



Ministry
of Defence

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14 July 2014

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your letter received by the MOD and acknowledged on 28 May 2014 requesting the following information:

"Please send me all information regarding the annual cost of equerries and orderlies to all members of the Royal family."

This has been considered as a request for information in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI Act).

A search for the information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence (MOD), and we can confirm that information in scope of your request is held.

It may be useful if I provide some background information about the Royal Family's historic relationship with the Armed Forces. Equerries are officers of the UK Armed Forces attached to the Royal Household who attend or assist members of the Royal family. The origin of the post goes back to the early 16th century.

Today a small number of formally established equerries and orderlies provide support to the Head of State. This is a practice common across nations regardless of whether or not they have a Royal Family. In the UK, their primary purpose is to manage the extensive involvement and interaction of the Royal Family with the UK military at home and abroad, together with support to state ceremonial events (including hosting visits from overseas) and support to formal, state sponsored, visits by members of the Royal Family.

As each Household operates as an independent entity, duties vary between Equerries. The portfolio of duties might reasonably include:

- Principal Military Staff Officer for the planning and execution of public engagements, ceremonial occasions and overseas visits, including liaison with a wide range of agencies.

- Plan and prepare briefing material for Royal military engagements and accompany 'their' senior member of The Royal Family on visits.
- Liaison with Senior Household staff (Private Secretary, Master of the Household, Lord Chamberlain's Office) and senior staff of other Households concerning engagements and movements.
- Organising and implementing the private programme for the Royal Family at Balmoral Castle and Sandringham House.
- Responsibility for staff matters, travel, fire and safety procedures.
- Assist in the briefing for and execution of Buckingham Palace functions, including Audiences, Privy Council Meetings, credential ceremonies, homages and briefing Her Majesty on all recipients of investitures.

The cost of all formally established equerries and orderlies in support of the Royal Family is approximately £500,000.

This figure is derived from capitation rates for financial year 2013-14 and includes pay, national insurance and pension contributions.

Please note that this figure does not include costs for the larger number of assistant equerries who are typically members of the Household Division and conduct their activities as and when their primary duties allow. This information is not held.

Full time equerries and orderlies are paid the same salaries as their military counterparts in MOD and receive no additional MOD funding as ongoing costs such as travel and incidental expenses are met by Buckingham Palace.

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>.

Yours sincerely,

Defence Personnel Secretariat