

Our Ref: RT/CLD



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[REDACTED]
Campaign Against Arms Trade
11 Goodwin Street
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20 December 2004

Dear [REDACTED]

In October 2003 an article appeared in the Sunday Times newspaper entitled 'Arms firm waged dirty war on protesters' which alleged that a consultancy run by Evelyn Le Chene was in charge of a vast private intelligence gathering network that collected the identities and confidential details of a large number of activists affiliated to The Campaign Against Arms Trade (CAAT). The article also alleged that the information was being passed on to British Aerospace (now BAe Systems).

The article made particular reference to the infiltration of CAAT alleging that person(s) unknown had downloaded the entire content of CAAT's computer and passed on information concerning membership, bank account details, and details of private donations to third parties.

As there were allegations relating to the contravention of the Data Protection Act 1998, I authorised an investigation to be carried out with the objective of obtaining evidence to institute appropriate proceedings under the Act.


A comprehensive and lengthy investigation into this matter has recently been concluded and I am writing to inform you of the outcome. The investigation has not revealed any evidence that CAAT's membership lists, individuals' private donations or bank account details were divulged to any third parties by Evelyn Le Chene.

However, the investigation did establish that a former member of CAAT had been forwarding information by way of e-mail, to a company with links to Evelyn Le Chene. The individual concerned was approached by my office but refused to be interviewed regarding this matter. I also understand that the company receiving the information ceased trading shortly after publication of the newspaper article. It is understood that Evelyn Le Chene is now residing in France and she has also refused to assist with the investigation.

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In any event, we have analysed the information that was forwarded from CAAT's offices. Although the information was confidential, it was not "personal data" as defined by the Act. As there was no evidence to show that personal data are involved there are no proceedings which I can take against any individual or organisation under the Act. Therefore no further action is anticipated and the investigation is concluded.

I will, of course, continue to monitor such activities and investigate when appropriate.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Richard Thomas'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent horizontal stroke across the middle.

RICHARD THOMAS
Information Commissioner