

Changes to Ministry of Defence Personnel Statistics

BACKGROUND

1. The Ministry of Defence (MOD) publishes a wide range of personnel statistics. 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 the United Kingdom make better decisions.

2. These personnel statistics are primarily counts of Armed Forces and Civilian personnel (strengths), those joining (intake) and those leaving (outflow), reported by various categories of interest. Military strength counts are reported against requirement figures for the UK Regular Armed Forces, which enables surpluses and deficits to be calculated.

3. These personnel statistics are published in ten National and Official Statistics Releases on the GOV.UK website¹. The publications are as follows:

Military	Civilian
Quarterly Location Statistics	
Monthly Service Personnel Statistics	Quarterly Civilian Personnel Report
Biannual Diversity Statistics	Biannual Civilian Diversity Dashboard
Annual Sponsored Cadets Statistics	Annual Civilian Performance Management Outcomes
Royal Navy and Royal Marines Monthly Personnel Situation Report	Civilian Personnel Sickness Absence Quarterly Report
Royal Navy and Royal Marines Quarterly Pocket Brief	

Table 1: Ministry of Defence (Personnel Statistics and Analysis) publications.

4. We intend to cease publishing *Royal Navy and Royal Marines Monthly Personnel Situation Report* and *Royal Navy and Royal Marines Quarterly Pocket Brief*, and reduce the frequency of publications of *Monthly Service Personnel Statistics*, *Quarterly Location Statistics*, *Civilian Personnel Sickness Absence Quarterly Report* and *Quarterly Civilian Personnel Report*.

5. Following an internal review of content we are seeking further user views on the proposals for the cessation or reduced frequency of statistics.

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

REASONS FOR THE PROPOSALS FOR CESSATION OR REDUCED FREQUENCY OF STATISTICS

6. The decision to review the Personnel Statistics and Analysis publications outlined in Table 1 is part of a wider review into Official Statistics published by the Ministry of Defence (MOD). This aims to remove duplication of statistics across publications and free up resource to provide more responsive analysis to inform policy development and decision making in the Department. These publications are being reviewed with a view to implementing changes in mid-2017.

7. The review aims to ensure that the information published by the MOD is timely and fit for purpose, as required by the UK Statistics Authority Code of Practice.

8. It is intended that this condensed suite of publications will allow for additional analysis to take place whilst still fulfilling user-needs in terms of data transparency, accessibility and usability.

PROPOSALS FOR CESSATION OR REDUCED FREQUENCY OF STATISTICS

9. Based on internal consultation, a number of statistics have been suggested for cessation, or frequency reduction. This is to ensure best use of resource in a context of tightening resources and high levels of internal demand for analysis to contribute to improvements in the effectiveness and efficiency of the Armed Forces.

10. Annex A (below) contains the proposed statistics that we intend to stop publishing or reduce the frequency of publication for, and reasons for this. Service and civilian personnel numbers are fairly stable and our assessment is that reducing the frequency of publications will not have a significant detrimental impact on transparency, accountability or informing public debate.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSALS

11. Proposed changes in publication frequency are outlined below:

Publication	Current Frequency	Proposed Frequency
Monthly Service Personnel Statistics	Monthly	Quarterly
Quarterly Location Statistics	Quarterly	Annual
Quarterly Civilian Personnel Report	Quarterly	Bi-annual
Civilian Personnel Sickness Absence Quarterly Report	Quarterly	Annual
Royal Navy and Royal Marines Monthly Personnel Situation Report	Monthly	-
Royal Navy and Royal Marines Quarterly Pocket Brief	Quarterly	-

Table 2: Ministry of Defence (Personnel Statistics and Analysis) proposed publication frequency changes.

12. Top-level Royal Navy/Royal Marines (RN/RM) strength breakdowns, previously published in the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Monthly Personnel Situation Report, will instead be included in Quarterly Service Personnel Statistics. This mitigates against a loss of detail resulting from the cessation of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Monthly Personnel Situation Report.

13. The statistics and analyses that will be stopped, as outlined in Annex A, will no longer be published on the GOV.UK website.

EXTERNAL CONSULTATION FEEDBACK ON PROPOSED CHANGES

14. Considering the proposals for cessation or reduced frequency of statistics and the reasons put forward, 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 21 April 2017 to 2 June 2017. 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 (2016).

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

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

by post to
Defence Statistics (Tri-Service),
Ministry of Defence,
Main Building,
Floor 3 Zone M,
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

Annex A: Statistics that we intend to stop publishing or reduce the frequency of and reasons for this

1. We intend to change the frequency with which we publish some statistics. The statistics that we intend to reduce the frequency of publication for, are as follows:

1.1. Monthly Service Personnel Statistics:

Monthly Service Personnel Statistics (MSPS) provides information on the number of Military Personnel in (defined as the strength), joining (intake) and leaving (outflow) the UK Armed Forces. Detail is provided for both the Full-time Armed Forces and Reserves.

To ensure best use of resource in a context of tightening resources and high levels of internal demand for analysis to contribute to improvements in the effectiveness and efficiency of the Armed Forces, it is no longer appropriate to publish Tri-Service Personnel Statistics on a monthly basis. Changes in the data each month are typically small and often not reflective of long-term trends, and our assessment is that reducing the frequency of publications will not have a significant detrimental impact on transparency, accountability or informing public debate. We therefore propose reducing the frequency of this publication to quarterly, and are seeking user views on this.

All statistics within this publication which are currently published monthly will have their frequency reduced to quarterly. This includes strength, intake and outflow statistics for Naval, Army and Royal Air Force Service Personnel.

We propose to reduce the frequency of Separated Service statistics within this publication from quarterly to bi-annual, for the same reasons as outlined above.

Military Salaries Index and NATO Rank statistics will continue to be published on an annual basis, and Application statistics on a quarterly basis.

1.2. Quarterly Location Statistics:

Quarterly Location Statistics (QLS) contains figures on the National and International locations of all UK Regular Forces Personnel and MOD civilian personnel. The tables present information on the stationed location of all UK Regular service and civilian personnel by UK Unitary Authority and Local Authority Area, as well as all global locations. Data is presented for each Service by Officer / Other Ranks breakdown, and for civilian personnel by non-industrial / industrial breakdowns (including Trading Funds and Locally Engaged Civilians).

As with MSPS, to ensure best use of resource, it is no longer appropriate to continue to publish Tri-Service Location Statistics on a quarterly basis. Changes in the data each quarter are typically small and often not reflective of long-term trends, and our assessment is that reducing the frequency of publications will not have a significant detrimental impact on transparency, accountability or informing public debate. We

therefore propose reducing the frequency of this publication to annual, and are seeking user views on this.

1.3. Quarterly Civilian Personnel Report and Civilian Personnel Sickness Absence Quarterly Report:

The Quarterly Civilian Personnel Report (QCPR) is a National Statistic which gives summary strengths and flows of MOD civilians at quarter points. The Civilian Personnel Sickness Absence Quarterly Report (CPSAQR) is an Official Statistic that gives statistics on MOD civilian sickness absence, also at quarter points.

To ensure best use of resource in a context of tightening resources and high levels of internal demand for analysis to contribute to improvements in the effectiveness and efficiency of the Armed Forces, we are proposing to reduce publication of the QCPR to twice a year and the CPSAQR to once a year. This will free up resource to spend on reactive ad hoc analysis

Civilian personnel numbers are fairly stable and our assessment is that reducing the frequency of publications will not have a significant detrimental impact on transparency, accountability or informing public debate.

2. In addition, we intend to cease publishing some statistics. The statistics that we intend to stop publishing are:

2.1. Royal Navy and Royal Marines Monthly Personnel Situation Report and Royal Navy and Royal Marines Quarterly Pocket Brief:

The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Monthly Personnel Situation Report (RN/RM MPSR) is an Official Statistic which gives summary strengths and flows of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines (RN/RM) as at the first day of the month. The Quarterly Pocket Brief (QPB) is a one-page summary of strengths and flows as at the first of the month for each quarter point. Most statistics in both reports are for Regular personnel, although Full Time Reserve Service personnel are included in some of the tables.

We are proposing to cease publication of both the MPSR and QPB for the following reasons:

- The detail contained in the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Monthly Personnel Situation Report is believed to be of most interest to internal users and is therefore no longer the best way of keeping public users informed. Internal users could be better served by an internal product which replaces both the MPSR and QPB.
- Such an internal product could be more easily designed and adapted to meet user needs and would remove the resource overheads associated with publication of Official Statistics.
- The level of detail required by internal users is not necessary for external customers. High-level statistics on strength, inflow and outflow will continue to be published in the UK Armed Forces Quarterly Service Personnel Statistics

and will be sufficient to satisfy the majority of public demand for RN/RM personnel information.

- There are no equivalent publications for the Army or RAF. This results in an imbalance between the single services in regularly published statistics.