



This annual bulletin provides summary statistics on claims, awards and recipients of pensions, allowances or other payments under the War Pension Scheme (WPS) between 2010/11 and 2019/20. The WPS is a no-fault scheme, which financially compensates for injury/illness and death caused by service in the UK Armed Forces from the start of the First World War in 1914 until 5 April 2005.

## Key Points

### As at 31 March 2020

There were,



**93,611** disablement pensioners & **13,493** war widow(er)s in receipt of a war pension.

Of which,



**52%** & **88%** were of retirement age (65+).

Subsequently,

**35%** of supplementary allowances were paid out in the form of age addition allowances.



**367** War Pension claimants with mesothelioma had elected to receive the lump sum payment instead of a regular disablement pension.

These recipients were additional to the 93,611 disablement pensioners in receipt of a war pension.

### During the financial year 2019/20

There were,

**3,203** first disablement & **657** war widow(er)s' claims cleared. Of which,

**73%** & **43%** were awarded compensation.

A total of:



**£501.2M** was paid to disablement pensioners\*

**£179.2M** was paid to war widow(er)s.

\*of which **£11.5M** was paid in lump sum form to compensate for mesothelioma.

On average it took:



**11 months** to clear first disablement claims.

**Under two months** to clear war widow(er)s' claims.

**15 months** to clear appeals<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> The MOD has no control over the length of time it takes for a decision to be made as appeal tribunals are independent.

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Would you like to be added to our **contact list**, so that we can inform you about updates to these statistics and consult you if we are thinking of making changes? You can subscribe to updates by emailing [Analysis-Publications@mod.gov.uk](mailto:Analysis-Publications@mod.gov.uk)

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Other bulletins in this series and the supplementary tables in Excel format (Annex A) and in Open Document Spreadsheet format (Annex B) containing all data presented in this publication can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/war-pension-recipients-index>

### National Statistics Status

National Statistics status means that our statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value, and it is our responsibility to maintain compliance with these standards.

The continued designation of these statistics as National Statistics was confirmed in November 2013 following a compliance check by the Office for Statistics Regulation:

[https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/images-letterofconfirmationasnationalstatisticsassessmentreport19\\_tcm97-43516.pdf](https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/images-letterofconfirmationasnationalstatisticsassessmentreport19_tcm97-43516.pdf)

The statistics last underwent a full assessment against the Code of Practice in 2012:

[https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/images-assessmentreport197statisticsondefencehealt\\_tcm97-41724.pdf](https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/images-assessmentreport197statisticsondefencehealt_tcm97-41724.pdf)

Since the latest review by the Office for Statistics Regulation, we have continued to comply with the Code of Practice for Statistics, and have made the following improvements:

Added insight by providing additional information to users of these statistics, including:

- Total amounts paid out in compensation in the form of ongoing pensions to disablement pensioners and widow(er)s, by financial year.
- Clearance times for War Pension claims and appeals

Responded to continued external interest in disablement pensioners suffering from mental health disorders, specifically post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), by incorporating this information into these annual statistics.

Updated these statistics to reflect any significant War Pension Scheme policy changes, for example the including of information on lump sum awards paid out for Service-attributable mesothelioma, following its introduction in 2015.

# Introduction

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This Statistical Bulletin presents summary information on the War Pension Scheme (WPS) as at 31 March 2020.

The 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 compensation claims administered by Defence Business Services (DBS) Veterans UK.

Further information on the eligibility to claim, and the processing of WPS claims, can be found on the Gov.uk website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/war-pension-scheme/war-pension-scheme-what-you-need-to-know>

These statistics have been provided in response to a high volume of requests for information about claims and awards under the scheme, and the number of individuals currently in receipt of a War Pension. These statistics are used by external organisations such as NHS trusts, local Government and Armed Forces charities. This report is also used internally to aid work planning and policy development.

All tables provided in previous releases of this report have been updated with 2019/20 data and are available in Annexes A and B as separate Excel and Open Document Spreadsheet (ODS) files at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/war-pension-recipients-index>

In addition to this statistical bulletin the MOD also publishes annual statistics summarising MOD compensation payments under the;

- a) Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS). This scheme considers claims for compensation for injury, illness or death caused by service on or after 6 April 2005: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/armed-forces-compensation-scheme-statistics-index>
- b) Common Law Compensation Scheme. This scheme considers claims or compensation on the basis of whether the MOD has a legal liability to pay compensation. Where there is a proven legal liability, compensation is paid: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/mod-compensation-claims-statistics>

Other related MOD Official Statistics:

- c) Annual Location Statistics on the location of pension and compensation recipients: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/location-of-armed-forces-pension-and-compensation-recipients>
- d) A four-part publication on the size and socio-demographic characteristics of the UK Armed Forces veteran population residing in Great Britain. The last in the series was published in 2019: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/annual-population-survey-uk-armed-forces-veterans-residing-in-great-britain>
- e) A two part publication which provided: estimates on the size and socio-demographic characteristics of the working age (between 16 and 64 years of age) UK Armed Forces veteran population residing in England and Wales, and; comparisons to the general population in England and Wales using responses provided in the 2011 Census: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/census-2011-working-age-uk-armed-forces-veterans-residing-in-england-and-wales-index>

## Registered Claims and Appeals

This section provides summary information on claims and appeals registered under the WPS during 2019/20, and trends over time.

During 2019/20 there were:

### 8,441 Disablement claims

registered by ex-UK Armed Forces personnel for compensation for Service-attributable injury or illness. Of these,

**3,735 were first disablement claims,**  
and

**4,706 were second /subsequent  
disablement claims**

Additionally, there were:

### 680 War widow(er)s' claims

registered to apply for compensation for Service-attributable death.

### 2,143 Supplementary allowance claims

registered by disablement pensioners and war widow(er)s for additional financial support.

**1,554 Appeals** registered by disablement pension and war widow(er) pension claimants, who were dissatisfied with the outcome of their claim.

**Disablement claim:** Registered by ex-UK Armed Forces personnel for injury/illness caused by Service prior to 6 April 2005. Includes first and second/subsequent claims.

**First disablement claim:** There are two types of first claim; **current invaliding claims** are raised automatically following medical discharge for a pre-April 2005 injury or illness. All other first claims are classed as a **first claim to pension**.

**Second/Subsequent disablement claim:** Claimants can submit further claims if existing conditions worsen or they suffer the onset of new associated conditions following their first claim.

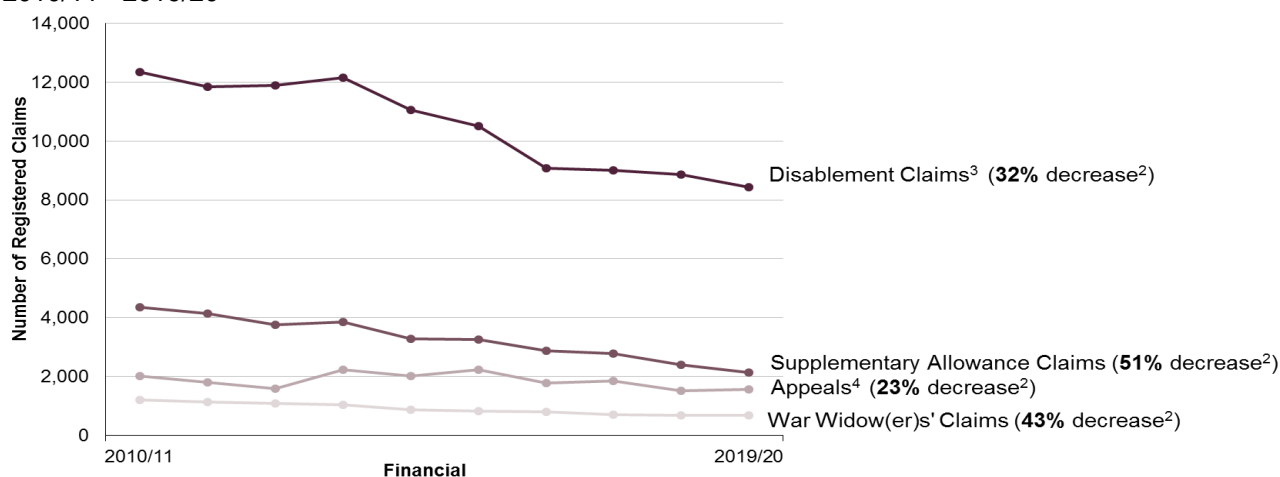
**War Widow(er)s' claim:** Registered by, and on behalf of, eligible spouses and partners following the death of a Service person or veteran where the cause of death was attributed to Service in the UK Armed Forces prior to 6 April 2005.

**Supplementary Allowance claim:** Pension recipients may claim for 'top-up' payments to provide financial support for a range of care needs, including additional costs associated with the burden of ageing and having a disablement.

**Appeals:** All claimants may lodge an appeal to an appropriate Pension Appeal Tribunal if they are not satisfied with the outcome of their claim.

**Figure 1: War Pension Scheme claims registered, by claim type and financial year<sup>1</sup>, numbers and percentage changes<sup>2</sup>**

2010/11 - 2019/20



**Source: War Pension Computer System**

1. Financial year in which the claim was registered.
2. Percentage change since 2010/11
3. Disablement claims include both first and second claims
4. Includes appeals for all claim types.

(Tables 1 and 2, Annexes A and B)

**Source: War Pension Computer System**

## Registered Claims and Appeals (Cont.)

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Figure 1 shows the number of registered **disablement claims reduced by almost one-third** (32% decrease from 12,330 claims in 2010/11) and the number of **war widow(er)s claims reduced by almost half** (43% decrease from 1,199 claims in 2010/11) over the past ten years. This is primarily the result of the introduction of the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS) on 6 April 2005 which took over the administration of compensation arrangements for service-attributable injury/illness and deaths on or after this date. Subsequently, the numbers of all other claim types have also reduced over this period.

Disablement claims have continued to be registered under the WPS since the introduction of the AFCS as claimants with a pre-April 2005 injury / illness are not able to claim for compensation under the WPS until they have left the UK Armed Forces, and there is no time limit for registration of first disablement claims.

Despite the overall reduction, there was an increase in the number of registered disablement claims in 2013/14, compared with the previous year (Figure 1). This increase may be partly driven by redundancies following the Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR)<sup>1</sup>, which increased the numbers of UK Armed Forces service leavers<sup>2</sup> resulting in an artificial increase in disablement claims in 2013/14.

War widow(er)s claims have continued to be registered under the WPS since the introduction of the AFCS for two primary reasons:

- The WPS will consider compensating the widow(er)s of deceased ex-service personnel who were in receipt of specific War Pension arrangements at the time of their death (as detailed in the Background Quality Report).
- War widow(er)s claims are also still automatically generated for consideration under the WPS following a death in service, regardless of cause, if the service person joined the UK Armed Forces prior to 6 April 2005. Compensation will be awarded under the WPS in the event that the cause of death was attributable to injury or ill health caused, or made worse by, service prior to this date. However, where cause of death is attributable to service post 6 April 2005, compensation will be awarded under the AFCS and the WPS claim will be rejected.

(Tables 1 and 2, Annexes A and B)

Source: War Pension Computer System

<sup>1</sup> The strategic defence and security review: securing Britain in an age of uncertainty:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-strategic-defence-and-security-review-securing-britain-in-an-age-of-uncertainty>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-armed-forces-monthly-manning-statistics-index>

# Clearance Times

This section provides summary information on the average (median) number of working days it took to clear claims and appeals registered under the WPS, as an indication of how long a claimant can expect to wait, on average, for a decision. Figures are presented for claims cleared in 2019/20, with trends over time.

Note that clearance times for supplementary allowance claims have not been calculated as they include a wide range of care needs from claiming for a refund on prescription glasses to more complex needs such as claiming for employability support.

During 2019/20;

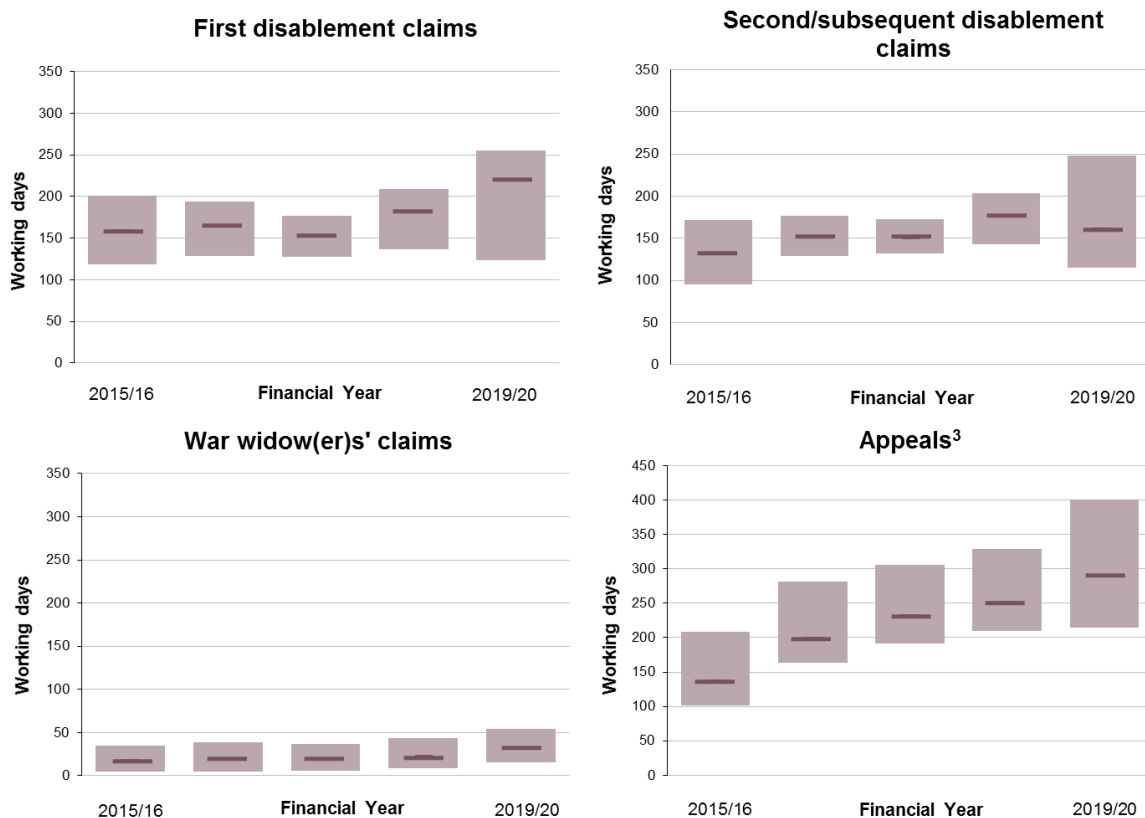
**First and second / subsequent disablement pension claims** were cleared, on average, within **11 and approximately eight months** respectively.

**War widow(er)s' claims** were cleared, on average, within **two months**.

**Appeals** took the longest average time to clear (up to **15 months**), however it should be noted that the MOD have no control over the length of time it takes for a decision to be made as appeal tribunals are independent.

Clearance times are calculated as the number of working days between the date the claim/appeal was received by the MOD and the date a decision was made.

**Figure 2: War Pension Scheme claim and appeal clearance times, by claim type and financial year<sup>1</sup>, median average, upper quartile and lower quartile<sup>2</sup> 2015/16 to 2019/20**



**Source: War Pension Computer System**

1. Financial year in which the claim or appeal was cleared.

2. See 'Methodology' section for further information on upper and lower quartiles.

3. Appeals clearance times were calculated from date of appeal registration to date a decision was made by the Pensions Appeal Tribunal (PAT), Ministry of Justice.

(Tables 3,4,5 and 6, Annexes A and B)

**Source: War Pension Computer System**



## Clearance Times (Cont.)

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During 2019/20;

**First disablement pension claims, and second/subsequent disablement claims were cleared, on average, within 11 calendar months** (220 working days) **and approximately eight calendar months** (161 working days) **respectively**.

During the last financial year a procedure change has required caseworkers to provide a greater depth of detail in their award notifications. This has contributed to the significant increase in the average claim clearance time and the increased spread in clearance times seen in 2019/20 (Figure 2). Disablement claims have always varied in the time taken for claims to be cleared, this is partly due to some claims requiring considerable resource due to the time between injury/illness onset and the claim being registered. Claimants cannot submit a claim until they have left service and there is no time limit to claim.

**War widow(er)s' claims were cleared, on average, within two calendar months** (32 working days). Widow(er)s' claims take less time to clear, and the spread in clearance times is smaller, since the claim process is more straightforward than for disablement claims. During 2019/20 the average clearance time significantly increased from 22 to 32 working days. This was partly due to the fluctuation in the number of claims registered throughout the year and the limited flex in resource level, resulting in a short-term backlog when claim registrations were high.

**Appeals were cleared, on average, within 15 calendar months** (290 working days), the longest average time it has taken to clear appeals over the past five financial years (Figure 2). Please note, the MOD completed the first stage of appeal processing within six calendar months (106 working days) after which appeals were heard at an independent Pension Appeal Tribunal (PAT). The MOD has no control over the length of time it takes for evidence to be gathered and a decision to be made at the PAT. For further information on the PAT process please see the Background Quality Report.

Note that during 2018/19 DBS Veterans UK experienced a lack of resourcing which partly led to increase in clearance times for claims and appeals for 2018/19, whilst resource stabilised this continued to impact clearance times in 2019/20.

# Claim Outcomes

This section provides summary information on the outcomes of claims and appeals cleared under the WPS during 2019/20, and trends over time.

During 2019/20:

There were a total of **3,203** first disablement claims and **657** war widow(er)s' claims cleared.

**Almost three quarters (73%)** of all first disablement claims were awarded compensation (2,327) in the form of a gratuity payment or ongoing war pension

**4 in 10 (40%)** of Second/ subsequent disablement claims were awarded or resulted in an increased entitlement (1,823).

**Just over 4 in 10 (43%)** of war widow(er)s' claims were successful (283).

**6 in 10 (60%)** of supplementary allowance claims were successful (1,255).

**Just over one-third (36%)** of disablement pension appeals and **1 in 7 (15%)** widow(er)s' appeals were successful (102 cases in total).

Decisions are made following the advice of medical advisors on whether a claim is Service-attributable.

**First disablement claims, and second/subsequent claims** determined to be Service-attributable are awarded a disablement percentage between 0% and 100%:

- a) Those awarded at 20% - 100% are paid an ongoing war pension
- b) Those awarded at 1% - 19% are paid a one-off gratuity (lump sum) payment.
- c) Service-attributable cases determined not to be severe enough to impact on daily life are awarded a nil (0%) award.

**War widow(er)s' claims** are either awarded or rejected with successful widow(er)s' paid an ongoing war pension. Claim outcomes for war widow(er)s' do not include reviews.

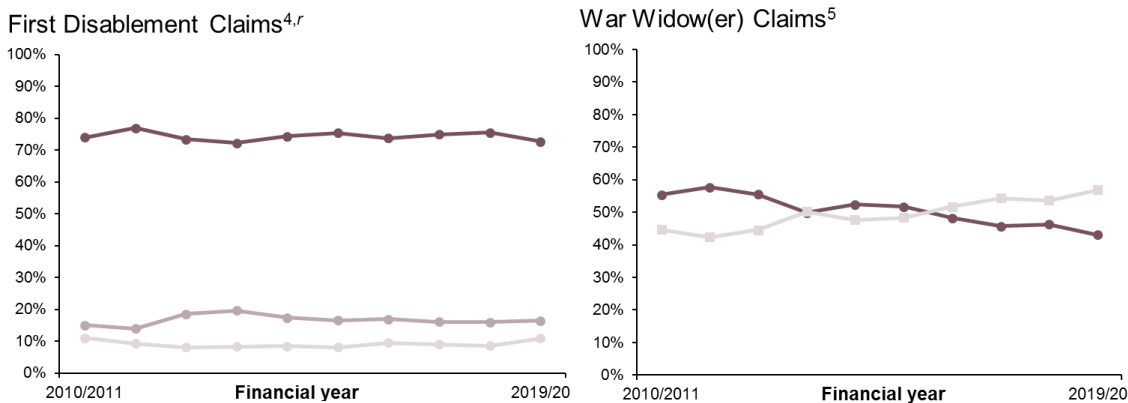
Full details of rates payable under the scheme be found on the Gov.uk website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/war-disablement-pension-2019-rates>

**Figure 3: War Pension Scheme cleared claims by claim type, outcome and financial year<sup>1</sup>, percentages of cleared claims**

1 April 2010 to 31 March 2020

Key: Successful<sup>2</sup> Awarded Nil<sup>3</sup> Unsuccessful



Source: War Pension Computer System

1. Financial year in which the claim was cleared.
  2. Includes those awarded a gratuity payment (at 1-19%) and a war pension (at 20-100%) and those with an unknown disablement percentage.
  3. Nil awards are not applicable for war widow(er)s
  4. Figures include first disablement claims only due to the complexity of second/subsequent claim outcomes.
  5. Figures include restored Widow(er)s, and exclude widow(er)s' reviews.
- r. Due to an error in identifying claim outcomes figures for first claims have been revised to include claims awarded with an unknown disablement percentage. The revisions had no impact on the overall results and trends reported

(Tables 9,10,11,12 and 13, Annexes A and B)

Source: War Pension Computer System



## Claim Outcomes (Cont.)

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Annual numbers of cleared disablement pension and war widow(er)s' claims have increased from previous year, despite the decrease in annual numbers of registered claims (Table 9, Annexes A and B). However, the proportion of claims which were successful, awarded nil, and unsuccessful have remained stable (Figure 3). The increase in cleared claims has been influenced by successful recruitment and training within DBS Veterans UK and the prioritisation of claims registered in previous financial years.

Success rates vary across the different types of claims and appeals as they all have different eligibility criteria.

Approximately 60% of War widow(er)s claims have been rejected during 2019/20 (Figure 3). War Widow(er)s' claims continue to be automatically generated following a death in service, regardless of the cause of death, where the service person joined the UK Armed Forces prior to 6 April 2005, as discussed in the introduction. However, most of these cases go on to be awarded under the AFCS and are rejected under the WPS. As such, the increase in the proportion of rejected War widow(er)s claims in 2019/20 is expected as the likelihood of death being related to an incident prior to April 2005 decreases each subsequent year.

Second disablement claims included claims for further conditions or deterioration of an existing condition. They also included reviews made by the MOD to assess whether the level of disablement has changed since the initial assessment was made. When individuals submit second/subsequent claims, a comparison is made between the condition of the claimant and the condition of a normal healthy person of the same age and gender. It is a current assessment and the decision is based on current medical evidence therefore the pension awarded may be reduced in value. Note that a small proportion (1%, n=52) of second/subsequent claims cleared during 2019/20 resulted in a reduced outcome.

Supplementary allowances each have their own eligibility criteria and decision-making process and therefore success rates varied considerably during 2019/20, for example 44% of claims for funeral expenses were successful, compared with 64% of claims for allowance for lower standard of occupation (ALSO) (Table 12, Annexes A and B).

Appeal success rates were generally lower than other claims (34%, n=102 of all entitlement appeals being allowed) since in most cases the original claim outcome resulted from a fair assessment.

## War Pension Recipients

This section provides summary statistics on the numbers of disablement pensioners and war widow(er)s in receipt of an ongoing war pension as at 31 March each year, between 2011 and 2020. Demographic information is also presented for those in receipt of a pension as at 31 March 2020.

As at 31 March 2020 there were **93,611 disablement pensioners** in receipt of an ongoing war pension of which:

- 95% were male, and just over half (52%) were of retirement age (aged 65+).

As at 31 March 2020 there were **13,493 war widow(er)s** in receipt of an ongoing war pension, of which:

- Nearly all (>99%) were female, and 88% were of retirement age (aged 65+).

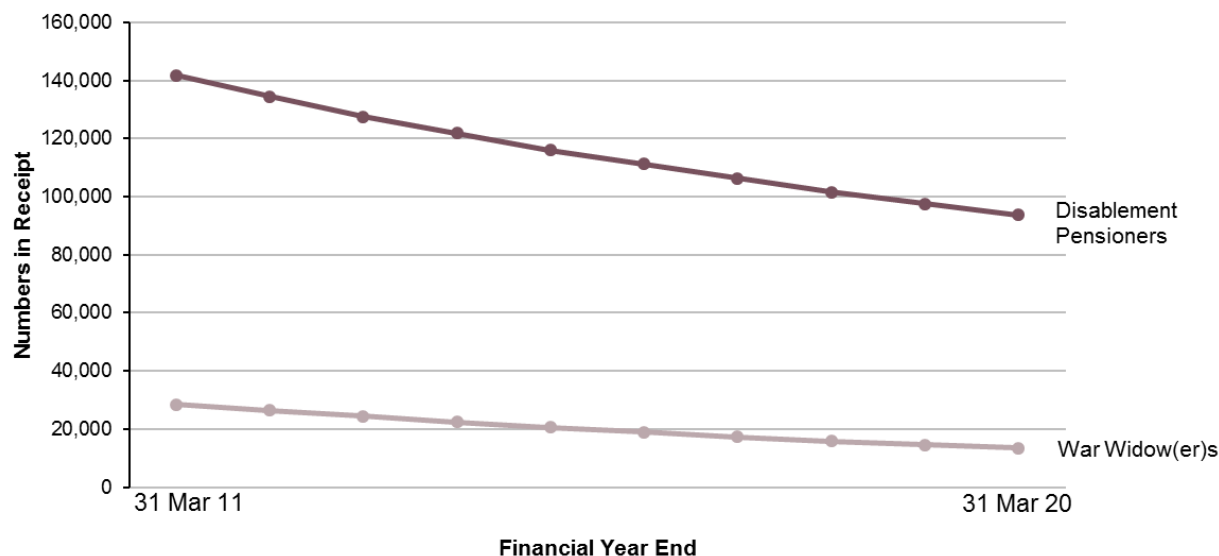
There was a 5% decrease in the total number of recipients from the previous year, which has been decreasing at a consistent rate each year since 2010/11.

**Disablement pensioners:** Ex-UK Armed Forces personnel in receipt of an ongoing war pension for a Service-attributable injury/illness at a disablement percentage of 20% or above.

**War widow(er)s:** Those in receipt of an ongoing war pension following the death of their partner or spouse caused, or substantially hastened, by Service.

**Figure 4: Disablement Pensioners and War Widow(er)s in receipt of an ongoing pension, as at financial year end, numbers**

As at 31 March 2011 to as at 31 March 2020



Source: War Pension Computer System

Annual numbers of disablement pensioners and war widow(er)s in receipt of an ongoing pension under the WPS has consistently decreased by approximately 5% each year since 31 March 2011 (Figure 4). A result of numbers of pension recipients leaving the scheme each year remaining higher than the number of successful claimants entering the scheme.

The main reason for the cessation of a pension was death (due to the age profile of disablement pensioners and war widow(er)s as discussed on page 11). Pensions may also cease for other reasons such as: failure to draw the pension for one year; refusal to undergo a medical examination or provide medical evidence or; imprisonment.

(Tables 14,15,16,17,18,19 and 20, Annexes A and B)

Source: War Pension Computer System

## War Pension Recipients (Cont.)

As at 31 March 2020:

### Disablement Pensioners



More than **9 in 10 (95%)** were **male**



Just over **half (52%)** were of **retirement age (65+)**



Just over **one-quarter (27%)** were located in the **South East** and **South West** of England

The demographic profile of disablement pensioners is in line with previous veteran findings<sup>1</sup>, reporting that 89% of veterans were male, 60% of veterans were of retirement age, and 29% were located in the South East and South West of England.

Almost **two-thirds (65%)** were in receipt of a war pension at a disablement percentage between 20% and 30%.

#### Disablement Percentage

20	least severe
30	
40	Using evidence supplied from the claimant and advice from medical advisors, Veterans UK will award claimants with severe enough disabilities a 'disablement percentage' ranging from 20% (least severe) to 100% (most severe).
50	
60	
70	
80	
90	
100	most severe

### War Widow(er)s



More than **9 in 10 (>99%)** were **female**



Almost **9 in 10 (88%)** were of **retirement age (65+)**

The age profile of War widow(er)s is driven by two factors:

- The high volume of older widow(er)s as a result of deaths during the Second World War, and subsequent National Service<sup>2</sup> which ended in 1960.
- The introduction of the AFCS which has compensated for deaths attributable to time spent in Service after 6 April 2005 resulting in fewer younger widow(er)s joining the WPS.



Almost **one-third (32%)** were located in the **South East** and **South West** of England

(Tables 14,15,16,17,18,19 and 20, Annexes A and B)

Source: War Pension Computer System

1. As published in the MOD Annual Population Survey Statistics: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/annual-population-survey-uk-armed-forces-veterans-residing-in-great-britain>
2. <http://www.parliament.uk/about/living-heritage/transformingsociety/private-lives/yourcountry/overview/nationalservice/>

## Causes of Disablement

Due to continued external interest, this section provides information on awards made under the WPS for service-attributable mental health conditions and mesothelioma.

Information on injuries/illnesses is recorded on the War Pension Computer System (WPCS) in the form of a medical diagnosis code and a free-text medical diagnosis description. The code and description are based on the medical evidence and diagnosis obtained once a claim has been registered with DBS Veterans UK. Due to the free text nature of this information, it is not possible to provide a full summary of all injuries/illnesses that have been awarded compensation under the War Pension Scheme. However, records can be interrogated for a specific condition.

### Awards for mental health conditions

As at 31 March 2020:



**14,737 (16%)**  
Of DPs were in receipt of a War Pension for **mental disorders**

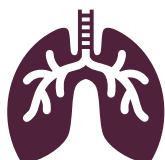
Of which,

**8,356**  
were specifically for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (**PTSD**)

Awards made for mental health disorders are estimates, based primarily on a free-text search and should be interpreted with caution.

### Awards for mesothelioma

Between 1 April 2016 and 31 March 2020:



**367** ex-Service personnel diagnosed with mesothelioma had elected to receive the lump sum payment instead of receiving a regular disablement pension.

Since 16 December 2015 veterans who had been diagnosed with diffuse mesothelioma as a result of asbestos exposure through their Service in the Armed Forces, have been entitled to receive a lump sum payment of up to £140,000 instead of receiving an ongoing disablement pension. These payments started being paid from 1 April 2016. Further details on the introduction of these lump sum payments can be found in the Background Quality Report.

## Recipients of Supplementary Allowances

This section provides summary statistics on disablement pensioners and war widow(er)s in receipt of supplementary allowances<sup>1</sup> as at 31 March 2020. Eligible disablement pensioners and war widow(er)s are able to claim for additional financial support for a range of care needs, including additional costs associated with the burden of ageing and having a disablement.

As at 31 March 2020:

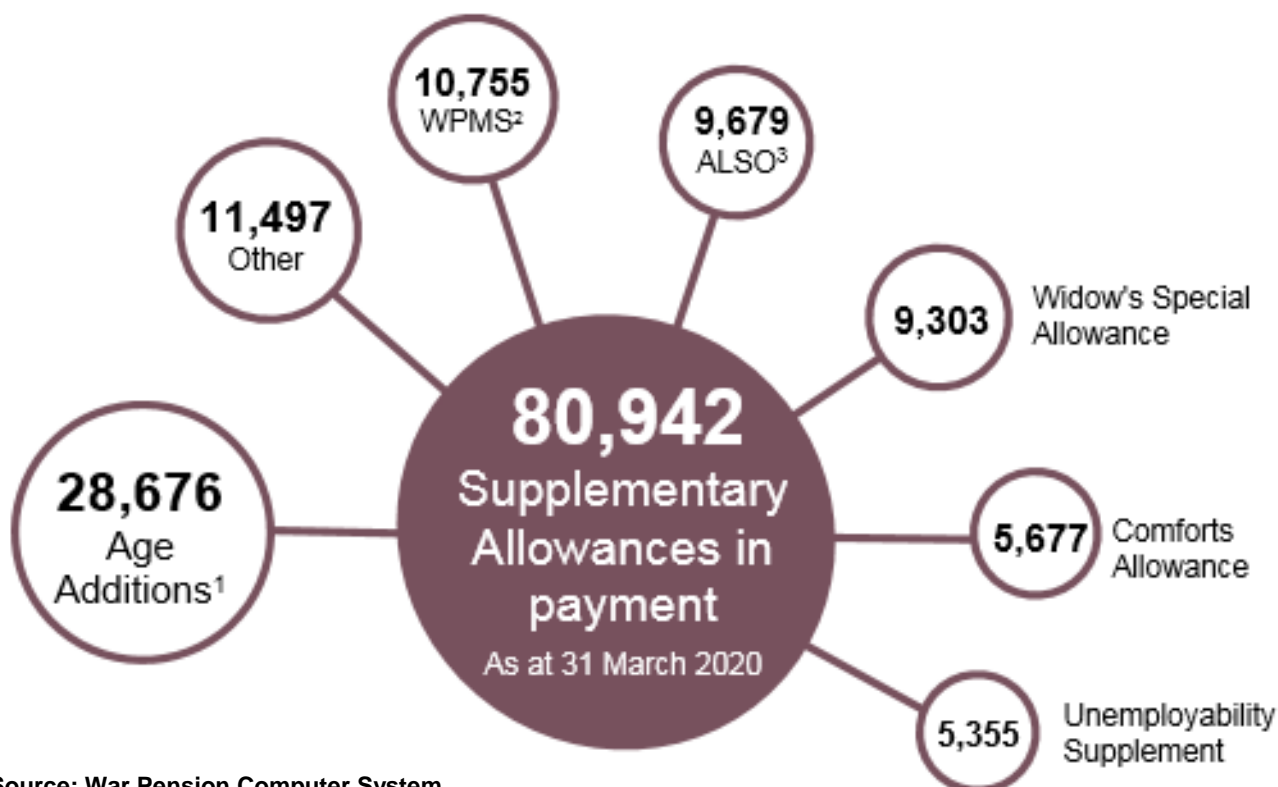
Age addition allowances made up over one-third (35%) of all supplementary allowances in payment, with almost **9 in 10** (86%) of war widow(er)s and **2 in 10** (18%) of disablement pensioners in receipt of this allowance.

Pensioners are able to claim for multiple supplementary allowances and therefore may be in receipt of more than one allowance.

**Age Addition Allowance:** This is paid out from age 65 to disablement pensioners whose disablement is assessed at 40% or more. An Age 80 addition allowance is paid to all disablement pensioners aged 80 or over. The age allowances are made to help a pensioner cope with the increased costs associated with the burden of ageing and having a disablement, rather than any acceptance that the disablement worsens with age.

**Figure 5: Supplementary Allowances in payment to Disablement Pensioners and War Widow(er)s as at financial year end, numbers**

As at 31 March 2020



Source: War Pension Computer System

1. Includes Disablement, Widow(er)s, and Age 80 Additions
2. War Pensioner's Mobility Supplement
3. Allowance for Lowered Standard of Occupation

(Tables 22 and 23, Annexes A and B)

Source: War Pension Computer System

<sup>1</sup>Part II Awards in respect of disablement: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2006/606/contents>

## Financial amounts paid out under the WPS

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This section provides information on the financial amounts paid out under the War Pension Scheme during the past five financial years between 2015/16 and 2019/20.

In 2019/20 a total of **£680.3 million** was paid out in the form of pensions and supplementary allowances.



Of which, **£501.2 million** was paid out to disablement pensioners and **£179.2 million** was paid out to war widow(er)s.

As at 31 March 2020 there had been **£51.0 million** paid to ex-service personnel in the form of the mesothelioma lump sum payment since its introduction on 16 December 2015. £11.5 million of this was paid during 2019/20.

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The average weekly amount received by disablement pensioners in 2019/20 was **£94.26** per week. This was compared to **£249.01** per week for war widow(er)s.

The average weekly amount received for disablement pensioners was lower compared to war widow(er)s. The majority of pensions in payment to disablement pensioners were at the lower disablement percentages, which equate to lower financial amounts compared to the standard war widow(er)s' pension rate which compensates for Service-attributable death.

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The amount paid out under the WPS **decreased by 14%** over the last five financial years from £794.8 million in 2015/16 to £680.3 million in 2019/20. This reflects the decreasing numbers in receipt of a war pension and supplementary allowances.

In 2019/20 there was a **2%** decrease in the amounts paid out under the WPS from the previous financial year.



## Methodology

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**This section provides a brief summary of the methodology and data sources; more detailed information is available in the background quality report for this bulletin.**

### *Data Sources*

Figures presented in this bulletin were compiled from data stored on the War Pension Computer System (WPCS). Defence Statistics receive quarterly data extracts from the WPCS which were used to compile the figures provided. DBS Veterans UK were responsible for ensuring the quality of WPCS data supplied to Defence Statistics.

Defence Statistics receive annual data from DBS Veterans which are used to report on financial information paid out under the WPS.

Defence Statistics receive annual figures from DBS Veterans UK for individuals who have opted to receive the mesothelioma lump sum payment, including the total amount paid out to these individuals under the scheme.

### *Data Coverage*

The data presented include all regular and reserve ex-service personnel, war widow(er)s and other dependants (including adult dependants, children, unmarried dependants, war orphans, and war parents) who have claimed for compensation under the War Pension Scheme between 1 April 2010 and 31 March 2020.

Note that recipients of the mesothelioma lump sum payment are additional to all other claimants of a disablement pensions. These individuals are not recorded on the WPCS and are therefore not included within disablement pension figures presented.

A claimant was eligible for consideration under the WPS where disablement or death has occurred as a result of service in HM Forces, prior to 6 April 2005. In addition, awards may also be made where disablement or death has occurred as a result of:

- War-time Service in the Naval Auxiliary Service, or the Mercantile Marine
- Service in the Polish Forces under British command during World War Two
- A civilian or a member of a civil defence organisation was the direct result of an injury sustained as a result of enemy action in World War Two.

Claims for injuries/illnesses as a result of service cannot be made until an individual has left the services.

Illnesses and injuries awarded under the WPS are recorded in both a free-text field and as a medical diagnosis code. To produce the figures for War Pensions in payment for mental health conditions, records with a medical diagnosis code 4000 to 4008, indicating a mental disorder, were identified. The free-text field was also searched for terms such as 'PTSD', 'psych', 'phobia', 'depression', 'adjustment', 'anxiety', 'panic', 'dysthymic', 'schizophrenia', 'mood disorder', 'substance abuse' and 'mania', as well as any probable misspellings or alternate spellings. As conditions are sometimes spelt incorrectly it was possible that some records with reference to mental health have not been identified. Therefore the figures supplied should be treated as a minimum.

## Methodology (Cont.)

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### *Calculation of claim clearance times*

Information on WPS claim clearance times has been presented as a median average with an inter-quartile range, rather than a mean average and standard deviation as these statistics were affected less by outliers. An outlier is an observation within a dataset that appears to be inconsistent with the remainder of the dataset.

- The median is the value in the center of the data set when they are arranged from smallest to largest.
- A quartile is any of three values (first/lower quartile, second quartile (median), third/upper quartile) that divides the sorted (from smallest value to largest value) dataset into four equal parts. The lower quartile (LQ) is the value that at which 25% of the values in the dataset will be below. The upper quartile (UQ) is the value that at which 75% of the values in the dataset will be below.
- The inter-quartile range (IQR) is the range in which the middle 50% of the data points fall (i.e. the distance between the lower and upper quartile). The longer the inter-quartile range the wider the spread of data.

### *Significance test*

The Mann-Whitney U test was used to identify if there were significant differences between clearance times over time. The significance test provided confidence to state that an observed difference between the clearance times was a real difference, and did not occur due to chance. A significance level of 0.05 has been used throughout this report.

## Glossary

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**Adult Dependant:** Adult relatives, i.e. sister, brother, aunt or uncle etc., for whom the service person was financially responsible.

**Age 80 addition (NI) (Disablement & Widow(er)):** This may be paid to a war disablement pensioner and a war widow(er) aged 80 or over.

**Age addition allowance:** This may be paid to a war disablement pensioner who is aged 65 or over and whose disablement is assessed at 40% or more. A war widow(er) may receive an additional allowance at age 65 which is increased at age 70, and again at age 80.

**Allowance for Lowered Standard of Occupation (ALSO):** This may be paid if a disablement pensioner's earning capacity is reduced because their pensioned disablement permanently prevents them following their regular occupation. To gain entitlement new claimants must be under age 65, with a disablement percentage of at least 40%. This allowance plus their basic War Disablement Pension cannot exceed the 100% disablement pension rate.

**Appeal:** If a claimant is not satisfied with the outcome of any of their claims they may lodge an appeal to an appropriate Tribunal.

**Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS):** Compensation scheme for all members of the regular and reserve forces. It provides compensation for all injuries, ill-health and death attributable to service where the cause occurred on or after 6 April 2005.

**Awarded 0%:** The doctor may decide from the medical evidence that although the condition was caused by service or wartime experience, if it is not causing the person a problem at the moment then they will be awarded an assessment of nil.

**Cleared Claim:** A claim is classed as cleared when Veterans UK issue a letter to the claimant informing them of the outcome of their claim or appeal

**Comforts Allowance (COMF):** This may be paid to a severely disabled pensioner who is receiving Constant Attendance Allowance or Unemployability Supplement or both. It is intended to help with the extra expenses associated with severe disablement.

**DBS Veterans UK:** Responsible for administering the Armed Forces pension and compensation schemes for those injured or bereaved through service.

**Departmental review:** A review can be carried out to reassess a case when a condition has been rejected and an award for a war pension has not been made.

**Deterioration claims:** An application can be made to increase a war pension if an accepted condition has worsened, or, if another condition has made the accepted war pension disablement worse.

**Disablement pensioner:** Ex-UK Armed Forces service personnel with an injury/illness as a result of service with a disablement percentage of 20% or above.

**Disablement Percentage:** First and second/subsequent claims are assessed by a doctor, and then he/she gives a percentage of up to 100% to dependent on how disabled the person is.

**Gratuity Payment:** If a disablement is assessed at less than 20%, personnel are paid a lump sum called a gratuity. The amount depends on the extent of the disablement and how long the person is likely to be disabled.

## Glossary (Cont.)

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**Pensions Appeal Tribunal (PAT):** The PAT hears appeals from all claimants who have disagreed with the decision made by the MOD on the outcome of their claim.

**Registered Claim:** A claim is classed as registered when Veterans UK begin a workflow on the War Pension Computer System (WPCS) for a claim.

**Supplementary Allowance:** Everyone in receipt of a War Pension can claim for extra allowances to help with the extra costs of a long-term health condition or disability.

**Unmarried Dependant:** Partner who lived with the ex-service person for at least 6 months before his enlistment, was maintained by him and who has borne his child.

**War Orphan:** Child of deceased service person who has no surviving mother or father. Child whose mother was divorced from a service person at the time of death. Child who is not in the care of the surviving parent.

**War Parent:** Parent of the deceased service person.

**War Pension Scheme (WPS):** No fault compensation scheme for all members of the regular and reserve force. It provides compensation for all injuries, ill-health and death caused or made worse by service from WW1 in 1914 to 5 April 2005. Ex-service personnel are only eligible to claim once they've left the services.

**War Pensioner's Mobility Supplement (WPMS):** This is intended to help with the mobility costs of a pensioner who is unable to walk, or virtually unable to walk. New claimants must have a service disablement of at least 40%. It is paid to double amputees and to those pensioners who need help getting about because they are both deaf and blind as a result of their pensioned disablement.

**War widow(er):** Spouse of ex-service person whose death was whilst in service or related to a disablement due to service prior to 6 April 2005.

**War widow(er)s' review:** A review can be carried out where there is further evidence which could change the outcome of a claim.

**War widow(er)'s Special Allowance:** This is a Supplementary Pension payable to "pre-1973 war widow(er)s" (the widow(er)s of service personnel who died or left the services before 31<sup>st</sup> March 1973, and who did not benefit from the improvements made from that date to the MOD's Armed Forces Pension Scheme).

**Working day:** Any day in which legal business can be conducted. In this report a working day is any day apart from a Saturday, Sunday or bank holiday

**For further definitions please see Background Quality Report.**

## Further Information

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### Symbols

~	Suppressed (greater than zero or fewer than 3, or secondary suppression – see disclosure control note for details)
r	Revised
p	Provisional
Q1	1 April to 30 June
Q2	1 July to 30 September
Q3	1 October to 31 December
Q4	1 January to 31 March

### Disclosure Control

In line with the directives of the JSP 200, disclosure control is conducted on all statistical information provided by the MOD to safeguard the confidentiality of individuals. Within these statistics a risk of disclosure has been considered to be high where numbers presented are fewer than three. In cases where a risk of disclosure exists, one of two appropriate disclosure control methods have been applied:

**Figures have been suppressed:** In most cases where there may be a risk of disclosure, numbers fewer than three have been suppressed and marked as '~'. Where there was only one cell in a row or column that was fewer than three, secondary suppression has been applied so that numbers cannot simply be derived from totals or subtotals. In most cases the secondary suppression has been applied to the next smallest figures.

**Figures have been grouped:** Where there is a risk of disclosure, relevant categories across columns or rows have been grouped in order to present larger numbers. This method of suppression has been applied to Tables 14, 18, 19 and 20 of Annexes A and B.

**Figures have been rounded to the nearest five:** In cases where the suppression of information would result in larger numbers being 'hidden' as a result of secondary suppression and it has not been possible to group columns and/or rows, figures have been rounded to the nearest five. This method of suppression has been applied to Tables 7, 10, 12 and 18 in Annexes A and B.

### Revisions

The figures reported for each quarter are based on the WPCS data extract as at the end of each quarter, and will be correct as at the time each extract was taken. Previous years/quarters are not recalculated and therefore any update to claim information made on the WPCS after each quarterly snapshot will not be reflected in the report.

Historical data will only be revised if errors are found in the data processing or statistical methods used during their publication. If an error was found all historical data would be revised, based on the quarterly snapshots of data, and Defence Statistics will highlight the error and the impact on the numbers presented.

Since the release of the previous Statistical Bulletin an error has been identified in the process of identifying claim outcomes, in which claims awarded with an unknown disablement percentage were excluded. This error has now been corrected and any affected figures have been revised and marked with an 'r'. The number of affected figures was minimal and does not affect any trends. Therefore, this error is considered to have had minimal impact.

### Scheme information

Further information on the WPS and other MOD compensation schemes can be found on the Gov.UK website:

WPS and AFCS: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/armed-forces-compensation>

Common law compensation:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/common-law-claims-policy-division>

## Further Information (Cont.)

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### Contact Us

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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. For more information, see:

<https://www.gov.uk/make-a-freedom-of-information-request/the-freedom-of-information-act>

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