

Changes to the definition of trained strength for the Army and resultant changes to the Ministry of Defence Armed Forces Personnel Statistics

BACKGROUND

1. The Ministry of Defence (MOD) announced on 29th June 2016 that it was changing the Army trained manpower by changing the definition of trained strength to include those in the Army whom have completed Phase 1 training. This will affect some tri-Service totals. This definition change does not affect the Naval Service or the RAF in any way.
2. The MOD publishes a wide range of Armed Forces personnel statistics and the change of definition will, in places, change how we intend to present these statistics. We intend to use this new definition in our 1 October 2016 editions published in November 2016.
3. The main purpose of these statistics is; to measure the performance of the MOD against Government and Parliament targets, and also to inform general debate in Government, Parliament and the wider public. Our mission is to produce high quality statistics, analysis and advice to help Britain make better decisions.
4. These personnel statistics are primarily counts of Armed Forces personnel (strengths), those joining (intake) and those leaving (outflow), reported by various categories of interest. Trained strength counts are, in places, reported against requirement figures for UK Regular Armed Forces and FR20 Volunteer Reserves, which enables surpluses and deficits to be calculated.
5. The personnel statistics affected are published in National Statistics Releases on the GOV.UK website¹. The publications are as follows:

Monthly Service Personnel Statistics (MSPS)	Biannual Diversity Statistics
Annual MOD Health and Safety Statistics	UK Armed Forces Recovery Capability
Annual Medical Discharges in the UK Armed Forces	

PROPOSALS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE CHANGE OF DEFINITION OF TRAINED STRENGTH FOR THE ARMY

For the Army UK Regulars:-

6. We intend to introduce the new term '**Trained and counting towards liability**'. This will enable direct reference to previous time series under the previous definition i.e. it will be phase 2 trained personnel. This will be used when comparing trained strength against liability, and will allow consistent analysis/comparison with the previous outputs,

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-defence/about/statistics>

7. When this new term is not being used and we are using the current term '**Full Time Trained Strength**', this will include Phase 1 trained personnel.

8. For outflow, we intend to continue to calculate the main outflow rates, such as Voluntary Outflow, using the '**Trained and counting towards liability**' strengths. This will enable direct comparisons with previously published rates and rates between Services. We will however, for trained strength losses, also include numbers leaving after phase 1 training but before completing phase 2 training.

9. Phase 1 trained personnel will be removed from the untrained strength outflow statistics. Therefore, a comparison with previous statistics will not be made in the same table. However, as we intend to publish these statistics, identified separately in another table, the user will still be able to calculate this statistic if required.

10. For intake, Army personnel will be shown where they enter. Untrained intake: if coming in direct to phase 1 training – this is the majority of intake. Trained intake: if coming in to phase 2 training or phase 2 trained. Trained and counting towards liability intake: if phase 2 trained.

11. This means for the majority of statistics we will be able to maintain a twelve month ending statistic and rate but for some of the new statistics this will not be possible. In these instances the first time we will be able to produce them will be for our 1 October 2017 edition, released in November 2017. Therefore commentary on them will be limited until this time.

For Army FR20 Trained Volunteer Reserves population:-

12. For this population it is much simpler. The new definition will apply to both comparing against the requirement and all intake and outflow.

13. However, users will not be able to compare any of the previous statistics published for this Army population other than for the total strengths i.e. untrained and trained combined. Therefore the commentary for most of the Army Reserve statistics will be limited until we have a full 12 months data.

14. The spreadsheet accompanying this document on the consultation page will provide you with a draft example of how this might be displayed - Annex A.

PROPOSAL FOR REMOVING THE INTAKE TARGETS FOR FR20 VOLUNTEER RESERVES IN THE MARTIME RESERVE, ARMY RESERVE AND RAF RESERVES.

15. Progress against the FR20 Volunteer Reserve intake targets is currently reported in Table 7c of the Service Personnel Statistics Excel Tables. This will be discontinued because external reporting of the growth of the Reserves will be based on strength profiles only, though intake and outflow statistics will continue to be reported in Table 7b and 7d.

EXTERNAL CONSULTATION FEEDBACK ON PROPOSED CHANGES

16. Considering the change of definition of trained strength to Army Regular and Reserve personnel, we now invite feedback from our external users, particularly regarding the implications of the proposals and any possible impact you may wish us to consider.

TIMINGS

This consultation will run from 11 July to 21 August 2016. This consultation process is in line with the UK Statistics Authority Code of Practice for Official Statistics Protocol 1 and the Civil Service Consultation Principles (published in July 2012 to replace the Code of Practice on Consultation).

If you have any comments on the proposed changes please send:

by email to DefStrat-Stat-Tri-Enquiries@mod.uk

by post to

Defence Statistics (Tri-Service),
Ministry of Defence,
Main Building,
Floor 3 Zone K,
Whitehall,
London,
SW1A 2HB.

When sending your comments please include contact details (your name plus either email address, postal address or telephone number) so that we can follow up if clarification is needed.

NEXT STEPS

We will publish a summary of responses, with key findings and planned changes on the Consultations page of the GOV.UK website.

Please note by responding to this consultation we shall assume that you have given your consent for your responses to be made public.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information may be subject to publication or release to other parties or to disclosure in accordance with the access to information regimes².

If you have any comments regarding the consultation process, please contact the Tri-Service Head of Branch by email at DefStrat-Stat-Tri-Hd@mod.uk or by telephone on 020 780 78896.

² Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and Environmental Information Regulations 2004