



# Ministry of Defence

Ministry of Defence  
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Ref: FOI2017/13417

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Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 18 December 2017 requesting the following information:

“Could you please provide details of the number of serving soldiers who have codes for being prescribed anti-depressants entered into their electronic medical records since 2015. If possible I would like the breakdown to include service and sex”

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

As at 1 December 2017 **6,168 current serving soldiers** were prescribed antidepressants between 1 January 2015 and 8 January 2017. **Table 1** presents this information by gender.

**Table 1: Current serving soldiers as at 1 December 2017 prescribed antidepressants, numbers**  
1 January 2015 to 8 January 2018

Service	All	Male	Female
Army	6,168	5,020	1,148

Source DMICP and JPA

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

Information has been derived from the Defence Medical Information Capability Programme (DMICP). DMICP has a centralised data warehouse of coded information. It is the source of electronic, integrated healthcare records for primary healthcare and some MOD specialist care providers from which searches for codes can be run.

Some medications used to treat depression are used to treat conditions other than mental health. Amitriptyline, nortriptyline and duloxetine are used much more frequently in the management of neuropathic pain than in depression. Furthermore selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) such as fluoxetine, paroxetine, citalopram, escitalopram and sertraline can be used to treat other medical conditions. It is not possible to determine the reason for prescription from centrally held data therefore the numbers provided will contain prescriptions for medical conditions other than depression. To determine the reason for the prescriptions would require a clinician to manually review the medical records of personnel prescribed these drugs which would exceed the cost limit associated with FOI requests.

These figures include trained and untrained Regulars and Reserves.

Joint Personnel Administration (JPA) is the most accurate source for demographic information for UK Armed Forces personnel and is used to gather information on a person's service and gender.

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, 1<sup>st</sup> 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/>.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely

Defence Statistics Health