



Ministry
of Defence

**Navy Command FOI Section
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FOI2025/31739

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Mr I Overton
Request-1382831-bd8ef0d4@whatdotheyknow.com

16 February 2026

Dear Mr Overton,

Release of Information

Further to our correspondence of 23 January 2026, I am now able to provide a substantive response to your request for the following information:

'I am writing to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. For the period from 1 September 2025 to 22 December 2025, please confirm:

- Whether any Royal Navy personnel were seconded, embedded, or otherwise assigned by the Ministry of Defence to United States Navy vessels operating in the Caribbean region.

If the answer to question 1 is yes, please provide:

- The total number of Royal Navy personnel seconded or assigned during this period

- The ranks of such Royal Navy personnel (in the Royal Navy and their role with the US Navy)

- The names of the U.S. naval vessels to which Royal Navy personnel were assigned.'

Your enquiry has been considered to be a request for information in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the Act).

As explained in our interim response, a search for the information was completed within the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and it was confirmed that some information in scope of your request was held. However, in the same correspondence, it was also explained that it was

considered that some of the information may fall within the scope of section 26 (Defence) of the Act.

Under section 26(1)(b) of the Act, information is exempt if its disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the capability, effectiveness or security of any relevant forces.

Under s27(1), information is exempt if its disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the interests of the UK abroad or the promotion or protection by the UK of its interests abroad.

As the exemptions at Section 26 and Section 27 are qualified exemptions, it was necessary for the Department to decide whether, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosure. The Public Interest Test has now been completed and I can advise that after careful consideration of the information and for the reasons detailed below, the balance of public interest was found to be in favour of withholding some of the information in relation to the secondments of Royal Navy (RN) personnel to United States (US) vessels operating in the Caribbean region. It may assist you to understand our decision if I outline the factors that were considered.

It is accepted that there is great public and media interest in the collaborative activities and arrangements in place between the UK Armed Forces and other Nations and disclosure of all of the information would demonstrate the MOD's commitment to openness and transparency. However, there is a very compelling public interest in protecting our Armed Forces. To do this, the MOD must keep its position on information disclosure under constant review to ensure that it meets the prevailing geopolitical circumstances. Armed Forces personnel regularly serve on exchange programmes with our key military partners around the world, it is considered that disclosure of specific details such as the rank, role and vessel that RN personnel may have been deployed to, when coupled with information that may already be in the public domain through other means, could be used to derive tactical level information regarding the UK and US Armed Forces assessment of i) current and future threats and ii) current and planned responses to these threats and the level of personnel required to do so. As such, this may provide tactical advantage to hostile forces causing operational and personnel security risks. As such, information in relation to the secondments of RN personnel to US vessels operating in the Caribbean region, is withheld under section 26(1)(b) of the Act.

Furthermore, it is considered that disclosure of information relating to the exchange of RN personnel to US Navy vessels, such as the roles of those personnel on specific US vessels, could damage the trust and prejudice relations with our allies/international partners and compromise any future collaborative training and operational arrangements. Consequently, information in relation to the secondments of RN personnel to US vessels operating in the Caribbean region, is also withheld under section 27(1) of the Act.

In response to your first question, I can, however, confirm that RN personnel were seconded to US Navy Vessels in the Caribbean Region during the period 1 September to 22 December 2025.

If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance.

If you wish to complain about the handling of your request, or the content of this response, you can request an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights

Compliance team, Ground Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail CIO-FOI@mod.gov.uk). Please note that any request for an internal review should be made within 40 working days of the date of this response.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may raise your complaint directly to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not normally investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website at <https://ico.org.uk/>.

Yours sincerely

Navy Command Secretariat – FOI Section