



DEFENCE FOI 042/21/22 STATEMENT OF REASONS UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

1. I refer to the application by [REDACTED] under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act) for access to:

'- All emails, memos and any other correspondence or documents relating to the clearance process to publicly release a photo taken on 6 April, 2010, of Ben Roberts-Smith in Afghanistan.

- Please include any information relating to a cross on the uniform and the digital altering of the photograph to remove the cross as part of the clearance process.

- Please redact individuals' names if privacy purposes dictate to do so under the Act.

- Please limit search to between April 2010 and February 2011.'

FOI decision maker

2. I am the authorised officer pursuant to section 23 of the FOI Act to make a decision on this FOI request.

Documents identified

3. I identified three documents (11 pages) as matching the description of the request.

Exclusions

4. Personal email addresses, signatures, PMKeyS numbers and mobile telephone numbers contained in documents that fall within the scope of the FOI request, duplicates of documents, and documents sent to or from the applicant are excluded from this request. Defence has only considered final versions of documents.

Decision

5. I have decided to release the documents in full in accordance with section 22 [access to edited copies with exempt or irrelevant matter deleted] of the FOI Act.

Material taken into account

6. In making my decision, I had regard to:
- the terms of the request;
 - the content of the identified documents in issue;
 - relevant provisions in the FOI Act;
 - the Guidelines published by the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner under section 93A of the FOI Act (the Guidelines); and
 - advice from Army Headquarters, Special Operations Command, Chief Information Officer Group, Headquarters Joint Operations Command and the Ministerial and Executive Coordination and Communication Division.

Further Information

7. Extensive searches were undertaken to locate documentation regarding altering of photographs with zero results located. This indicates the photographs located within the scope of this request are the only version of the photographs that the Department's central imagery section received. In addition, there is no record of the method of delivery of the imagery.

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Date: 2021.08.25 15:21:19 +10'00'

Mrs Joanne Groves
Accredited Decision Maker
Associate Secretary Group