



**Ministry
of Defence**

Defence Business Services
Acting Head of Secretariat
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Thornton-Cleveleys
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DBS/SEC/FOI: 2015/06181

6 August 2015



Dear 

Thank you for your email of 12 July to the Ministry of Defence (MOD), requesting the following information:

My Freedom of Information request concerns the number of case files still held by Veterans UK and archival policy towards these files.

My questions are:

1) According to an article by Jones, E., Everit, B, Ironside S., Palmer, I. & Wessely S. (2008) 'Psychological effects of chemical weapons: a follow-up study of First World War Veterans' Psychological Medicine (2008) 38, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 1419-1426, for their research they used a sample of 'The 7800 First World War case files held by the War Pensions Agency...'. How many WW1 case files does Veterans UK currently hold?

2) What is the retention policy for the files mentioned in 1)? Are they all, or just a selection (what criteria will be used for the selection?), going to be passed to National Archives for permanent preservation?

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

A search for the information has now been completed within the MOD, and I can confirm that all the information in scope of your request is held.

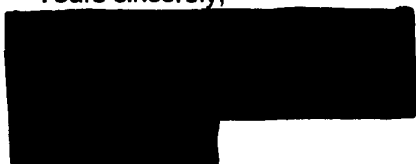
Statistics obtained in connection with the Ministry of Defence's War Pension Filestore Retention, Relocation and Destruction Project confirmed there are no surviving Great War veterans. In view of this, all of the Great War Pension files were removed from Nelson storage facility and delivered directly to the TNT file storage depository. TNT staff removed the service documents and any x rays from the files, and arranged for the remainder of the contents to be destroyed.

As World War One service documents are of historic value they were all sent to the Public Records Office in Portsmouth for permanent retention.

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, <https://ico.org.uk/>.

Yours sincerely,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the Acting Head of Secretariat.

Acting Head of Secretariat