

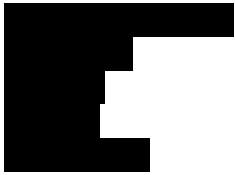


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9 November 2015

Dear

Thank you for your letter of 12 October requesting the following information:

1. *'The total number of people signing up as army recruits, broken down year by year, over the last 10 years.*
2. *Within that, the number of male and female recruits.*
3. *Within that, which base the recruits start their phase one training, (eg. Pirbright/Catterick/Sandhurst etc.)*
4. *The total cost of putting a recruit through phase one training.*
5. *Within the last ten years, the total number of vacancies which need filling in the army. (Soldier or Officer), broken down by year.*
6. *Within that, the percentage of vacancies filled.'*

I am treating your letter as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). I have grouped the answers for convenience.

Questions 1,2,5,6. Section 21 of the FOIA exempts information that is already reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means. Defence Statistics publish information on a regular basis showing intake figures for the Armed Forces, including the Army and Army Reserve. The most recent information is contained in 'UK Armed Forces Monthly Service Personnel Statistics September 2015' which is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-armed-forces-monthly-service-personnel-statistics-index>.

Figures for the last ten years for the Regular Army, including intake by sex and total strength against requirement, may be found in Quarterly Performance Reports, including those at the following links:

Quarterly Personnel Report – 1 April 2015 (for 2010/11 to 2014/15)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-armed-forces-quarterly-personnel-report-2015#>

Quarterly Personnel Report – 1 April 2012 (for 2007/08 to 2009/10)

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140116142443/http://www.dasa.mod.uk/index.php/publications/personnel/military/quarterly-personnel-report/2012-04-01>

Quarterly Personnel Report – 1 April 2009 (for 2005/06)

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140116142443/http://www.dasa.mod.uk/index.php/publications/personnel/military/quarterly-personnel-report/2009-04-01>

The current deficit against the published requirement is due to decreases in strength, and the fact the Army's structure has not yet been fully reduced to its Army 2020 levels. The Army has undertaken a significant transition since 2011 as it has reshaped to deliver the structure envisaged under Army 2020. The environment for recruitment and retention is always subject to fluctuation and mitigating actions to improve manning levels are already having a positive effect.

Question 3. Information is not held on the proportion of intake by initial training location. However I can tell you that all Regular trainees commence their training at one of the following locations: one of the two Army Training Regiments at Pirbright; the Army Training Regiment at Winchester; the Infantry Training Centre, Catterick; the Army Foundation College, Harrogate (for Junior Entry, namely those aged between 16 and 17/17.5 years of age); the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst for officers.

Question 4. The average cost of successful trainees in 2014/15 was £116k per officer and £37k per soldier, derived from a wide range of Phase One training courses and locations. The cost includes pay, including permanent staff and trainees, infrastructure costs such as utilities, and non-cash items such as depreciation. The average cost for soldiers does not include the combined Phase One and Two training delivered at the Infantry Training Centre. The actual costs will vary depending on course and location. Phase One training at the Army Training Regiments is known as the Common Military Syllabus, and lasts for 14 weeks. The Commissioning Course for officers at Sandhurst lasts for 48 weeks. Those attending the Army Foundation College at Harrogate undertake either the 'long' course lasting 49 weeks, or for technical trades, the 'short' course lasting 23 weeks, as these trainees will subsequently require longer Phase Two training.

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/>

Yours sincerely,

Army Secretariat