



Ministry
of Defence

Defence Statistics Health
Ministry of Defence
Oak 0 West (#6028)
Abbey Wood North
Bristol BS34 8JH
United Kingdom

Telephone: +44 (0)30679 84423

E-mail:

DefStrat-Stat-Health-PQ-FOI@mod.gov.uk

Reference: FOI2019/ 10395
[REDACTED]

2 October 2019

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email received on 30 August 2019 requesting the following information:

“Under The Freedom of Information Act the number of National Servicemen who served in Cyprus between April 1958 and November 1959, who are in receipt of a Veterans UK pension in respect of skin cancer:- Squamous Cell Carcinoma, Basal Cell Carcinoma and Actinic *Keratosi*s.”

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, and I can confirm that information in scope of your request is held by the MOD.

However, I have to advise you that we will not be able to answer your request without exceeding the appropriate limit. To provide a response would require over 35 days of effort. This is primarily due to the manual effort required to retrieve and extract archived personnel records to identify National Servicemen deployed to Cyprus between April 1958 and November 1959.

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.

The MOD may be able to provide some information in scope of your request if you reduce or refine your request to bring the cost of compliance under the limit.

Under Section 16 (Advice and Assistance) you may find it helpful to note the following:

The MOD will consider providing the following:

Information on all veterans aged 79 and over¹, who were in receipt of a War Pension as at 31 March 2019, that had claimed compensation for skin cancer, and specifically Squamous Cell Carcinoma, Basal Cell Carcinoma and Actinic Keratosis. Note that the MOD is unable to determine current War Pensioners who deployed to Cyprus during National Service, as per Section 12 of the FOI Act.

The War Pension Scheme (WPS) provides no-fault compensation for all ex-service personnel where illness, injury or death is caused by Service from the start of the First World War in 1914 up until 5 April 2005. The WPS is managed by the Ministry of Defence (MOD) with all

¹ Veterans who served in Cyprus between April 1958 and November 1959 are estimated to be aged 79 years or older as at 31 March 2019.

compensation claims administered by Defence Business Services (DBS) Veterans UK. Electronic WPS information is held on the War Pension Computer System (WPCS).

Defence Statistics publish an annual National Statistic on claims and awards under the WPS:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/war-pension-recipients-index>

The latest update was published on 27 June 2019 (as at 31 March 2019).

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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