



FOI Ref: 10629

Section 17 Notice under the Freedom of Information Act 2000

WITHHOLDING INFORMATION

Section 27(1) – Information is exempt information if its disclosure under this Act would, or would be likely to, prejudice—

- (a) relations between the United Kingdom and any other State,
- (c) the interests of the United Kingdom abroad, or
- (d) the promotion or protection by the United Kingdom of its interests abroad.

This is a prejudice based qualified exemption for which I am required to conduct a public interest test.

The arguments under Section 27(1)(a) for non-disclosure are centred on the legitimate expectation that any material held by the CPS pertaining to information within the scope of your request would be exempt from disclosure. It therefore follows that subsequent disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice relations with the Greek authorities and the United Kingdom.

Disclosure would also be likely to prejudice relations with other countries that may fear a precedent for disclosure has been set more widely.

In addition, the release of the information requested would, or would be likely to prejudice the interests of the UK abroad. The British Government develops and maintains a robust relationship with other nation states which can promote mutual interest in a number of different areas including human rights and the fight against terrorism and international crime. Disclosure of the information held relevant to your request, which may prove detrimental to the UK's relationship with one country, would in all likelihood result in other countries reconsidering their affinity with the UK. These considerations fall under section 27 (1) (c) and (d) of the FOI Act.

Section 27 is a qualified exemption which means that the decision to disclose information is subject to a public interest test. There is a public interest in both increased transparency of public bodies generally and in releasing information that would increase public understanding of how states cooperate. Despite this public interest argument in favour of disclosure, in this instance, it is our view that the public interest in not releasing information that forms part of Project Invigor is even stronger.



We therefore believe that the public interest is in favour of maintaining the exemption, and that the requested material should be withheld.