

Proposed reduction in frequency of the “Forces Help to Buy” Official Statistic

SUMMARY

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) currently publishes the ‘Forces Help to Buy’ Official Statistic on a monthly basis. We are now seeking external users’ views on reducing the frequency of publication from monthly to quarterly.

BACKGROUND

This is a monthly publication that provides statistics on the number of applications and payments made under the Forces Help to Buy (FHTB) scheme since its launch in April 2014.

FHTB is an advance of salary scheme that allows Regular Armed Forces personnel to borrow money in order to buy their first home or move to a new location or extend an existing property.

REASONS FOR THE PROPOSED CHANGE

Defence Statistics (WDS) is proposing to reduce the frequency of publication of this Official Statistic from monthly to quarterly as:

After the large number of first-stage applications received in the first month of the scheme, the number of applications has been consistent over time, with first-stage applications averaging just under 600 per month. The number of payments has also been consistent over time, averaging just over 300 per month.

The numbers of Freedom of Information (FOI) requests and Parliamentary Questions (PQs) for information about Forces Help to Buy Scheme is very low. No FOIs or PQs about the scheme have been submitted over the last 12 months.

The number of web-hits for the publication remains low, averaging just over 200 per month.

TIMINGS

This consultation will run for four weeks, from 19th October 2017 to 16th November. This consultation complies with the Government’s Code of Practice on Consultations.

As long as there is no objection during the consultation period, the reduction in frequency of the report will proceed as planned and the October 2017 edition will be the final monthly report produced. The December 2017 edition, to be published in January 2018, will be the first quarterly report produced.

RESPONDING TO THE CONSULTATION

Considering the reasons for the proposed changes, we now invite the feedback of our external data users and are keen to know what impact ceasing publication will have on you.

Ways to respond:

If you have any comments on the proposed changes please send them:

By email to: DefStrat-Stat-WDS-Pubs@mod.gov.uk

By post to:

Defence Statistics (WDS)
Ministry of Defence,
Main Building,
Floor 3 Zone M,
Whitehall,
London,
SW1A 2HB

When sending your comments please include contact details (your name and either e mail address, postal address or telephone number) so that we can follow up if clarification is needed.