



Ministry of Defence

Ministry of Defence
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Ref: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

18 August 2015

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email of 24 July in which you requested the following information:

1. How many new recruits have declared themselves to be gay since the new registration process took effect earlier this year in the UK?
2. And how many new recruits have declared themselves to be gay in Catterick Garrison specifically?
3. How many new recruits have chosen not to declare their sexuality since the new registration process took effect earlier this year in the UK?
4. And how many new recruits have chosen not to declare their sexuality in Catterick Garrison specifically?
5. How many new recruits have declared themselves to be straight since the new registration process took effect earlier this year in the UK?
6. And how many new recruits have declared themselves to be straight in Catterick Garrison specifically?

In response to our email of 28 July, you confirmed that you were referring to new recruits that joined the Armed Forces since 24 November 2014. 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, and I can confirm that the Ministry of Defence holds information in scope of your request.

The Ministry of Defence encourages diversity at all levels. The option for Service personnel to declare their sexual orientation is not a new facility. This has been available since November 2011, to trainees as part of our Recruit Trainee Survey and Cadet Officer Survey. This was an interim solution pending an upgrade to our Joint Personnel Administration database (JPA). This upgrade was completed in November 2014 and all Service personnel have been encouraged to declare their sexual orientation. In regard to questions 1, 3 and 5, the table below shows the number of new recruits who have declared their sexuality on JPA since joining the Armed Forces on 24 November 2014. Please note that these new recruits may include Service personnel that left as a Regular and returned as a Reservist. The declaration includes a "prefer not to say" option.

Sexual Orientation	Number of Service Personnel
	10,590
Homosexual	~
Heterosexual	60
Other	~
Prefer not to say	~

It should be noted that totals are rounded in accordance with Defence Statistics rounding policy; therefore totals may not equal the sum of their parts. All numbers less than five have been suppressed and presented as '~'

In regard to your questions regarding Catterick Garrison, 1,435 new recruits were based at Catterick Garrison since 24 November 2014, however, none of these personnel have declared their sexual orientation on JPA.

Making a declaration is not mandatory but collecting data where individuals are willing to give it will give us a better understanding of the composition of our Armed Forces and help ensure our policies and practices fully support our personnel. Sexual Orientation monitoring will enable Defence to create an environment where all personnel, irrespective of their sexual orientation, feel comfortable, valued and confident to remain.

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, <http://www.ico.org.uk>.

Yours sincerely,

Defence People Secretariat