



This statistical release presents figures on the National and International locations of all UK Regular Forces personnel and MOD Civilian personnel, and the intake by Parliamentary Constituency into the UK Regular Forces.

The strength by location tables present information on the stationed location of all UK Regular service and Civilian personnel by UK Unitary Authority and Local Authority Area, as well as global locations. Data are presented for each Service by Officer/ Other Ranks breakdown, and for Civilian personnel by non industrial / industrial breakdown (including Trading Funds and Locally Engaged Civilians).

The intake tables present information on intake into the UK Regular Forces by Parliamentary Constituency. Data is presented for each Service with parliamentary constituencies grouped by UK Regions.

Key Points and Trends

▲ 143,380	Strength of UK Regular Forces in UK at 1 April 2021 <i>an increase of 4,130 compared with 1 April 2020</i>
▼ 5,890	Strength of UK Regular Forces overseas at 1 April 2021 <i>a decrease of 160 compared with 1 April 2020</i>
▲ 53,530	Strength of MOD Civilian personnel in UK at 1 April 2021 <i>an increase of 1,700 compared with 1 April 2020</i>
▲ 4,540	Strength of MOD Civilian personnel located overseas at 1 April 2021 <i>an increase of 60 when compared with 1 April 2020</i>
▼ 450	Strength of UK Regular Forces in Germany at 1 April 2021 <i>a decrease of 90 compared with 1 April 2020</i>
▲ 39,530	Largest UK Region concentration of UK Regular Forces is in South East UK at 1 April 2021 <i>an increase of 1,380 compared with 1 April 2020</i>
▲ 21,480	Largest UK region concentration of MOD Civilian personnel is in South West UK at 1 April 2021 <i>an increase of 760 compared with 1 April 2020</i>

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Background quality report: www.gov.uk/government/statistics/tri-service-personnel-bulletin-background-quality-reports

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Other bulletins in this series can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/location-of-all-uk-regular-service-and-civilian-personnel-annual-statistics-index>

NS indicates the underlying tables are badged as National Statistics

Introduction

This statistical release presents figures on the National and International locations of all UK Regular Forces personnel and MOD Civilian personnel, and the Intake into the UK Regular Forces by Parliamentary Constituency. Previous releases did not include the Intake figures, and only presented the location statistics by strength. The Intake figures are in Tables 7.1, 7.2 and 7.3 in the Excel spreadsheet version of this publication.

Certain Military and Civilian figures have been revised due to data processing errors. In particular, Civilian rounding methodology has been updated to be consistent with Military rounding. Please refer to the section on rounding on page 8 for further information on the rounding methodology.

The basing of the UK Forces is changing. The Strategic Defence and Security Review 2010 (SDSR) outlined a number of recommendations to transform the UK Forces in order to face current threats. These recommendations aim to restructure the UK Armed Forces and rationalise the Defence estate. This has instigated a number of more detailed plans including the Regular Army Basing Plan.

There are a number of planned modifications to the structure and way each of the Services would operate, with a focus on creating a versatile Force. The modifications include the decisions to reconfigure the Army by reducing it from six to five multi-role brigades. The Royal Air Force (RAF) structure will focus around fewer Fast Jet platforms with increasing numbers of Unmanned Air Vehicles and an improved strategic Air Transport Fleet. Additionally, the British Forces personnel previously based in Germany have been relocated back in the UK. These changes came into effect by 2020 and consequently impacted on basing both overseas and in the UK. Previous versions of this publication reported the 2015 Strategic Defence and Security Review, released in November 2015. Prior to SDSR 2015, this publication reported the planned Future Force 2020, as set out in the SDSR 2010 which planned to reduce the size of the Armed Forces. The Integrated Review and Spending Review will determine if there will be any new targets for Full-time Armed Forces personnel. In addition, this will be reported in future publications.

UK Regular Forces - Figures are for UK Regular Forces (including both Trained and Untrained personnel), and therefore exclude Gurkhas, Full Time Reserve Service personnel and mobilised reservists. Royal Navy / Royal Marines personnel on sea service are included against the local authority containing the home port of their ship. RAF Other Ranks serving in the South Atlantic are shown against the location containing their home base.

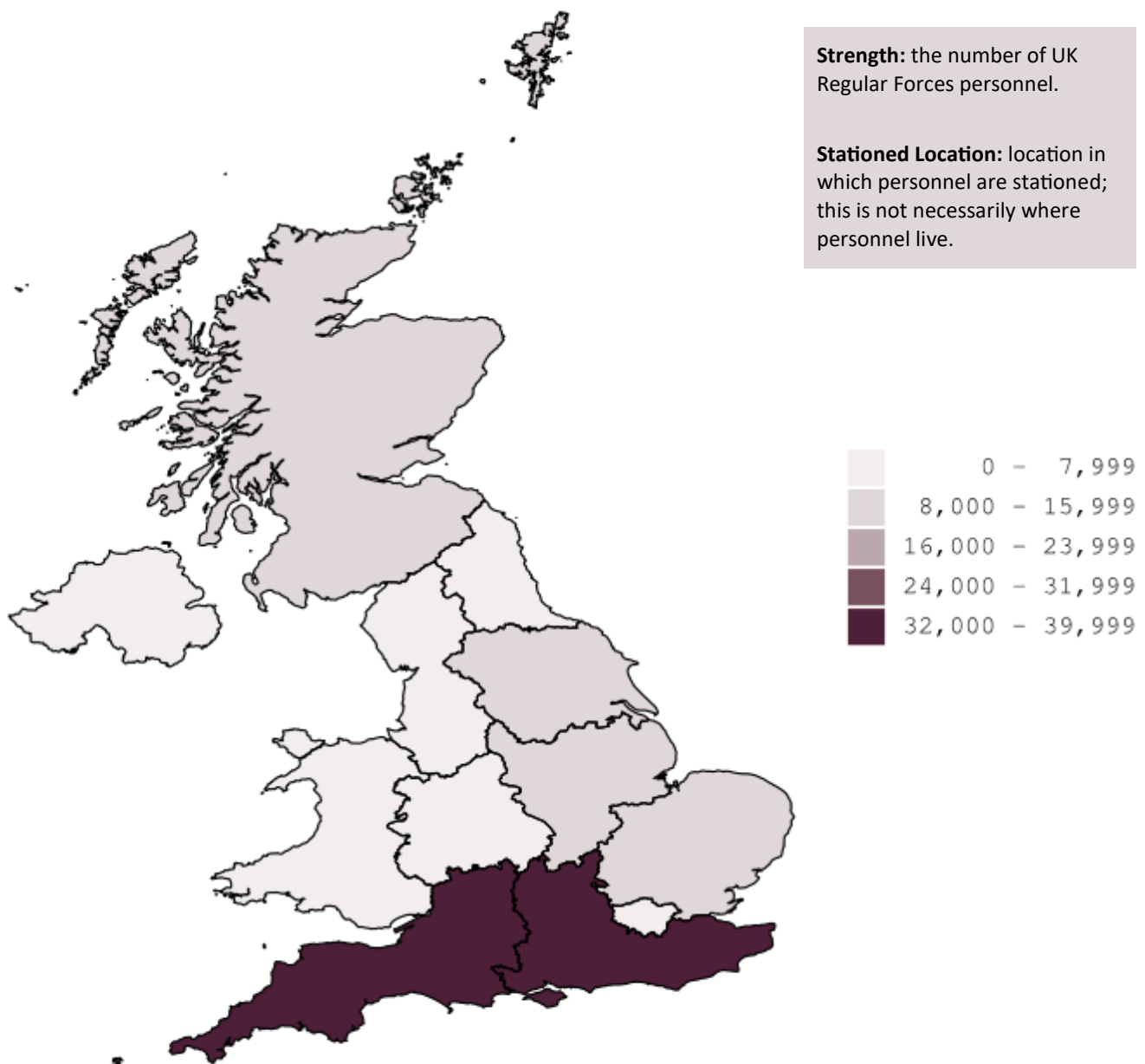
MOD Civilian personnel - Civilian figures are reported as Full Time Equivalent (FTE). FTE is a measure of the size of the workforce taking into account that some people work part-time. Part-time staff are counted according to the number of hours they work per week as a proportion of normal hours for their grade and location.

UK Regular Forces by Region

The majority of Service personnel are located in the South East and South West of the UK with 39,530 and 38,590 personnel, respectively. The fewest personnel are located in the North East with 1,050 personnel. The largest decrease between 1 April 2020 and 1 April 2021 was in East Midlands with a decrease of 30. The largest increase between 1 April 2020 and 1 April 2021 was in the South West with an increase of 1,490.

A time series of United Kingdom Regular strengths can be found in the [accompanying tables](#).

Figure 1: Distribution of UK Regular Personnel by Region as at 1 April 2021



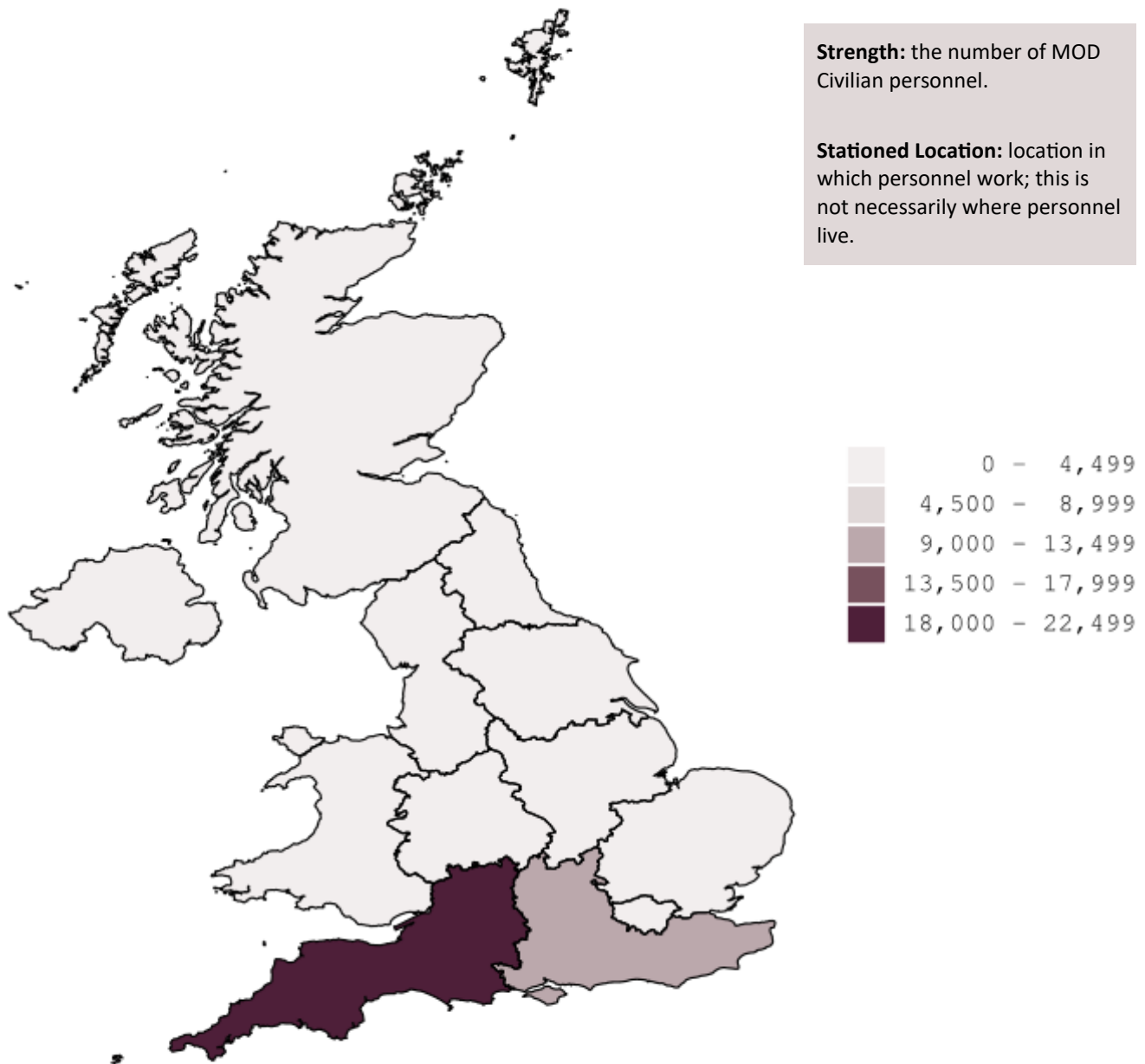
UK Boundary Source: Office for National Statistics licensed under the Open Government Licence v.3.0. Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right [2018].

MOD Civilian personnel by Region

The majority of MOD Civilians are located in the South West and South East of the UK with 21,480 and 10,010 civilians, respectively. The fewest civilians are located in the North East with 220 civilians. The largest increase in civilians between 1 April 2020 and 1 April 2021 was in the South West with an increase of 760 civilians. There were no decreases in Civilians in the Regions between 1 April 2020 and 1 April 2021, and the number remained unchanged for North East in the same period.

A time series of United Kingdom Civilian strengths can be found in the [accompanying tables](#).

Figure 2: Distribution of MOD Civilian Personnel by Region as at 1 April 2021



UK Boundary Source: Office for National Statistics licensed under the Open Government Licence v.3.0. Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right [2018].

Worldwide Strengths

The strength of UK Regular Forces stationed overseas decreased from 6,050 to 5,890 (2.64 per cent) between 1 April 2020 and 1 April 2021. Over the same period, the number of MOD Civilian personnel based overseas increased from 4,480 to 4,540 (1.3 per cent).

A time series of world wide strengths can be found in the [accompanying tables](#).

Germany Drawdown

Background

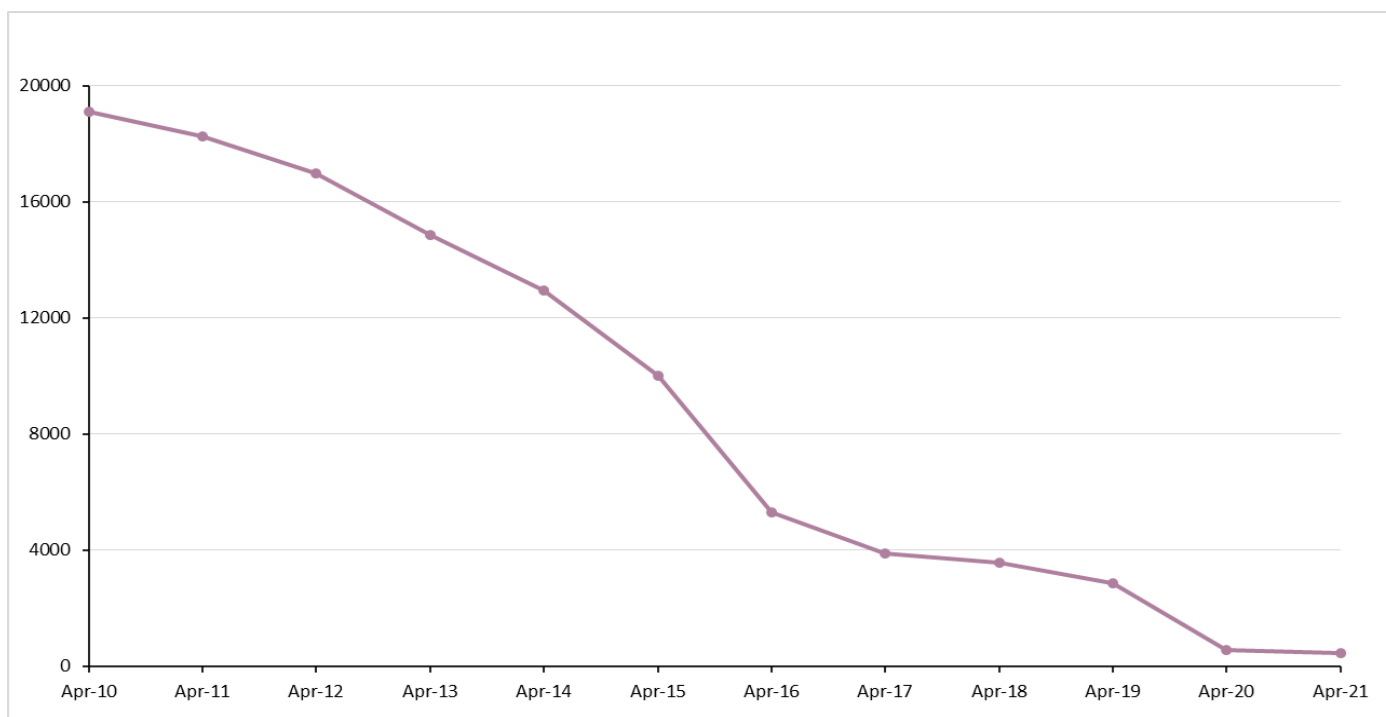
SDSR 2010 announced that while the presence of the British military in Germany has played an important role in demonstrating Alliance solidarity, there was no longer any operational requirement for UK forces to be based there, so the aim was to withdraw forces from Germany by 2020.

The Germany drawdown was aimed at seeing half of the approximate 20,000 personnel relocated by 2015 and the remainder by 2020, with the exclusion of approximately 200 Army, RN and RAF personnel who will remain in Exchange and Liaison posts. This ended UK military basing in Germany. The greatest impact was in the Army, who, as at 1 April 2010, accounted for 98.4 per cent of the personnel stationed in Germany.

Strength Change

UK Armed Forces Regular personnel stationed in Germany have been declining over the past ten years, shown in Figure 3 below. The strength declined from 19,100 as at 1 April 2010 to 450 as at 1 April 2021, a decrease of 18,650. The largest decrease was between 1 April 2015 and 1 April 2016 with over 4,500 personnel leaving Germany.

Figure 3: UK Regular Personnel stationed in Germany from 1 April 2010 to 1 April 2021



Note: Figures are for UK Regular Forces (including both Trained and Untrained personnel), and therefore exclude Gurkhas, Full Time Reserve Service personnel and mobilised reservists.

Intake by Parliamentary Constituency

In the latest financial year (12 months ending 31 March 2021), for the Royal Navy/Royal Marines, the region with the largest number of intake was South West with 550 personnel while the parliamentary constituency with the largest number of intake was Gosport with 40 personnel. For the Army, the region with the largest number of intake was South East with 1,360 personnel while the parliamentary constituency with the largest number of intake was Richmond (Yorks) with 60 personnel. For the RAF, the region with the largest number of intake was South West with 280 personnel while the parliamentary constituency with the largest number of intake was Sleaford and North Hykeham with 30 personnel.

Unitary and Local Authority Changes

The restructuring of Defence and the Defence Estate is having an impact on both Regular and Civilian distribution across Unitary and Local Authorities in the UK.

Northern Ireland

There has been a change in structure of Northern Ireland Districts with some Districts grouped together during the 2015-16 financial year.

England

There was a change in Local Authority name in April 2018 from Shepway to Folkestone and Hythe.

As at 1 April 2021, there were mergers of Local Authorities that occurred since 1 April 2020:

- Buckinghamshire Council was formed from a merger of Buckinghamshire County Council with the District Councils of Aylesbury Vale, Chiltern, South Bucks and Wycombe.
- North Northamptonshire was formed from a merger of the non-metropolitan districts of Corby, East Northamptonshire, Kettering and Wellingborough.
- West Northamptonshire was formed from a merger of the non-metropolitan districts of Daventry, Northampton and South Northamptonshire.

Trading Funds

Trading Funds

The Trading Funds total as at 1 April 2021 was 7,610, an increase of 320 personnel (4.4 per cent) compared with 1 April 2020. The increased civilian numbers reflect increases in specific business areas, including Strategic Command, Defence Infrastructure Organisation, Head Office and Corporate Services, Defence Equipment and Support, Defence Science and Technology Laboratory and the Defence Nuclear Organisation.

There was a large reduction in Trading Funds strength between 1 January 2015 and 1 April 2015. This was driven by the privatisation of Defence Support Group and the transfer of 2,000 personnel as at 1 April 2015. Approximately 450 personnel were retained with the Department as the Defence Electronic Components Agency (DECA) within Head Office and Corporate Services.

Data Sources and Notes

UK Regular Forces data are sourced from the Joint Personnel Administration (JPA) system. Location data are based on the stationed location of the individual as recorded in the 'Assignment Location' field of the JPA system. The figures are based on Service personnel's stationed location and not their location of residence - where personnel work isn't necessarily where they live. Personnel deployed on operations to an area away from their stationed location are shown against their most recent stationed location.

Following the request in Defence Orals in April 2020, data on the parliamentary constituency of recruits (intake) is included in the current release of this statistics. Data on recruits joining the armed forces is held by Defence Recruiting System (DRS). Data extracts are obtained from DRS and data validation and processing is performed by the single Services analysis teams (Analysis Navy, Analysis Army and Analysis Air). The Parliamentary constituency is identified from "contact" postcode as recorded in the DRS for Air and Navy data, however the Army data uses the Postcode District only, not the full Postcode, as per the information held in ARITC management information system. This is then linked to the latest ONS geographical lookup tables.

Air and Navy data are produced using full "contact" postcodes on intake and therefore provides a completely accurate intake by constituency. Any constituencies with no personnel recorded truly have had no intake over the reported period for these Services. However, for the Army data, only postcode district is available and therefore used to derive constituency. Postcode districts can overlap constituencies and therefore we have assigned personnel to the constituency which has a majority of postcodes associated with the relevant postcode district. Two constituencies, namely Dudley South and Northampton North, have no postcode districts where the majority of postcodes fall in the constituency, and so have no reported intake. It should be noted that this does not mean that no personnel have been recruited from these constituencies, rather they cannot be assigned there due to the methodology used. The methodology is currently under review and is being revised to use full postcodes for all three services for the next Annual Location Statistics, increasing the quality of the data produced.

MOD civilian data are compiled from several sources:

1) Core MOD personnel - Data for core MOD personnel are taken from the personnel system - Human Resources Management System (HRMS). Defence Statistics use budgetary UINs and attribute people according to the budgetary area that pays them, using the Standing Data System hierarchy from Financial Management Information Systems.

2) Trading Funds - Trading Funds were introduced by the Government under the Trading Funds Act 1973 as a 'means of financing trading operations of a government department which, hitherto, have been carried out on Vote'. They are self-accounting units that have greater freedom than other government departments in managing their own financial and management activities. Currently the MOD has two Trading Funds - DSTL and the UK Hydrographic Office. Until 1 October 2011, the Met Office also was reported on by the MOD, but as of 1 October 2011 their responsibility transferred to the Department for Business, Energy, & Industrial Strategy (BEIS).

Defence Support Group (DSG) was privatised as at 1 April 2015, with approximately 2,000 posts transferring to Babcock. Approximately 450 personnel were retained with the Department as the Defence Electronic Components Agency (DECA) within Head Office and Corporate Services.

Data Sources and Notes (cont.)

3) Locally engaged civilians (LEC) - LEC employees are recruited overseas exclusively for employment in support of the UK Armed Forces deployed in a particular overseas theatre and on terms and conditions of service applicable only to that overseas theatre or Administration.

Previously this has included the dependents of UK military personnel or UK-based civilian staff employed in overseas theatre (who are sometimes separately identified as UK Dependents). However, to reflect the different terms and conditions of these personnel, UK dependents are not included in LEC figures from October 2013. LECs are not civil servants. LEC data are provided by Top Level Budgetary areas quarterly to Defence Statistics requirements. LEC FTE strengths are based on the actual FTE of part-time LECs where available, and the FTE for those part-time personnel where actual values remain unavailable are estimated with the mean FTE of part-time LECs, increasing the accuracy of LEC FTE.

4) The Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) - The civilian-manned Royal Fleet Auxiliary delivers worldwide logistical and operational support for the wide range of tasks the Royal Navy undertakes including warfighting, counter-piracy, humanitarian and disaster relief, and counter-narcotics operations. RFA data are now taken from the Magellan personnel system. Previously these data were taken from the CHIPS payroll system, but moving to the Magellan system allows total personnel numbers to be reported, rather than purely those being paid. Due to using this system Tri-Service do not have access to the location of these personnel.

5) Defence Equipment and Support (DE&S) - changed status as at 1 April 2015 and was reclassified as a Bespoke Trading Entity, reported under the title DES Bespoke Trading Entity, and will be reported in the same format as current Trading Funds. For the purposes of the QLS report it has still been reported in Industrial and Non Industrial Civilian figures to allow comparable analysis of DE&S across the SDSR periods on a consistent basis.

Further Information

Symbols

|| discontinuity in time series
* not applicable
.. not available
– zero
~ 5 or fewer
p Provisional
e Estimate
r Revised

Rounding

When rounding to the nearest 10, numbers ending in “5” have been rounded to the nearest multiple of 20 to prevent systematic bias.

Where rounding has been used, totals and sub-totals have been rounded separately and so may not equal the sums of their rounded parts.

Revisions

Certain Military and Civilian figures have been revised due to data processing errors. In particular, Civilian rounding methodology has been updated to be consistent with Military rounding. Previously, Civilian totals whose value is strictly greater than 5 but less than 6 were rounded down to 5. The updated methodology rounds these values to 10. For example, a total of 5.5 used to be rounded to 5, but will now be rounded to 10.

Amendments to figures for earlier years may be identified during the annual compilation of this Bulletin. This will be addressed in one of two ways:

- where the number of figures updated in a table is small, figures will be updated and those which have been revised will be identified with the symbol "r".
- where the number of figures updated in a table is substantial, the revisions to the table, together with the reason for the revisions, will be identified in the commentary at the beginning of the relevant chapter / section, and in the commentary above affected tables. Revisions will not be identified by the symbol "r" since where there are a large number of revisions in a table this could make them more difficult to read.

Further Information (cont.)

Contact Us

Analysis (Tri-Service) welcome 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:

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If you require information which is not available within this or other available publications, you may wish to submit a Request for Information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to the Ministry of Defence. See guidance on [how to make an FOI request](#).

Other contact points within Defence Statistics are:

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