



This is an annual publication that provides information on the number of vessels boarded by the Royal Navy Fishery Protection Squadron (FPS) within British fishery limits, and the number of court convictions and Financial Administration Penalties (FAPs) issued as a result of the boardings.

This edition provides statistics for financial years 1999/2000 to 2016/17. It also updates the conviction and FAP figures released in the 2016 edition.

The FPS enforces fishery protection laws by patrolling the British fishery limits and conducting inspections of fishing vessels. Any infringements that are identified as a result of the boardings are followed up by the Marine Management Organisation (MMO). This may involve prosecuting offenders or administering FAPs.

Key Points and Trends

The Royal Navy FPS boarded 278 vessels within British fishery limits in 2016/17. This is a 40% fall in boardings compared to the previous financial year.

The annual number of boardings has fluctuated since 1999/00 but there is an overall downward trend that is, on average, an 8% decrease each financial year.

There were a total of 6^p court convictions and FAPs resulting from the 278 boardings by the end of 2016/17.

UK nationals have received a third of all convictions and FAPs since 1999/2000, the largest share of any nationality, followed by French nationals (28%) and Belgian nationals (15%).

^p Please note that:

The number of convictions and FAPs is provisional and may increase due to some cases being concluded a year or more after the initial boarding.

The number of convictions and FAPs issued as a result of the boardings in 2015/16 has increased from 3 to 4 since the previous publication, due to a number of cases being concluded after April 2016.

Responsible Statistician: WDS Head of Branch Tel: 020 7807 8792 Email: DefStrat-Stat-WDS-Hd@mod.uk

Further information/ mailing list: DefStrat-Stat-WDS-Pubs@mod.uk

Background quality report: www.gov.uk/government/collections/military-aid-to-civil-authorities-statistics-index

Would you like to be added to our **contact list**, so that we can inform you about updates to our statistics and consult you if we're thinking of making changes? You can subscribe to updates by emailing DefStrat-Stat-WDS-Pubs@mod.uk

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These tables are Official Statistics but have not been badged as National Statistics.

Contact Us

Defence Statistics welcomes feedback on our statistical products. If you have any comments or questions about this publication or about our statistics in general, you can contact us as follows:

Defence Statistics Telephone: 020 7807 8792
Email: DefStrat-Stat-WDS-pubs@mod.uk

If you wish to correspond by mail, our postal address is:

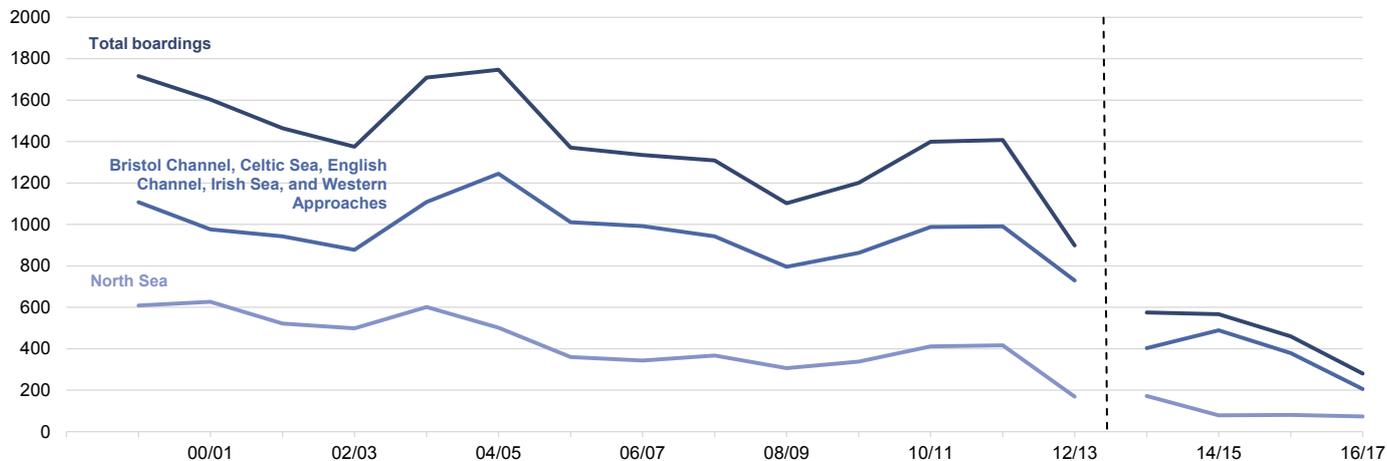
Defence Statistics
Ministry of Defence
Main Building
Floor 3 Zone M
Whitehall
London
SW1A 2HB
For general MOD enquiries, please call: 020 7218 9000.

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<https://www.gov.uk/make-a-freedom-of-information-request/the-freedom-of-information-act>

Key Findings

Chart 1. Number of vessels boarded by the Royal Navy Fishery Protection Squadron within British fishery limits each financial year, 1999/00 to 2016/17



Source: Historical editions of [UK Defence Statistics](#) and previous editions of Military Aid to Civil Authorities

----- From April 2013, FPS ships were no longer exclusively tasked with marine enforcement.

The Royal Navy Fisheries Protection Squadron (FPS) boarded 278 vessels within British fishery limits in 2016/17 (Chart 1). This is a fall in boardings of 40% compared to the previous financial year.

278 is the lowest annual number of boardings in at least 18 years, and represents a decrease of 84% since 1999/2000.

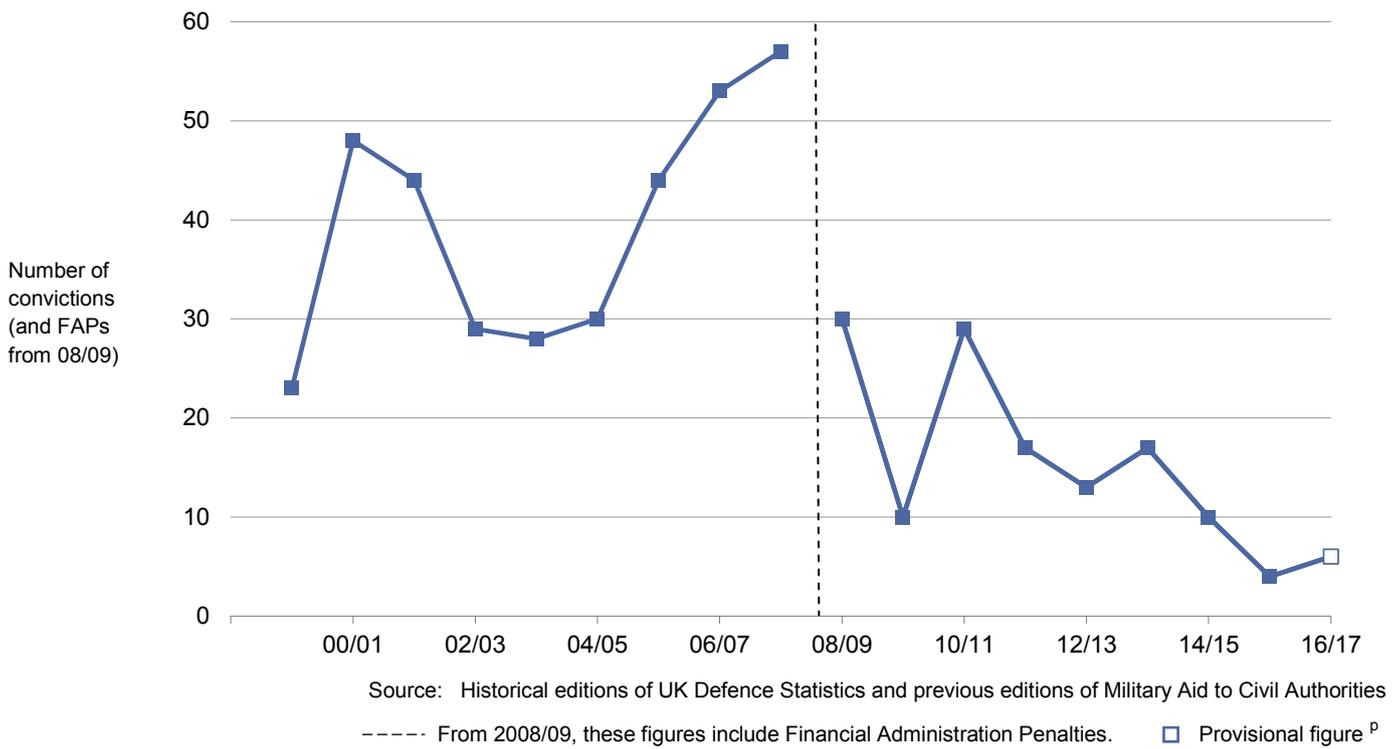
The annual number of boardings has fluctuated since 1999/2000 but there is an overall downward trend that averages a 8% fall each financial year. This downward trend can be seen across both sea areas in which the FPS operates.

Around three-quarters (73%) of boardings in 2016/17 occurred in the Bristol Channel, Celtic Sea, English Channel, Irish Sea, and Western Approaches.

In April 2013, the Marine Management Organisation and the Royal Navy (RN) agreed that FPS ships would no longer be exclusively tasked with Marine Enforcement. As the ships are now likely to be involved in other RN activity, this may explain the reduction in the number of boardings after 2012/13.

Detailed figures on the number of vessels boarded by the Royal Navy FPS each year since 1999/2000 can be found in [Table 1](#).

Chart 2. Number of convictions and Financial Administration Penalties arising from the boarding of vessels by the Royal Navy Fishery Protection Squadron within British fishery limits each financial year, 1999/00 to 2016/17

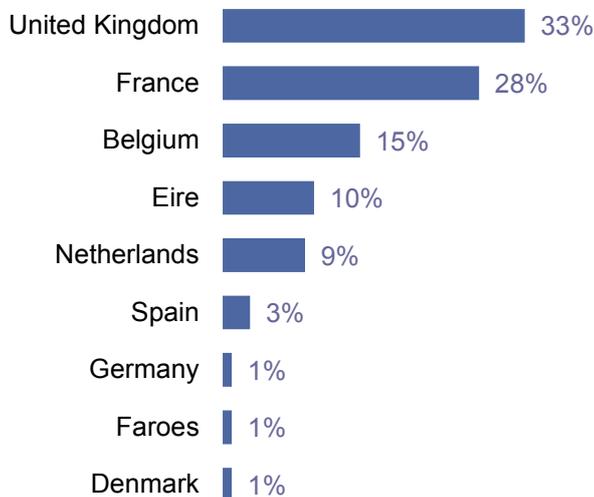


There were a total of 6^p court convictions and FAPs resulting from the 278 boardings in 2016/17. However, this figure is provisional and may increase due to some cases concluding a year or more after the initial boarding.

The number of convictions (and FAPs from 2008/09) has fluctuated between 1% and 4% of the number of boardings each year since 1999/00.

The Financial Administration Penalty (FAP) was introduced in 2008/09 as an alternative to convictions. This streamlined the penalty process by administering fines where previously most of the crew of each offending vessel would have been required to attend court.

Chart 3. Share of convictions and Financial Administration Penalties by nationality, 1999/2000 to 2016/17



UK nationals have received a third of all convictions and FAPs since 1999/2000, the largest share of any nationality, followed by French nationals (28%) and Belgian nationals (15%).

Detailed figures on the number of convictions and Financial Administration Penalties each year since 1999/2000 can be found in [Table 2](#).

Further Information

Background Information

The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) is an executive, non-departmental public body (NDPB) established and given powers under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. The Ministry of Defence (MOD) has an agreement with MMO for the provision of Marine Enforcement Services, such as fishery protection. A copy of a Memorandum of Understanding between MMO and the MOD relating to the provision of these services can be accessed on the MMO website.

The Royal Navy Fisheries Protection Squadron is the oldest front line squadron in the Royal Navy. It has three River Class Offshore Patrol Vessels covering UK waters, and one Offshore Patrol Vessel (Helicopter) stationed in the Falkland Islands. The River Class Fishing Patrol Vessels cover the fishery limits of England, Wales and Northern Ireland – an area that covers over 80,000 square miles of sea, and stretches up to 200 miles from the coastline. These vessels can be used in the maritime counter terrorism, pollution control or counter-drug surveillance role in addition to their main task of fishery protection.

Context

The main users of this data will be those interested in MOD activities, especially MOD support for fishery protection. This is most likely to include UK Fisheries Administrations, the media, politicians and the general public who are situated in areas with a fishing industry.

Data Sources

The data in this table are provided by the MMO. Data are extracted by MMO from the UK Monitoring, Control and Surveillance System, and are collated manually.

Data Quality

Both the MMO and the Royal Navy have undertaken quality control on the data provided in these tables. The data have also been subjected to 'sense checks' by Government statisticians.

More information about the quality of this data can be found in the background quality report, which can be found via the link on the front page of this publication.

¹<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140108121958/http://www.marinemanagement.org.uk/about/documents/mou/mod.pdf>

²<http://www.royalnavy.mod.uk/Operations/Enduring-Operations/UK/Fishery-Protection>

Symbols

- || discontinuity in time series
- r revised
- p Provisional
- zero or rounded to zero

Italic figures are used for percentages and other rates, except where otherwise indicated

Revisions

The number of convictions and Financial Administration Penalties in 2016/17 is provisional and may increase, due to some cases being concluded a year or more after the initial boarding. Therefore, it is planned for the figure to be revised in the next edition of this publication.

Corrections to the published statistics will be made if errors are found, or if figures change as a result of improvements to methodology or changes to definitions. When making corrections, we will follow the Ministry of Defence Statistics [Revisions and Corrections Policy](#). All corrected figures will be identified by the symbol “r”, and an explanation will be given of the reason for and size of the revision. Corrections which would have a significant impact on the utility of the statistics will be corrected as soon as possible, by reissuing the publication. Minor errors will also be corrected, but for convenience these corrections may be timed to coincide with the next annual release of the publication.

Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

DEFRA Department for the Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs. DEFRA is the ministerial department responsible for policy and regulations on environmental, food and rural issues.

FAP Financial Administration Penalty.

FPV Fishing Patrol Vessel.

MMO Marine Management Organisation. The MMO is an executive non-departmental public body (NDPB) established and given powers under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. It has a wide range of responsibilities including managing UK fishing fleet capacity and UK fisheries quotas, and responding to marine emergencies alongside other agencies.

Royal Navy The sea-going defence forces of the UK, including ships, submarines, and Naval aircraft and their personnel, but excluding the Royal Marines and the Royal Fleet Auxiliary Service (RFA). From 1 April 2000 the Royal Navy incorporated Queen Alexandra’s Royal Naval Nursing Service (QARNNS).

Squadron In the Naval Service (i) a group of vessels, normally commanded by a Commander; (ii) a group of naval aircraft, normally commanded by a Commander; (iii) a group of particular personnel, such as divers, commanded by a Commander; (iv) a group of Royal Marines on board ship or an amphibious assault group, normally under the command of a Lt Col (Royal Marines); (v) a sub-unit of the Special Boat Service, normally commanded by a Major (Royal Marines) or Lieutenant Commander (Royal Navy).

Table 1**Number of vessels boarded by the Royal Navy Fishery Protection Squadron within British fishery limits, each financial year**

This table shows the activities of the Royal Navy Fishery Protection Squadron operating within British fishery limits under an agreement with the Marine Management Organisation (MMO). More information about this agreement can be found in the Background Information section of this report.

The statistics cover the number of convictions arising from vessels boarded between 1 April and 31 March each financial year between 2010/11 and 2016/17, with a base year of 1999/2000.

Boardings carried out by vessels of the Scottish Executive Environment Directorate and the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development for Northern Ireland are not included.

The data in this table are not National Statistics, and they have not been put forward to the UK Statistics Authority for assessment.

	Number of vessels boarded							
	1999/00 ¹	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14 ²	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Vessels boarded	1 716	1 399	1 408	898	575	567	460	278
<i>By sea areas²:</i>								
North Sea	609	411	417	169	172	78	81	73
Bristol Channel, Celtic Sea, English Channel, Irish Sea, and Western Approaches	1 107	988	991	729	403	489	379	205

Source: Marine Management Organisation

1. Figures are reported from 1999/2000 due to concerns with data quality in earlier periods.

2. From April 2013, an agreement that FPS ships would no longer be exclusively tasked with Marine Enforcement came into effect, meaning there would be less less time available for boardings.

3. The Faroes, Rockall and West of Scotland are not covered by the Royal Navy Fishery Protection Squadron.

Table 2**Convictions and Financial Administration Penalties arising from the boarding of vessels by the Royal Navy Fishery Protection Squadron within British fishery limits each financial year**

This table shows the number of convictions that are due to infringements detected by the Royal Navy Fishery Protection Squadron (FPS) offshore patrol vessels, operating under service level agreement to the Marine Management Organisation (MMO), who undertake a range of delivery functions for the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

The statistics cover the number of convictions arising from vessels boarded between 1 April and 31 March each financial year between 2010/11 and 2016/17, with a base year of 1999/2000. Figures may change retrospectively as some cases may not be heard in court until a year or more after the initial boarding. These changes will be indicated by the symbol "r" in the table below as revisions.

In financial year 2008/09, the Marine and Fisheries Agency (known as the MMO since April 2010) introduced the Financial Administration Penalty (FAP) as an alternative to convictions. This streamlined the penalty process by administering fines where previously most of the crew of each offending vessel would have been required to attend court. Convictions from 2008/09 onwards are based on the number of offences addressed by the courts that resulted in a court conviction, not the number of fishing vessel crews that attended court. That is, the same fishing vessel crew could be required to attend court for one or more offences to be heard and each offence would count separately.

The data in this Table are not National Statistics, and they have not been put forward to the UK Statistics Authority for assessment.

	Number of convictions and Financial Administration Penalties							
	1999/00 ^{1,2}	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Convictions and FAPs arising from boardings	23	29	17	13	17	10	4^r	6^p
<i>By nationality:</i>								
Belgium	4	1	2	2	1	-	-	1 ^p
Denmark	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Eire	-	3	3	1	2	3	1	2 ^p
Faroese	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
France	9	14	6	6	4	2	1	1 ^p
Germany	1	2	-	-	-	1	-	-
Netherlands	1	3	2	2	1	2	-	2 ^p
Spain	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	-
United Kingdom	8	5	2	2	9	2	2 ^r	-

Source: Marine Management Organisation

1. Figures are reported from 1999/2000 due to concerns with data quality in earlier periods.

2. From 2008/09, these figures include Financial Administration Penalties.

^p The number of convictions and FAPs is provisional and may increase due to some cases being concluded a year or more after the initial boarding.

^r Since the publication of the 2015/16 bulletin, the total number of convictions arising from boardings in the 2015/16 financial year has increased from 3 to 4: the number of convictions of UK nationals has increased from 1 to 2, while all other figures for the year remain unchanged.