



Ministry
of Defence

Headquarters Surgeon General Secretariat
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Ref: FOI2015/05735

Email: SGSecFin-SecGpMailbox@mod.uk

[Redacted]

23 July 2015

Dear [Redacted]

Thank you for your email of 29 June 2015 in which you asked the following:

"I'm a mature student with Exeter University studying for an MA in Anthrozoology (human-animal studies).

For my dissertation project I'm looking at Western soldiers adopting street dogs.

For US military personnel, after a search of the internet, I found General Order 1 which covers prohibited activities and includes that it is prohibited to adopt pets or mascots, care for, or feed any type of domestic or wild animal. However, I haven't been able to find anything similar which applies to UK military personnel. Please can you let me know if there is such an order and if so, what it is so I can reference it?"

Your enquiry has been treated as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000 and the Ministry of Defence (MOD) can confirm that it holds information within the scope of your enquiry.

The tri-Service policy on adopting feral animals as unofficial mascots is set down in Joint Service Publication (JSP) 950 Leaflet 3-3-2. The section on the adoption of unofficial mascots states that:

"The adoption of unofficial mascots is strongly discouraged. Before condoning the adoption of an unofficial mascot, a Commander is to balance any perceived morale benefits against the risk to military public health e.g. from rabies or other zoonoses. The Commander is to ensure that provision is made for the welfare and healthcare of the mascot."

You may wish to note that should the prevalence of zoonoses, such as rabies, be considered to be high in any operational area, local Standard Operating Procedures may prohibit the adoption of mascots.

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,

Headquarters Surgeon General Secretariat