



Ministry
of Defence

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Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email dated 12 October 2016 requesting the following information;

"I would like to request the number of medically downgraded ranks in the Royal Marines. If possible could i have this information per year from 2010 to 2016. If possible can this be broken into age brackets (16-25; 26-35; 35-40; 41+ or similar).

Can i also have the numbers of ranks who have been downgraded shown by length of time they have held this category in each age bracket...

In addition i would also like to know the numbers of ranks medically discharged for each of those years and age groups..."

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

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

Over the time period 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2016, 5,365 Regular Royal Marines ranks were medically downgraded. **Table 1** presents information on the number of medically downgraded Regular Royal Marines ranks for the period 1 April 2010 and 31 March 2016, by year and age group.

Some personnel had downgrading episodes that span across years and therefore were counted in each year (e.g. if a person was downgraded from 1 December 2013 to 1 July 2014, they were counted in both 2012/13 and 2013/14). It is therefore not possible to sum the columns to obtain a total figure for the period 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2016. Please note that for some of these personnel the downgrading episode began prior to 2010.

Table 1: UK Regular Royal Marines Ranks¹ medically downgraded, by year and age group^{2,3}, Numbers

1 April 2010 to 31 March 2016

Age Group	Year					
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
All	1,551	1,735	1,779	1,887	1,825	1,921
<20	73	92	89	102	90	106
20 to 24	414	526	539	599	546	536
25 to 29	401	404	441	514	489	532
30 to 34	215	246	262	277	291	324
35 to 39	199	200	186	171	176	177
40 to 44	142	155	160	130	125	134
45+	107	112	102	94	108	112

Source: JPA

1 Includes Trained and Untrained Royal Marines ranks. Excludes reservists.

2 The sum of age groups may be greater than the total for each financial year. This is because personnel may appear in two different age bands within the same year.

3 Age group is earliest age at which personnel held a medically downgraded status in the year. This may not be the age at which personnel were first medically downgraded.

To assess the length of time Regular Royal Marines ranks were downgraded, all new episodes of downgrading since 1 April 2010 have been included. Figures presented in **Table 1** and **Table 2** will differ as some personnel will have been downgraded prior to 1 April 2010. Also, if personnel were newly medically downgraded more than once during the same year, these episodes will have been counted as individual episodes in **Table 2**.

Of the 5,365 Regular Royal Marines ranks medically downgraded between 1 April 2010 and 31 March 2016, 4,155 had one or more new episodes of downgrading in this time period, resulting in 5,408 new episodes of downgrading (**Table 2**).

The end of medical downgrading episode was identified as when personnel returned to Medically Fully Deployable (MFD) or exited Service. If personnel had not returned to MFD or exited Service as at 1 November 2016 (date of data extracts), the length of downgrading episode was calculated up to 1 November 2016 (i.e. if a person was newly medically downgraded on 1 August 2016 and had not returned to MFD or exited Service as at 1 November 2016, their length of medical downgrading would be 0 to 1 year). Such episodes are ongoing and will increase in length until these personnel return to MFD or exit Service.

Please note that for personnel downgraded since 2014 not enough time has elapsed to assess if their episodes of downgrading will surpass one or two years. This has been shown with shading within **Table 2**.

Table 2: New episodes of medical downgrading in UK Regular Royal Marines Ranks¹, by year², age group³ and length of downgrading episode, Numbers^{4,5}
1 April 2010 to 31 March 2016

Age Group	Year					
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
All	810	834	1,038	987	797	942
<20	90	110	111	113	87	97
0 to 1 year	78	89	100	93	48	75
1 to 2 years	~	15	6	12	27	22
2 to 3 years	0	~	~	~	12	
3 + years	~	~	~	~		
20 to 24	267	320	405	425	274	322
0 to 1 year	216	233	273	300	171	243
1 to 2 years	28	51	46	65	72	79
2 to 3 years	6	7	17	35	31	
3 + years	17	29	69	25		
25 to 29	219	203	240	253	193	253
0 to 1 year	152	119	176	152	117	181
1 to 2 years	42	42	23	36	48	72
2 to 3 years	~	11	6	30	28	
3 + years	~	31	35	35		
30 to 34	110	102	173	109	126	145
0 to 1 year	72	64	83	51	71	109
1 to 2 years	18	~	13	19	33	36
2 to 3 years	5	~	9	15	22	
3 + years	15	21	68	24		
35 to 39	66	48	62	49	55	68
0 to 1 year	33	23	34	18	32	46
1 to 2 years	~	~	~	11	17	22
2 to 3 years	~	~	~	9	6	
3 + years	19	14	18	11		
40 to 44	39	39	32	27	43	26
0 to 1 year	18	12	18	10	20	17
1 to 2 years	11	~	0	~	12	9
2 to 3 years	~	~	~	~	11	
3 + years	~	18	~	14		
45+	19	12	15	11	19	31
0 to 1 year	13	~	7	5	10	24
1 to 2 years	~	~	~	~	~	7
2 to 3 years	~	~	0	~	~	
3 + years	~	6	~	~		

Source: JPA, DMICP and Defence Statistics' Service Leavers Database

1 Includes Trained and Untrained Royal Marines ranks. Excludes reservists.

2 Year within which the downgrading episode began.

3 Age of personnel at time which downgrading episode began.

4 If personnel were newly medically downgraded more than once in a year, they were counted for each of these episodes of downgrading.

5 The tables in this report have been scrutinised to ensure individual identities have not been revealed inadvertently. In line with JSP200, numbers fewer than five have been suppressed and presented as '~'.

In the last financial year, 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016, **152** Regular Royal Marines ranks were medically discharged. Information covering the period 1 April 2010 and 31 March 2016, by age group, is presented in **Table 3**. Please note individuals included in the table below may also have been included in the downgrading **Table 1** and **Table 2**.

Table 3: UK Regular Royal Marines Ranks¹ medically discharged, by year and age group, Numbers²

1 April 2010 to 31 March 2016

Age Group	Year					
	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
All	63	132	157	90	113	152
<20	~	~	~	~	0	~
20 to 24	20	31	34	17	22	35
25 to 29	20	42	43	38	41	54
30 to 34	11	25	37	17	23	34
35 to 39	~	14	23	12	14	15
40 to 44	~	~	10	~	8	6
45+	5	11	~	~	5	~

Source: JPA, DMICP and FMed23

1 Includes Trained and Untrained Royal Marines ranks. Excludes reservists.

2 The tables in this report have been scrutinised to ensure individual identities have not been revealed inadvertently. In line with JSP200, numbers fewer than five have been suppressed and presented as '~'.

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

UK Regular Royal Marines ranks include Regulars, plus Trained and Untrained personnel.

Age group of downgraded personnel displayed in **Table 1** is the earliest age at which personnel held a medical downgraded status in the year. This may not be the age at which personnel were first medically downgraded.

In line with the Joint Service Publication (March 2016), numbers less than five have been suppressed and presented as '~' where the information has been deemed to be disclosive. Where there is only one cell in a row or column that is less than five, the next smallest number (or numbers where there are tied values) has also been suppressed so that numbers cannot simply be derived from totals.

Defence Statistics release annual updates on medical discharges in the UK Armed Forces as an Official Statistic publication. The last statistical release was on 14 July 2016 which presented data up to 31 March 2016. The latest report can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/medical-discharges-among-uk-service-personnel-statistics-index>

Medical Downgrading

The number of medical downgradings has been compiled using the Defence Statistics "derived" field which utilises a combination of the Joint Personnel Administration (JPA) and Defence Medical Information Capability Programme (DMICP) Medical Deployment Standard (MDS). Length of downgrading episode has been compiled from DMICP and Defence Statistics' Leavers Database.

Joint Personnel Administration is the most accurate source for demographic information for UK Armed Forces personnel and is used to gather information on a person's service.

DMICP is a centralised data warehouse. It is the source of electronic, integrated healthcare records for primary healthcare and some MOD specialist care providers. DMICP was rolled out in 2007 and legacy medical data for currently serving personnel was migrated across during rollout.

Service personnel with medical conditions or fitness issues which affect their ability to perform their duties are referred to a medical board for a medical examination and review of their medical grading. The patient may be downgraded, to allow for treatment and rehabilitation. Medically downgraded personnel are those personnel who have been assessed by a medical board and subsequently awarded a MDS of either Medically Limited Deployable (MLD) or Medically Non Deployable (MND).

MLD personnel are medically fit for duty with minor employment limitations. MLD personnel may have a medical condition or functional limitation that prevents the meeting of all Medically Fully Deployable (MFD) requirements. In accordance with Joint Service Publication 950 Leaflet 6-7-2 (Nov 09), "a grade of MLD requires a risk assessment to be carried out for each deployment and the decision on that deployment will depend on the medical condition, individual function, the proposed employment, length of the deployment and the medical support available".

MND personnel are medically fit for duty with major employment limitations or are medically unfit for Service. MND personnel have a medical condition or functional limitation that prevents the meeting of all MLD requirements. They may require continued medical care, long term medication and access to secondary care facilities.

Medical Discharge

Medical discharges are the result of a number of specialists (medical, occupational, psychological, personnel, etc.) coming to the conclusion that an individual is suffering from a medical condition that pre-empts their continued service in the Armed Forces. Statistics based on these discharges do not represent measures of true morbidity or pathology. At best they indicate a minimum burden of ill-health in the Armed Forces. Furthermore, the number and diversity of processes involved with administering a medical discharge introduce a series of time lags, as well as impact on the quality of data recorded.

The information on cases was sourced from electronic personnel records from DMICP and manually entered paper documents from medical boards. The primary purpose of these medical documents is to ensure the appropriate administration of each individual patient's discharge. Statistical analysis and reporting is a secondary function.

Would you like to be added to our contact list, so that we can inform you about updates to our statistical publications covering Suicides in the UK Armed Forces and consult you if we are thinking of making changes? You can subscribe to updates by emailing: DefStrat-Stat-Health-PQ-FOI@mod.uk

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

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