



Defence Business Services
Secretariat Team
Room 6303
Tomlinson House
Norcross
Thornton-Cleveleys
Lancashire
FY5 3WP

Ref: [REDACTED]

E-mail: DBSRES-Secretariat@mod.gov.uk

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

14 February 2020

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email of 14 January 2019 requesting the following information:

“How many grievances have been received in the last 4 years against cso4 grades and above?”

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

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

However, Section 12 of the Act makes provision for public authorities to refuse requests for information where the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate limit, which for central government is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3.5 working days in determining whether the department holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting it.

This information is not held centrally so to answer the request would involve recalling 1,004 paper files from archives and cross referencing them against the MOD Human Resources Management System in order to locate, retrieve and extract this information. It is estimated that this would take in excess of 89 days of effort to complete, which would far exceed the cost limit.

Under Section 16 (Advice and Assistance), it may be helpful to explain that anybody who works for the MOD could travel to Northern Ireland, have an issue with a member of the NISGS and consequently raise a grievance against them. This means that when considering your request all grievances would need to be considered. However, I can confirm that the MOD may be able to provide some information should you consider refining your request by limiting it to staff based in Northern Ireland at the time a grievance was raised and by reducing the time period. Although it is not guaranteed that your refined request may fall within the cost limit, we would be happy to look at it again.

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,

Defence Business Services Secretariat