



Ministry of Defence

Defence Business Services
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Our Ref: DBS/SEC/FOI2016

E-mail: DBSRES-Secretariat@mod.uk

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Dear

Thank you for your email of 18 March seeking information on the Veterans Lapel Badge (VLB). I am treating your email as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

You asked:

- 1. On what basis is the Veterans Badge administered? How many have been issues?*
- 2. What Contractual Arrangements exist for its production?*
- 3. Any correspondence written or electronic about its original purpose and any documents regarding the decision to roll it out service wide.*

With regard to the basis of administration of the VLB, Section 1 of the FOIA gives the applicant the right to access recorded information held by public authorities at the time the request is made and does not require public authorities to answer questions, provide explanations, or give opinions, unless this is recorded information held. However, under Section 16 I can tell you that all former Armed Forces personnel who have served one day or more and entitled to be issue with a VLB on demand, they are issued to all Service personnel when they leave service and to War Widows in receipt of a War Pension.

There is no exact record of the number issued but since mid-2006 84,500 have been issued by the Ministry of Defence (MOD) Medal Office. This does not include the number issued to Service personnel leaving service.

As regards the contractual arrangements, at present there are no Contractual Arrangements in place for the production of the VLB and they are issued from existing stocks.

In relation to the introduction of the VLB, the MOD may hold information on the subject you have requested. However, I have to advise you that we will not be able to answer your request without exceeding the appropriate cost limit. This is because to locate, retrieve, and extract information in the scope of your request would involve approximately 35 hours of staff effort.

Section 12 of the Act makes provision for public authorities to refuse requests for information where the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate cost limit, which for central government is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one

person spending 3.5 working days in determining whether the department holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting it.

Under Section 16, I can tell you that the VLB was launched in May 2004 to raise the profile of veterans by assisting the wider public to recognise them. The badge is an enamelled, engraved, and pinned, lapel badge featuring the words "HM Armed Forces – Veteran", which encompass the Tri-Service, Anchor, Crossed Swords and Eagle motifs. The symbolism is intended to unite all veterans in recognising the commonality of their service, to encourage a sense of unity and community between surviving veterans and to ignite public recognition of current veterans and their continuing contribution to society.

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, <http://www.ico.org.uk>

Yours sincerely,

Defence Business Services