



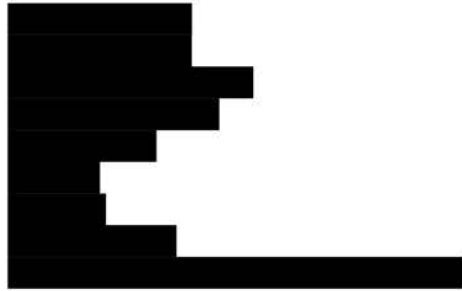
Ministry of Defence

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Dear 

Thank you for your email of 8 July 2015 requesting the following information:

"I am happy to refine the request simply to exclude the Royal Marines from this FOI. Therefore please provide statistics on the numbers of Army, Navy and RAF personnel who have failed a fitness test in the past 12 months. It is important that the MoD's response details what percentage of personnel taking a fitness test failed the test for each Service. (for example: 200 sailors failed a test, which is 10 per cent of those in the navy who took the test"

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Please accept my apologies for the delay in responding.

Between 1 June 2014 and 31 May 2015:

- **588** UK Regular Royal Navy (RN) personnel (in service as at 1 June 2015) failed at least one fitness test. This constituted **3%** of personnel in service as at 1 June 2015 that took at least one fitness test during the period.
- **4,339** UK Regular Army personnel (in service as at 1 June 2015) failed a component of the Military Annual Training Test (MATT2); either the Annual Fitness Test (AFT) or Personal Fitness Assessment (PFA). This constituted **7.5%** of personnel in service as at 1 June 2015 that took at least one fitness test during the period.
- **1,633** UK Regular Royal Air Force (RAF) personnel (in service as at 1 June 2015) failed at least one fitness test. This constituted **6%** of personnel in service as at 1 June 2015 that took at least one fitness test during the period.

Please note that these personnel may have subsequently passed a fitness test prior to the end of the 12 month period.

Under section 16 of the Act (Advice and Assistance) you may wish to note:

The Defence Health and Wellbeing Strategy has just been launched and applies to all Defence People, not just Service personnel, for whom maintaining health and fitness is a major contributor to the moral and physical components of wellbeing. Research shows that healthy behaviour and good physical health are associated with enhanced job performance and a reduction in sickness absence. The MOD has a responsibility to provide the physical and psychological environment necessary to maintain a healthy workforce in order to meet Defence outputs, including operational availability, and fulfil its role as an employer. This Strategy will produce benefits to the individual, the employer and, in the longer term, to society

The Joint Personnel Administration (JPA) was used to obtain information on whether the test was passed for all Naval Service personnel. Naval Service personnel have been counted as failing a fitness test if they failed at least one element during the reported period.

The Royal Navy Fitness Test (RNFT) provides for a range of values derived for men and women aged 16 to 59 years. These values take into account the physiological differences between the sexes, achieve gender equivalence, and reflect the average rate of performance decline with age. The RNFT consists of the following elements:

- Multi Stage Fitness Test (MSFT) – A bleep test which is a run between two markers placed 20m apart in response to a series of pre-recorded timing 'bleeps' on CD.
- 2.4km run - The running surface should be firm, level, measured, clear of obstacles, with minimal sharp turns. An athletics track or an astro-turf pitch is ideal.
- Rockport Walk – A 1,610m (1 mile) walk which can be carried out by personnel over age 40 and is strongly advised for those over age 50.
- Strength Test– Carrying a drum of two x 20kg power bags over four x 15m shuttles, with the weights to be placed down at the end of each shuttle. The strength test is only required up to the age of 50.

Full details of the composition of the RN Fitness test are published on the internet in the "RNFT Policy and Protocols 2013" document, available via the following external link:

https://pdevportal.co.uk/assets/upload/ckfiles/bobsleigh/princes_trust/files/RNFT%20policy%20and%20protocols%202013%20-%20U.pdf

The Army Data Warehouse was used to obtain information on whether the test was passed for all Army personnel.

The MATT2 Policy was introduced in August 2008 (last amended in April 2013) and details the basic level of physical fitness testing for all Officers and Soldiers, in order to ensure that individuals are prepared for the physical and psychological demands of combat.

There are two elements of the MATT2 Policy:

- Personal Fitness Assessment (PFA). The PFA is in the format of press-ups, sit-ups and aerobic test, taking the form of a run or a MSFT (Multi-Stage Fitness Test) and requires a pass at the gender fair level equivalent to a PFA 'green'. Inability to attain a pass in any of the three elements will be deemed a fail and require remedial action in accordance with the current Fitness Test Failure Policy.
- Annual Fitness Test (AFT). The AFT consists of an eight mile loaded march in two hours carrying a load determined by an individual's Career Employment Group (CEG). It is conducted in combat clothing and boots.

The RAF Fitness Information Software System (FISS) was used to obtain information on whether the test was passed for all RAF personnel.

The RAF introduced a Fitness and Health Strategy in 1993 (last amended in October 2007) to meet the need of improving fitness levels throughout the RAF for reasons of general health and operational effectiveness. The Air Force Board has given unequivocal support to the call for improved fitness throughout the Service and has recognised that this will only be achieved by a change of culture, and that the success will depend on personnel at all levels taking responsibility for effecting the change.

There are three main elements to the RAF Fitness Strategy;

- The requirement for all personnel to undertake regular exercise.
- For all personnel to take responsibility for not only their own fitness, but also for the fitness of their subordinates.
- A health based, gender and age fair RAF Fitness test (RAFFT). This consists of three elements; a multi-stage fitness test (MSFT), a sit-up test and a press-up test.

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

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely

Defence Statistics (Health) Head (B1)