

# Background Quality Report

## Introduction

The numbers of civilian personnel employed by the Ministry of Defence (MOD) are published on a biannual basis as a National Statistic. These data are accompanied by Official Statistics on Diversity and Performance Management outcomes on the MOD page of [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk).

### Biannual Civilian Personnel Report (BCPR)

**Link** [Biannual Civilian Personnel Report \(BCPR\) - index page](#)

**Type:** National Statistic

**Frequency:** Biannual (data as at April and October)

**Details:** Presents the numbers, intake and outflow of all civilian personnel employed by the Ministry of Defence. The published figures are mainly counts of numbers (strengths) and movements (flows) of civilian personnel for a range of categories.

Publications up to October 2018 were issued on quarterly basis and can be found at:

**Link** [Quarterly Civilian Personnel Report \(QCPR\) - index page](#)

### Civilian Personnel Diversity Dashboard

**Link** [Civilian Personnel Diversity Dashboard - index page](#)

**Type:** Official Statistic

**Frequency:** Biannual (data as at April and October)

**Details:** Presents figures on diversity declaration and representation of minority groups of civilian personnel employed by MOD Main TLBs of the Ministry of Defence.

**Link** [Civilian Performance Management Outcomes - index page](#)  
**Type:** Official Statistic  
**Frequency:** Annual (August based on data for annual report period)  
**Details:** Presents numbers on the performance management outcomes for civilian personnel employed by Ministry of Defence.

## Relevance

*This section is about the degree to which the statistical product meets user needs in both coverage and content.*

### Civilian personnel strength and flows data:

The main users of the civilian personnel statistics are the MOD's Defence Resources and DCDS Personnel and Training who use these statistics to monitor staffing levels and inform policy. The tables published have been developed in consultation with these customers to ensure they fully meet their needs. The statistics have been used to monitor the reduction in personnel numbers as part of the Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR). However, the publications have a multitude of uses by various interested parties, both internally and external to the department.

### Civilian personnel diversity data:

This statistical release presents figures on diversity declaration and representation of minority groups of civilian personnel employed by the Ministry of Defence Top Level Budgetary areas (MOD Main). Published in April 2012 for the first time, the creation of the Diversity Dashboard is to meet the Departments obligations under Public Sector Equality Duty to provide information on its workforce in relation to the protected characteristics identified by the Equality Act 2010.

### Civilian personnel performance data:

In 2017/2018, the MoD introduced a new Performance Management framework. The objective of the review was to introduce a Performance Management process which was fairer and more effective motivating. The intent behind Performance Management for MOD and the recent policy changes has been to establish honest and accurate assessments of achievement, strengths and development needs for all Job Holders.

These statistics are also used to answer Parliamentary questions and Freedom of Information requests relating to civilian personnel numbers.

## Timeliness and Punctuality

*This section reports on the time gap between publication and the reference period (timeliness) and the gap between planned and actual publication dates (punctuality).*

The monthly extracts for civilian strengths, flows and diversity are taken from HRMS on the first calendar day and made available to the production team within 10 working days. The validation and editing takes around one week and production of the statistics and publications a further week. The aim is to publish the BCPR statistics on a biannual basis, within one month of data being made available. Diversity Dashboard statistics are published on a biannual basis, within two months of the data being available.

The publication dates of these reports are pre-announced, in line with the Official Statistics Code of practice on the [Publication Release Dates section](#) of [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk).

The individuals who have 24 hour pre-release access to Ministry of Defence's key national and official statistics publications can be found on [Defence Statistics pre-release access lists](#).

The following table provides provisional publication dates for the Civilian personnel publications.

<b>Publication</b>	<b>Situation Date</b>	<b>Provisional Publication Dates</b>
Biannual Civilian Personnel Report (BCPR)	1 April 2020	May 2020
	1 October 2020	November 2020
	1 April 2021	May 2021
	1 October 2021	November 2021
Biannual Diversity Dashboard	1 April 2020	June 2020
	1 October 2020	November 2020
	1 April 2021	May 2021
	1 October 2021	November 2021

## Accessibility and Clarity

*This section reports on the: ease with which users are able to access the data and the format in which the data are available and the availability of supporting information (accessibility); and the quality and sufficiency of the metadata, illustrations and accompanying advice (clarity).*

The BCPR, Diversity Dashboard and Civilian Performance Outcomes are all published on Defence Statistics at [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) and are available as pdf's. The data tables are also available as Excel sheets. The publications are accompanied by notes explaining the categories and definitions used and the main changes that have impacted the statistics. Detailed analysis and commentary are provided in the publications and identify some of the notable features of these data.

In line with the current regulations on the [accessibility requirements for public sector bodies](#), from September 2020 the BCPR and Diversity Dashboard will be produced in HTML format, with data tables also available in Excel and OpenDocument Spreadsheet formats.

## Methodology and Production

The published figures are mainly counts of numbers (strengths) and movements (flows) of civilian personnel for a range of categories.

The strength figures are reported as **Full Time Equivalent (FTE)**. This is preferable to headcount for civilian personnel as it enables fair comparison with Service figures, where working part-time does not occur, and provides a better indication of the person hours available and salary costs. FTE is calculated from the contractually agreed number of hours worked per week divided by the number of hours per week which constitute full-time for the grade and location (this varies according to whether Industrial or Non-Industrial grade, and whether on the London or National pay scale).

Flows are measured using **Headcount** as users of the statistics are more interested in monitoring the number of new recruits and departures from the Department, rather than the FTE of these flows, and further, because changes in the working hours of personnel between periods render FTE flows unable to be reconciled with strengths. Diversity representation is also only appropriate to be presented as headcount, as this relates to the number of personnel to whom protected characteristics apply, not to the number of hours per week worked.

With the exception of gender and age all protected characteristic fields on HRMS are voluntary fields such as disability status, ethnicity, religion and sexual orientation. Civilian personnel complete these based on their self-perceptions, but are under no obligation to complete these fields. It is not possible for Defence Statistics to assess the accuracy or consistency of the declarations made by individuals within these fields.

## Accuracy and Reliability

*This section is about the differences between the estimates and the unknown true values.*

Data for civilians within MOD Main and Defence Equipment & Support Trading Entity are derived from the MOD's Human Resources Management System (HRMS). Basic data validation is conducted as part of the acceptance of the monthly extract prior to it being made available to the production team through ATHENA, a custom designed database for holding the time series of monthly civilian extracts. More detailed validation is then undertaken on the breakdowns of individual fields (including ethnicity, disability, gender, TLB, grade), and comparisons between the current and previous month's figures. The consistency of gains, losses and inter-TLB transfers is also checked. Unusual variations are identified and investigated to identify explanations/reasons for the changes. In instances where our investigations detect data issues we take action with DBS to correct the data. The validation process focuses on the areas where problems with the data have been detected in the past.

Trading Funds and Executive Agency data come from the validated personnel systems of the individual trading funds and executive agencies, and Royal Fleet Auxiliary data are sourced directly from their HR system 'Magellan'. The data are validated along the same lines as for MOD Main civilian personnel, but RFA data are not input onto the ATHENA database. No further validation of this data is undertaken.

Locally engaged civilians (LEC) data are provided by the main budgetary area of the MOD responsible for them. Improvements in the way in which LEC information is recorded have meant the actual FTE of part-time LECs are now available. As such, from January 2012 onwards LEC figures use these actual values where possible. Previously published LEC FTE figures from April 2010 to October 2011 were not revised as the impact was minimal compared to the resource required, so previous LEC FTE figures therefore assume a 0.5 FTE for all part-time personnel. The data are validated along the same lines as for MOD Main civilian personnel. In the event of data being unavailable, the appropriate figures from the previous quarter point are carried forward as estimates. These estimates are not revised once actual figures become available, as late deliveries of data are typically from small TLBs and the impact is minimal. However, if at a later date validation errors of a substantial impact are revealed then figures are revised.

To reflect the different terms and conditions of LEC personnel, UK dependents are not included in LEC figures from October 2013. Prior to this dependents of UK military personnel or UK-based civilian staff employed in overseas theatre (who were sometimes identified as UK dependents) had been included in LEC totals.

There was an HRMS reset of the disability field on 18 April 2011 to accommodate the new disability reporting requirements to match 2011 Census definitions. Insufficient numbers of personnel have made disability declarations since the reset to be able to report civilian disability representation rates with any validity from July 2011 to April 2019. During this time to enable reporting of disability figures to meet the MOD's obligations under the public sector equality duty (PSED) and to provide some indication of the *numbers* of disabled people within the MOD, we have agreed to report numbers of people declared as disabled only when the numbers of people who have not declared their status is also reported. Since the declaration rates have now met the 60 per cent threshold, representation rates for disability will be reported from April 2019 onwards.

## Performance, Cost and Respondent Burden

*This section is about the effectiveness, efficiency and economy of the statistical output*

Value for money is sought by ensuring that these publications serve the customer requirement through review processes. This ensures the minimum production time is required, thus keeping production costs to a minimum and ensuring data are as timely as possible.

## Confidentiality, Transparency and Security

*This section is about the procedures and policy used to ensure sound confidentiality, security and transparent practices.*

### Confidentiality

All published outputs are counts of individuals in particular groupings. Disclosure control is applied to statistical or numeric information to safeguard the confidentiality of individuals. 'Disclosure control' refers to the efforts made to reduce the risk of disclosure, such as applying statistical methods to protect 'personally identifiable information' (PII) in aggregate data tables. These safeguards can take many forms (e.g. data suppression, rounding, recoding etc.).

An updated MOD Disclosure Control and Rounding policy has been published on GOV.UK and this policy has been applied to MOD civilian personnel statistics. The policy is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/defence-statistics-policies>

## Transparency

The outputs identify any issues or caveats relating to the data or statistics. This quality report provides further information on the method, production process and quality of the output.

## Security

All staff involved in the production process have signed the Data Protection Act; all MOD, Civil Service and data protection regulations are adhered to. These data are stored, accessed and analysed using the MOD's restricted network and IT systems, and the access to raw data is password protected.

## Assessment of user needs

Defence statistics has worked closely with our customers to ensure the civilian personnel statistics meets their needs. The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated that the 'Biannual Civilian Personnel Report' as National Statistics in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

The process of determining compliance with the Code and designation as National Statistics is known as Assessment. Details of this assessment can be found at:

<https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/publication/statistics-on-uk-defence-personnel/>

The UK Statistics Authority produces the 'Code of practice for statistics' which provides producers of official statistics with the detailed practices they must commit to when producing and releasing official statistics.

The Code ensures that the statistics published by government serve the public. When producers of official statistics comply with the Code, it gives users of statistics and citizens confidence that published government statistics are of public value, are high quality and are produced by people and organisations that are worthy of trust.

Details can be found at:

<https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/code-of-practice/>

## Frequency of publications relating to Civilian Personnel

Defence Statistics (Civilian) completed a consultation on reducing publication of QCPR from quarterly to twice a year for the following reasons:

- a. The information could still be provided to internal customers, but published less frequently, reducing the time spent on ministerial submissions and report commentary.
- b. To ensure best use of resource in a context of tightening resources and high levels of internal demand for analysis to contribute to improvements in the effectiveness and efficiency of the Armed Forces.
- c. To free up resource to spend on reactive ad hoc analysis to meet our policy customers' requirements.

Defence Statistics concluded that this would not have a significant detrimental impact on transparency, accountability or informing public debate. The consultation ran from 21 April 2017 to 2 June 2017.

Following the conclusion of the consultation this publication is now published twice a year at April and October points.

The consultation process was in line with the UK Statistics Authority Code of Practice for Official Statistics and the Civil Service Consultation Principles (2016).

Details of the proposed changes and results can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/changes-to-ministry-of-defence-mod-personnel-statistics>

## Rounding

Where rounding has been used, totals and sub-totals have been rounded separately and so may not equal the sums of their rounded parts. When rounding to the nearest 10, numbers ending in "5" have been rounded to the nearest multiple of 20 to prevent systematic bias.

All percentages are calculated from headcount totals (part time equivalent to one person), from unrounded figures and are shown to 1 decimal place.



## Coherence and Comparability

*This section examines: the degree to which data are derived from different sources or methods, but refer to the same topic, are similar (coherence); and the degree to which data can be compared over time and domain (comparability).*

In 2004 following changes in employment legislation and a requirement to better plan for the future of the civilian workforce, definitions were changed to better reflect human resources methods and policies. Two levels of civilian were introduced:

- **Level 0**, contains all those at Level 1 plus DE&S Trading Entity, Trading Funds, Executive Agencies and LEC's. This is used for external reporting, including National Statistics publications, Strategic Defence and Security Review Baseline and Parliamentary business.
- **Level 1**, includes Top Level Budgetary areas (TLBs), Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA), but excludes Defence Equipment & Support (DE&S) Trading Entity, Trading Funds, Executive Agencies, and Locally engaged civilians (LECs). This is generally used for MOD internal reporting and planning.

Summary table:

	Civilian Level 0	Civilian Level 1	MOD main personnel (strength)	Civilian personnel (Intake/Outflow)
Top Level Budgetary area (TLB)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA)	✓	✓		
DE&S Trading Entity	✓			✓
Trading Funds & Executive Agencies	✓			
Locally engaged civilians (LEC)	✓			

Structural changes have occurred during the time-series covered by MOD civilian personnel statistics. In some cases this means that figures are not directly comparable across the whole period. To aid understanding of these changes and how they have impacted upon the figures the detail of these changes is provided here:

- i. As at 1 April 2018 approximately 1,160 posts transferred out of DE&S Trading Entity to form Defence Nuclear Organisation (DNO) as an Executive Agency, additionally approximately 80 personnel within DG Nuclear also transferred to DNO, moving from Level 1 to Level 0 reporting.
- ii. As at 1 April 2018, approximately 400 posts forming the Defence Electronics Components Agency (DECA) previously reported in Head Office & Corporate Services (HO&Cs) within Level 1 were reported separately as an Executive Agency within level 0, for improved consistency and transparency of data reporting.
- iii. Rates are the number of people who join or leave the Department per 100 of the average headcount strength, but all flows exclude the effect of net transfers between MOD Main TLBs, DE&S and Trading Funds. Due to the re-categorisation of Defence Equipment & Support to a Bespoke Trading Entity, the intake and outtake flows will contain only a proportion of these data (dependent in the time period being considered). To effectively compensate for this, these data have been weighted accordingly via average strength.

## References

	Reference	Website location
1	gov.uk	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/">https://www.gov.uk/</a>
2	Biannual Civilian Personnel Report (BCPR)	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/mod-biannual-civilian-personnel-statisticsindex">https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/mod-biannual-civilian-personnel-statisticsindex</a>
3	Quarterly Civilian Personnel Report (QCPR)	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/mod-civilian-personnel-quarterly-statistics-index">https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/mod-civilian-personnel-quarterly-statistics-index</a>
4	Biannual Diversity Dashboard	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/mod-diversity-dashboard-index">https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/mod-diversity-dashboard-index</a>
5	Performance Management Outcomes	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/mod-civilian-performance-management-outcomes">https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/mod-civilian-performance-management-outcomes</a>
6	Civilian Personnel Sickness Absence Annual Report	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/mod-civilian-sickness-absence-annual-statistics-index">https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/mod-civilian-sickness-absence-annual-statistics-index</a>
7	MOD statistics pre-release access list	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/defence-statistics-pre-release-access-list">https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/defence-statistics-pre-release-access-list</a>
8	Defence Statistics Policies	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/defence-statistics-policies">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/defence-statistics-policies</a>
9	UK Statistics Authority – Assessment Reports	<a href="https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/publication/statistics-on-uk-defence-personnel/">https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/publication/statistics-on-uk-defence-personnel/</a>
10	Code of practice for statistics	<a href="https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/code-of-practice/">https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/code-of-practice/</a>
11	Frequency of Quarterly Civilian Personnel Report (QCPR) Publication	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/changes-to-ministry-of-defence-mod-personnel-statistics">https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/changes-to-ministry-of-defence-mod-personnel-statistics</a>

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Defence Statistics welcome feedback on this Background Quality Report or any of the statistics mentioned.