



Ministry
of Defence

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Date: **30 October 2014**

[REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 28th October 2014 requesting the following information:

Please can you provide the summary information on self reported alcohol consumption recorded in the Defence Medical Information Capability Programme (DMICP) as presented by Min(DPWW) at the MOD All Party Parliamentary Group on Alcohol.

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

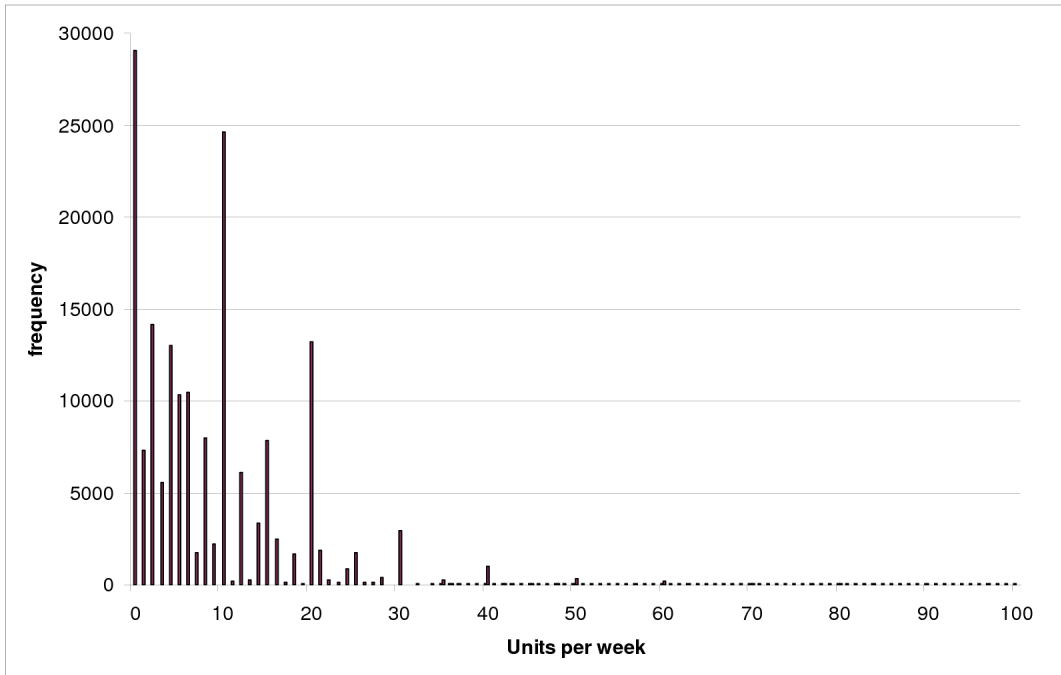
A search for the information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence, and I can confirm that information in scope of your request is held. The information you requested is enclosed.

A total of 172,802 UK Armed Forces personnel¹ had a number of alcohol units consumed per week recorded on DMICP at least once between 1 January 2010 and 1 June 2014.

¹ UK Armed Forces personnel comprises Regular and Reserve personnel who have a Service of 'Army', 'Royal Navy', 'Royal Marines' or 'Royal Air Force' recorded in DMICP. The data were not filtered for registration type, so include personnel (e.g Army Reserve) who are also registered with an National Health Service General Practitioner.

Figure 1 presents a frequency distribution of the number of alcohol units consumed per week² between 1 January 2010 and 1 June 2014.

Figure 1: UK Armed Forces personnel¹, alcohol units consumed per week², 1 January 2010 and 1 June 2014, frequency distribution.



Source: DMICP data warehouse

¹ UK Armed Forces personnel comprises Regular and Reserve personnel who have a Service of 'Army', 'Royal Navy', 'Royal Marines' or 'Royal Air Force' recorded in DMICP. The data were not filtered for registration type, so include personnel (e.g Army Reserve) who are also registered with a National Health Service General Practitioner.

² The most recent recorded alcohol consumption for each individual

Figure 1 shows the most common value for alcohol units consumed is 'zero', with peaks seen at ten units, 20 units, 30 units and 40 units. This shows that personnel appear to be estimating or rounding the number of units they consume. 17% of those with alcohol units recorded have zero units per week recorded.

Table 1 presents for UK Armed Forces personnel, the alcohol units consumed per week by average (median), 25th and 75th percentiles, and the range of units consumed. The median, which represents the middle value of a data series, has been used as it is not affected by outliers. The mean would be skewed by any inaccurate high values. The percentiles are used to show the spread of the 'middle' 50% of values.

² The most recent recorded alcohol consumption for each individual

Table 1: UK Armed Forces personnel, alcohol units consumed per week by Service, Gender, Trained Status, Regular/Reservist status, Age Band and Rank. Number, median units consumed, range of units consumed, 25th and 75th percentiles. 1 January 2010- 1 June 2014

		Number of alcohol units consumed				
		Number ¹	Median	25th percentile (Lower Quartile)	75th percentile (Upper Quartile)	Minimum and Maximum ²
All		172,802	6	2	12	0-100
Service	Royal Navy	25,350	8	3	12	0-100
	Royal Marines	7,009	8	3	14	0-100
	Army	104,575	6	2	12	0-100
	RAF	35,868	7	2	12	0-100
Gender	Male	154,943	6	2	12	0-100
	Female	17,859	4	1	9	0-72
Trained Status ³	Trained	155,852	6	2	12	0-100
	Untrained	15,101	5	1	10	0-100
Reg/Res	Regular	153,360	6	2	12	0-100
	Reservist	19,442	6	2	12	0-100
Ageband	16-24	51,583	6	2	12	0-100
	25-34	66,521	6	2	12	0-100
	35-44	37,101	7	2	12	0-100
	45-54	16,314	8	3	14	0-100
	other ⁴	1,283	7	2	15	0-100
Rank	OR1	1,295	4	1	10	0-40
	OR2	45,578	5	1	10	0-100
	OR3	16,872	6	1	12	0-100
	OR4	22,821	6	2	10	0-100
	OR6	14,499	6	2	12	0-95
	OR7	10,461	8	2	14	0-88
	OR8	5,068	7	2	12	0-80
	OR9	3,303	8	3	14	0-80
	OF-D	193	6	4	10	0-30
	OF1	2,982	10	5	14	0-60
	OF2	9,350	10	4	15	0-97
	OF3	8,901	10	4	15	0-90
	OF4	3,611	10	5	16	0-100
	OF5 and above	1,211	10	6	20	0-63
	blank	26,657	6	2	12	0-100

Source: DMICP data warehouse

1 Number of currently serving UK Armed Forces personnel (Regular and Reservists) with a number of alcohol units consumed recorded between 1 Jan 2010 and 1 Jun 2014. Please note this is not the number of UK Armed Forces personnel in each demographic group.

2 Note that values greater than 100 units per week consumed were removed

3 There are some personnel with incorrect trained status in DMICP. This may be due to manual data entry rather than linked via the DMICP interface with JPA. These records have not been presented so trained status totals will not equal the overall total.

4 'other' includes personnel with ages recorded below 16 and over 54. Some of these may be incorrectly recorded.

5 Due to the structure of the DMICP data model, Service, Gender, Trained Status, Reg/Res status, and Rank are current for each individual. Age band is as at the point of recording consumption.

Table 1 shows that the median units reported by each demographic group is ten units or less. The largest differences can be seen by rank with Other Ranks reporting slightly less alcohol consumed

than Officers. The median ranged between four and eight for Other Ranks compared to between six and ten for Officers.

Please note a median of ten units consumed is a low level of alcohol consumption and within the NHS recommended limits.

The 25th and 75th percentiles represent the spread of values recorded, and show the lower and upper values between which 50% of all the values lie. Table 1 shows that the spread of scores is quite narrow, with 50% of values recorded overall occurring between two and 12 units per week.

The lack of differences observed between any of the demographic groups and the overall low number of reported units consumed means that this data should be interpreted with caution.

It is also possible that self reported data when given by a patient to their doctor or dentist may be inaccurate. Patients may underestimate the amount they actually consume, or may give a favourable figure to their doctor or dentist as they would be aware from health promotion material that they should not be drinking to excess.

Under section 16 of the Act (Advice and Assistance), you may find it useful to note the following:

Data entered between 1 January 2010 and 1 June 2014 for currently registered Armed Forces patients, were extracted from the DMICP data warehouse on 14 July 2014. The latest figure for alcohol units consumed per week for each individual was used in the statistics provided in this response.

On advice from the MOD public health team any values over '100 units per week' (62 records) were removed from the dataset as these were assumed to be data errors.

The Defence Medical Information Capability Programme (DMICP) is the source of electronic, integrated healthcare records for primary healthcare and some MOD specialist care providers. DMICP was rolled out in 2007 and legacy medical data for currently serving personnel was migrated across during rollout.

Clinical Read Codes used for this analysis were:

- 136 – 'alcohol consumption'
- 136V – 'alcohol units per week'
- EGTON418 – 'alcohol intake'

Each of these numeric codes represents a numeric value for units consumed per week. Please note that these codes can be used as part of a template for structured data entry, or entered directly in the consultation screen. These codes were used in over 50 different templates in DMICP.

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.gov.uk>.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely

Defence Statistics (Health) Head (B1)