



Ministry
of Defence

Defence Business Services
Secretariat Team Drafter
Room 6303
Tomlinson House
Norcross
Thornton Cleveleys
Lancashire
FY5 3WP

E-mail: DBSRES-Secretariat@mod.uk

[REDACTED]
FOI2018/01372
[REDACTED]

31 January 2018

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your emails of 29 January 2018 which clarified the following:

"I apologise for the confusion caused. I can confirm that the second email limiting the remit of the request to civilian staff is the correct email. This is not a second request".

Thank you also for your emails of 7 December 2017, 22 December 2017 and 17 January 2018 which asked and clarified as follows:

"I would like to make a freedom of information request regarding staff pension opt outs at the Ministry of Defence.

I would be grateful if you could provide information for each year since 2011/12 that data is available for covering:

- 1) The proportion of total opted employees opted out of pension provision*
- 2) The proportion of employees joining in that that opted out of pension provision."*

"I apologise for my request not providing sufficient clarity on the information required.

The first part of my request relates to all employees at the department.

The second part relates to new joiners. All employees upon joining will be automatically enrolled into a pension scheme. Within three months employees can opt out and have their contributions refunded. We would be interested in the percentage of employees that opt out of the scheme within 3 months of joining the department".

"I am more than happy to clarify the information that I would like to request under the freedom of information act"

I would like to request information regarding the proportion of civilian staff employed by the Ministry that have opted out of the Civil Service Pension Scheme. I would

appreciate for data for the proportion broken down between staff joining the Ministry and all staff".

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

A search for the information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence, and I can confirm that some information in scope of your request is held.

In order to produce an answer for the first question, results have been taken from a fixed point at the end of each financial year. The data used is taken from the Human Resources Management System (HRMS) and the population included in the count consists of the Ministry of Defence civilian employees with a status of active, leave of absence or leave with pay as at 31 March each year.

In HRMS terms, pension scheme membership is recorded in the Benefits Program field. In addition to the various pension schemes available (e.g. Premium, Classic Plus, NUVOS etc.), one of the options available is "Opt Out", so the percentage has been calculated using the number of individuals who have this entry against their record at each data point compared with the complete MOD civilian population detailed above at the same point.

Percentages at the end of each financial year from 2011/12 are as follows:

Financial Year	%age Opt Outs
2011/12	<1%
2012/13	<1%
2013/14	<1%
2014/15	<1%
2015/16	<1%
2016/17	<1%

Results are based on headcount, not FTE.

Please note this will not include contractors, LECs, etc. who are not on MOD Main payroll or individuals employed in agencies or arm's length bodies.

For the second question about the proportion of employees joining the MOD that opted out of pension provision, I have again based results on data taken from HRMS and included MOD main employees who were either hired or rehired in each of the respective financial years.

Where individuals have more than one period of service within the respective financial year, pension membership or opt out within 3 months has been based on the latest hire/rehire date within that period, to avoid double counting. Percentages for this answer are based on the number of individuals who have the option of 'Opt Out' recorded in their associated HRMS Benefit Program within 3 months of being hired/rehired into MOD, compared with the total number of individuals who were hired/rehired during the same period.

Unlike the response to question one, no consideration has been given as to whether individuals were still employed by the MOD at the end of the financial year, the percentage is simply the total number of hires/rehires who opted out, compared with the total number who were hired/rehired in the same period.

Percentages of Opt Outs in the population who joined/re-joined in each financial year from 2011/12, are as follows:

Financial Year	%age Opt Outs
2011/12	4%
2012/13	5%
2013/14	3%
2014/15	2%
2015/16	2%
2016/17	2%

Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number. As with the answer to question one, results are based on headcount rather than FTE and do not include contractors, LECs, etc. or individuals employed by agencies or arm's length bodies.

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.gov.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,



Defence Business Services (Secretariat)

