



# Ministry of Defence

## Annual Location Statistics (ALS)

1 April 2020

This statistical release presents figures on the National and International locations of all UK Regular Forces personnel and MOD Civilian personnel.

The tables present information on the stationed location of all UK Regular service and Civilian personnel by UK Unitary Authority and Local Authority Area, as well as global locations.

Data are presented for each Service by Officer / Other Ranks breakdown, and for Civilian personnel by non industrial / industrial breakdown (including Trading Funds and Locally Engaged Civilians).

### Key Points and Trends

<b>▲ 139,250</b>	<b>Strength of UK Regular Forces in UK</b> at 1 April 2020 <i>An increase of 3,060 compared with 1 April 2019</i>
<b>▼ 6,050</b>	<b>Strength of UK Regular Forces overseas</b> at 1 April 2020 <i>a decrease of 2,170 compared with 1 April 2019</i>
<b>▲ 51,830</b>	<b>Strength of MOD Civilian personnel in UK</b> at 1 April 2020 <i>an increase of 1,480 compared with 1 April 2019</i>
<b>▼ 4,480</b>	<b>Strength of MOD Civilian personnel located overseas</b> at 1 April 2020 <i>A decrease of 810 when compared with 1 April 2019</i>
<b>▼ 540</b>	<b>Strength of UK Regular Forces in Germany</b> at 1 April 2020 <i>a decrease of 2,310 compared with 1 April 2019</i>
<b>▲ 38,150</b>	<b>Largest UK Region concentration of UK Regular Forces is in South East UK</b> at 1 April 2020 <i>an increase of 145 compared with 1 April 2019</i>
<b>▲ 20,730</b>	<b>Largest UK region concentration of MOD Civilian personnel is in South West UK</b> at 1 April 2020 <i>an increase of 1,470 compared with 1 April 2019</i>

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Background quality report: [www.gov.uk/government/statistics/tri-service-personnel-bulletin-background-quality-reports](http://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/tri-service-personnel-bulletin-background-quality-reports)

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MOD Civilian personnel by Region	page 4	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/location-of-all-uk-regular-service-and-civilian-personnel">service-and-civilian-personnel</a>
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## Introduction

This statistical release presents figures on the National and International locations of all UK Regular Forces personnel and MOD Civilian personnel.

Certain Military and Civilian figures have been revised due to data processing errors. In particular, Civilian rounding methodology has been updated to be consistent with Military rounding. Please refer to the section on rounding on page 8 for further information on the rounding methodology.

The basing of the UK Forces is changing. The Strategic Defence and Security Review 2010 (SDSR) outlined a number of recommendations to transform the UK Forces in order to face current threats. These recommendations aim to restructure the UK Armed Forces and rationalise the Defence estate. This has instigated a number of more detailed plans including the Regular Army Basing Plan.

There are a number of planned modifications to the structure and way each of the Services would operate, with a focus on creating a versatile Force. The modifications include the decisions to reconfigure the Army by reducing it from six to five multi-role brigades. The Royal Air Force (RAF) structure will focus around fewer Fast Jet platforms with increasing numbers of Unmanned Air Vehicles and an improved strategic Air Transport Fleet. Additionally, the British Forces personnel currently based in Germany will be relocated back in the UK. These changes are planned to come into effect by 2020 and will consequently impact on basing both overseas and in the UK. On 23rd November 2015, the Ministry of Defence published the National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015. SDSR 2015 outlines plans to uplift the size of the Regular Armed Forces, setting targets for a strength of 82,000 for the Army, 30,450 for Royal Navy/Royal Marines and 31,750 for Royal Air Force by 2020.

**UK Regular Forces** - Figures are for UK Regular Forces (including both Trained and Untrained personnel), and therefore exclude Gurkhas, Full Time Reserve Service personnel and mobilised reservists. Royal Navy / Royal Marines personnel on sea service are included against the local authority containing the home port of their ship. RAF Other Ranks serving in the South Atlantic are shown against the location containing their home base.

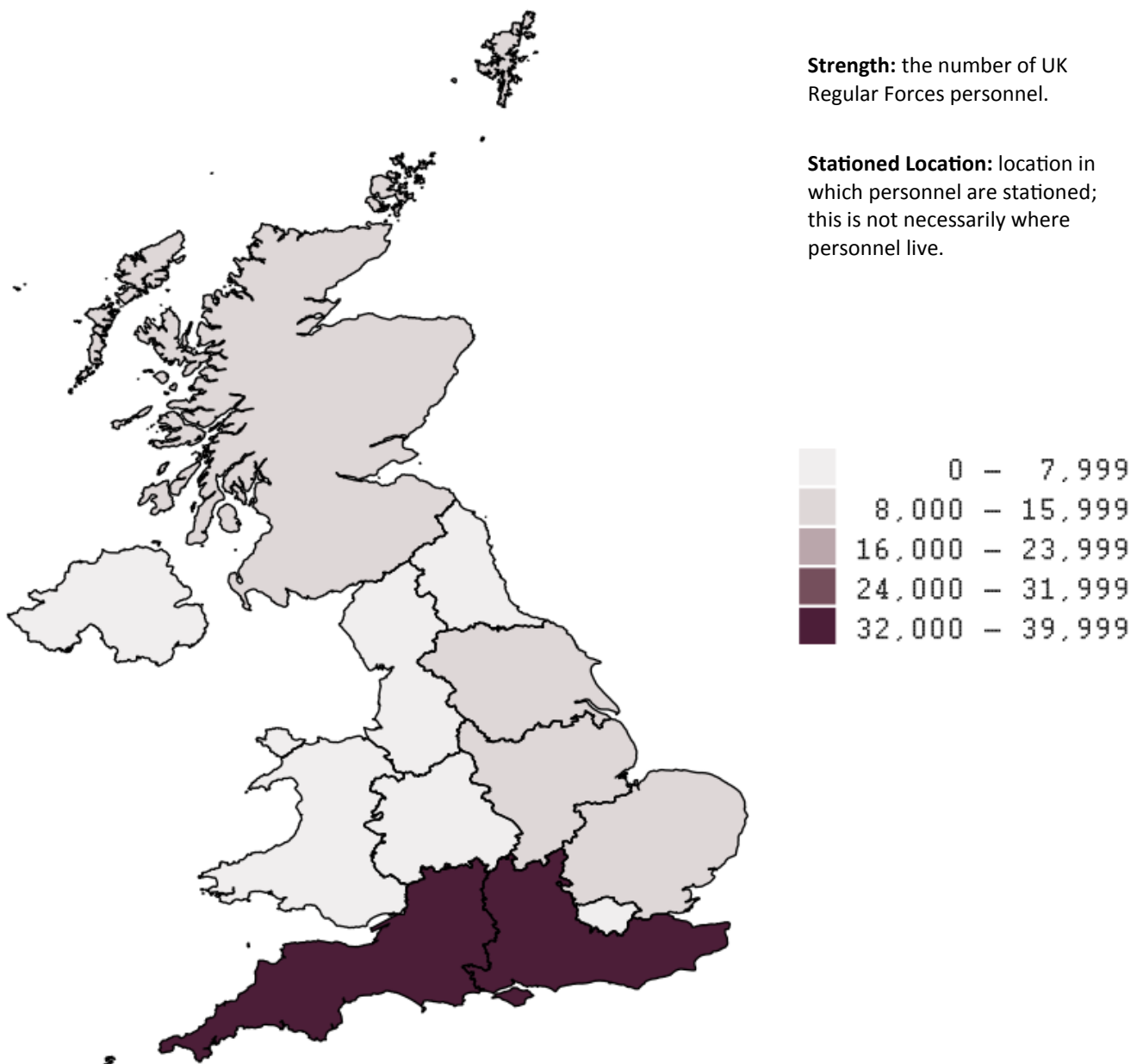
**MOD Civilian personnel** - Civilian figures are reported as Full Time Equivalent (FTE). FTE is a measure of the size of the workforce taking into account that some people work part-time. Part-time staff are counted according to the number of hours they work per week as a proportion of normal hours for their grade and location.

## UK Regular Forces by Region

The majority of Service personnel are located in the South East and South West of the UK with 38,150 and 37,100 personnel, respectively. The fewest personnel are located in the North East with 1,070 personnel. The largest decrease between 1 April 2019 and 1 April 2020 was in the East of England with a decrease of 200. The largest increase between 1 April 2019 and 1 April 2020 was in the South West with a increase of 2,020.

A time series of United Kingdom Regular strengths can be found in the [accompanying tables](#).

**Figure 1: Distribution of UK Regular Personnel by Region as at 1 April 2020**



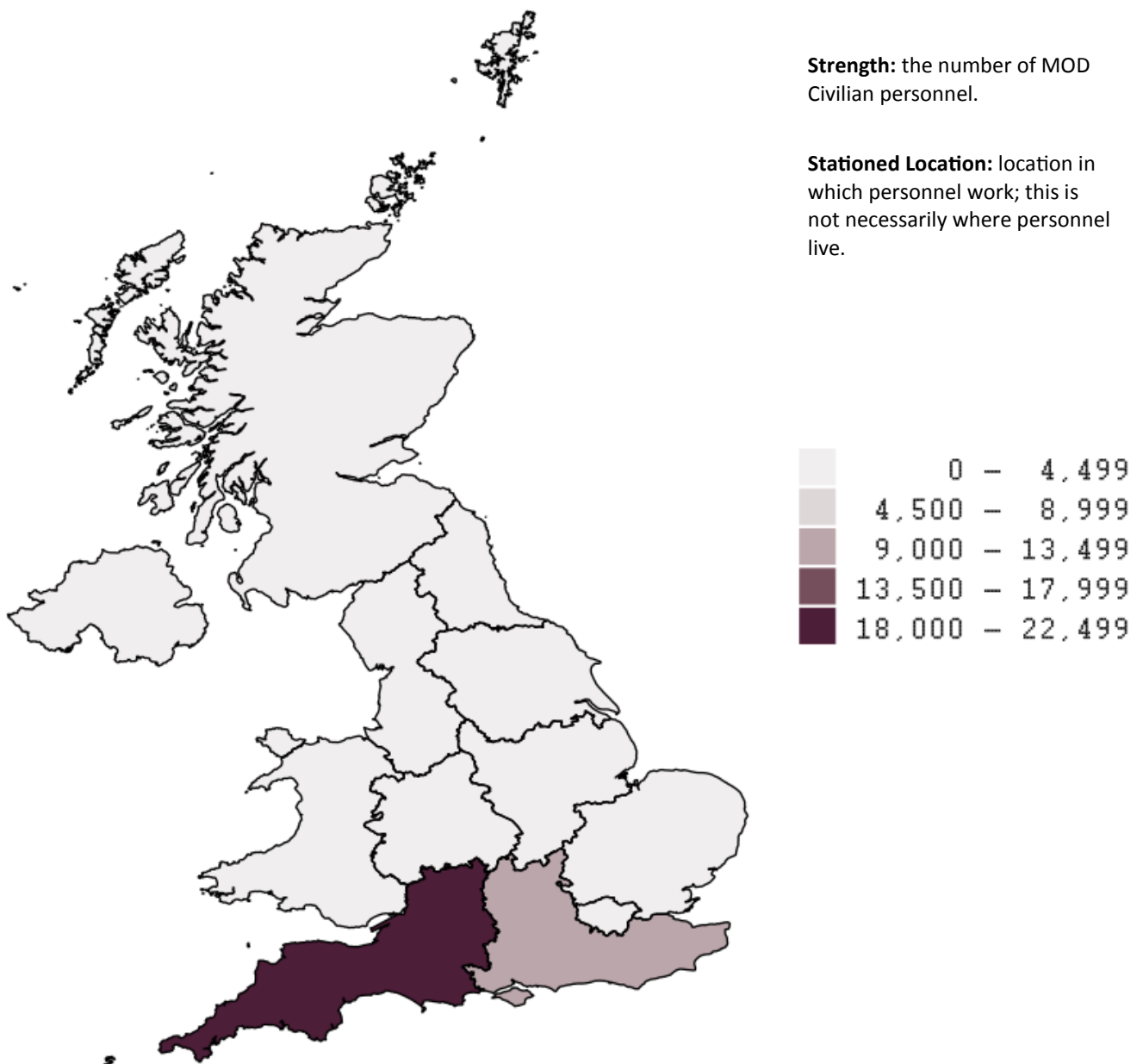
UK Boundary Source: Office for National Statistics licensed under the Open Government Licence v.3.0. Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right [2018].

## MOD Civilian personnel by Region

The majority of MOD Civilians are located in the South West and South East of the UK with 20,730 and 9,740 civilians, respectively. The fewest civilians are located in the North East with 220 civilians. The largest increase in civilians between 1 April 2019 and 1 April 2020 was in the South West with an increase of 1,460 civilians. The largest decrease between 1 April 2019 and 1 April 2020 was in Yorkshire and The Humber with a decrease of 320.

A time series of United Kingdom Civilian strengths can be found in the [accompanying tables](#).

**Figure 2: Distribution of MOD Civilian Personnel by Region as at 1 April 2020**



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## Worldwide Strengths

The restructuring of Defence and the changing world picture is having an impact on both Regular and Civilian worldwide strengths. The strength of UK Regular Forces stationed overseas decreased from 8,220 to 6,050 (26.4 per cent) between 1 April 2019 and 1 April 2020. Over the same period, the number of MOD Civilian personnel based overseas decreased from 5,290 to 4,480 (15.2 per cent).

A time series of world wide strengths can be found in the [accompanying tables](#).

### Germany Drawdown

#### Background

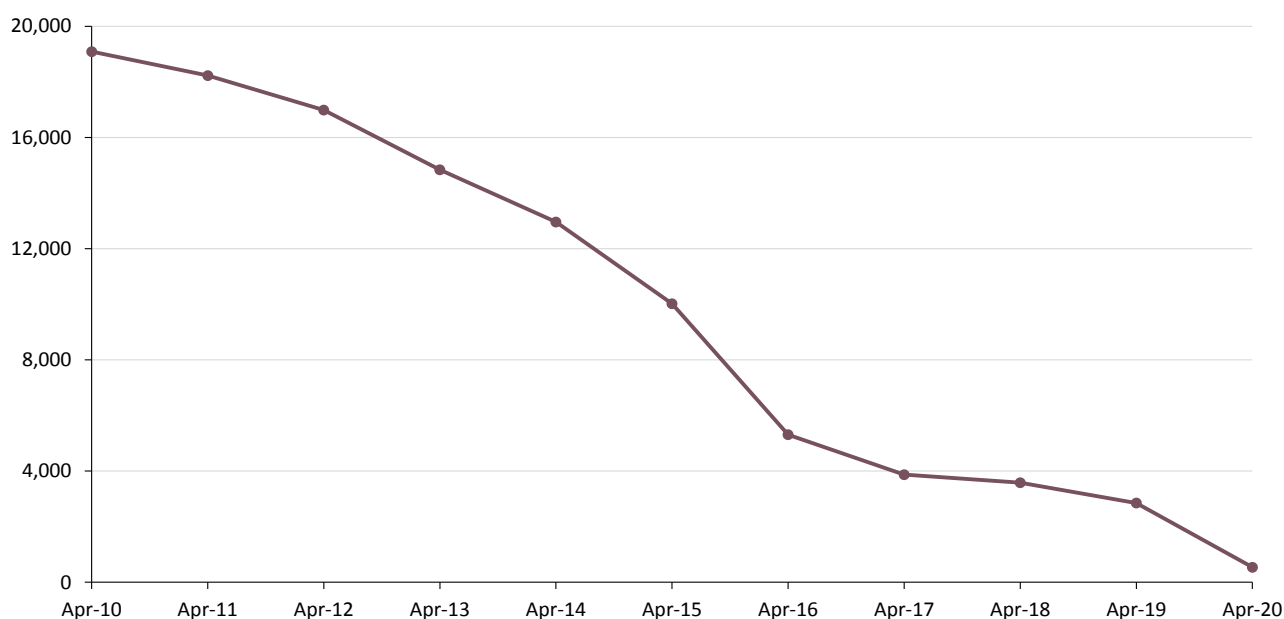
SDSR 2010 announced that while the presence of the British military in Germany has played an important role in demonstrating Alliance solidarity, there was no longer any operational requirement for UK forces to be based there, so the aim was to withdraw forces from Germany by 2020.

The Germany drawdown aims to see half of the approximate 20,000 personnel relocated by 2015 and the remainder by 2020, with the exclusion of approximately 200 Army, RN and RAF personnel who will remain in Exchange and Liaison posts. This will end UK military basing in Germany. The greatest impact will be in the Army, who, as at 1 April 2010, accounted for 98.4 per cent of the personnel stationed in Germany.

#### Strength Change

UK Armed Forces Regular personnel stationed in Germany have been declining over the past ten years, shown in Figure 3 below. The strength has fallen from 19,100 as at 1 April 2010 to 540 as at 1 April 2020, a decrease of 18,560. The largest decrease was between 1 April 2015 and 1 April 2016 with over 4,500 personnel leaving Germany.

**Figure 3: UK Regular Personnel stationed in Germany from 1 April 2010 to 1 April 2020**



#### Note:

Figures are for UK Regular Forces (including both Trained and Untrained personnel), and therefore exclude Gurkhas, Full Time Reserve Service personnel and mobilised reservists.

## Unitary and Local Authority Changes

The restructuring of Defence and the Defence Estate is having an impact on both Regular and Civilian distribution across Unitary and Local Authorities in the UK.

### **Northern Ireland**

There has been a change in structure of Northern Ireland Districts with some Districts grouped together during the 2015-16 financial year.

### **England**

There was a change in Local Authority name in April 2018 from Shepway to Folkestone and Hythe.

As at 1 April 2020, there were merges of Local Authorities that occurred since 1 April 2019:

- West Suffolk District Council was merged from Forest Heath District Council and St Edmundsbury Borough Council.
- East Suffolk District Council was merged from Suffolk Coastal District Council and St Waveney District Council.
- Somerset West and Taunton District Council was merged from West Somerset District Council and Taunton Deane District Council .
- The Unitary Authority of Dorset was merged from the districts of East Dorset, North Dorset, Weymouth and Portland, Purbeck, West Dorset, and North Dorset.
- The Unitary Authority of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole was merged from the Unitary Authorities of Bournemouth and Poole, and Christchurch District.

### **Trading Funds**

The Trading Funds total as at 1 April 2020 was 7,290, an increase of 720 personnel (11.0 per cent) compared with 1 April 2019. The increased civilian numbers reflect increases in specific business areas, including Strategic Command, Defence Infrastructure Organisation, Head Office and Corporate Services, Defence Equipment and Support, Defence Science and Technology Laboratory and the Defence Nuclear Organisation.

There was a large reduction in Trading Funds strength between 1 January 2015 and 1 April 2015. This was driven by the privatisation of Defence Support Group and the transfer of 2,000 personnel as at 1 April 2015. Approximately 450 personnel were retained with the Department as the Defence Electronic Components Agency (DECA) within Head Office and Corporate Services.

## Data Sources and Notes

UK Regular Forces data are sourced from the Joint Personnel Administration (JPA) system. Location data are based on the stationed location of the individual as recorded in the 'Assignment Location' field of the JPA system. The figures are based on Service personnel's stationed location and not their location of residence - where personnel work isn't necessarily where they live. Personnel deployed on operations to an area away from their stationed location are shown against their most recent stationed location.

MOD civilian data are compiled from several sources:

**1) Core MOD personnel** - Data for core MOD personnel are taken from the personnel system - Human Resources Management System (HRMS). Defence Statistics use budgetary UINs and attribute people according to the budgetary area that pays them, using the Standing Data System hierarchy from Financial Management Information Systems.

**2) Trading Funds** - Trading Funds were introduced by the Government under the Trading Funds Act 1973 as a 'means of financing trading operations of a government department which, hitherto, have been carried out on Vote'. They are self-accounting units that have greater freedom than other government departments in managing their own financial and management activities. Currently the MOD has two Trading Funds - DSTL and the UK Hydrographic Office. Until 1 October 2011, the Met Office also was reported on by the MOD, but as of 1 October 2011 their responsibility transferred to the Department for Business, Energy, & Industrial Strategy (BEIS).

Defence Support Group (DSG) was privatised as at 1 April 2015, with approximately 2,000 posts transferring to Babcock. Approximately 450 personnel were retained with the Department as the Defence Electronic Components Agency (DECA) within Head Office and Corporate Services.

**3) Locally engaged civilians (LEC)** - LEC employees are recruited overseas exclusively for employment in support of the UK Armed Forces deployed in a particular overseas theatre and on terms and conditions of service applicable only to that overseas theatre or Administration.

Previously this has included the dependents of UK military personnel or UK-based civilian staff employed in overseas theatre (who are sometimes separately identified as UK Dependents). However, to reflect the different terms and conditions of these personnel, UK dependents are not included in LEC figures from October 2013. LECs are not civil servants. LEC data are provided by Top Level Budgetary areas quarterly to Defence Statistics requirements. LEC FTE strengths are based on the actual FTE of part-time LECs where available, and the FTE for those part-time personnel where actual values remain unavailable are estimated with the mean FTE of part-time LECs, increasing the accuracy of LEC FTE.

**4) The Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA)** - The civilian-manned Royal Fleet Auxiliary delivers worldwide logistical and operational support for the wide range of tasks the Royal Navy undertakes including warfighting, counter-piracy, humanitarian and disaster relief, and counter-narcotics operations. RFA data are now taken from the Magellan personnel system. Previously these data were taken from the CHIPS payroll system, but moving to the Magellan system allows total personnel numbers to be reported, rather than purely those being paid. Due to using this system Tri-Service do not have access to the location of these personnel.

## Further Information

### Symbols

|| discontinuity in time series  
\* not applicable  
.. not available  
– zero  
~ 5 or fewer  
p Provisional  
e Estimate  
r Revised

### Rounding

When rounding to the nearest 10, numbers ending in “5” have been rounded to the nearest multiple of 20 to prevent systematic bias.

Where rounding has been used, totals and sub-totals have been rounded separately and so may not equal the sums of their rounded parts.

### Revisions

Certain Military and Civilian figures have been revised due to data processing errors. In particular, Civilian rounding methodology has been updated to be consistent with Military rounding. Previously, Civilian totals whose value is strictly greater than 5 but less than 6 were rounded down to 5. The updated methodology rounds these values to 10. For example, a total of 5.5 used to be rounded to 5, but will now be rounded to 10.

*Amendments to figures for earlier years may be identified during the annual compilation of this Bulletin. This will be addressed in one of two ways:*

- where the number of figures updated in a table is small, figures will be updated and those which have been revised will be identified with the symbol "r".
- where the number of figures updated in a table is substantial, the revisions to the table, together with the reason for the revisions, will be identified in the commentary at the beginning of the relevant chapter / section, and in the commentary above affected tables. Revisions will not be identified by the symbol "r" since where there are a large number of revisions in a table this could make them more difficult to read.



## Further Information (cont.)

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If you require information which is not available within this or other available publications, you may wish to submit a Request for Information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to the Ministry of Defence. See guidance on [how to make an FOI request](#).

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