



# Ministry of Defence

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REF: DBS/SEC/FOI2018/10277/[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]  
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[REDACTED]  
August 2018

Thank you for your email to the Ministry of Defence (MOD) of 2 August, seeking information on bullying complaints raised by staff members.

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

You asked:

- “1. In the last three financial years (2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18, how many staff members employed working in your department have reported bullying by another staff member? I would be grateful if you could break down by year.*
- 2. How many of these incidents were dropped or withdrawn, and how many were formally investigated?*
- 3. Broken down again by the years above, I would be grateful if you could provide a full breakdown of incidents, including the job title of the alleged perpetrator and what the allegation was based on. Please also state what the outcome was. Should this exceed cost limit, please just provide this information requested in (3) for the financial year 2017-18 only”.*

I am writing to confirm that MOD holds some of the information in scope of your request. However, I should advise you that we will not be able to answer your request without exceeding the appropriate cost limit. This is because the data on the reasons for undergoing the grievance process are not held centrally. The staff effort required to locate and retrieve the information requested would exceed the appropriate cost limit and involve an estimated 71.5 hours at £25.00 per hour, of more than £1,788 worth of staff effort, and this is just for Financial Year 2017/2018.

Section 12 of the FOIA makes provision for public authorities to refuse requests for information where the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate cost limit, which for central government is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3.5 working days in determining whether the department holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting it.

Under Section 16 (Advice and Assistance) the MOD may be able to provide some information in scope of your request if you refine your request to bring the cost of compliance under the limit. You might wish to consider reducing the time period or limiting your request to a single department within the MOD.

Please be assured that the MOD takes harassment and bullying very seriously. You may find it of interest to know that the policy on harassment and bullying, Joint Service Publication 763 – The Bullying and Harassment Complaints Procedures can be found on the gov.uk website at the following link;

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/209888/JSP763\\_1\\_July\\_20113.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/209888/JSP763_1_July_20113.pdf)

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 black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the sender.

DBS Secretariat