

DETERMINATION OF THE DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION

I have determined that the following information is exempt from disclosure under Exemption 3 of the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. § 552(b)(3)) because it meets the requirements for exemption under 10 U.S.C. § 130e:

Department of the Air Force Launch Manifests

Date: 8.3.2015



Michael L. Rhodes
Director of Administration

In accordance with 10 U.S.C. § 130e, I reviewed the information provided to me by the Thirtieth Space Wing, Second Range Operations Squadron, concerning Launch Manifests and determined that it qualifies as DoD critical infrastructure security information (CISI). As defined by 10 U.S.C. § 130e, CISI includes:

“...sensitive but unclassified information that, if disclosed, would reveal vulnerabilities in Department of Defense critical infrastructure that, if exploited, would likely result in the significant disruption, destruction, or damage of or to Department of Defense operations, property, or facilities, including information regarding the securing and safeguarding of explosives, hazardous chemicals, or pipelines, related to critical infrastructure or protected systems owned or operated by or on behalf of the Department of Defense, including vulnerability assessments prepared by or on behalf of the Department of Defense, explosives safety information (including storage and handling), and other site-specific information on or relating to installation security.”

Launch dates, windows, and firing order of related missions on the Western Range (WR) launch manifest is sensitive “For Official Use Only” information which if released will harm DoD’s ability to effectively conduct launch operations, reveal sensitive information about DoD weapons system development, and disclose contractor proprietary information the government must protect.

Making the WR launch manifest publically available through the Freedom of Information Act will harm the effectiveness of national launch operations. If an adversary or subversive group knows launch dates and windows in advance of an operation, they can effectively and efficiently conduct intelligence collection efforts against our operations, more easily identify vulnerabilities, and better devise plans to disrupt launch operations or damage and destroy critical DoD infrastructure and assets. This can include employing personnel, unmanned aerial vehicles and cyber techniques to thwart pre-launch preparations and launch of critical national security payloads and weapons systems.

Furthermore, information on the launch manifest, to include launch dates and the sequence of missions, can reveal status and technical progress of critical national security weapons system development programs. The knowledge of planned dates when compared to actual execution dates can provide adversaries with invaluable insight on development of critical warfighting capabilities.

The public interest in the disclosure is minimal in this instance. Therefore, the public interest consideration in the disclosure of this information does not outweigh preventing the disclosure of the information.