs', a total of 76 files dating from 1985 are held. These files contain public correspondence, sighting reports and associated papers and are referenced as follows:

REFERENCE

D/Sec(AS)/12/1) 5 parts dealing with Policy issues.
 D/Sec(AS)/64/1)

D/Sec(AS)/12/2)
 D/Sec(AS)/12/2/1)
 D/Sec(AS)/12/5) 27 parts dealing with alleged sightings.
 D/Sec(AS)/12/6)
 D/Sec(AS)/12/7)
 D/Sec(AS)/64/2)

 D/Sec(AS)/12/3) 34 parts dealing with public correspondence.
 D/Sec(AS)/64/3)

 D/Sec(AS)/12/4) 8 parts dealing with Parliamentary business.
 D/Sec(AS)/64/4)

 D/Sec(AS)/64/5 1 part for media issues.

 D/Sec(AS)/64/6 1 part listing answerphone messages.

some
files
 It is possible that ^{some} files held in other MOD headquarters divisions or establishments may contain ~~ref~~ papers relating to this topic but these could only be identified at disproportionate cost.

Background

CS(RM) are answering another of Lord Hill-Norton's PQs (4146) about 'UFO' files. Lord Hill-Norton is keen to have all 'UFO' files not in current use, including those less than 30 years old, released to the Public Record Office.

It is simply not possible to say where all files containing 'UFO' information might be held. We know that a number of archived files less than 30 years old are held by CS(RM), the MOD records branch, responsible for reviewing and transferring records selected for preservation at the PRO. However, in the absence of a Departmental-wide file database and without knowing the details of all originating Branches, a manual search of in excess of one million files at the two main MOD archives would be necessary to locate and list other relevant titles and reference numbers. Even if staff effort could be diverted from essential tasks for this purpose, (and it is difficult to quantify how much but as an example, a highly selective search of these two archives in support of the Official History of the Falklands War cost more than £5,000 in staff effort), we could still not be sure that all 'UFO' information had been found; a more detailed search of enclosures on less obviously titled files would be necessary. It is also the case that Service Units and establishments might have information on local records and this would also need to be recorded.

The draft answer therefore explains that there are difficulties in providing the information requested but, in an effort to be helpful, lists 'UFO' files currently held by Sec(AS2).

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Section 40 some suggested changes to Background Note, para 2:

"...less than 30 years old are held by CS(RM), the MOD records branch, responsible for reviewing and transferring records selected for preservation at the PRO.. a manual search of in excess of one million files at the two main MOD archives would be necessary...." " Even if staff effort could be diverted from essential tasks for this purpose (difficult to quantify but by way of an example a highly selective search of these two archive in support of the Official History of the Falkland War cost more than £5,000 in staff effort) we."
Iain

advice received
by CHOTS from
CS(RM)

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closed files

As Hist Branch

Sec (AS) + DS E

dep. files

LORDS WRITTEN PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION - URGENT ACTION REQUIRED

DATE FOR RETURN : 12:00 ON 18 November 1998
 PQ REFERENCE : PQ 41451
 PQ TYPE : LORDS WRITTEN
 MINISTER REPLYING : -NOTFOUND-
 LEAD BRANCH: : SEC (AS)
 COPY ADDRESSEE(S) : -NOTFOUND-

- The answer and background note must be authorised by a civil servant at Senior Civil Service level or a military officer at one-star level or above who is responsible for ensuring that the information and advice provided is accurate and reflects Departmental Instructions on answering PQs DCI GEN 150/97.
- Those contributing information for PQ answers and background notes are responsible for ensuring the information is accurate.
- The attached checklist should be used by those drafting PQ answers and background material, those contributing information and those responsible for authorising the answer and background note as an aid to ensuring that departmental policy is adhered to.
- If you or others concerned are uncertain about how PQs are answered seek advice from a senior civil servant in or closely associated with your area.

Peer's DETAIL: Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Hill-Norton GCB

QUESTION

To ask Her Majesty's Government ~~To ask Her Majesty's Government~~ whether they will list the references and titles of all open and closed files currently held by the Ministry of Defence which contain information about unidentified flying objects. (3910)

titles

4 Oct 1998

Section 40

checked with
Party Branch -correct wording as
shown

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PQ CHECKLIST

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- * YOUR PROPOSED ANSWER MUST BE ACCURATE AND NOT MISLEADING IN ANY WAY
- * MEET THE DEADLINE & CONSULT EARLY IF THERE ARE PROBLEMS
- * YOU WILL BE HELD TO ACCOUNT FOR THE DRAFT ANSWER AND ADVICE
- * IF IN DOUBT, SEEK ADVICE FROM A SENIOR CIVIL SERVANT WITH EXPERTISE IN ANSWERING PQs

PQ ANSWER

- * **DO USE PLAIN AND PRECISE LANGUAGE**
- is the answer unambiguous and free from jargon?
- * **DO BE OPEN, STRAIGHTFORWARD AND HONEST**
- have you included all the facts necessary for a full and unambiguous answer?
- do you fully understand the policy governing the answering of PQs? See attached note on Government Policy
- if you have excluded anything can it be justified under the Open Govt Code (see DCI GEN 54/98)
- * **DO CHECK SOURCES AND ENSURE EVIDENCE IS AVAILABLE TO BACK UP ANSWERS**
- is sufficient documentary evidence available to back up the answer if challenged?
- does anybody outside your management area need to be involved? Have you consulted them?
- * **DO CHECK PREVIOUS ANSWERS ON THE SAME SUBJECT**
- * **DO MAKE CLEAR THE BASIS ON WHICH YOU ARE ANSWERING THE QUESTION**
- if you have gone beyond a literal interpretation of the question have you made it clear?
- * **DON'T RELY ON HEARSAY OR GUESSWORK**
- are you confident that the information provided will stand up to detailed scrutiny?
- * **DON'T BE ABSOLUTE UNLESS YOU HAVE THE PROOF**
- think very carefully before you say "all" or "never" or "not possible"
- does it differ from the views of outside experts, if so why?

BACKGROUND NOTE

- * **DO KEEP IT RELEVANT**
- does it explain the answer?
- * **DO EXPLAIN JUDGEMENTS MADE, AND ANY DOUBTS OR CAVEATS**
- * **DO MAKE IT CLEAR IF INFORMATION IS BEING RELEASED FOR THE FIRST TIME OR IF IT IS DIFFERENT FROM INFORMATION RELEASED PREVIOUSLY**
- have you sought and included advice on the wider implications (including PR)?
- * **DO GIVE A CLEAR EXPLANATION FOR WITHHOLDING INFORMATION**
- details of disproportionate cost included?
- have you explained your justification for exclusion under the Open Govt Code?
- * **DO RECORD THE SOURCES RELIED ON IN PREPARING YOUR PROPOSED ANSWER**
- have you included details of those who have provided you with information?

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QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN ANSWER IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS

ALL DRAFT REPLIES MUST BE CLEARED AT SENIOR CIVIL SERVICE (GRADE 5) OR ONE STAR LEVEL OR

ABOVE

THE CHECKLIST IS TO HELP YOU DRAFT THE ANSWER PROPERLY YOU MUST USE IT

REPLIES SHOULD BE SENT BY CHOTS E-MAIL TO "Parliamentary Questions". DIVISIONS NOT ON CHOTS SHOULD SEND THEIR DRAFTS BY FAX TO THE PARLIAMENTARY BRANCH

Section 40

ALWAYS QUOTE THE QUESTION (PQ) NUMBER AND THE NAMES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS OF THE PERSON WHO DRAFTED THE REPLY AND THE SENIOR OFFICIAL WHO APPROVED IT.

IF YOU REQUIRE ANY ADVICE, PLEASE CALL **Section 40**

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1. WRITTEN PQs

All written PQs **must** be answered within 14 days of being tabled, even if the House is by then in recess.

2. DEADLINE FOR REPLY

a. If, exceptionally, you cannot meet the deadline, you should contact this Branch to see if an extension to the deadline can be given. **You should do this before 12.00 on the day on which you are due to return the PQ answer.**

b. You must provide a full explanation of why you cannot meet the deadline.

c. If it is impossible to answer the question within 14 days the Minister has to write to the Lord concerned explaining the circumstances and undertaking to provide a full answer as soon as possible. You must provide the draft letter.

3. OPEN GOVERNMENT

a. A revised Code of Practice on Access to Government Information came into effect in 1997. It is set out in DCI GEN 54/98.

b. Replies must be drafted in accordance with this policy. If you are recommending

to Ministers that some or all information is withheld, the answer must specify the law or exemption in the Code under which it is being withheld. eg "I am withholding the information requested under exemption 1 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information." It is **NOT** acceptable to rely on past practice.

4. DRAFTING THE ANSWER**- USE THE CHECKLIST -**

a. The draft reply should be concise, clear and meticulously accurate. It should have a positive tone where possible.

b. Use clear and direct language to avoid any ambiguity. Short everyday words and short sentences are best. Avoid cliches and MOD/Service jargon. Use abbreviations only after using the words or name in full.

c. The answer must be unclassified.

d. If you refer to a previous PQ answer or document, send a copy.

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