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07 October 2019

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
FOI2019/10571

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email dated 13 September 2019 requesting the following information:

"Can you tell me how many civilian and military staff employed at MPA Falklands Islands that have been passed by the SMO to work at the base that weigh over 120kgs currently and also have been passed to work or stay at the base over the past 7 years."

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. A search for the information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence, and I can confirm that information in scope of your request is held. Some of the information falls entirely within the scope of the absolute exemptions provided for at section 40 (Personal Data) of the FOIA and has been withheld.

Section 40(2) has been applied to some of the information to protect personal information as governed by the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR. In line with JSP200 Statistics Disclosure Guidance, numbers fewer than five are suppressed to reduce the possible inadvertent disclosure of individual identities. Section 40 is an absolute exemption and there is therefore no requirement to consider the public interest in making a decision to withhold the information.

Based on your previous correspondence dated 9th September 2019 we have interpreted your request to relate to numbers passed by the SMO to work at the base who weighed over 120kgs.

Of the UK Armed Forces personnel currently deployed or stationed<sup>1</sup> at MPA Falklands Islands, **eight** were recorded to have weighed over 120kg prior to their deployment or posting. Of the civilians currently employed at MPA Falklands Islands, **fewer than five** weighed over 120kg prior to their employment.

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<sup>1</sup> Deployment data is held up to 1 September 2019. Stationed data is held as at 1 April 2019.

Since August 2012, **159** UK Armed Forces personnel deployed or stationed<sup>1</sup> at MPA Falklands Islands weighed over 120kg prior to their deployment or posting. Information is not held on the weight of civilians employed on MPA Falklands Islands over the past seven years as medical records for employed civilians that have left MPA Falklands Islands are not retained.

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

#### Weight

Weight information was taken from the individual's electronic patient record held on the Defence Medical Information Capability Programme (DMICP). DMICP is the source of electronic, integrated healthcare records for primary healthcare and some MOD specialist care providers. DMICP was rolled out in 2007 and legacy medical data for currently serving personnel was migrated across during rollout. If information is entered as free text in the patient record, then it is not available in the data warehouse and would not be included in this response.

There may be a bias in the data provided as personnel who appear underweight or overweight may have their weight recorded more regularly than those personnel who appear to be of an ideal weight. Body Composition Measurement (BCM) is a measure of Body Mass Index (BMI) and waist circumference and is the primary measure used by MOD. Unlike BCM data, weight in kilograms is not routinely collected and Medical Officers (MO) may be biased to recording weight only when it poses a risk. MO may not update the medical record if the patient has since lost weight.

The most recent weight recorded before the date of deployment or posting was used, therefore the weight recorded may be out of date and personnel may not have been this weight when they deployed/posted. For personnel who weighed over 120kg, the time between the date their weight was recorded and the date of deployment/posting ranged from two days to 10 years.

Weight may be considered as a factor when reviewing an individual's fitness although it is not currently a limit in itself; other medical conditions and limitations must be considered. All personnel deploying to the MPA Falklands Islands should undertake a medical by a Senior Medical Officer (SMO) or Unit MO at their own Unit in the UK to ensure that they are fully fit to deploy. Stretcher weight limits at the MPA Falklands Islands affect the ability to safely aeromedically evacuate, this is considered by the Medical Officer. This response assumes that all personnel deployed or stationed at the Falklands have been passed by their SMO. For civilian employees, the Falkland Island Government send a letter to all potential employees who have been identified as having a weight of over 120kgs to ensure they are fully informed of the weight limits of the stretchers.

#### Population

Deployment data was derived from the Joint Personnel Administration (JPA) Move and Track system using the 'deployed country code' and 'deployed unit location' fields. Deployment data is held as at 1 September 2019. This represents the most recent data held.

Station location was used to identify personnel serving at the Falklands, in addition to those who were deployed. This data was sourced from JPA based on the 'Assignment Location' field. Figures are based on personnel's stationed location and not their location of residence. Personnel deployed on operations to an area away from their stationed location are shown against their most recent stationed location. Station location data is held as at 1 April 2019. This represents the most recent data held. Date of arrival is not held so the most recent weight before 1 April 2019 was used.

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](mailto: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/>.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely

Defence Statistics Health Head (B1)