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Ref: FOI2020/03671

Dear

Thank you for your email of 17 February 2020 to the Ministry of Defence (MOD), seeking the following information:

*“The 1962 GSM was issued with the service person's name, rank, service number and of regiment inscribed on the medal edge.*

*This indicates that it may be possible to extract the number of GSM's issued to UDR personnel thus giving a fairly accurate starting figure for the number of men and women who first enlisted into that regiment.*

*The UDR was in service from 1970 to 1992 when it merged to create the Royal Irish Regiment.*

*Under the FOI legislation, would you be able to obtain that figure easily and publish it in response to this request?”*

Additionally, thank you for your further email of 13 March 2020 clarifying the following:

*“I would be grateful to receive data for UDR personnel being awarded the GSM 1962 with Northern Ireland clasp.”*

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 all the information in scope of your request is held. However, I have to advise you that as the specific information requested is not held centrally, we would not be able to answer your questions without exceeding the appropriate limit.

Section 12 of the FOI 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, locating it, retrieving it and extracting it.

In order to fully answer your questions, we would be required to recall over 14,375 Service records and each would all have to be interrogated to establish which would be in scope of the

your request. To recall the records it has been estimated that it would take in the region on 1,200 hours. At the rate of £25 per hour, this action alone would equate to over £30,000 of effort, exceeding the appropriate cost limit.

However, under Section 16 (Advice and Assistance), the Department may be able to provide some information in the scope of your request if you were to refine your request by specifying a time period which could significantly reduce the number of cases to be examined. Although it is not guaranteed that your refined request may fall within the cost limit, we would be happy to look at it again.

As I am sure you will appreciate, the Government's contingency planning for the COVID-19 crisis is currently affecting the Department's ability to respond to correspondence and requests as quickly as we would like and as such there may be delays in providing responses and processing further requests. I would, therefore, ask for your patience and understanding during this difficult time.

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](mailto: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