



Ministry
of Defence

Army Secretariat
Army Headquarters
IDL 24 Blenheim Building
Marlborough Lines
Andover
Hampshire, SP11 8HJ
United Kingdom

Ref: FOI2018/08972
ArmySec/10/03/80754

E-mail: ArmySec-Group@mod.uk

Website: www.army.mod.uk

XXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXX

3 August 2018

Dear XXXXXXXX,

Thank you for the clarification email of 2 July relating to your FOI request of 5 June in which you requested the information detailed in Annex A to this letter.

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

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

Information you requested can be found at Annex B, but some of the information falls entirely within the scope of the absolute exemptions provided for at sections 40 (Personal Data) and Section 21 (accessible by other means) of the FOIA and has been withheld.

Section 40 has been applied to parts two and three of your request in order to protect personal information as governed by the Data Protection Act. Section 21 has been applied to part five of your request. These are absolute exemptions and there is therefore no requirement to consider the public interest in making a decision to withhold the information.

Under the Act a Public Authority is not required to create new information to respond to requests. The MOD holds data that could be used to produce information to answer part four of your request. However, to produce the information would require significant data manipulation including complex analysis and sophisticated judgement to the extent that it can be considered 'new' information which is not currently held.

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

XXXXXXXXX
Army Secretariat

Annex A FOI request and follow-up clarification request

1. *How many women have expressed an interest in joining the close combat arms? Could this be broken down into female civilians joining direct or existing female members of the armed forces transferring to close combat roles? Also what is the break down between those wanting to join as officers and other ranks?*

2. *What is break down of those women expressing an interest to join close combat arms, those who have submitted an application, those who applied and been successfully accepted to join? Also could this be broken down between those applying to be officers and other ranks?*

Expressions of interest clarified as:

- *asking for recruiting info about careers in close combat roles and also requesting application forms and supporting material. This can be done by visiting recruiting offices, by telephone, email, social media or by logging onto MOD websites/portals.*
- *Requesting interviews with army recruiting personnel to discuss careers in close combat roles.*
- *participating in tester events or visits to events to promote close combat roles.*
- *participating in medical examinations prior to application.*

3. *How many women have actually started training in close combat arms? Could this be broken down across the Infantry, Royal Armoured Corps, RAF Regiment and Royal Marines? How many have actually completed their training and actually joined their units? Also could this be broken down between those applying to be officers and other ranks?*

4. *What has been the cost to date for the British Army, RAF and Royal Marines of setting up the necessary training organizations and infra-structure to support training women to serve in close combat arms? This should include studies into medical standards, recruiting material and activity, training instructors, modifying buildings and preparing training syllabus. What is the budget for this initiative over the next five years?*

5. *What is the criteria used by the MOD and armed services for judging the success of the initiative to bring women? What are the target numbers of for women join the Infantry, Royal Armoured Corps, RAF Regiment and Royal Marines over the next five years? Is there a cost benefit analysis to determine success or failure of the initiative? If so, is it possible to receive a copy of this document?*

Applications clarified as:

In terms for submitting applications, I would consider that to be the submission of application, with complete supporting documentation.

Annex B Release of requested information

1. *How many women have expressed an interesting in joining the close combat arms? Could this be broken down into female civilians joining direct or existing female members of the armed forces transferring to close combat roles? Also what is the break down between those wanting to join as officers and other ranks*

2. *What is break down of those women expressing an interest to join close combat arms, those who have submitted an application, those who applied and been successfully accepted to join? Also could this be broken down between those applying to be officers and other ranks?*

Data on expressions of interest to the Navy are detailed below in answer to parts 1 and 2 of your request. Expressions of interest as defined in your request are not recorded for the Army and RAF.

Table 1: Information release in answer to parts one and two

July 2016 - June 2018				
Field	Officer/Rating	Role	Total Enquiries	Applications within the selection process
Commando	Officer	Royal Marines Officer	340	~
Commando	Other Rank	Royal Marines Other Ranks	1010	10
TOTAL			1350	20

July 2018

3. *How many women have actually started training in close combat arms? Could this be broken down across the Infantry, Royal Armoured Corps, RAF Regiment and Royal Marines? How many have actually completed their training and actually joined their units? Also could this be broken down between those applying to be officers and other ranks?*

Table 2: Army and RAF information in answer to part three.

	Army RAC		Air RAF Regt
	Officers	Ranks	Ranks
Started training	10	30	~
Completed training	10	20	0

June 2018

Table 1 and 2 notes:

- No Royal Marine officers or other ranks have commenced training.
- Please note that these figures are single Service estimates and are not official statistics produced by Defence Statistics.
- Figures have been rounded to 10 to limit disclosure and ensure confidentiality. Totals and sub-totals have been rounded separately and so may not appear to be the sum of their parts.
- '~' denotes fewer than five
- The Infantry Ground Close Combat roles are not yet open for applications.
- The numbers above do not include women in Infantry Reserve units serving as band members.

4. *What has been the cost to date for the British Army, RAF and Royal Marines of setting up the necessary training organizations and infra-structure to support training women to serve in close combat arms? This should include studies into medical standards, recruiting material and activity, training instructors, modifying buildings and preparing training syllabus. What is the budget for this initiative over the next five years?*

Information not held.

5. *What is the criteria used by the MOD and armed services for judging the success of the initiative to bring women? What are the target numbers of for women join the Infantry, Royal Armoured Corps, RAF Regiment and Royal Marines over the next five years? Is there a cost benefit analysis to determine success or failure of the initiative? If so, is it possible to receive a copy of this document?*

The 'Women in ground close combat findings paper' is available via the weblink below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/women-in-ground-close-combat-roles-review-2016>

This contains the information requested, including:

Paragraph 2. '...Opening GCC roles to women will maximise the talent available to Defence and deliver equality of opportunity...'

Paragraph 25. C. 'There will be no quotas or targets for women in GCC roles.'