



Ministry
of Defence

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Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email received by the department on 27 April 2019 requesting the following information:

“I would like to know what your real numbers are. For suicide with British military veterans?”

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

I am writing to advise you that following a search of our recorded information, I have established that the information you requested on the numbers of suicide amongst UK Armed Forces veterans is not held by the Ministry of Defence.

Under Section 16 (advice and assistance) you may wish to note the following:

Although the MOD does not hold information on the causes of death of all UK Armed Forces veterans, information is held on certain cohorts of ex-Service personnel. The MOD has published information on the causes of mortality, including suicide among Veterans of the 1990/91 Gulf conflict and the Falklands conflict. The latest publications can be found on the Gov.uk website:

Causes of mortality among veterans of the 1990/91 Gulf conflict:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/causes-of-deaths-that-occurred-among-the-uk-veterans-of-the-199091-gulf-conflict>

Causes of mortality among veterans of the Falklands conflict:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/causes-of-deaths-among-the-uk-armed-forces-veterans-of-the-1982-falklands-campaign>

The MOD has also committed to undertake a new study to investigate causes of death, including suicide, amongst all those who served between 2001 and 2014, including those who deployed to operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. In addition, it was recently announced that the study will be extended to include the most recent service leavers and will be updated on an ongoing basis to provide real-time monitoring of suicides.

For serving personnel, the MOD publishes annual statistics on suicide and deaths in the UK Regular Armed Forces, the latest publication can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-armed-forces-suicide-and-open-verdict-deaths-index>

Suicide figures within the publications listed above are presented as rates to enable comparisons between groups over time, taking into account the differing number of personnel in a group (personnel at risk) at a particular point in time. For example, the number of events (i.e. suicides) is divided by the

number of personnel at risk and multiplied by 100,000 to calculate the rate of suicide for Regular Service personnel.

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

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