



Ministry  
of Defence

**Defence Business Services**  
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Ref: FOI2018/09588

E-mail: DBSRES-Secretariat@mod.gov.uk

[REDACTED]

7 August 2018

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your emails of 16 March and 12 July 2018 requesting the following information:

*Question 1 If a mother lost her son, an army private, in WW1 what would be the net weekly war pension she would receive from the government?*

*Question 2 If the mother died in 1968 what would that (net) weekly army pension be at the time of her death? i.e. would it have increased from the original net amount first paid 50 years earlier?*

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

I must firstly apologise that you did not receive a response to your initial request. This seems to have been referred to the wrong department within Defence Business Services.

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 and can be found at Appendix A and B.

Under Section 16 of the Act (Advice and Assistance) you may find it helpful to note that Parents pensions were first introduced during the 1914-1918 War. At that time, adult sons and daughters had a duty under the Poor Law to contribute towards the support of their parents if they were in financial need. The state accepted responsibility for replacing within certain limits the support which a son killed in action might have given to parents if they became incapable of self-support because of sickness, advancing age or other adversity. This legal duty of sons and daughters disappeared, however, with the abolition of the Poor Law in 1948 and since then a comprehensive social security system has developed.

In regard to Question 1, based on the information held we are unable to provide a net weekly figure of War Pension for a mother who lost her son in WW1, as it would have been specific to their financial circumstances. This is because a pension equal to the amount of pre-war dependence or 3s 6d per week, whichever was the greater but not exceeding 15s per week would have been paid. The amount was also dependent on whether there were two parents and if more than one son had died.

In regard to Question 2, based on the information held we are unable to confirm how the rates were transitioned to those in use in 1940. We know that in later years the only rate paid was equivalent to the normal rate of 1940, which was £1 per week. Rates were not increased after 1940.

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,

A thick black horizontal bar redacting the signature of the sender.

Defence Business Services (Secretariat)