



Ministry
of Defence

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Ref: FOI2016/09246

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Email: [REDACTED]

16 November 2016

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 6 September 2016 in which you requested the following information:

“Can you tell me how many applications for the Legion D’Honneur the MoD have received from British citizens for their role in the Normandy landings since 2014 on behalf of the French Government?

Can you also tell me how many Normandy veterans have received the award and how many cases are currently pending (as of October 2016)?

Out of the pending cases can you detail how many applications have been passed to French authorities and how many have yet to be passed to them?

Can you tell me how many of these applications have been rejected by the MoD since 2014?

Out of these rejections can you tell me the reasons for the refusal for the award?

Can you tell me how many applications have been passed from the MoD to the French Government since 2014?

Out of these can you tell me how many the French Government have rejected?

Out of these rejections by the French Government can you detail the reason for each rejection?.”

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) 2000. I am writing to confirm that the Ministry of Defence (MOD) holds some information within the scope of your request. I will answer each question individually in the order they were presented:

Can you tell me how many applications for the Legion D’Honneur the MoD have received from British citizens for their role in the Normandy landings since 2014 on behalf of the French Government?

Answer: We have received approximately 5630 individual applications; however, this will include multiple applications by some individuals, cases with missing information (addresses) which mean we are unable to process the applications; and a small number of cases where the individual died after making the application, but before submission to the French authorities, and which we cannot therefore put forward.

Can you also tell me how many Normandy veterans have received the award and how many cases are currently pending (as of October 2016)?

Answer: We are not routinely advised by the French authorities when they issue the awards (this is done directly from the Embassy, not through the MOD) so we do not know how many submitted cases are “pending”. (See next answer) The last data from the French authorities was that

approximately 3,800 awards had been presented/sent to applicants in this country; and they also have approximately 150 cases where the awards have been returned as undeliverable. There are also a number of cases (about 200) that we have processed for British citizens living overseas; if these awards have been made through the French Embassy in the relevant country, they are not included in the figure from the Embassy here.

Out of the pending cases can you detail how many applications have been passed to French authorities and how many have yet to be passed to them?

Answer: We have approximately 70 "valid" cases (i.e. those with full data, recently received) waiting submission to the French. There are also approximately 150 cases with missing data that we cannot yet submit.

Can you tell me how many of these applications have been rejected by the MoD since 2014?

Answer: We only record the cases we believe are qualified for the award, so except for who have died while the process is ongoing, MoD has not "rejected" any cases.

Out of these rejections can you tell me the reasons for the refusal for the award?

Answer: We reject cases only where the individuals concerned do not meet the criteria for the Award (involved in the Invasion of Normandy and subsequent events and operations helping to liberate France in 1944). This would include the crews of Merchant vessels convoying troops across; and aircrew involved in attacks on targets in France in connection with the liberation (but not crews who would just have flown across France en-route to attack targets in Germany). However, these cases are not included in our records.

Can you tell me how many applications have been passed from the MoD to the French Government since 2014?

Answer: Approximately 5000.

Out of these can you tell me how many the French Government have rejected?

Answer: We have not been made aware of any cases that the French authorities have rejected.

Out of these rejections by the French Government can you detail the reason for each rejection?

Answer: Please see the answer to the previous question.

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, 2nd Floor, Zone N, 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