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I wish to request an internal review into the handling of my request for reports and correspondence concerning the incident between a Royal Navy submarine and the Motor Vessel Karen in the Irish Sea on 15 April 2015.

The Department's refusal to provide details of this incident is not compatible with the UK code of practice for Fishing Vessel Avoidance (extract from Commander in Chief Publication SMP95) A

This states that, in the event of a collision between a submarine and a fishing vessel, "Do not be unnecessarily secretive - THE FACT THAT YOU ARE THERE IS UNCLASSIFIED INFORMATION". (Annex B Para 5c)

With regard to the incident on 15 April 2015, the Ministry of Defence initially denied that a Royal Navy submarine was involved and has not formally named the vessel involved.

Following the loss of lives on the Fishing Vessel Antares in November 1990, a number of measures were introduced to prevent similar accidents in future. The incident on 15 April 2015 and the Department's silence about it, appear to indicate that these measures are either not being implemented or are not adequate.

In the light of this I am concerned that in withholding this information the Ministry of Defence has not taken due account of public interest in the risks to fishing vessels from submarines in its assessment of the balance of public interest.

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