



Ministry
of Defence



Defence Equipment & Support
Maple 0a #2043
MOD Abbey Wood
Bristol BS34 8JH



10-Aug-16 Our Reference: FOI2016/07468

Dear 

Your email dated 29th July 2016 is considered to be a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. You requested the following information:

Please state the number of privately employed staff engaged in the financial year 2014-15 as external support by DE&S to supplement the management of its work programme encompassed by contracts for the employment of manpower support, consultancy assistance and technical support in the areas of project management and logistics capability.

This FOI request follows-on from Questions 4 and 5 of your earlier request dated 12th April 2016, to which a response referenced FOI2016/06286 dated 25th July 2016 was provided; and from your media enquiry dated 26th July 2016, for which Directorate Defence Communications provided a response on 27th July 2016.

I can confirm that that the Ministry of Defence (MOD) holds some information relevant to your request. At the end of financial year 2014/15, Defence Equipment & Support (DE&S) employed 443 private sector staff through Contingent Labour (which is also known as Manpower Substitution). As provided in the response to FOI2016/06286 dated 25th July 2016, DE&S also had 19 private sector staff on secondment at the end of financial year 2014/15. Please note, however, that numbers would have fluctuated during the year depending on business need.

The number of private sector staff employed to provide technical support through the Framework Agreement for Technical Support (FATS) or in a consultancy capacity is not held. DE&S seeks support from the private sector for its projects and programmes through the award of contracts for a specific requirement. It is for the contractor to determine the resources (including staff resources) it needs to deliver that requirement. For example, under the Framework Agreement for Technical Support (FATS), we employ companies to deliver a specific package of technical support at a fixed price. It is for the company to decide the number and skill requirements needed to deliver the package of work.

Similarly, the number of staff provided by the Managed Service Providers (MSPs) in support of the DE&S Transformation Programme is a matter for each company. The numbers required can vary as the task requirement progresses and, for this reason the response to FOI2016/06286 provided average numbers only.

Under Section 16 of the FOIA (advice and assistance), it may help if I provide some context to the information I have provided. DE&S makes maximum use of the expertise of its own staff before engaging private sector support, however there will always be instances where the organisation needs access to external skills and expertise not available in its own workforce. More information on how DE&S now classifies and records private sector support is provided on page 21 of the 2014-15 DE&S Annual Report and Accounts. More explanation of how we classified private sector support prior to 2014-15 is below.

- Contingent labour refers to people employed across the MOD on a temporary basis to fill vacant, funded posts until recruitment action is taken to appoint a salaried permanent member of staff. These posts may arise for a number of reasons, including regular staff turnover and retirements from service. Contingent labour includes temporary admin and clerical workers, interim managers, and specialist contractors (in finance, human resources, information technology and other functions).
- FATS is used for work where the MOD does not possess, in house, the specialist technical resources and/or facilities necessary to provide the support needed by defence programmes, particularly those relating to equipment. FATS covers technical studies, technical project support and technical engineering support that support the acquisition of equipment or services at all stages of a project cycle and the delivery of a technical service.
- Consultancy is the provision of objective advice on strategy, structure, management or operations, in pursuit of MOD purposes and objectives. There is especially rigorous scrutiny and oversight of this, both by the Cabinet Office and internally by Ministers. Consultancy can be used only when other options for getting the task completed internally have been considered and rejected, either because the skills and/or resources are unavailable or because there are identifiable value-for-money benefits to the MOD in taking this approach

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.org.uk>.

Yours sincerely,

