



Ministry
of Defence

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7 August 2018

Dear xxxxxxxxxxxxxxx,

Thank you for your email of 16 July in which you requested the following information:

'a) Chaplains, how many chaplains are established from which religions, what are their ranks, in regards to Catholic Chaplains, what is the establishment of the chaplains, from which diocese or religious orders are they from, is there a shortfall, what is the legal mechanism for appointment.

b) The Irish Guards, strength, recruitment area, areas to which they are not deployed, nationality requirement, current religious or non belief data of the guards across all ranks.

c) when it was established and operated what was the jobs description/person specification, grade and vetting level of the designated staff of the so called UFO desk.'

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 (MOD), and I can confirm that some information in scope of your request is held. The information which can be released is detailed below.

Part A – Chaplains

The workforce requirement of chaplain posts across all three Services, broken down by ranks are detailed in the tables below. Not all posts are currently filled.

Army

Workforce Requirement	Major General	Brigadier	Colonel	Lieutenant Colonel	Major	Captain	Total
Regular	1	1	6	18	73	47	146
Reserve	0	0	0	22	13	61	78
Total	1	1	6	22	86	108	224

Please note that the majority of Captain and Major posts are rank ranged and can be covered by either rank.

Royal Air Force (RAF)

Workforce Requirement	Air Vice Marshal	Air Commodore	Group Captain	Wing Commander	Squadron Leader	Flight Lieutenant	Total
Regular	1	0	2	14	34	10	61
Reserve	0	0	0	6	10	2	18
Total	1	0	2	20	44	12	79

Please note that the majority of Flight Lieutenant and Squadron Leader posts are rank ranged and can be covered by either rank.

Royal Navy (RN)

Royal Navy chaplains do not hold rank and are simply referred to as a Chaplain. The regular workforce requirement is 58. In addition, there is a workforce requirement for 21 Reservists.

There is no specific workforce requirement for Roman Catholic chaplains and all chaplains are selected for individual posts on a merit basis. The Chaplains Department endeavour to maintain a denominational balance that reflects the declared religious denomination range of service personnel.

The diocese or religious order from which Chaplains are recruited is not recorded. All chaplains are recruited from one of the MOD's endorsed 'Sending Churches'. There are currently six Sending Churches: the Church of England, the Roman Catholic Church, the Church of Scotland (which includes the Church of Ireland), the Methodist Church, United Board (includes Baptists), and Churches in the Community. A church can apply to become an endorsed Sending Church. This process can take up to 18 months and all applications are subject to rigorous scrutiny. The MOD are currently in consultation with national bodies to explore how this mechanism might be extended to include other major non-Christian religions. Under Section 16 (Advice and Assistance) you may be interested to know that there are also five Tri-Service Multi Faith Civilian Chaplains to the Military who are Civil Servants who look after Muslim, Sikh, Buddhist, Judaism and Hindu issues.

All chaplains must be professionally trained by their respective Sending Church and have at least three years civilian practice before they are eligible to apply to be a MOD Chaplain. They must have the permission to apply to be a MOD Chaplain from their Sending Church. Then, like all other Officers, the individuals must pass the Professional Qualified Officers course at either Army Officer Selection Board, the RAF Officer and Aircrew Selection Centre or RN Admiralty Interview Board. Whilst serving, all chaplains are required to remain in good standing with their Sending Church who act as the professional endorsing body for their continued 'ministerial license'. If this license is lost a military chaplain must resign their commission.

Question B – Irish Guards

The current strength of the Trade Trained Irish Guards as at 1 April and religious belief information is detailed in the table below. Please note that:

- The figures are for trade trained Regular Army only and therefore exclude Gurkhas, Full Time Reserve Service, Mobilised Reserves, Army Reserve and all other Reserves, but includes those personnel that have transferred from GURTAM to UKTAP.
- The table includes personnel whose Arm/Services is "Irish Guards", but they may not necessarily be serving on Irish Guards regimental duty.
- Religion is as recorded on the Joint Personnel Administration system.
- 'Other Religions' consists of those personnel who have a recorded religion of 'Hindu', 'Muslim' and 'Other Religions'.
- The data have been rounded to the nearest 10, numbers ending in 5 being rounded to the nearest multiple of 20
- Totals and sub-totals have been rounded separately and so may not appear to be the sum of their parts.

	Strength at 1st April 2018
Irish Guards	500
Christian	440
Other Religions	10
No Religion	50

Source: Defence Statistics (Army)

Information concerning recruitment area and nationality requirements is exempt from release under Section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), because it is reasonably accessible to you by other means. It is already in the public domain on the Army website.

Recruitment information for the Irish Guards can be found at this link: <https://www.army.mod.uk/who-we-are/corps-regiments-and-units/infantry/irish-guards/>

Nationality requirements for all wanting to join the British Army can be found at this link: <https://apply.army.mod.uk/how-to-join/can-i-join/nationality>

The Irish Guards can be deployed to any theatre of operations worldwide, in the same way as any other Regiment.

Question C – Unidentified Flying Object (UFO) Desk

The information you requested is not held by the Ministry of Defence. The UFO hotline closed in 2009 and records are no longer held. Under Section 16 (Advice and Assistance) you may wish to know that all information previously held by the MOD has been released to The National Archives - <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ufos/>

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,

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