Background Quality Report

Introduction

The numbers of civilian personnel employed by the Ministry of Defence (MOD) are published on a quarterly basis as a National Statistic. These data are accompanied by Official Statistics on Diversity and Performance Management outcomes on the MOD page of www.gov.uk

Quarterly Civilian Personnel Report (QCPR)

Is a National Statistic that presents the numbers, intake and outflow of all civilian personnel employed by the Ministry of Defence. The published figures are mainly counts of numbers (strengths) and movements (flows) of civilian personnel for a range of categories.

Quarterly Civilian Personnel Report (QCPR) - index page

Civilian Personnel Diversity Dashboard

Is an Official Statistic that presents numbers on the diversity declaration and representation of minority groups of civilian personnel employed by the Ministry of Defence.
Civilian Personnel Diversity Dashboard - index page

Civilian Performance Management Outcomes

Is an Official Statistic which presents numbers on the performance management outcomes for civilian personnel employed by Ministry of Defence.
Civilian Performance Management Outcomes - index page

Relevance

This section is about the degree to which the statistical product meets user needs in both coverage and content.

Civilian personnel strength and flows data:
The main users of the civilian personnel statistics are the MOD's Defence Resources and DCDS Personnel and Training who use these statistics to monitor staffing levels and inform policy. The tables published have been developed in consultation with these customers to ensure they fully meet their needs. The statistics have been used to monitor the reduction in personnel numbers as part of the Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR). The baseline for civilians comprises of all Civilian Level O personnel. However, the publications have a multitude of uses by various interested parties, both internally and external to the department.

Civilian personnel diversity data:
This statistical release presents figures on diversity declaration and representation of minority groups of civilian personnel employed by the Ministry of Defence (main Top Level Budgetary areas). Published in April 2012 for the first time, the creation of the Diversity Dashboard is to meet the Departments obligations under Public Sector Equality Duty to provide information on its workforce in relation to the protected characteristics identified by the Equality Act 2010.

Civilian personnel performance data:
In 2013/14 the MOD introduced a new performance management framework that enables performance differentiation via relative assessment at the end of the reporting year using moderation panels. The intent behind Performance Management for MOD and the recent policy changes has been to establish honest and accurate assessments of achievement, strengths and development needs for all Job Holders.

All of these statistics are also used in answering of PQs and FOIs relating to civilian personnel numbers.

Timeliness and Punctuality

This section reports on the time gap between publication and the reference period (timeliness) and the gap between planned and actual publication dates (punctuality).

The monthly extracts for civilian strengths, flows and diversity are taken from HRMS on the first calendar day and made available to the production team within 10 working days. The validation and editing takes around one week and production of the statistics and publications a further week. The aim is to publish the QCPR statistics on a quarterly basis, within one month of data being made available. Diversity Dashboard statistics are published on a biannual basis, within two months of the data being available.

The data extracts for Civilian Performance Outcomes are produced in July/August of each year and relate to the performance box marking each person received.

The publication dates of these reports are pre-announced, in line with the Official Statistics Code of practice on the Publication Release Dates section of www.gov.uk.
The individuals who have 24 hour pre-release access to Ministry of Defence's key national and official statistics publications can be found on Defence Statistics pre-release access lists

The following table provides provisional publication dates for the Civilian personnel publications.

Publication	Situation Date	Provisional Publication Dates
Quarterly Civilian Personnel Report (QCPR)	1 January 2017 1 April 2017 1 July 2017 1 October 2017	16 February 2017 May 2017 August 2017 November 2017
Biannual Diversity Dashboard	1 April 2017 1 October 2017	May 2017 November 2017
Performance Management Outcomes	2016-17 reporting year	September 2017

Accessibility and Clarity

This section reports on the: ease with which users are able to access the data and the format in which the data are available and the availability of supporting information (accessibility); and the quality and sufficiency of the metadata, illustrations and accompanying advice (clarity).

The QCPR, Diversity Dashboard and Civilian Performance Outcomes are all published on Defence Statistics at www.gov.uk and are available as pdf's. The data tables are also available as Excel pages. The publications are accompanied by notes explaining the categories and definitions used and the main changes that have impacted the statistics. Detailed analysis and commentary are provided in the publications and identify some of the notable features of the data.

Methodology and Production

The published figures are mainly counts of numbers (strengths) and movements (flows) of civilian personnel for a range of categories.

The strength figures are reported as **Full Time Equivalent (FTE)**. This is preferable to headcount for civilian personnel as it enables fair comparison with Service figures, where working part-time does not occur, and provides a better indication of the person hours available and salary costs. FTE is calculated from the contractually agreed number of hours worked per week divided by the number of hours per week which constitute full-time for the grade and location (this varies according to whether Industrial or Non-Industrial grade, and whether on the London or National pay scale).

Flows are measured using **Headcount** as users of the statistics are more interested in monitoring the number of new recruits and departures from the Department, rather than the

FTE of these flows, and further, because changes in the working hours of personnel between periods render FTE flows unable to be reconciled with strengths. Diversity representation is also only appropriate to be presented as headcount, as this relates to the number of personnel to whom protected characteristics apply, not to the number of hours per week worked.

With the exception of gender and age all protected characteristic fields on HRMS are voluntary fields such as disability status, ethnicity, religion and sexual orientation. Civilian personnel complete these based on their self-perceptions, but are under no obligation to complete these fields. It is not possible for Defence Statistics to assess the accuracy or consistency of the declarations made by individuals within these fields.

Accuracy and Reliability

This section is about the differences between the estimates and the unknown true values.

Data for core MOD civilians are derived from the MOD's Human Resources Management System (HRMS). Basic data validation is conducted as part of the acceptance of the monthly extract prior to it being made available to the production team through ATHENA, a custom designed database for holding the time series of monthly civilian extracts. More detailed validation is then undertaken on the breakdowns of individual fields (including ethnicity, disability, gender, TLB, grade), and comparisons between the current and previous month's figures. The consistency of gains, losses and inter-TLB transfers is also checked. Unusual variations are identified and investigated to identify explanations/reasons for the changes. In instances where our investigations detect data issues we take action with DBS to correct the data. The validation process focuses on the areas where problems with the data have been detected in the past.

Trading Funds data come from the validated personnel systems of the individual trading funds, and Royal Fleet Auxiliary data are sourced directly from their HR system 'Magellan'. The data are validated along the same lines as for core MOD civilian personnel, but RFA data are not input onto the ATHENA database. No further validation of this data is undertaken.

Locally engaged civilians (LEC) data are provided by the main budgetary area of the MOD responsible for them. Improvements in the way in which LEC information is recorded have meant the actual FTE of part-time LECs are now available. As such, from January 2012 onwards LEC figures use these actual values where possible. Previously published LEC FTE figures from April 2010 to October 2011 were not revised as the impact was minimal compared to the resource required, so previous LEC FTE figures therefore assume a 0.5 FTE for all part-time personnel. The data are validated along the same lines as for core MOD civilian personnel. In the event of data being unavailable, the appropriate figures from the previous quarter point are carried forward as estimates. These estimates are not revised once actual figures become available, as late deliveries of data are typically from small TLBs and the impact is minimal. However, if at a later date validation errors of a substantial impact are revealed then figures are revised.

To reflect the different terms and conditions of LEC personnel, UK dependents are not included in LEC figures from October 2013. Prior to this dependents of UK military personnel or UK-based civilian staff employed in overseas theatre (who were sometimes identified as UK dependents) had been included in LEC totals.

There was an HRMS reset of the disability field on 18 April 2011 to accommodate the new disability reporting requirements to match 2011 Census definitions. Insufficient numbers of personnel have made disability declarations since the reset to be able to report civilian disability representation rates with any validity from July 2011. We are monitoring declaration rates and when these meet the 60 per cent threshold we will be confident to report representation rates for disability. Until this time to enable reporting of disability figures to meet the MOD's obligations under the public sector equality duty (PSED) and to provide some indication of the *numbers* of disabled people within the MOD, we have agreed to report numbers of people declared as disabled only when the numbers of people who have not declared their status is also reported.

Performance, Cost and Respondent Burden

This section is about the effectiveness, efficiency and economy of the statistical output

Value for money is sought by ensuring that these publications serve the customer requirement through review processes. This ensures the minimum production time is required, thus keeping production costs to a minimum and ensuring data are as timely as possible.

Confidentiality, Transparency and Security

This section is about the procedures and policy used to ensure sound confidentiality, security and transparent practices.

Confidentiality

All published outputs are counts of individuals in particular groupings. Disclosure control is applied to statistical or numeric information to safeguard the confidentiality of individuals. 'Disclosure control' refers to the efforts made to reduce the risk of disclosure, such as applying statistical methods to protect 'personally identifiable information' (PII) in aggregate data tables. These safeguards can take many forms (e.g. data suppression, rounding, recoding etc.).

An updated MOD Disclosure Control and Rounding policy has been published on GOV.UK and this policy has been applied to MOD civilian personnel statistics. The policy is available at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/defence-statistics-policies

Transparency

The outputs identify any issues or caveats relating to the data or statistics. This quality report provides further information on the method, production process and quality of the output.

Security

All staff involved in the production process have signed the Data Protection Act; all MOD, Civil Service and data protection regulations are adhered to. These data are stored, accessed and analysed using the MOD's restricted network and IT systems, and the access to raw data is password protected.

Assessment of user needs

Defence statistics has worked closely with our customers to ensure the civilian personnel statistics meets their needs. The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated that the 'Quarterly Civilian Personnel Report' as National Statistics in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. Designation can broadly be interpreted to mean the statistics:
- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods; and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

The process of determining compliance with the Code and designation as National Statistics is known as Assessment. Details of this assessment can be found at:

https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/publication/statistics-on-uk-defence-personnel/

Changes to Ministry of Defence (MOD) quarterly civilian personnel report

In July 2011 when CPS01 was replaced by the Quarterly Civilian Personnel Report (QCPR), the focus of the publication shifted to monitoring the decrease of civilian personnel following the announcement of the Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR). As such a baseline measure was agreed at April 2010 and defined as the SDSR baseline.

SDSR baseline: this included all Civilian Level 0 personnel, but excluded NACMO funded local engaged civilians in Afghanistan and personnel on US Visiting Forces (USVF) stations.

In 2015 Defence Statistics proposed to remove the SDSR baseline figure from the Quarterly Civilian Personnel Report to avoid multiple definitions. Future reductions in civilian personnel would be measured against the Level Definition. An external consultation ran from 23 July to 20 August 2015. Full details of this can be found at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/change-to-ministry-of-defence-mod-quarterly-civilian-personnel-report

<u>Withdrawal of statistical series 2, Personnel bulletin 2.02, Civilian personnel</u>

The Statistical Series 2 – Personnel Bulletin 2.02 – Civilian Personnel was part of a compendium of publications released each year by Defence Statistics. It contains statistics on Civilian Personnel split by TLB, casual / permanent, grade, gender, full-time / part-time, age, ethnicity, disability status, religion, sexual orientation, details of inflow and outflow and sickness absence statistics.

Following a review of its civilian statistics, it was proposed to to cease publication of the series and move some of the tables into other MOD civilian personnel Official and National Statistics publications. The majority of the tables within this publication were moved to other publications (included: Quarterly Civilian Personnel Report, Civilian Diversity Dashboard and Civilian Personnel Sickness Absence Quarterly Report), which allowed the data to be published in a more timely manner. The remaining tables which ceased to be produced generated little interest.

An external consultation ran from 29 February to 28 March 2016. Full details of this can be found at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/withdrawal-of-statistical-series-2-personnel-bulletin-202-civilian-personnel

Coherence and Comparability

This section examines: the degree to which data are derived from different sources or methods, but refer to the same topic, are similar (coherence); and the degree to which data can be compared over time and domain (comparability).

In 2004 following changes in employment legislation and a requirement to better plan for the future of the civilian workforce, definitions were changed to better reflect human resources methods and policies. Two levels of civilian were introduced:

- **Level 1**, includes Top Level Budgetary areas (TLBs), Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA), but excludes Defence Equipment & Support (DE&S) Trading Entity, Trading Funds, and Locally engaged civilians (LECs). This is generally used for MOD internal reporting and planning.

- **Level 0,** contains all those at Level 1 plus DE&S Trading Entity, Trading Funds and LEC's. This is used for external reporting, including National Statistics publications, Strategic Defence and Security Review Baseline and Parliamentary business.

Summary table:

	Civilian Level 0	Civilian Level 1
Top Level Budgetary area (TLB)	✓	✓
Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA)	✓	✓
Defence Equipment & Support (DE&S) trading entity	✓	
Trading Funds	✓	
Locally engaged civilians (LEC)	✓	

Structural changes have occurred during the time-series covered by MOD civilian personnel statistics. In some cases this means that figures are not directly comparable across the whole period. To aid understanding of these changes and how they have impacted upon the figures the detail of these changes is provided here:

i.   Science Innovation & Technology (SIT) formally ceased to be a TLB on 1 April 2010, approximately 90% of personnel transferred to the Central TLB with the remainder transferring evenly to DE&S and DSTL.

ii.   Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) was established on 01 April 2011 and replaced the Defence Estates organisation. DIO includes TLB property and facilities management functions previously situated within other TLBs, DIO title structure has been applied retrospectively across data period for consistency. Responsibility for management of the Meteorological Office personnel (1,800) transferred to Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) at 1 October 2011.

iii. Head Office & Corporate Services (HO&CS) and Joint Forces Command (JFC) were established as at 01 April 2012, the Central TLB (CTLB) and Chief of Joint Operations (CJO) were disestablished as at 1 April 2012. HO&CS and JFC were not the CTLB and CJO renamed.

iv.   Joint Forces Command achieved Full Operational Capacity as at 1 April 2013, absorbing additional support roles from lead service TLBs. As of 1 April 2013 responsibility for management of the MOD Guard Service (MGS) transferred from HO&CS to DIO.

v.   As part of Defence Equipment and Support's (DE&S) implementation of the Materiel Strategy Programme, the transfer of responsibility and resources for key outputs to Navy Command, Head Office & Corporate Services and Joint Forces Command resulted in a transfer of 2,640 personnel from DE&S as at 1 April 2014.

vi.   As at 1 April 2015 approximately 2,000 posts within the Defence Support Group (DSG) Trading Fund have been privatised and transferred to the private sector via Babcock, approximately 450 posts covering the Defence Electronic Components Agency (DECA) transferred to HO&CS and are reported within the MOD Main TLB total within Level 1 as at 1 April 2015.

vii. Defence Equipment and Support (DE&S) changed status as at 1 April 2015 and was reclassified as a Bespoke Trading Entity. It is reported outside Civilian level 1, but within level 0. Prior to this it was categorised as a Top Level Budgetary Area, which was part of the Civilian Level 1 total. For reporting purposes, DE&S will be reported as an extant TLB as at 1 April 2015 to allow comparable analysis of DE&S across the SDSR period covering 1 April 2010 to 1 April 2015. Civilian personnel strength for DE&S from 01 July 2015 onwards will be reported as a Bespoke Trading Entity.

viii. Rates are the number of people who join or leave the Department per 100 of the average headcount strength, but all flows exclude the effect of net transfers between MOD Main TLBs, DE&S and Trading Funds. Due to the re-categorisation of Defence Equipment & Support to a Bespoke Trading Entity, the intake and outtake flows will contain only a proportion of these data (dependent in the time period being considered). To effectively compensate for this, these data have been weighted accordingly via average strength.

References

	Reference	Website location
1	gov.uk	https://www.gov.uk/
2	Quarterly Civilian Personnel Report (QCPR)	https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/mod-civilian-personnel-quarterly-statistics-index
3	Biannual Diversity Dashboard	https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/mod-diversity-dashboard-index
4	Performance Management Outcomes	https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/mod-civilian-performance-management-outcomes
5	Civilian Personnel Sickness Absence Quarterly Report	https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/mod-civilian-sickness-absence
6	MOD statistics pre-release access list	https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/defence-statistics-pre-release-access-list
7	UK Statistics Authority – Assessment Reports	https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/publication/statistics-on-uk-defence-personnel/
8	MOD statistics: policies	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/defence-statistics-policies
9	Change to Ministry of Defence (MOD) quarterly civilian personnel report	https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/change-to-ministry-of-defence-mod-quarterly-civilian-personnel-report
10	Withdrawal of statistical series 2, Personnel bulletin 2.02, Civilian personnel	https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/withdrawal-of-statistical-series-2-personnel-bulletin-202-civilian-personnel

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Defence Statistics welcome feedback on this Background Quality Report or any of the statistics mentioned.