



Ministry of Defence

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Our Reference:
FOI2016/09452

8 November 2016

Thank you for your email dated 11 October 2016, requesting the following information:

"Please can you send me for each of the past five years, the number and type (eg SA80) of firearms that have been reported missing from the Armed Forces. If possible, for each incident, please can you tell me i) the location from which they were reported missing, ii) whether they were recovered and iii) the details of any recovery (eg recovered by police or found during a spring clean of stores?"

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

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

The information you have requested can be found below and at Annex A, but some of the information falls entirely within the scope of absolute exemptions provided for at Section 21 (Information reasonably accessible to the applicant) and qualified exemptions provided for at Section 31 (Law Enforcement) of the FOIA.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/foi-responses-released-by-mod-week-commencing-10-november-2014>

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2015-06-25/4296>

Under Section 16 of the Act (Advice and Assistance) you may find it helpful to note that the statistics for years 2013 and 2014, released in the FOI response dated 10 November 2014, differ to those provided in the written question to Parliament on 3 July 2015. This is due to an error in the way the statistics were compiled, overstating the losses and thefts in the UK in 2013 and 2014. In 2015, five weapons were reported lost/stolen.

The statistics, provided at Annex A, cover the recoveries of in-use¹ MOD firearms reported lost/stolen during the period 2011-15 and have been categorised as recovered in an

¹ Defined as weapon systems currently in-use by the UK Armed Forces and does not include deactivated, antique or replica firearms.

'Operational' or 'Non-operational' area². Due to the way the incidents were recorded, it has not been possible to provide all details surrounding recoveries.

Section 31 is a qualified exemption and is subject to public interest testing which means that the information requested can only be withheld if the public interest in doing so outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

Section 31 has been applied because releasing details of weapon thefts/losses, broken down by year, type and location/unit could be prejudicial to the prevention and detection of crime. When a public interest test was conducted, relating to the use of this section, it was deemed that the balance of public interest lay against the release of location for the aforementioned reasons.

If you are not satisfied with this response or you wish to complain about any aspect of the handling of your request, 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 this request for an internal review must be made within 40 working days of the date of this letter.

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 detail 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 Security & Resilience

Annex:

A. Recovered in-use MOD firearms 2011-2015.

² Operational covers areas where UK Armed Forces have been deployed overseas on operations/exercise. Non-operational covers UK and Germany.

RECOVERED IN-USE MOD FIREARMS 2011-2015

	TYPE	OPERATIONAL	NON OPERATIONAL	DETAIL
2011				
2012	Sig Sauer 9mm Pistol	2	3	No detail held
	Sig Sauer 9mm Pistol		1	Recovered by National Crime Agency (NCA) – 2016
	L85A2	1	1	No detail held
	L85A2		1	Recovered in September 2013, no further details
	C8 Demarco		1	Recovered by NCA – 2016
	Browning 9mm Pistol	1		No detail held
2013	Sig Sauer 9mm Pistol	3		No detail held
	L85A2	8		No detail held
	Browning 9mm Pistol	1		No detail held
2014	L85A2		2	Recovered after weapon systems fell into shallow water
2015	Sig Sauer 9mm Pistol		1	Recovered by Civilian Police