



Ministry of Defence

Ministry of Defence
Main Building
Whitehall
London SW1A 2HB
United Kingdom

Telephone :

Our Reference: [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your e-mail to the Ministry of Defence (MOD) dated [REDACTED] in which you requested the following information:

- 1) Please tell me how many Army personnel failed drugs test in each of the following years: a) 2014 b) 2015 c) 2016 to date.
- 2) Please provide a breakdown for each failed test telling me a) the drug for which they tested positive b) their rank c) what disciplinary measures were taken.

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) 2000.

A search for the information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence (MOD), and I can confirm that the MOD does hold some information within the scope of your request; this is provided in the attached Annex.

Drug misuse is incompatible with life in the Armed Forces and will not be tolerated. The Army does not tolerate drug abuse within its ranks as it is incompatible with military service and operational effectiveness. Soldiers caught taking drugs can expect to be discharged. In a very small number of exceptional circumstances, where an uncharacteristic mistake is made by a young soldier, second chances may be considered. This only happens where soldiers have already shown great promise and they fully meet the stipulated retention criteria.

The Ministry of Defence has a policy of Compulsory Drug Testing, which seeks to reinforce the message that drug use is unacceptable in Service personnel.

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 Information Rights Compliance team, 1st Floor, 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.org.uk>.

Yours sincerely,

Defence People

Table One Positive Drug Tests/Drug Type

Year	No. of Positives 2)	Cocaine	Ecstasy	Heroin	Cannabis	Benzo	Steroids	Ketamine	Amphetamine	Others
2014	600	340	60	-	130	10	90	~	~	-
2015	570	380	70	~	130	10	20	~	10	10
2016 (3)	170	100	20	-	40	-	-	-	-	-

- 1) In accordance with the Data Protection Act and our obligations in relation to the protection of confidentiality when handling personal data, the figures provided have been rounded to the nearest 10, where “~” denotes a number less than or equal to five. When rounding up to the nearest 10, numbers ending in 5 have been rounded to the nearest multiple of 20 to prevent systematic bias. Due to the rounding methods used, totals may not always equal the sum of the parts.
- 2) This does not identify those individuals who have returned more than 1 substance at a single Compulsory Drug Test
- 3) Up to April 2016

Table Two Positive Drug Tests by Rank

YEAR	RANK							
	Pte Aged 16-24	Pte aged 25 or	LBdr LCpl	Bdr Cpl CofH	Sgt	CSgt SSgt	WO1 WO2	Offr incl O/Cdt
2014	370	140	60	20	10	-	~	~
2015	340	170	50	10	~	~	~	~
2016 (3)	120	40	-	-	-	-	-	-

- 1) In accordance with the Data Protection Act and our obligations in relation to the protection of confidentiality when handling personal data, the figures provided have been rounded to the nearest 10, where “~” denotes a number less than or equal to five. When rounding up to the nearest 10, numbers ending in 5 have been rounded to the nearest multiple of 20 to prevent systematic bias. Due to the rounding methods used, totals may not always equal the sum of the parts.
- 2) For brevity some individuals return more than one positive drug test. There are varying circumstances, individual challenge, investigations, pending other criminal investigations (take precedence over administrative action), medical conditions, etc.
- 3) Up to April 2016

Table Three Army Discharges by Drug

YEAR	Drug Type					Total
	Cocaine	Ecstasy	Cannabis	Steroids	Others	
2014	230	40	100	60	40	460
2015	360	60	80	30	20	540
2016 (up to 27 April) (5)	120	10	40	-	-	180

- 1) All data is based on information held by the Directorate of Manning Army, Discharges team and has not been verified against personnel file information.
- 2) For brevity some individuals returned more than one positive drug test.
- 3) Figures have been rounded to the nearest 10, except where specified; numbers ending in 5 have been rounded to the nearest multiple of 20 to prevent systematic bias.
- 4) Where rounding has been used, totals and sub-totals have been rounded separately and so may not equal the sums of their rounded parts. Rounding is necessary, as a means of disclosure control and the preservation of anonymity; it also improves the clarity of output and conveys an appropriate level of precision to users. The figures above do not include individuals who have been discharged for admitting to having taken drugs/controlled substances.
- 5) Within the information above, less than 20 individuals tested positive for more than one type of drug/controlled substance.