

EXTERNAL CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSED CESSATION OF THE “MILITARY AID TO CIVIL AUTHORITIES” OFFICIAL STATISTIC

Introduction

On 17TH July 2017, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) opened a public consultation with users about the proposal to cease publication of the ‘Military Aid to Civil Authorities’ Official Statistic. The consultation sought users’ views on the impact on them of ceasing publication.

Users’ views

Two responses were received during the consultation period, which ended on 14th August 2017.

Both respondents objected to the proposed cessation of the publication. Both noted that with the UK leaving the European Union and therefore the Common Fisheries Policy, UK government fisheries policy is likely to change. The importance of publishing data on the activities of the Royal Navy Fisheries Protection Squadron (RN FPS) will therefore grow as such data will be critical for the public and parliamentary scrutiny of any new government policy. One respondent argued that there is likely to be an increase in incursions into UK fisheries by foreign fishing boats under the new policy regime. One respondent argued that the number of boardings by the RN FPS and subsequent prosecutions is also likely to grow.

Consultation outcome

Taking into account the feedback received, the decision has been taken to cease publication.

Current levels of interest in the statistics are low, as evidenced by the low number of web-hits for the publication (343 in 2016/17), and as acknowledged by one respondent. If demand for these statistics increases in the future then we will re-consider the need for and format of Official Statistics on this topic.

The last edition was released on 15 June 2017 and there will be no further editions of the publication.