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2 August 2006

Our ref: XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX (AIT 18-07-2006-131116-011)

Dear Mr XXXXX,

Thank you for your letter undated, which has been considered to be a request for information in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

In this letter you requested details of:-

1. The dumping of sarin gas in the sea off Wales and the West coast of Britain.
2. The spraying of watered down or diluted sarin from aeroplanes over Wales and Cornwall around the period of the second world war.

There was no dumping by the UK of Sarin (GB). However there was dumping of another nerve agent Tabun (GA) in 1956-1957, Operation SANDCASTLE, when 71,000 German aircraft bombs charged with this agent were scuttled in decaying hulks in at least 1000 fathoms of water.

In 1945, these German bombs had been transferred from Hamburg to Newport Docks in South Wales, in Operation DISMAL, then by rail to Llanberis in North Wales by rail and finally to RAF Llanwrog by lorry for storage. In the 1950's, when there was no further reason for their retention, the decision was taken to dump them. In 1953-1956 the bombs were shipped from Llanwrog by sea to Cairn Ryan near Stranraer, Wigtownshire in Scotland for transfer to ship hulks for sea dumping.

Details are best found in two open publications, details of these books are attached.

This matter has been in the public domain since the 1990's. During the 1990's there was much Parliamentary interest in the matter from (notably) Dafydd Wigley MP and Gordon Wilson MP.

There was no spraying of material or chemical sarin release from aeroplanes over Wales and Cornwall "during the period of the Second World War." Sarin was unknown to the UK until 1945 and was certainly not available in the UK until much later. It is doubtful if nerve agents were ever sprayed from aircraft in the UK.

If you are unhappy with the response or wish to complain about any aspect of the handling of this request, then you should contact the undersigned in the first instance. Should you remain dissatisfied, then you may apply for an internal review by contacting the Director of Information Exploitation, 6th Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (**e-mail Info-XD@mod.uk**).

If you are still unhappy following an internal review, you may take your complaint 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. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website, <http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk>.

Yours sincerely,

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Corporate Secretariat