



Ministry  
of Defence

Ministry of Defence  
Main Building  
Whitehall  
London  
SW1A 2HB

Ref: FOI2017/04782

Reply to: [REDACTED]

17 May 2017

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email of 18 April 2017 requesting the following information:

*“For 2016, please also provide:*

- 1) The number of members of the Armed Forces that were sacked after testing positive for drugs*
- 2) A breakdown of the actual drugs that Armed Forces tested positive for, rather than simply drug classification.”*

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

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) holds information relating to your request. In accordance with the Data Protection Act and our obligations in relation to the protection of confidentiality when handling personal data, disclosure control has been applied to the the figures provided herewith. Disclosure control is necessary when presenting any statistical or numeric information to safeguard the confidentiality of individuals, to protect commercially sensitive information, or where sharing the statistics may pose a threat to security.

Therefore the figures provided in this response have been rounded to the nearest 10. Further information about MOD disclosure control is available at this link: [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/56150/7/MOD\\_Statistics\\_-\\_Disclosure\\_Control\\_and\\_Rounding\\_Policy-amd.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/56150/7/MOD_Statistics_-_Disclosure_Control_and_Rounding_Policy-amd.pdf)

During 2016 the number of Service personnel discharged after testing positive at compulsory drug tests (CDT) was 750.

Regarding part 2 of your request, the drugs that Armed Forces personnel tested positive for are Amphetamine; Benzodiazepine; Cannabis; Cocaine; Ecstasy; Heroin; Ketamine; Methyl-Amphetamine (MDMA); Psychoactive Substances; Steroids.

The MOD conducts CDT because substance misuse is incompatible with Service life. Fewer than 0.8% of those tested under the MOD's CDT programme return a positive result and anyone who falls short of our high standards can expect to be disciplined. In a very small number of exceptional circumstances, second chances may be considered. This only happens where a Commanding Officer believes the individual meets the stipulated retention criteria. These are laid out in Joint Service

Publication (JSP) 835 which also details the MOD's process for dealing with a positive CDT result. JSP 835 is available on the gov.uk website:

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, Zone D, 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 FOI 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 FOI