



Ministry  
of Defence

Ref: DBS/SEC/FOI201808416/ [REDACTED]

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Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your e-mail of 27 June, in response to our offer of further information from Defence Statistics regarding medical discharges and compensation claims for Multiple Sclerosis.

You confirmed you would like the following information:

- “1. *Numbers of personnel medically discharged from Service with MS between the financial years 1995/96 and 2016/17*
2. *Numbers of veterans who have registered a claim for compensation under the War Pension Scheme (WPS) for MS between the financial years 2003/04 and 2016/17, broken down by:*
  - a. *Those medically discharged from Service with MS, by outcome (awarded or rejected).*
  - b. *Those medically discharged from Service for other medical reasons, by outcome (awarded or rejected).*
  - c. *Those not medically discharged from Service, by outcome (awarded or rejected).*
3. *Numbers of Service personnel and veterans who have registered a claim for compensation under the Armed Forces and Reserve Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS) for MS since the start of the scheme, between the financial years 2005/06 and 2016/17, broken down by:*
  - a. *Those who made an in-Service claim, by outcome (awarded or rejected)*
  - b. *Those who made a post-Service claim, by outcome (awarded or rejected).”*

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

A search for the information has now been completed and I can confirm that all the information in scope of the request is held.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

In answer to question 1 - between 1 April 1995 and 31 March 2017, 161 Service personnel were medically discharged with a principal or contributory cause of multiple sclerosis.

In answer to question 2 - between 1 April 2003 and 31 March 2017, 392 former Service personnel made a claim under the War Pension Scheme (WPS) for multiple sclerosis, broken down as follows:

88 personnel were medically discharged with a principal or contributory cause of multiple sclerosis. All these claims were awarded.

14 personnel were medically discharged with a principal and contributory cause other than multiple sclerosis. Of these fewer than five were rejected.

198 personnel were not recorded as having been medically discharged. Of these, 141 claims were awarded and 57 claims were rejected.

Please note the remaining 92 personnel did not have a valid Service number recorded on the WPS data and it was not possible to identify whether they were medically discharged. Therefore, the number of WPS claimants identified above who were medically discharged should be treated as a minimum.

In answer to question 3 - between 6 April 2005 and 31 March 2017 there were nine in-Service claims for multiple sclerosis registered under the Armed Forces and Reserve Forces Compensation Scheme, all of which were rejected (as at 31 March 2018). 14 personnel registered a post-Service claim for multiple sclerosis, all of which were rejected as at 31 March 2018. Post-service claims include medical discharge claims.

Under Section 16 of the FOIA (Information and Assistance) it may be helpful if I explain that the MOD's position is that multiple sclerosis is a disorder whose cause is currently unknown.

### ***War Pension Scheme Data***

The War Pension Scheme (WPS) provides no-fault compensation for all ex-service personnel where illness, injury or death is caused by Service from the start of the First World War in 1914 up until 5 April 2005.

Figures provided are sourced from data stored on Defence Business Services' (DBS) War Pensions Computer System (WPCS). The dataset has been extracted using data as at 31 March 2017.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/war-pension-recipients-index>

### **Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS) data**

The AFCS came into force on 6 April 2005 to pay compensation for injury, illness or death attributable to Service that occurred on or after that date. It replaced the previous compensation arrangements provided by the War Pensions Scheme (WPS) and the attributable elements of the Armed Forces and Reserve Forces Pensions Scheme. Defence Statistics publish an annual National Statistic on claims and awards under the



AFCS. The latest AFCS National Statistic was published on 28 June 2018 (as at 31 March 2018).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/medical-discharges-among-uk-service-personnel-statistics-index>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/armed-forces-compensation-scheme-statistics-index>

AFCS data is sourced from the Compensation and Pension System (CAPS) which is administrated and managed by DBS Veterans UK.

Under the AFCS, an individual can make multiple claims. Where an individual has made multiple in-Service and post-Service claims, the individuals has been counted once under in-Service claims, and once under post-Service claims.

Please note that when an individual is medically discharged and has been considered eligible for an ill-health pension, DBS Veterans UK will automatically consider the principal medical condition leading to medical discharge to determine whether it is caused by service and therefore warrants an AFCS award. This will not happen if the individual already has an AFCS award for that condition or made an unsuccessful claim for an AFCS award for that condition.

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,



Defence Business Services  
Secretariat Team

