



# Ministry of Defence Police

Freedom of Information Manager

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Our Ref: eCase: FOI2018/10299 RFI:318/19

Date: 23 September 2019

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Dear [REDACTED]

**FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000: MINISTRY OF DEFENCE POLICE:  
PROBATIONARY OFFICERS.**

I refer to your e-mail dated 5 September 2019, which was acknowledged on the same date.

We are treating your e-mail as a request for information in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA 2000).

In your e-mail you requested the following information:

- “1. I am writing to ask if it would be possible to please provide me the number of probationary officers currently within your force.  
2. If this could also be split by neighbourhood force area I would be very grateful. (i.e. location posting for your officers)”**

A search for information has now been completed by the Ministry of Defence Police and I can confirm that we do hold information in scope of your request.

We are determining a “probationer” as an officer currently in force who has completed less than two years service.

1. As of July 2019 – The Ministry of Defence Police have 499 probationary officers.
2. However, we need to advise you that the information for question 2 is being withheld. A public interest test has been carried out and we have concluded to withhold the information under the following exemptions.

Exemptions:

S24(1) – National Security  
S31(1)– Law Enforcement

Section 40(2) has been applied in order to protect personal information as governed by the Data Protection Act 1998. 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.

Sections 24, and 31 are prejudice qualified exemptions and there is a requirement to articulate the harm that would be caused in releasing the information on locations of officers.

Although there is a presumption of release under FOI, Section 24(1) applies as prior knowledge of the numbers of officers likely to be guarding a specific establishment would materially assist the planning of an armed attack or other form of disruption.

Although the department is committed to transparency and openness, Section 31(1) applies as Law enforcement applies because releasing information on Police numbers at specific locations could compromise law enforcement and security at that location and the security of those officers working at those sites.

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

**MDP Sec Freedom of Information Office**