

8 July 2026

Dear

**ATISN 27079**

### **Information requested**

Thank you for your request which I received on 10 June. You asked for:

*Copies of any briefing notes, reports, memoranda, ministerial submissions, or correspondence exchanged between the Welsh Government and the Ministry of Defence between 1 January 2024 and the present date which contain the terms:*

- "UAP"
- "Unidentified Aerial Phenomena"
- "UFO"
- "Unidentified Flying Object"

*Not requesting all correspondence or all records relating to aerial activity, only formal briefings, reports, memoranda, ministerial submissions, or correspondence exchanged with the Ministry of Defence containing the above terms.*

### **Our response**

In order to determine whether the Welsh Government holds information within the scope of your request, I have undertaken a number of enquiries.

I consulted the business areas most likely to have had dealings with the Ministry of Defence on this topic, namely:

- National Security & Resilience Division;
- Aviation, Maritime and Logistics Team; and
- Community Safety Division, given its engagement with the Armed Forces community in Wales.

None of these business areas identified information falling within the scope of your request. This suggests it is unlikely that the Welsh Government holds formal briefings, reports, memoranda, ministerial submissions, or correspondence with the Ministry of Defence relating to UFOs or UAPs.

However, I also undertook searches of the Welsh Government's corporate filing system covering the period from 1 January 2024 onwards.

Searches using the full phrases "**Unidentified Flying Object**" and "**Unidentified Aerial Phenomena**" identified records relating to this FOI request, a previous FOI request you submitted, and a small number of unrelated documents (e.g. an English reading test, an external magazine article) in which the phrases appeared.

Searches using the abbreviations "**UFO**" and "**UAP**" generated a very large number of potential records. Initial sampling indicated that many of these records were not relevant to the request and included references to previous FOI requests, external articles and other documents where the search terms appeared coincidentally rather than in relation to unidentified aerial phenomena or unidentified flying objects.

Additional searches were conducted using combinations of the search terms. Whilst these searches did not identify any formal briefings, reports, memoranda, ministerial submissions or correspondence exchanged between the Welsh Government and the Ministry of Defence that obviously fell within the scope of your request, the searches nevertheless generated a substantial number of potential records requiring individual review.

Overall, the searches generated in excess of 2,000 potential records. In order to establish whether any of these records fall within the scope of your request, each record would need to be individually reviewed to determine whether it contains relevant information and, if so, whether that information falls within the categories specified in your request.

Under section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, a public authority is not obliged to comply with a request where the authority estimates that the cost of determining whether it holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting that information, would exceed the appropriate limit. For central government this limit is set at £600, equivalent to 24 hours of work.

We estimate that it would take a minimum of approximately one minute to retrieve and review each of the records identified by our searches. On that basis, reviewing in excess of 2,000 records would require at least 33 hours of work. This exceeds the appropriate limit and does not take account of any additional time required to locate, retrieve and extract relevant information from any records identified as potentially falling within scope. This estimate is therefore conservative.

Accordingly, the Welsh Government is refusing your request under section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

In accordance with our duty under section 16 of the Act to provide advice and assistance, you may wish to submit a more focused request that we may be able to take forward. It may be that a Freedom of Information request is not the most appropriate route to obtain the information you are seeking. I would suggest that you start with the question you want answered. What is it that you want to understand? Rather than describing where you think the information may be located (for example in correspondence, briefings or reports), you may wish to focus on the specific information you are seeking about UFOs or UAPs. Any revised request will be treated as a new request.

## **Next steps**

If you are dissatisfied with the Welsh Government's handling of your request, you can ask for an internal review within 40 working days of the date of this response. Requests for an internal review should be addressed to the Welsh Government's Freedom of Information Officer at:

Information Rights Unit  
Welsh Government  
Cathays Park  
Cardiff  
CF10 3NQ

or e-mail: [Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales](mailto:Freedom.ofinformation@gov.wales)

Please remember to quote the ATISN reference number above.

You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

Website: [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk)

However, please note that the Commissioner will not normally investigate a complaint until it has been through our own internal review process.

Yours sincerely