



Defence Business Services
DBS Secretariat Team
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DBSRES-Secretariat@mod.gov.uk

Ref: FOI2020/04282

Mr

24 April 2020

E Mail:

Dear Mr

Thank you for your email of 28 March 2020 requesting the following information:

Could you please provide the locations of all VPAC and the numbers in each committee based of previous service and ranks.

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 some of the information in scope of your request is held.

The information you have requested falls entirely within the scope of an absolute exemption under Section 21 (Information reasonably accessible by other means) of the FOI Act. Section 21(1) has been applied as the information is already available in the public domain and therefore reasonably accessible to you at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/veterans-advisory-and-pensions-committees-x13/about>

As this is an absolute exemption there is no requirement to consider the public interest when making a decision to withhold the information.

Under Section 16 of the FOI Act (Advice and Assistance) you may find it helpful to be aware that the VAPC is a Non-Departmental Public Body which is divided into thirteen regional committees covering the whole of the UK, Eastern, East Midlands, East Scotland, London, Northern Ireland, North East, North West, South East, South West, Wales, West Midlands, West Scotland, Yorks and Humber.

Each Committee is led by a Chair and is allowed up to 20 members (including the Chair).

Although some of the VAPC members have a service background it is not an essential requirement of the role. As such no records are held by the Department pertaining to any service they may or may not have undertaken. When new appointments are advertised some knowledge of service life is listed as a desirable quality but it is not an essential requirement. It is the individual's interest in assisting Veterans which is considered to be the most important factor.

You may also wish to be aware that there is an extensive recruitment campaign ongoing as well as re-appointments for those members who have served three years. Once the recruitment process is complete, the information provided in the link above will be updated with the new members.

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