



Ministry
of Defence

Defence Statistics (Health)

Ministry of Defence

Oak 0 West (#6028)

Abbey Wood North

Bristol BS34 8JH

United Kingdom

Telephone: +44 (0)30679 84423

Facsimile: +44 (0)1179 319634

E-mail: DefStrat-Stat-Health-PQ-FOI@mod.uk

22 March 2017

FOI2017/02524

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email dated 21 February 2017 requesting the following information:

From 2008 please provide me with a table showing (i) the total, and (ii) an annual breakdown of the number of women service personnel who have been aeromedically evacuated due to pregnancy.

For those brought back from the Falklands please provide a breakdown by members of the (i) Army, (ii) Royal Navy and (iii) RAF.

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. A search for the information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence, and I can confirm that information in scope of your request is held. The information you requested is enclosed.

Between 1 January 2008 and 31 December 2016, **259** female UK Service personnel were aeromedically evacuated due to pregnancy. **Table 1** below presents this information by year.

Table 1: Female UK Service personnel aeromedically evacuated due to pregnancy, Numbers¹
1 January 2008 to 31 December 2016

	All	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Number of personnel	259	52 ^r	40	20	36 ^r	27 ^r	33 ^r	23 ^r	10 ^r	18

Source: Aeromedical Evacuation Control Centre (AECC) and Defence Patient Tracking System (DPTS)

1. Includes initial aeromedical evacuations only, numbers do not include connecting flights and reverse aeromedical evacuations¹. Females may be counted more than once if they have had multiple initial aeromedical evacuations for pregnancy during the same time period.

r indicates a revision to previously published data.

Between 1 January 2008 and 31 December 2016, **38** female UK Service personnel were aeromedically evacuated from the Falklands due to pregnancy. **Table 2** below presents this information by Service.

¹ Aeromedical Evacuation is defined as patient movement towards the UK; patient movement in any other direction is defined as Reverse Aeromedical Evacuation.

**Table 2: Female UK Service personnel aeromedically evacuated from the Falklands due to pregnancy, by Service, Numbers¹
1 January 2008 to 31 December 2016**

Service	Number of personnel
All	38
Naval Service²	7
Army	6
RAF	25

Source: Aeromedical Evacuation Control Centre (AECC) and Defence Patient Tracking System (DPTS)

1. Includes initial aeromedical evacuations only, numbers do not include connecting flights and reverse aeromedical evacuations¹. Females may be counted more than once if they have had multiple initial aeromedical evacuations for pregnancy during the same time period.
2. Naval Service includes Royal Navy and Royal Marines.

If women become pregnant in theatre, or discover they are pregnant in theatre (or at sea), they are returned at the first convenient opportunity. This may be via an aeromed flight if there is space available, but emergency cases will be given priority. Alternatively they may be returned on a routine flight, in which case Defence Statistics will not have sight of the reason for their return. For normal pregnancy cases, it is more important to ensure a safe return than an immediate one. Thus the numbers presented will be the minimum number of females returned from theatre as a result of pregnancy.

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

These figures have been compiled using data from Brize Norton Aeromedical Evacuation Control Centre (AECC) and the Defence Patient Tracking System (DPTS). It must be noted that it is possible that there will have been some individuals who returned to the UK without being recorded on the AECC or DPTS as pregnant, and their details will not have been recorded centrally. Thus the numbers presented will be the minimum number of females returned from operations as a result of pregnancy. Figures presented above include UK Regular and Reservist personnel.

Aeromedical Evacuation is the medically supervised movement of patients to and between medical facilities by air transportation. The RAF Aeromedical Evacuation Service provides the worldwide patient air movement capability for Defence 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Patients are risk assessed prior to flight, and when necessary, trained medical teams are provided to deliver care in the air. Defence Statistics receive Aeromedical Evacuation records fortnightly from the Aeromedical Evacuation Control Centre (AECC) at RAF Brize Norton, which commenced in April 2006 for Iraq and Afghanistan only, and April 2008 for worldwide evacuations.

The numbers presented in this response include the number of personnel aeromed only. These numbers do not include connecting flights and reverse aeromedical evacuations¹.

The DPTS commenced on 8 October 2007 and was set up to enable the capture of tracking data for aeromedically evacuated patients at the place where healthcare is being delivered along the care pathway. It is a live system and is constantly being updated retrospectively as such the data are provisional and subject to change.

The DPTS is not a medical or welfare record system; medical records are held on the Defence Medical Information Capability Programme; welfare records are held in single Service welfare databases. The DPTS is not an authoritative record of personnel and demographic details, these details are held on Joint Personnel Administration system.

Defence Statistics have included female personnel aeromed to the UK with any of the following recorded diagnoses; 'Pregnancy - Normal', 'Pregnancy – Disorder' and 'Family Planning – TOP' (Termination of

Pregnancy (TOP)), or where pregnancy was identified in the injury/illness mechanism field or free-text commentary in the DPTS.

Would you like to be added to our contact list, so that we can inform you about updates to our statistical publications covering Deaths and Health and Safety 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, <http://www.ico.gov.uk>.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely

Defence Statistics (Health) Head (B1)