



Ministry  
of Defence

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8 June 2017

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email of 11 May 2017 requesting the following information:

*"The suicide rates for Serving Armed Forces Personnel for year 2013, 2014, 2015 & 2016.*

*I would also like to request the year upon year figures for serving personnel diagnosed with PTSD for the year of 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016.*

*Finally, I would like to request the figures on how many service personnel diagnosed with PTSD left the service in year 2013, 2014, 2015 & 2016."*

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

I can confirm that the Ministry of Defence holds this information. Some of the information is exempt under Section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), because it is reasonably accessible to you by other means. Annual suicide rates are already available in the public domain: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-armed-forces-suicide-and-open-verdict-deaths-2016>

**Table 1** presents the number of UK Armed Forces personnel who had a PTSD diagnostic read code entered in their electronic patient record and subsequently left Service, by year. This includes those diagnosed in primary care by a GP as well as those diagnosed at MOD Specialist Mental Health Services. Note, cases of PTSD can often be complex and an individual may be receiving treatment for a long period of time. Therefore **Table 1** presents the year in which the first PTSD diagnostic read code was entered in a patient's electronic record as the time they were diagnosed with PTSD. For example, a patient may have been seen for PTSD in 2014 and 2015 but they will be counted only once in 2014. Please note, data was extracted from 1 January 2010, personnel may have been diagnosed with PTSD prior to this but the first read code recorded after 1 January 2010 has been used to determine year of diagnosis. Personnel may have left Service for any reason and thus may not have been related to PTSD. Personnel diagnosed with PTSD prior to 2013 and who subsequently left Service have not been included in this analysis.

**Table 1: UK Armed Forces personnel diagnosed with PTSD and who subsequently left Service, by calendar year.**

2013 – 2016

Year diagnosed with PTSD	n	Year left Service				Still serving
		2013	2014	2015	2016	
	<b>2,568</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>382</b>	<b>1,494</b>
<b>2013</b>	684	75	186	135	46	242
<b>2014</b>	629	-	76	156	115	282
<b>2015</b>	632	-	-	64	167	401
<b>2016</b>	623	-	-	-	54	569

Source: DMICP, JPA

1. An individual with more than one PTSD read code in their patient record will only be counted once in the first year a code appears
2. Personnel who have left Service for any reason
3. Personnel assessed with PTSD prior to 2013 and who subsequently left Service have not been included

Between 2013 and 2016 **2,568** UK Armed Forces personnel were diagnosed with PTSD at primary care or MOD Specialist Mental Health Services. Of which **1,074** have subsequently left Service in the same time period.

Please note, if PTSD has been entered as free text only in a patients' medical record it will not be included in the figures presented as this information is not available in the data warehouse. To determine the number of free text entries would require a manual search of each medical record for all Service Personnel, in service, for the years 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016. This would incur disproportionate costs under Section 12.

Please also note that the numbers presented in **Table 1** reflect the number of personnel with read codes for PTSD entered by a clinician in the patient's electronic record including codes entered by GPs in primary care. Once a patient is seen by a specialist mental health clinician at MOD Specialist Mental Health Services a PTSD diagnosis given in primary care may change. This information is available in the UK Armed Forces Annual Mental Health report which can be found at :

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-armed-forces-mental-health-annual-statistics-financial-year-201516>

Under Section 16 (Advice and Assistance) you may find it useful to note the following:

*Defence Medical Information Capability Program (DMICP) Data*

Data on diagnosis of PTSD used in this response were derived from the integrated primary health record (iHR) within the Defence Medical Information Capability Programme (DMICP) data warehouse. Searches in DMICP for the following PTSD read codes were conducted:

- E29y1 – Other post-traumatic stress disorder
- Eu433 - [X]Acute post-traumatic stress disorder follow military comb
- Eu434 - [X]Chron post-traumatic stress disorder follow military comb
- TESTSPO1 - Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Eu431 - [X]Post - traumatic stress disorder
- HNGNQR15 - [RFC] Post traumatic stress disorder
- RAFHALPO1 - Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

DMICP has a centralised data warehouse of coded information. It is the source of electronic, integrated healthcare records for primary healthcare and some MOD specialist care providers.

DMICP is a live data source and is subject to change. Date of extract 31 May 2017.

### *Specialist Mental Health Data*

More analysis on mental health in the UK Armed Forces treated at MOD Specialist Mental Health Services can be found in the following Official Statistic publication produced by Defence Statistics in June each year.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-armed-forces-mental-health-annual-statistics-financial-year-201516>

UK Armed Forces personnel have access to Specialist Mental Health Services, by referrals made by their GP, provided through MOD DCMH or MOD In-patient providers. DCMH are specialised psychiatric services based on community mental health teams closely located with primary care services at MOD sites in the UK and abroad. All UK based and aero-medically evacuated Service personnel based overseas requiring in-patient admission are treated by one of eight NHS trusts in the UK which are part of a consortium headed by the South Staffordshire and Shropshire NHS Foundation trust (SSSFT). UK based Service personnel from British Forces Germany (BFG) were treated at Guys and St Thomas Hospital in the UK up until April 2013 and from this date, at Gilead IV hospital, Bielefeld, under a contract with Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen Family Association (SSAFA) through the Limited Liability Partnership.

### *Specialist Medical Discharge Data*

In the response provided someone could have left Service for any reason not as a result of being diagnosed with PTSD. Information on the number of medical discharges as a result of PTSD can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/medical-discharges-among-uk-service-personnel-statistics-index>

### *Joint Personnel Administration (JPA) Data*

JPA is the system used by the UK Armed Forces to deal with matters of pay, leave and other personnel administrative tasks. It can be used to deduce if a patient is still serving. Snap shots of JPA are taken on the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month to record who is serving at the time.

In this response if someone was not on JPA in the first month of the year it has been deduced that they left Service in the previous year. For example, if someone was not on JPA in January 2014 then they left Service in 2013.

Would you like to be added to our contact list, so that we can inform you about updates to our statistical publications covering mental health in the UK Armed Forces and consult you if we are thinking of making changes? You can subscribe to updates by emailing: [DefStrat-Stat-Health-PQ-FOI@mod.uk](mailto:DefStrat-Stat-Health-PQ-FOI@mod.uk)

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, Ground Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail [CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk](mailto: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>.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely  
Defence Statistics (Health) Head (B1)