



From: DCDS Pers Secretariat
Zone D, Sixth Floor,
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
Main Building, London, SW1A 2HB.

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Our Reference:
20-08-2010-160944-005

Date: 13 September 2010

Dear XXXXXX,

Thank you for your correspondence, dated 20 August 2010, which has been considered to be a request for information in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Your request has been passed to my department and I have been asked to respond.

You asked the following question:

“Please could you send me details of all the service personnel who have gone AWOL in the past ten years, all those who have subsequently been prosecuted for desertion and the sentences they have been given and where they have been detained?”

Statistics on personnel categorised as absent without leave (AWOL) are recorded by the number of incidences reported. Within this total, therefore, there may be Service personnel who have been AWOL on more than one occasion. Furthermore, following the reporting of an incidence of AWOL, information may later come to light of extenuating circumstances, such as for compassionate reasons, hospitalisation or travel delays beyond the individual's control. In such cases they may not have been formally charged but the incidence is still recorded.

Please find below tables from each of the three Services detailing the figures requested with any explanations required at the bottom of each of the tables.

ROYAL NAVY

INSTANCES OF REPORTED AWOL STATISTICS											
As at 31 Aug 10											
YEAR	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
RN	55	92	111	120	184	196	157	114	123	83	31

The details of all Royal Navy personnel who have been charged with desertion are below. These figures reflect when individuals were tried for desertion and do not reflect when they committed the offence.

YEAR	MODE OF TRIAL	SENTENCE
2000	Summary Trial	Dismissed
2002	Summary Trial	42 days detention (attempted desertion)
2002	Court Martial	42 days detention (suspended)
2006	Summary Trial	Dismissed

Records are not available to establish where individuals served their detention – however they would usually be expected to serve at Military Corrective Training Centre Colchester.

ARMY

INSTANCES OF REPORTED AWOL STATISTICS											
As at 31 Aug 10											
YEAR	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
ARMY	2709	2647	2951	2822	3032	2720	2334	2312	2139	2127	1248

The details of all Army desertion charges and the results of the Court Martials are below.

01 Jan to 31 May 2010

OFFENCE DETAILS	SENTENCE
Desertion & AWOL	Detn (Detn) 8 months (mths) + Detn 1 month, to run consecutively
Desertion	Dismissal (Dism) from Her Majesty's Service (HMS)
Desertion	Detn 15 months
AWOL & Desertion	Detn 2 months + Detn 7 months consecutively
Desertion & AWOL	Imprisonment (Imp) 10 months & Dism HMS, + Imp 1 month concurrently
Desertion	Detn 18 months, Dism HMS
2 x Desertion + 1 x AWOL	Imp 15 months & Dism HMS, Imp 15 months & Dism HMS, Imp 60 days & Dism HMS, consecutive (total 32 months)
Desertion & AWOL	Imp 15 months & Dism HMS, + 2 months imp concurrent
Desertion	Dism HMS, Service Community Order 1 year, unpaid work 180 hrs
Desertion	Detn 12 months, Dism HMS

2009

OFFENCE DETAILS	SENTENCE
Desertion	Detn 7 mths & Dism HMS
Desertion	Detn 9 mths
Desertion	Imprisoned 9 mths & Dism HMS
Desertion	Detn 6 mths & Dism HMS
Desertion/AWOL	Imprisoned 8 mths & Dism HMS
Desertion	Detn 8 mths
Desertion	Detn 8 mths
Desertion	Imprisoned 2 years & Dism HMS
Desertion	Detn 6 mths & Dism HMS

2008

OFFENCE DETAILS	SENTENCE
Desertion	Detn 8 mths & Reduced to the Ranks (RTR)
Desertion	Detn 150 days
Desertion	Dism HMS & Detn 9 mths
Desertion	Detn 8 mths suspended sentence activated Dism HMS
Desertion	Detn 9 mths
Desertion	Dism HMS, Detn 1 Yr & RTR
Desertion	Detn 9 mths
Desertion	Detn 195 days

2007

OFFENCE DETAILS	SENTENCE
Desertion	Dism HMS & Detn 115 days
Desertion	Dism HMS & Detn 10 mths
Desertion	Dism HMS & Detn 6 mths
Desertion	Detn 12 mths
Desertion	Dism HMS & Detn 9 mths

Desertion	Reduced To 121 Days Detention On Review.
Desertion	Dism HMS & Detn 12 mths

2006

OFFENCE DETAILS	SENTENCE
Desertion	Dism HMS & Detn 7 mths
Desertion	Detn 140 days
Desertion	Detn 7 mths & RTR
Desertion	Dism HMS & Prison 8 mths 27 days
Desertion	Dism HMS & Detn 6 mths
Desertion	Dism HMS & Detn 120 days
Desertion	Dism HMS & Detn 6 mths 28 days

2005

OFFENCE DETAILS	SENTENCE
Desertion	Dism HMS & Detn 138 days
Desertion	Dism HMS & Detn 6 mths
Desertion	Dism HMS & Detn 10 mths
Desertion	Dism HMS & Detn 202 days
Desertion	Detn 112 Days (Suspended) & RTR

2004

OFFENCE DETAILS	SENTENCE
Desertion	Detn 8 mths
Desertion	Dism HMS & Detn 12 mths
Desertion	Dism HMS & Detn 7 mths

2003

OFFENCE DETAILS	SENTENCE
Desertion	Imp 110 days, Dism HMS & RTR
Desertion	Dism HMS & 9 mths Detn
Desertion	84 days Imp & Dism HMS

2002

OFFENCE DETAILS	SENTENCE
Desertion	Dism HMS & 56 days Detn
Desertion	Dism HMS & 9 mths Detn
Desertion	159 days Detn
Desertion	Dism HMS
Desertion	Dism HMS and Detn 7 mths and 28 days
Desertion	Dism HMS and Detn 126 days

2001

OFFENCE DETAILS	SENTENCE
Desertion	Dism HMS & 171 days Detn (Mitigated To 67 days Detn)
Desertion	Dism HMS, 154 days Detn & RTR
Desertion	Dism HMS & 6 mths 19 days Detn

2000 – 7 (No further information)

1999 – 18 (No further information)

Please note – “Detention” indicates a period at the Military Correction Training Centre Colchester. “Imprisoned” indicates a period at a civilian prison. A civilian prison sentence “almost certainly” results in a discharge from the Army. I am unable to provide the names of the civilian establishments used.

ROYAL AIR FORCE

INSTANCES OF REPORTED AWOL STATISTICS											
As at 25 Aug 10											
YEAR	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
RAF	27	28	25	38	57	37	10	26	13	8	7

Periods of unauthorised absence by RAF Service personnel are recorded as AWOL (and not desertion) until the reason for their absence can be determined (i.e. if the intention was to desert). Individuals charged with desertion are dealt with by Court Martial. Between 1999 and August 2010, two RAF Personnel have appeared at Court Martial facing charges of Desertion. Of these, one RAF Service person was charged with Desertion but not convicted in 2002, and, one RAF Service person was convicted at Court Martial of Desertion in 2005. This individual was dismissed from the Service and awarded 6 months detention at the Military Corrective Training Centre Colchester.

I hope that you find this information useful.

Yours sincerely

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DCDS PERS Secretariat

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If you are not satisfied with this response or you wish to complain about any aspect of the handling of your request, then you should contact me in the first instance. If informal resolution is not possible and you are still dissatisfied then you may apply for an independent internal review by contacting the Head of Corporate Information, 1st Floor, Zone N, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk). Please note that any request for an internal review must be made within 40 working days of the date on which the attempt to reach informal resolution has come to an end.

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