



This is an annual publication that provides information on the number of vessels boarded by the Royal Navy Fishery Protection Squadron (FPS) within British fishery limits, and the number of court convictions and Financial Administration Penalties (FAPs) issued as a result of the boardings.

This edition provides statistics for financial years 2008/09 to 2014/15, with a base year of 2000/01. It also updates the conviction and FAP figures released in the 2014 edition.

The FPS enforces fishery protection laws by patrolling the British fishery limits and conducting inspections of fishing vessels. Any infringements that are identified as a result of the boardings are followed up by the Marine Management Organisation (MMO). This may involve prosecuting offenders or administering FAPs.

### Key Points and Trends

- The FPS boarded **567** vessels in 2014/15, which is a minor reduction compared with the previous year (575 boardings in 2013/14). It is the lowest figure in at least 17 years, and a 67% reduction compared with the number of boardings in 1997/98 (the first year these statistics covered financial year periods).
- There is an overall downward trend in the number of vessels boarded annually since 1997/98, averaging a 5% decrease each financial year.
- There were a total of **8<sup>p</sup>** court convictions and FAPs resulting from the 567 boardings by the end of 2014/15. This is identical to the figure calculated in April 2014 for the same time period in 2013/14.

<sup>p</sup> Please note that:

- a. The number of convictions and FAPs is **provisional** and may increase due to some cases being concluded a year or more after the initial boarding.
- b. The number of convictions and FAPs issued as a result of the boardings in 2013/14 has increased from 8 to **17** since the previous publication, due to a number of cases being concluded after April 2014.

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**Background quality report:** [www.gov.uk/government/collections/military-aid-to-civil-authorities-statistics-index](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/military-aid-to-civil-authorities-statistics-index)

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These tables are Official Statistics but have not been badged as National Statistics.

## Contact Us

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Defence Statistics welcomes feedback on our statistical products. If you have any comments or questions about this publication or about our statistics in general, you can contact us as follows:

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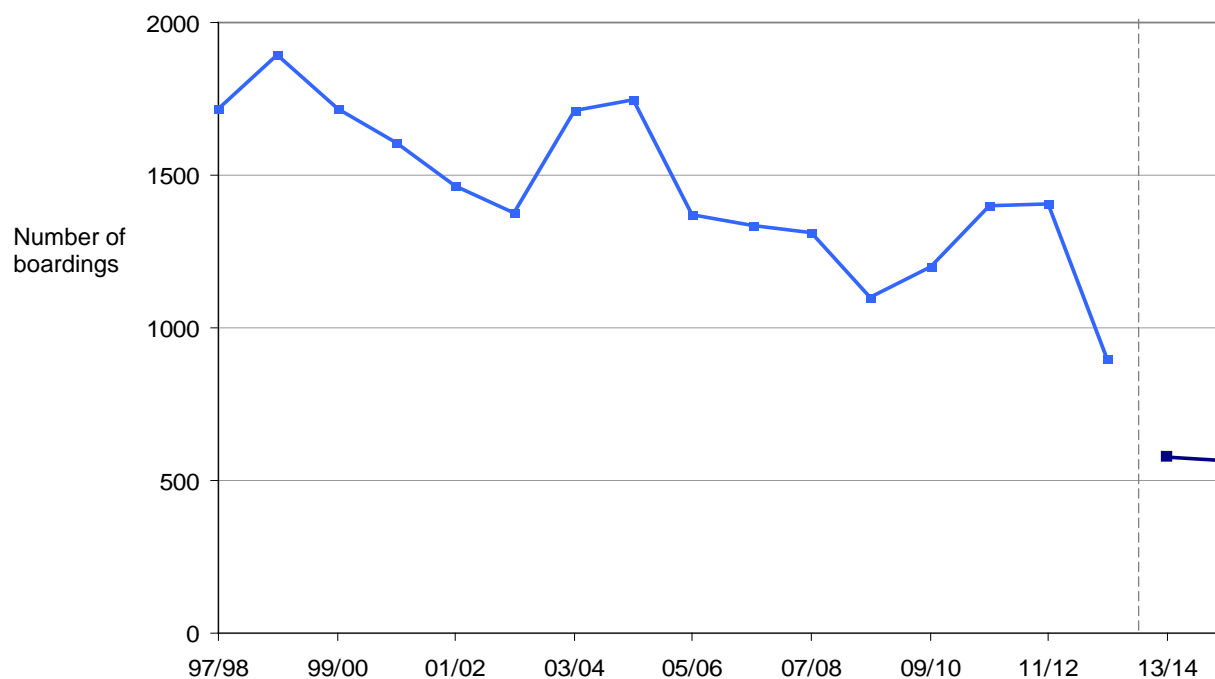
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<https://www.gov.uk/make-a-freedom-of-information-request/the-freedom-of-information-act>

## Key Findings

**Chart 1. Number of vessels boarded by the Royal Navy Fishery Protection Squadron within British fishery limits each financial year, 1997/98 to 2014/15**



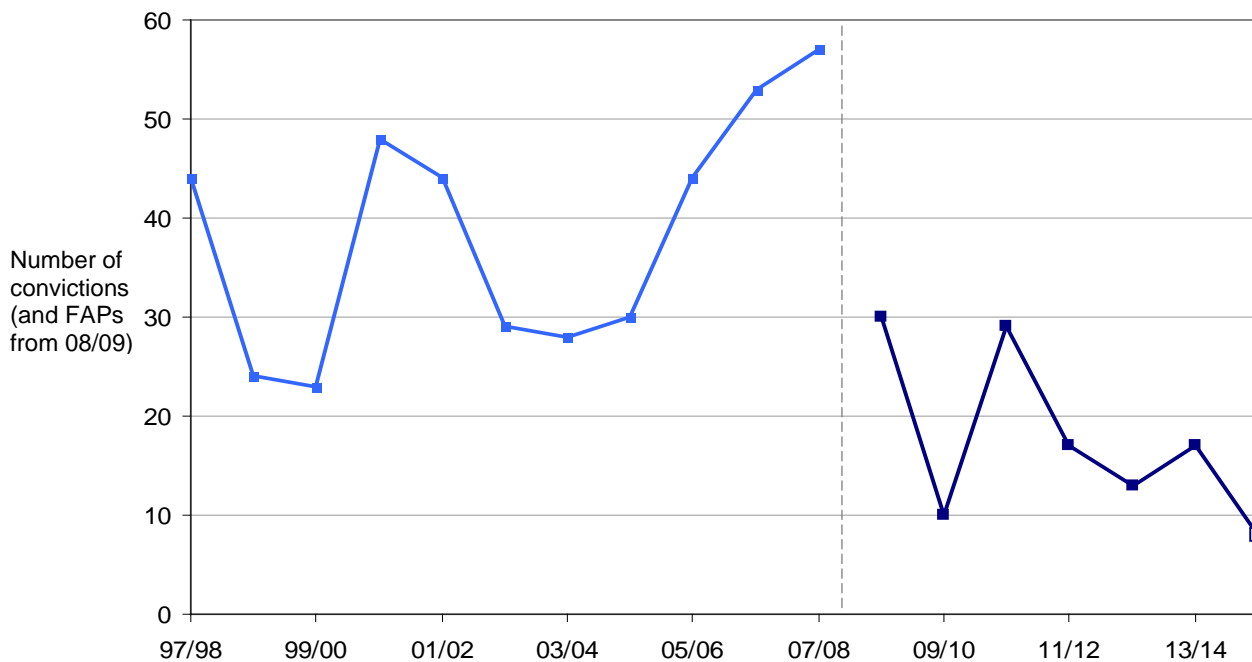
Source: Historical editions of [UK Defence Statistics](#) and previous Military Aid to Civil Authorities bulletins.

----- From April 2013, FPS ships were no longer exclusively tasked with marine enforcement.

- In 2014/15, **567** vessels were boarded by the Royal Navy Fisheries Protection Squadron (FPS) within British fishery limits. This is a minor reduction compared with the 575 boardings in 2013/14.
- 567 is the lowest annual number of boardings in at least 17 years, and a 67% reduction compared with the number of boardings in 1997/98.
- The annual number of boardings has fluctuated since 1997/98, but there is an overall downward trend that averages a 5% decrease each financial year.
- In April 2013, an agreement that FPS ships would no longer be exclusively tasked with Marine Enforcement came into effect between the Marine Management Organisation and the Royal Navy (RN). As the ships are now likely to be involved in other RN activity, this may explain the reduction in the number of boardings after 2012/13.
- Since 2008/09, about a quarter of boardings have been in the North Sea, and about three-quarters in the Bristol Channel, Celtic Sea, English Channel, Irish Sea, and Western Approaches. The FPS does not cover the Faroes, Rockall or West of Scotland.

Detailed figures on the number of vessels boarded by the Royal Navy Fishery Protection Squadron each year since 2008/09 can be found in [Table 1](#).

**Chart 2. Number of convictions and Financial Administration Penalties arising from the boarding of vessels by the Royal Navy Fishery Protection Squadron within British fishery limits each financial year, 1997/98 to 2014/15**



Source: Historical editions of [UK Defence Statistics](#) and previous Military Aid to Civil Authorities bulletins.

----- From 2008/09, these figures include Financial Administration Penalties.

□ Provisional figure <sup>P</sup>

- The Financial Administration Penalty (FAP) was introduced in 2008/09 as an alternative to convictions. This streamlined the penalty process by administering fines where previously most of the crew of each offending vessel would have been required to attend court.
- There were a total of 8<sup>P</sup> court convictions and FAPs resulting from the 567 boardings by the end of 2014/15. This is identical to the figure calculated in April 2014 for the same time period in 2013/14. However, this figure is provisional and may increase due to some cases being concluded a year or more after the initial boarding.
- The number of convictions and FAPs arising from the boardings in 2013/14 has increased from 8 to 17 since the previous publication, due to a number of cases being concluded after April 2014.
- The number of convictions (and FAPs, from 2008/09) has fluctuated between 1% and 4% of the number of boardings each year since 1997/98.
- In the seven years since the FAP was introduced, 35% of convictions and FAPs have been of French nationals, followed by UK nationals (24%), Belgians (11%), and Irish (11%).

Detailed figures on the number of convictions and Financial Administration Penalties each year since 2008/09 can be found in [Table 2](#).

<sup>P</sup> The number of convictions and FAPs is provisional and may increase due to some cases being concluded a year or more after the initial boarding.

## Further Information

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### Background Information

The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) is an executive, non-departmental public body (NDPB) established and given powers under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. The Ministry of Defence (MOD) has an agreement with MMO for the provision of Marine Enforcement Services, such as fishery protection. A copy of a Memorandum of Understanding between MMO and the MOD relating to the provision of these services can be accessed on the MMO website<sup>1</sup>.

The Royal Navy Fisheries Protection Squadron is the oldest front line squadron in the Royal Navy. It has three River Class Offshore Patrol Vessels covering UK waters, and one Offshore Patrol Vessel (Helicopter) stationed in the Falkland Islands. The River Class Fishing Patrol Vessels cover the fishery limits of England, Wales and Northern Ireland – an area that covers over 80,000 square miles of sea, and stretches up to 200 miles from the coastline. These vessels can be used in the maritime counter terrorism, pollution control or counter-drug surveillance role in addition to their main task of fishery protection.<sup>2</sup>

### Context

The main users of this data will be those interested in MOD activities, especially MOD support for fishery protection. This is most likely to include UK Fisheries Administrations, the media, politicians and the general public who are situated in areas with a fishing industry.

### Data Sources

The data in this table are provided by the MMO. Data are extracted by MMO from the UK Monitoring, Control and Surveillance System, and are collated manually.

### Data Quality

Both the MMO and the Royal Navy have undertaken quality control on the data provided in these tables. The data have also been subjected to 'sense checks' by Government statisticians.

More information about the quality of this data can be found in the background quality report, which can be found via the link on the front page of this bulletin.

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<sup>1</sup><http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140108121958/http://www.marinemanagement.org.uk/about/documents/mod/mod.pdf>

<sup>2</sup><http://www.royalnavy.mod.uk/Operations/Enduring-Operations/UK/Fishery-Protection>

## Symbols

	discontinuity in time series
r	Revised
p	Provisional
–	Zero or rounded to zero

*Italic* figures are used for percentages and other rates, except where otherwise indicated.

## Revisions

The number of convictions and Financial Administration Penalties in 2014/15 is provisional and may increase, due to some cases being concluded a year or more after the initial boarding. Therefore, it is planned for the figure to be revised in the next edition of this bulletin.

Corrections to the published statistics will be made if errors are found, or if figures change as a result of improvements to methodology or changes to definitions. When making corrections, we will follow the Ministry of Defence Statistics [Revisions and Corrections Policy](#). All corrected figures will be identified by the symbol “r”, and an explanation will be given of the reason for and size of the revision. Corrections which would have a significant impact on the utility of the statistics will be corrected as soon as possible, by reissuing the publication. Minor errors will also be corrected, but for convenience these corrections may be timed to coincide with the next annual release of the publication.

## Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

**DEFRA** Department for the Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs. DEFRA is the ministerial department responsible for policy and regulations on environmental, food and rural issues.

**FAP** Financial Administration Penalty.

**FPV** Fishing Patrol Vessel.

**MMO** Marine Management Organisation. The MMO is an executive non-departmental public body (NDPB) established and given powers under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. It has a wide range of responsibilities including managing UK fishing fleet capacity and UK fisheries quotas, and responding to marine emergencies alongside other agencies.

**RN** see **Royal Navy**.

**Royal Navy** The sea-going defence forces of the UK, including ships, submarines, and Naval aircraft and their personnel, but excluding the Royal Marines and the Royal Fleet Auxiliary Service (RFA). From 1 April 2000 the Royal Navy incorporated Queen Alexandra’s Royal Naval Nursing Service (QARNNS).

**Squadron** In the Naval Service (i) a group of vessels, normally commanded by a Commander; (ii) a group of naval aircraft, normally commanded by a Commander; (iii) a group of particular personnel, such as divers, commanded by a Commander; (iv) a group of Royal Marines on board ship or an amphibious assault group, normally under the command of a Lt Col (Royal Marines); (v) a sub-unit of the Special Boat Service, normally commanded by a Major (Royal Marines) or Lieutenant Commander (Royal Navy).

**Table 1****Number of vessels boarded by the Royal Navy Fishery Protection Squadron within British fishery limits each financial year**

This table shows the activities of the Royal Navy Fishery Protection Squadron operating within British fishery limits under an agreement with the Marine Management Organisation (MMO). More information about this agreement can be found in the Background Information section of this report.

The statistics cover the number of convictions arising from vessels boarded between 1 April and 31 March each financial year between 2008/09 and 2014/15, with a base year of 2000/01.

Boardings carried out by vessels of the Scottish Executive Environment Directorate and the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development for Northern Ireland are not included.

**The data in this table are not National Statistics, and they have not been put forward to the UK Statistics Authority for assessment.**

	Number of vessels boarded							
	2000/01	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14 <sup>1</sup>	2014/15
<b>Vessels boarded</b>	<b>1 603</b>	<b>1 102</b>	<b>1 201</b>	<b>1 399</b>	<b>1 408</b>	<b>898   </b>	<b>575</b>	<b>567</b>
<i>By sea areas<sup>2</sup>:</i>								
North Sea	627	306	338	411	417	169	172	78
Bristol Channel, Celtic Sea, English Channel, Irish Sea, and Western Approaches	976	796	863	988	991	729	403	489

Source: Marine Management Organisation

1. From April 2013, an agreement that FPS ships would no longer be exclusively tasked with Marine Enforcement came into effect, meaning there would be less less time available for boardings.

2. The Faroes, Rockall and West of Scotland are not covered by the Royal Navy Fishery Protection Squadron.

**Table 2****Convictions and Financial Administration Penalties arising from the boarding of vessels by the Royal Navy Fishery Protection Squadron within British fishery limits each financial year**

This table shows the number of convictions that are due to infringements detected by the Royal Navy Fishery Protection Squadron offshore patrol vessels, operating under service level agreement to the Marine Management Organisation (MMO), who undertake a range of delivery functions of DEFRA.

The statistics cover the number of convictions arising from vessels boarded between 1 April and 31 March each financial year between 2008/09 and 2014/15, with a base year of 2000/01. Figures may change retrospectively as some cases may not be heard in court until a year or more after the initial boarding.

In financial year 2008/09, the Marine and Fisheries Agency (known as the MMO since April 2010) introduced the Financial Administration Penalty (FAP) as an alternative to convictions. This streamlined the penalty process by administering fines where previously most of the crew of each offending vessel would have been required to attend court.

Convictions from 2008/09 onwards are based on the number of offences addressed by the courts that resulted in a court conviction, not the number of fishing vessel crews that attended court. That is, the same fishing vessel crew could be required to attend court for one or more offences to be heard and each offence would count separately.

**The data in this Table are not National Statistics, and they have not been put forward to the UK Statistics Authority for assessment.**

	Number of convictions and Financial Administration Penalties								
	2000/01		2008/09 <sup>1</sup>	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
<b>Convictions and FAPs arising from boardings</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>  </b>	<b>30</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>17 <sup>r</sup></b>	<b>8 <sup>p</sup></b>
<i>By nationality:</i>									
Belgium	4		5	3	1	2	2	1	-
Denmark	3		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Eire	4		-	1	3	3	1	2	4
Faroese	3		-	-	-	-	-	-	-
France	8		12	1	14	6	6	4 <sup>r</sup>	1
Germany	-		-	-	2	-	-	-	2
Netherlands	6		2	-	3	2	2	1 <sup>r</sup>	1
Spain	-		3	1	1	2	-	-	-
United Kingdom	20		8	4	5	2	2	9 <sup>r</sup>	-

Source: Marine Management Organisation

1. From 2008/09, these figures include Financial Administration Penalties.

<sup>p</sup> The number of convictions and FAPs is provisional and may increase due to some cases being concluded a year or more after the initial boarding.

<sup>r</sup> Since the publication of the 2013/14 bulletin in June 2014, the total number of convictions arising from boardings in the 2013/14 financial year has increased from 8 to 17. The number of UK convictions has increased from 2 to 9, Netherlands convictions have increased from 0 to 1, and France convictions have increased from 3 to 4.