



Ministry of Defence

[Redacted]

Ref: FOI2017/08191

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[Redacted]

25 September 2017

Dear [Redacted]

Release of Information

Thank you for your correspondence of 25 August 2017 in which you requested the following information:

- 1. *How many personnel the RN/RM has recruited from the Commonwealth from the period 1950 - now?*
- 2. *How many are currently serving?*
- 3. *How many have changed to their nationality from Commonwealth to British?*
- 4. *Projectory of how many British Commonwealth/Commonwealth we hope to have in the RN by 2025.*
- 5. *All policy states that from 2013 – all recruits must have 5 years residency to join the RN, but we know there are personnel still joining direct from St Vincent without 5 years residency in the UK. Are you able to provide figures on how many RN personnel have joined without 5 years residency since 2013.'*

Your enquiry has been considered to be a request for information in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

I can confirm that the Ministry of Defence holds some information in scope of your request. Taking your questions in order, with regard to question one, the Department is only able to provide you with the number of Royal Navy and Royal Marines recruited from the Commonwealth from Recruiting Year 2003/2004 and this information can be found detailed in the table below:

[Redacted]	
2003/2004	16
2004/2005	4
2005/2006	8
2006/2007	11

<b>2007/2008</b>	91
<b>2008/2009</b>	161
<b>2009/2010</b>	111
<b>2010/2011</b>	71
<b>2011/2012</b>	46
<b>2012/2013</b>	67
<b>2013/2014</b>	47
<b>2014/2015</b>	28
<b>2015/2016</b>	11
<b>2016/2017</b>	14
<b>2017/2018</b>	19
<b>Total</b>	<b>705</b>

In response to question two, there are 599 people currently serving who have a Commonwealth country listed as their first Nationality.

With regard to question three and how many personnel have changed their nationality from Commonwealth to British, the Ministry of Defence does not hold this information. I am however able to tell you that there are 153 personnel who have British as their first nationality and a Commonwealth country as their second nationality, however, we cannot accurately report whether they joined the Royal Navy or Royal Marines directly from a Commonwealth country before changing their nationality. British may well have been their first nationality on joining however we have no way of determining this. In addition to this, of those personnel who have a Commonwealth country as their first Nationality, 35 also have British annotated as their second nationality, however, we do not hold information which reports whether those personnel had British nationality on joining or whether they acquired it 5 years after joining the Royal Navy/Royal Marines direct from a Commonwealth country.

In response to question four and your request for a projectory of how many British Commonwealth/Commonwealth personnel we aim to join the Royal Navy by 2025, I am able to tell you that the Government is allowing 50 Commonwealth personnel per year to join the Royal Navy in trades where the personnel have skills which are in short supply amongst UK applicants. The average length of service is 11 years for men and 9 years for women; it is therefore reasonable to expect Commonwealth representation to remain steady at between 500 and 600 while the Navy is allowed to recruit Commonwealth personnel at this level.

With regard to question five, as explained above, the Home Office allows the Navy to recruit 50 personnel per year direct from Commonwealth countries to fill skills gaps which cannot be filled by UK applicants. The table in response to question one provides you with the figures of Commonwealth personnel employed from 2013.

If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance

If you wish to complain about the handling of your request, or the content of this response, you can request 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 should be made within 40 working days of the date of this response.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may raise your complaint directly to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not normally investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website at <https://ico.org.uk/>.

Yours sincerely

Navy Command Secretariat – FOI Section