



From: DCDS Personnel & Training Secretariat
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Our Reference:

16-11-2011-123047-011

Date: 12 December 2011

Dear

Thank you for your correspondence dated 16 November 2011, which has been considered to be a request for information in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). Your request has been passed to my department and I have been asked to respond.

You asked the following questions:

1.(a) “How many Army, Royal Marines, Royal Navy and RAF personnel tested positive in compulsory drug tests in 2009? Please give the figures by unit/regiment where possible. (b) Please break down these positive tests by drug type (e.g six personnel tested positive for heroin; 10 tested positive for cocaine; three tested positive for heroin and cocaine; 16 tested positive for cannabis; nine tested positive for cocaine and cannabis etc.) (c) How many Armed Forces personnel who tested positive for drugs in 2009 have been dismissed as a result”.

2.(a) “How many Army, Royal Marines, Royal Navy and RAF personnel tested positive in compulsory drug tests in 2010? Please give the figures by unit/regiment where possible. (b) Please break down these positive tests by drug type (e.g six personnel tested positive for heroin; 10 tested positive for cocaine; three tested positive for heroin and cocaine; 16 tested positive for cannabis; nine tested positive for cocaine and cannabis etc.) (c) How many Armed Forces personnel who tested positive for drugs in 2010 have been dismissed as a result”.

3.(a) “How many Army, Royal Marines, Royal Navy and RAF personnel tested positive in compulsory drug tests in 2011 so far? Please give the figures by unit/regiment where possible. (b) Please break down these positive tests by drug type (e.g six personnel tested positive for heroin; 10 tested positive for cocaine; three tested positive for heroin and cocaine; 16 tested positive for cannabis; nine tested positive for cocaine and cannabis etc.) (c) How many Armed Forces personnel who tested positive for drugs in 2011 have been dismissed as a result”.

The Armed Forces do not tolerate the taking of illegal drugs within their ranks, as it is incompatible with military service and reduces operational effectiveness. All Service

personnel are subject to random compulsory drug testing. Providing a positive result, indicating the presence of illegal substances, will almost certainly result in an administrative discharge. These measures are well known and are a condition of Service.

The Compulsory Drug Testing (CDT) information you have requested in respect of the three Services has been compiled in the attached tables. Turning to your request regarding a breakdown by Ship, Regiment and Squadron, Section 40(2) of the FOIA provides an exemption from disclosing information about identifiable individuals where it would breach the Data Protection Act 1998. The Act contains a number of exemptions from the right of subject access to personal data which is information about a living individual from which that individual can be identified. In this case because the number of Service personnel that tested positive is small in number there is a risk that disclosure may cause these persons to be identified.

In regard to the respective CDT figures from all three Services, it should be noted the difference in the number of positive tests and the number of discharges is normal and is caused by a number of reasons such as individuals going absent, leaving the Service before the result, time lag between the test and the discharge due to investigations, overlap between years and some personnel being retained despite a positive test.

Royal Navy Positive CDT results by year

Drug Type	2009	2010	2011
Cocaine	18	18	15
Ecstasy	1	1	1
Cannabis	14	23	13
Other (Ketamine, Steroids, Benzodiazepines and Opiates)	1	2	2
Total	34	44	31

Royal Navy Discharges as a result of positive CDT by year

	2009	2010	2011 (to date)
Discharges	30	42	31

Army Positive CDT results by year

Drug Type	2009	2010	2011 (As at 30 Sep)
Cocaine	241	266	174
Ecstasy	5	5	12
Cannabis	174	181	102
Ketamine	11	3	5
Other	20	38	49
Total	451	493	342

Army Discharges as a result of positive CDT by year

	2009	2010	2011 (As at 30 Sep)
Discharges	508	459	305

Royal Air Force Positive CDT results by year

Drug Type	2009	2010	2011
Cocaine	5	18	22
Ecstasy	0	2	5
Cannabis	7	8	5
Amphetamine	0	0	1
Other (mixture of substances/steroids)	0	0	5
Total	12	28	38

Royal Air Force Discharges as a result of positive CDT by year

	2009	2010	2011 (to date)
Discharges	12	26	24

I hope that you find this information helpful.

Yours sincerely,

DCDS Personnel & Training Secretariat

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In keeping with the spirit and effect of the Freedom of Information Act, all information is assumed to be releasable to the public unless exempt. The Ministry of Defence therefore will be simultaneously posting the information you requested, together with any related information that will provide a key to its wider context, in our online FOI Disclosure Log at <http://www.foi.mod.uk>

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.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may take your complaint to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website, <http://www.ico.gov.uk>.