



Ministry of Defence

Ministry of Defence
Main Building
Whitehall
London
SW1A 2HB

Reference: FOI2018/03555

[REDACTED]

Email to: [REDACTED]

25 June 2018

Dear xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Thank you for your email of 17 February 2018 requesting the following information:

"I am seeking the following information:

1) *The number of incidents of alleged sexual misconduct involving members of the armed forces posted outside the UK or employed outside the UK, which have been brought to the MOD's attention in each of the calendar years 2015, 2016 and 2017?*

If possible, please break these figures down into types of alleged misconduct: (i) rape, (ii) harrassment, (iii) other forms of sexual misconduct. Please also specify in each category how many of the alleged incidents involved non-armed forces individuals?

2) *The number of these incidents which were investigated in each of the calendar years 2015, 2016 and 2017?*

3) *The number of those incidents in which such investigations determined that there was evidence of sexual misconduct in each of the calendar years 2015, 2016 and 2017?*

If possible, please break these figures down into types of misconduct:

(i) rape, (ii) harrassment, (iii) other forms of sexual misconduct.

Please also specify in each category how many of the incidents involved non-armed forces individuals?

4) *The number of armed forces personnel who were disciplined as a result of these allegations or investigations in each of the calendar years 2015, 2016 and 2017?*

5) *The number of armed forces personnel who resigned as a result of these allegations or investigations in each of the calendar years 2015, 2016 and 2017?*

6) *The number of armed forces personnel who were dismissed as a result of these allegations or investigations in each of the calendar years 2015, 2016 and 2017?"*

On 8 March 2018, you clarified that:

"1) with regard to the phrase "brought to the MOD's attention", please consider that this request concerns incidents that have been reported to the UK Ministry of Defence, either directly or via the armed forces chain of command.

2) with regard to the definition of sexual misconduct, I do not wish to confine the request only to criminal conduct. If it is easier, and in order not to present a misrepresentative set of statistics, I would be happy for you to break down the figures into categories such as:

- Criminal activity*
- Activity contrary to standing orders*
- Activity which might be prejudicial to good order and discipline."*

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

Our letter of 27 March 2018 advised that a Public Interest Test (PIT) was to be held regarding your FOI request.

I apologise for the time taken to respond fully to your FOI request. I can now advise that the PIT has concluded the following information should be provided to you.

Sexual harassment and assault is unacceptable - whether in the Armed Forces or across wider society. There are several processes and safeguards in place across the Armed Forces to ensure that victims of such offences are properly supported and that any allegations are properly investigated

The information requested regarding sexual offences is exempt from release under Section 21 of the FOI Act because the information is available in the official statistics. The statistics relating to sexual offences in the Service Justice System for 2015, 2016 and 2017 are included in the data on Gov.uk as below.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/sexual-offences-in-the-service-justicesystem-2015>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/sexual-offences-in-the-service-justicesystem-2016>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/sexual-offences-in-the-service-justicesystem-2017>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/sexual-offences-in-the-service-justicesystem>

These statistics provide details of sexual offences but not all misconduct such as harassment. They will tell you how many sexual offences the Service Police investigated in those years and how many people were found guilty:

Some of the requested information may also be available in the Court Martial results website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/court-martial-results-from-the-militarycourt-centres>

Regarding sexual harassment and bullying, the office of the Service Complaints Ombudsman (SCO) captures data on its own complaint-handling performance and that of the Armed Forces. The SCO Annual Report and other statistics are available at the following link:

<https://www.servicecomplaintsombudsman.org.uk/>

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

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 us in the first instance at the address above. 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, 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 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 normally 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.org.uk>.

Yours sincerely,

(Original Signed)
Defence People Secretariat