



Ministry
of Defence

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Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 5 September in which you requested the following information:

In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I would like to ask the following questions with regard to the employment of soldiers as Royal Army Veterinary Corps Dog Handlers:

1. *What is the training period to train as a Royal Army Veterinary Corps Dog Handlers?*
2. *How many soldiers began this training in the period 2013/14 and 2014/15 as:*
 - a. *Trained soldiers transferring from another Regiment?*
 - b. *Direct enlistments after completing Phase 1 Training?*
3. *How many soldiers successfully completed this training in the period 2013/14 and 2014/15 as*
 - a. *Trained soldiers transferring from another Regiment?*
 - b. *Direct enlistments after completing Phase 1 Training?*
4. *Is there a mandatory return of service period after successfully completing this training?*
5. *What is the average length of service for a Royal Army Veterinary Corps Dog Handlers?*

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

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 below.

On joining the Royal Army Veterinary Corps all soldiers in the Dog Handler Career Employment Group (CEG) will complete an 8 week Phase 2 training course at the Defence Animal Centre (DAC) which qualifies them as a Class 3 Dog Handler. After 18 months of experience they will then complete their Class 2 qualification in unit. After another 18

months of experience they will then return to the DAC to complete their Class 1 qualification which takes approximately six weeks.

The number of soldiers beginning and completing training as requested is shown in the table below. The figures are for the Dog Handler Phase 2 (eight weeks) course only and have been rounded to the nearest five as a means of disclosure control and to preserve anonymity.

'~' denotes fewer than five.

| | Began Training | Completed Training |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| 2013/14 Transfers | 15 | 15 |
| Direct enlistments | 25 | 25 |
| 2014/15 Transfers | ~ | ~ |
| Direct enlistments | 25 | 25 |

All soldiers are bound by standard Army Terms and Conditions of Service. There is no mandatory return of service for Dog Handler training.

The average length of service for a Royal Army Veterinary Corps Dog Handlers is eight years, four months. This calculation is based on an average of the last three years of data for trained regular Army only. The calculation is based on data for those who left the Army from a position of Dog Handler. Those who were qualified dog handlers but were not acting in the role when they left have been excluded. In addition, those whose position is unknown have been excluded

Length of service has been calculated using entry date. There are known problems with the entry date information. If personnel have transferred to the Army from another Service, served under an alternative assignment type (e.g reserve forces), are re-entrants or have transferred from Other Ranks to Officers, their entry date may correspond to any of these events. The resulting LoS may reflect their current period of service, include previous service, or it may be the time that has elapsed since they first joined the Armed Forces, irrespective of any break in service.

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, 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, <https://ico.org.uk>.

Yours sincerely,


Army Secretariat