Background Quality Report: *Civilian Personnel Statistics*

Introduction	*This section provides the context for the quality report.*
	Overview The numbers of civilians employed by the Ministry of Defence are published as National Statistics on the MOD area of www.gov.uk. The Quarterly Civilian Personnel Report (QCPR)[1] presents the latest civilian strengths and changes since the previous quarter for the main budgetary areas of the MOD. It also provides a time-series of strengths for the main categories of MOD employment for each quarter, including the 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR)[2] baseline in order to enable monitoring of the SDSR rundown, and shows intake and outflow broken down by method of entry and reason for leaving. A summary of diversity representation for protected characteristics is also given, with greater detail of declaration and representation rates provided in the Biannual Diversity Dashboard[3]. The quarterly Civilian Personnel Numbers (CPN)[4] presented the civilian strengths by agency, trading fund and location by financial year and rolling quarter from January 2006 until January 2012. The annual compendium UK Defence Statistics[5] provides a more detailed breakdown of civilian strengths and flows by financial year and from April 2013 has been published in separate bulletins with civilian personnel numbers in Statistical series 2 - Personnel Bulletin 2.02 - Civilian Personnel[6]. **Methodology and Production** The published figures are mainly counts of numbers (strengths) and movements (flows) of civilian personnel for a range of categories. The strength figures are reported as Full Time Equivalents (FTE). This is preferable to headcount for civilian personnel as it enables fair comparison with Service figures, where working part-time does not occur, and provides a better indication of the person hours available and salary costs. FTE is calculated from the contractually agreed number of hours worked per week divided by the number of hours per week which constitute full-time for the grade and location (this varies according to whether Industrial or Non-Industrial grade, and whether on the London or National pay scale). Flows however, are measured using headcount as users of the statistics are more interested in monitoring the number of new recruits and departures from the Department, rather than the FTE of these flows, and further, because changes in the working hours of personnel between periods render FTE flows unable to be reconciled with strengths. Diversity representation is also only appropriate to be presented as headcount, as this relates to the number of personnel to whom protected characteristics apply, not to the number of hours per week worked. With the exception of gender and age all protected characteristic fields on HRMS are voluntary fields such as disability status**,** ethnicity, religion and sexual orientation**.** Civilian personnel complete these based on their self-perceptions, but are under no obligation to complete these fields. It is not possible for Defence Statistics to assess the accuracy or consistency of the declarations made by individuals within these fields.

	Contact details Abigail Fox, the Head of Defence Statistics Civilian Branch, is responsible for these statistics. Her contact details are: Defence Statistics (Civilian) Ministry of Defence Floor 3 Zone K Main Building, Whitehall London SW1A 2HB Email: DefStrat-Stat-CivEnquiries@mod.uk Tel: 020 7218 1359 Web site: www.gov.uk Defence Statistics welcome feedback on this Background Quality Report or any of the statistics mentioned.
Relevance	*This section is about the degree to which the statistical product meets user needs in both coverage and content.* The main users of the civilian personnel statistics are the MOD's Defence Resources and DCDS Personnel and Training who use the statistics to monitor staffing levels and inform policy. The tables published have been developed in consultation with these customers to ensure they fully meet their needs. Recently the statistics have been used to monitor the reduction in personnel numbers as part of the 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR)[2] and the resulting Voluntary Early Release Schemes and to inform the Defence Board of how the Department is meeting its Public Sector Equality Duty. However, the publications have a multitude of uses by various interested parties, both internally and external to the department. The statistics are also used in answering of PQs and FOIs relating to civilian personnel numbers. Civilian Personnel Numbers (CPN) is no longer published due to a lack of demand for the numbers following a fall in the number of agencies from 35 in 1997 to only 5 in 2010. Some of these agencies gained Trading Fund status and as such their numbers remained in the CPN, but there has also been a decline in the number of Trading Funds down to 4 in 2010. At April 2014 there were 2 Agencies and 3 Trading Funds and consequently considerably less interest in the numbers. Historic publications are available at Civilian Personnel Numbers (CPN) [4].
Accuracy and Reliability	*This section is about the differences between the estimates and the unknown true values..* Data for core MOD civilians are derived from the MOD's Human Resources Management System (HRMS). Basic data validation is conducted as part of the acceptance of the monthly extract prior to it being made available to the production team through ARES, a custom designed database for holding the time series of monthly civilian extracts. More detailed validation is then undertaken on the breakdowns of individual fields (including ethnicity, disability, gender, TLB, grade), and comparisons between the current and previous month's figures. The consistency of gains, losses and inter-TLB transfers is also checked. Unusual variations are identified and investigated to identify explanations/reasons for the changes. In instances where our investigations detect data issues we take action with DBS to correct the data. The validation process focuses on the areas where problems with the data have been detected in the past.

	Trading Funds data come from the validated personnel systems of the individual trading funds, and Royal Fleet Auxiliary data are sourced directly from their HR system 'Magellan'. The data are validated along the same lines as for core MOD civilian personnel, but RFA data are not input onto the ARES database. No further validation of this data is undertaken. Locally engaged civilians (LEC) data are provided by the main budgetary area of the MOD responsible for them. Improvements in the way in which LEC information is recorded have meant the actual FTE of part-time LECs are now available. As such, from January 2012 onwards LEC figures use these actual values where possible. Previously published LEC FTE figures from April 2010 to October 2011 were not revised as the impact was minimal compared to the resource required, so previous LEC FTE figures therefore assume a 0.5 FTE for all part-time personnel. The data are validated along the same lines as for core MOD civilian personnel. In the event of data being unavailable, the appropriate figures from the previous quarter point are carried forward as estimates. These estimates are not revised once actual figures become available, as late deliveries of data are typically from small TLBs and the impact is minimal. However, if at a later date validation errors of a substantial impact are revealed then figures are revised. The QCPR was introduced in July 2011 to replace and expand upon the previous Civilian Personnel Statistics publication CPS01, which was also quarterly. Nine CPS 01 publications were revised between 2006 and 2011. Over the same period the CPN has been revised twice. QCPR has been revised twice since its inception. There was an HRMS reset of the disability field on 18 April 2011 to accommodate the new disability reporting requirements to match 2011 Census definitions. Insufficient numbers of personnel have made disability declarations since the reset to be able to report civilian disability representation rates with any validity from July 2011. We are monitoring declaration rates and when these meet the 60 per cent threshold we will be confident to report representation rates for disability. Until this time to enable reporting of disability figures to meet the MOD's obligations under the public sector equality duty (PSED) and to provide some indication of the *numbers* of disabled people within the MOD, we have agreed to report numbers of people declared as disabled only when the numbers of people who have not declared their status is also reported.
Timeliness and Punctuality	*This section reports on the time gap between publication and the reference period (timeliness) and the gap between planned and actual publication dates (punctuality).*
	The monthly extracts are taken from HRMS on the first calendar day and made available to the production team within 10 working days. The validation and editing takes around one week and production of the statistics and publications a further week. The aim is to publish the QCPR statistics within one month of data being made available and the Diversity Dashboard statistics within two months. The publication dates are pre-announced, in line with the Official Statistics Code of practice on the Publication Release Dates section[7] of the DEFENCE STATISTICS webpage and on the UK National Statistics[8]. Pre-release access is only given for QCPR. See Defence Statistics pre-release access lists[9] for details.

The following table provides timeliness for the latest publications.

Publication	Situation Date	Publication Date
QCPR	1 April 15	14 May 15
Biannual Diversity Dashboard	1 April 15	28 May 15
Statistical Series 2 – Personnel Bulletin 2.02 – Civilian Personnel	1 April 15	September 15 (provisional)

Accessibility and Clarity	*This section reports on the: ease with which users are able to access the data and the format in which the data are available and the availability of supporting information (accessibility); and the quality and sufficiency of the metadata, illustrations and accompanying advice (clarity).*
	The QCPR, Diversity Dashboard and UK Defence Statistics are all published on <u>Defence Statistics at Gov.UK</u>[10] and are available as pdfs, with QCPR also available as Excel pages. QCPR and UK Defence Statistics / Civilian Personnel Bulletin can be found under the "National Statistics Publication" section. They are also available through the <u>UK National Statistics</u>[8] or by searching for "MOD civilian statistics" on the internet. The publications of civilian personnel statistics are accompanied by notes explaining the categories and definitions used and the main changes that have impacted the statistics. Graphics are used to present time-series and quarter-on-quarter changes. Detailed analysis and commentary are provided in the publications and identify some of the notable features of the data.
Coherence and Comparability	*This section examines: the degree to which data that are derived from different sources or methods, but refer to the same topic, are similar (coherence); and the degree to which data can be compared over time and domain (comparability).*
	In 2004 following changes in employment legislation and a requirement to better plan the future of the civilian workforce, definitions were changed to better reflect human resources methods and policies. Two levels of civilian were introduced: • **Level 1**, which includes permanent and casual personnel, and Royal Fleet Auxiliaries, but excludes Trading Funds. This is generally used for MoD internal reporting and planning. • **Level 0**, which contains all those at Level 1 plus Trading Funds and Locally engaged civilians. This is used for external reporting, including National Statistics publications CPS01 and UKDS, and Parliamentary business. This change in 2004 resulted in the inclusion of approximately 20,000 staff which were not previously included in the total figures. This did not represent an increase in the number of civilians working for the Ministry of Defence, rather that people who had previously not been included in the definition were now included.

In July 2011 when CPS01 was replaced by QCPR the focus of the publication shifted to the monitoring of the decrease of civilian personnel, following the announcement of the Strategic Defence and Security Review. As such a baseline measure was agreed at April 2010 and defined as the SDSR baseline.

- **SDSR**, which contains all Civilian Level 0 personnel but excludes all NACMO Funded locally engaged civilians in Afghanistan, Conflict Pool Funded locally engaged civilians in Sierra Leone and personnel on US Visiting Forces stations. The MOD has no financial liability over NACMO or Conflict Pool LEC's and USVF civilians and therefore are not included in the monitoring of the personnel reduction.

There have also been a number of organisational and structural changes to the MOD that have impacted the figures over the last two decades. Particularly, the privatisation of certain elements of the MOD, such as QinetiQ in 2001 and DARA in 2008. The following table identifies some of the main changes and estimates the impact of the change.

Year	Change	Headcount Impact
1993	Contractorisation of the Atomic Weapons Establishment	- 6,000
1994	Removal of GCHQ personnel	Unknown
1997	Privatising parts of Centre and DSTL	- 1770
2001	Formation and privatisation of QinetiQ	- 8,000
2001	Transfer of War Pensions Agency from DWP	+ 800
2002	Contractorisation of Clyde Dockyards	- 1,800
2002	Partnering agreement at Devonport	- 1400
2002	Privatising parts of Centre	- 455
2003	Contractorisation of support services at Army training sites	- 500
2008	Part privatisation of DARA (Vector Aerospace Corp)	– 1,000
2011	Transfer of Met Office to BIS	-1,860
2012	Privatisation in RAF Catering and Leisure Project	-750

The Strategic Defence & Security Review (SDSR) baseline number has fallen by **22,760 (FTE)** since 1 April 2010. This comprises of

Science Innovation & Technology (SIT) formally ceased to be a TLB on 1 April 2010, approximately 90% of personnel transferred to the Central TLB with the remainder transferring evenly to DE&S and DSTL. Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) was established on 01 April 2011 and replaced the Defence Estates organisation. DIO includes TLB property and facilities management functions previously situated within other TLBs, DIO title structure has been applied retrospectively across data period for consistency of reporting. As of 1 April 2013 responsibility for management of the MOD Guard Service (MGS) transferred from HO&CS to DIO. The MDP remained within in HO&CS, but is no longer an Agency.

At 1 October 2011 responsibility for management of the Meteorological Office personnel transferred to Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS). Head Office & Corporate Services (HO&CS) and Joint Forces

	Command (JFC) were established as at 01 April 2012, the Central TLB (CTLB) and Chief of Joint Operations (CJO) were disestablished as at 1 April 2012. HO&CS and JFC were not the CTLB and CJO renamed. Joint Forces Command achieved Full Operational Capacity as at 1 April 2013, absorbing additional support roles from lead service TLBs.
Trade-offs between Output Quality Components	*This section reports the extent to which different aspects of quality are balanced against each other.*
	Defence Statistics still receive the fields that were chosen at the time of transfer from the previous HR system to be those that best matched the old system. Therefore there is only one Grade field available for analysis and it is not possible to distinguish between paid and substantive grade (which would differ in individuals on temporary promotion for example). Work is underway to amend this and increase the quantity of data Defence Statistics receives from the HRMS source information.
Assessment of User Needs and Perceptions	*This section reports the processes for finding out about users and uses, and their views on the statistical products.*
	Defence Statistics has worked closely with our customers to ensure the civilian personnel statistics meet their needs. A consultation of users was undertaken in 2004 on changes to the definition of civilian workforce which identified areas of improvement and resulted in a clearer more consistent presentation of the number of civilians. See 2004 Consultation Notes[11(a)] and 2004 Consultation Decision[11(b)] for more details.

Defence Statistics has undertaken a fundamental review of its civilian statistics, data-sources and its outputs, and consulted users on proposals to change CPS01 to QCPR. See the 2011 Consultation Document[11(c)] for details. Changes include a greater range of tables to better meet customer needs, provide diversity representation information, and the inclusion of more detailed commentary on the statistics, and data sources.

An external user consultation was conducted in 2012 which discussed the ongoing UK Statistics Authority (UKSA) assessment of Defence Statistics publications. See the 2012 Consultation Document[11(d)] for details. Defence Statistics publications have been divided into six groups - all have been assessed with five reports published so far. The recommendations the UKSA have made include:

Improving engagement with/identification of needs and uses of external users
Improving publication of methods/pre-announcement of changes in methods
Improving publication of information on quality
Providing clearer information on revisions
Improving commentary to inform interpretation and make figures more accessible
Providing information available in forms which encourage reuse

Further details can be found at

The UK Statistics Authority - Assessment Reports[12]

We have made our own assessment of what these statistics could be used for using the categorisation in the UKSA paper *The Use Made of Statistics*. We believe the statistics could be used as follows:-

     i. Informing the general public's choices:
          e. about the performance of government and public bodies |

	ii. Government decision making about policies, and associated decisions about related programmes and projects: b. policy monitoring The underlying data also allow for: ii. Government decision making about policies, and associated decisions about related programmes and projects: a. policy making vii. Facilitating academic research.
Performance, Cost and Respondent Burden	*This section is about the effectiveness, efficiency and economy of the statistical output.* Value for money is sought by ensuring the publication serves the customer requirement through review processes. The recent change from producing a compendium of defence statistics (in the form of UKDS) to publishing individually targeted bulletins (in the form of Statistical Series 2) has been made in part to focus on the specific needs of users and partly to reduce respondent burden by only producing information that is not already published by Defence Statistics. This ensures the minimum production time is required, thus keeping production costs to a minimum and ensuring data are as timely as possible.
Confidentiality, Transparency and Security	*This section is about the procedures and policy used to ensure sound confidentiality, security and transparent practices.* **Security** All staff involved in the production process have signed the Data Protection Act; all MOD, Civil Service and data protection regulations are adhered to. The data is stored, accessed and analysed using the MOD's restricted network and IT systems, and the access to raw data is password protected. **Confidentiality** All published outputs are counts of individuals in particular groupings. The outputs are rounded according to Defence Statistics rounding policy, which reflects the degree of accuracy of the outputs and prevents disclosure of information on individuals. **Transparency** The outputs identify any issues or caveats relating to the data or statistics. This quality report provides further information on the method, production process and quality of the output.

References

	Reference	Website Location
1	Quarterly Civilian Personnel Report (QCPR)	https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/mod-civilian-personnel-quarterly-statistics-index
2	Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR 2010)	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-strategic-defence-and-security-review-securing-britain-in-an-age-of-uncertainty
3	Biannual Diversity Dashboard	https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/mod-diversity-dashboard-index
4	Civilian Personnel Numbers (CPN)	http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/201401161 42443/http:/www.dasa.mod.uk/index.php/publications/personnel/civilian/archive/civilian-personnel-numbers-by-agency
5	UK Defence Statistics	https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-defence-statistics-compendium-index
6	Statistical Series 2 - Personnel Bulletin 2.02 - Civilian Personnel	https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/mod-service-and-civilian-personnel-bulletin-index
7	Publication Release Dates	https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/announcements?organisations%5B%5D=ministry-of-defence&page=2
8	National Statistics Publication Hub	http://www.statistics.gov.uk/hub/index.html
9	Defence Statistics Pre-Release Access lists	https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/defence-statistics-pre-release-access-list
10	Defence Statistics at Gov.UK	https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-defence/about/statistics
11	(a) Changes to the Definition of the Civilian Workforce - 2004 Consultation Notes.	http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/201401161 42443/http:/www.dasa.mod.uk/policy_and_processes/consultations/changes-to-civilian-workforce.pdf
	(b) Changes to the Definition of the Civilian Workforce – 2004 Consultation Decision.	http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/201401161 42443/http:/www.dasa.mod.uk/policy_and_processes/consultations/changes-to-definition-of-the-civilian-workforce.pdf
	(c) 2011 Consultation Document. QCPR review	https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-the-content-of-dasas-quarterly-civilian-publication-cps-01
	(d) DASA Official Statistics External User Consultation Meeting 30 May 2012	http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/201401161 42443/http:/www.dasa.mod.uk/policy_and_processes/consultations/2012-UKDS-consultation-presentation-meeting.pdf
12	The UK Statistics Authority - Assessment Reports	http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment/assessment-reports/index.html

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