



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

# **The MOD Form 680 Policy and Process**

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# MOD FORM 680

Arms Control and Counter Proliferation (ACP) is the Government Authority for the **MOD Form 680**:

*The security procedure for Government to assess the release by all companies to foreign entities of defence-related equipment or information (including technology or software) with a classification of OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE or above for various purposes, including marketing campaigns and in support of Open General Export Licences (OGELs), in order to protect UK foreign and security policy interests.*



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## WHEN IS A F680 REQUIRED?

All companies must have a F680 approval in place before they can release defence related material (information or equipment) that is classified **'Official-Sensitive (Restricted)' or above** to any foreign entity overseas or when demonstrating it to them in the UK.

Companies do not need to apply for a MOD Form 680 where both the equipment and information have been classified at OFFICIAL (Unclassified) by MOD.



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## WHAT A F680 IS AND ISN'T

- The F680 is the MOD's security process which contributes towards the overall HMG export licensing procedures.
- The F680 only clears the release of classified equipment or information outside of the UK.
- An F680 approval does not in any way constitute an export approval.
- It is not an HMG indicator of a likely export licence approval. Changes in the period between an F680 approval and eventual export licence approval, such as a situation in foreign country, can change rapidly. What might be viewed as okay one day, may not be the next.



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## WHAT IS A F680 ASSESSED AGAINST?

MOD Form 680 applications are assessed on a **case-by-case basis** against the **Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria**.

- Criterion One                      UK's international obligations – FCO
- Criterion Two                      Human rights – FCO
- Criterion Three                     Internal situation in buyer country – FCO
- Criterion Four                      Regional stability – FCO
- **Criterion Five**                    **Security of the UK and its allies – MOD**
- Criterion Six                        Behaviour of the buyer country – FCO
- **Criterion Seven**                **Diversion to undesirable end-user – MOD/FCO**
- Criterion Eight                     Sustainable development - DFID

**Provisos:** Provisos (or conditions) may be issued to companies as part of a MOD Form 680 application outcome letter. These may advise on categories of information that cannot be released.



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## WHO ASSESSES F680S?

### **MOD**

- Capability Protection
- Defence Security
- Defence Intelligence

### **Other Government Departments**

- Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO)
- Department for International Development (DFID)
- Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ)



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## HOW LONG DOES AN F680 TAKE TO ASSESS?

The Government aims to respond to applications within 30 working days.

Note: Some applications take longer depending on the nature of the information or equipment to be released and/or the destination.



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# ADVICE ON APPLYING FOR F680S

- Groundwork
- Early applications
- Focus on what you need rather than what would be nice to have
- Plan/manage expectations
- Application should tell a story....the more detail the better e.g.
  - Specific customers/end-user
  - Specific end-use
  - Role of third parties/entities and the release level required
  - A picture and layman's terms



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# PERFORMANCE

- HMG received 5251 F680 applications in 2013.
- HMG assessed 63% of these applications within 30 working days.
- HMG approved 95% of these applications.
- Approvals far outweigh refusals.



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# MOD FORM 680 REVIEW

- MOD conducted a review of the MOD Form 680 process to optimise it and ensure it was delivering the required outputs to MOD, Government and Industry.
- Analysis of the procedure and ways to maximise effectiveness.
- To make the procedure clearer, to users.
- Review undertaken in tandem with changes to the Government Security Classification (GSC).



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# MOD FORM 680 REVIEW - CHANGES

- From 2 April 2014 all companies must have a MOD Form 680 approval in place for the release to foreign entities of either equipment or information about equipment with a classification of OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE or above.
- Includes UK material classified RESTRICTED or above, graded prior to 2nd April 2014, and internationally security classified material.
- Companies do not need to apply for a MOD Form 680 for the release of equipment or information about equipment with a classification of OFFICIAL (including UNCLASSIFIED for material graded prior to 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2014 and equivalent international material).



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# MOD FORM 680 REVIEW - CHANGES

- Extant MOD Form 680 approvals granted prior to 2 April remain valid and run until their expiry date.
- Can continue to be used for the release of classified information or equipment provided expiry date given in outcome letter has not passed.
- Updated guidance on the MOD Form 680 process published on [www.Gov.uk](http://www.Gov.uk).



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# MOD FORM 680 – COMMUNICATING THE PROCESS BETTER

- There is more to be done.
- The message on what an F680 approval is and isn't has been lost and misinterpreted over the years.
- It has been recognised that the review and changes could have better communicated the correct reasons for the use of the MOD Form 680.
- Ongoing assessment of the guidance and the application process itself being undertaken to achieve this.



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# QUESTIONS