



Ministry
of Defence

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Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your emails of 7 May in which you requested the following information:

How many people have committed suicide at Fort George at Ardersier in Scotland since it was built? How many of those were in The Black Watch since their residence there in 2007?

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 (MOD), and I can confirm that some information in scope of your request is held and has been provided below.

Between 1 January 1984 (earliest data held) and 21 May 2019, there were two coroner confirmed suicides among UK Armed Forces personnel at Fort George, Ardersier, Scotland. Of these, one was serving in the Black Watch since their residence at Fort George in 2007.

Under Section 16 of the Act (Advice and Assistance) you may find it helpful to note that Defence Statistics Health compiles the Department's authoritative deaths database for all UK Armed Forces personnel who died whilst in Service going back to 1984. Information is compiled from several internal and external sources from which a number of internal analyses and external National Statistics Notices are released. Statistical reports relating to the Armed Forces are available on the gov.uk website.

When providing statistics on suicides, Defence Statistics Health rely exclusively on the information provided by coroners in England and Wales and in Northern Ireland, and the Procurator Fiscal in Scotland. This ensures the Department's objectivity, as all accidental deaths and those resulting from violent action have to be referred to these officials for investigation. For sake of brevity these sources of information have been labelled collectively as "coroner's verdicts". In addition, Defence Statistics cross reference the information held against death certificate information available from NHS Digital and the General Registrar's Office (GRO). Location of death isn't consistently recorded and the data in this response includes those where a free text search of location of death refers to Fort George.

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,

Army secretariat