



Ministry
of Defence

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Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email received on 4 June 2019 requesting the following information:

“What is the average age of a British Gulf War veterans life span”.

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

Based on the subject header of your email request which was entitled “*Average age on death of a British Gulf War Veteran*” MOD has interpreted your request to be asking for average age at death for veterans of the 1990/91 Gulf War conflict.

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

As at 31 December 2015 the average age at death was **46 years**.

Please note the average age has been calculated based on the 3% of Gulf 1990/91 veterans who had died as at 31 December 2015. As this figure does not consider deaths which will occur in the future the average age at death will continue to increase as surviving members of the conflict age. The data presented does not include those who died as a direct result of the conflict.

Under section 16 of the Act (Advice and Assistance) you may find it useful to note:

The Gulf 1 mortality study compares the mortality rates of 53,409 UK Armed Forces personnel that deployed to the 1990/91 Gulf Conflict to those of a comparison group, the Era cohort. The Era cohort consists of 53,143 UK Armed Forces personnel of similar age, gender, Service, regular/reservist status and rank who were in Service on 1 January 1991 but did not deploy to the Gulf. The findings include deaths that occurred to personnel whilst in service and deaths that occurred after personnel had left the UK Armed Forces.

The latest publication and further information on the study can be found at:

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

Individuals in the Gulf cohort were identified by the MOD from administration sources. Information provided for each cohort member included date of birth. Date of death and cause of death information has been provided by NHS Digital (formerly known as the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC)) who now hold the England central patient registry and the General Register Office (GRO) for Scotland.

Individual ages at time of death were calculated using the date of birth and date of death. The overall average age was calculated using both the mean and the median as measures of central tendency, both of which showed average age as 46 years.

Information on average lifespan of the cohort would include projected life expectancy for the entire cohort of veterans of the 1990/91 Gulf War conflict, using information for surviving members of the cohort and those who have died. Please note that compiling the average lifespan would require over half of the cohort to have deceased.

If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance.

If you are not satisfied with this response or you wish to complain about any aspect of the handling of your request, then you should contact me in the first instance. If informal resolution is not possible and you are still dissatisfied then you may apply for 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 must be made within 40 working days of the date on which the attempt to reach informal resolution has come to an end.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may take your complaint to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website, <http://ico.org.uk>.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely

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