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31 May 2017

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email of 29 May in which you requested the following information:

*"In photographs taken at Buckingham Palace on the recent occasion of presentation of new colours to the 1st Battalion and F Company, Scots Guards by HM The Queen, it was evident that 5 non Scots Guards officers were parading as part of 1SG. Namely officers from Royal Marines, Scots, another Guards regiment (Irish or Coldstream Guards?) and two Infantry regimental officers one of whom might have been from the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment. This is an unusually large number of 'attached' officers to a Battalion at any one time so does this mean that there is currently a significant Scots Guards officer recruitment deficit in addition to the shortage of Guardsmen recently reported in the press?"*

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

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.

I can confirm there is no deficit of officers in the Scots Guards and that the battalion has recruited its full quota for officers this year and last. Under Section 16 of the FOIA – Advice and Assistance – it might be helpful to explain that exchange arrangements often take place between different infantry units. The Royal Marine is a part of a regular, long standing exchange and officers from other Guards regiments serve with 1 Scots Guards as it is the only Guards battalion in a mechanised role and so provides useful experience. Although five officers appears a high number, it is not untoward as there are often a number of officers from other regiments within each unit. It may have been that the officers in the photographs were filling gaps created by early departure, injury, representing at sports or for a number of other reasons. It could also be that the SCOTS and LANCS officers had the right or better skills and experience required than the available Scots Guards officers to fill a vacant post in the battalion.

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, Ground Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail [CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk](mailto: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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