



Ministry
of Defence

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Reference: FOI 2017/09230

Date: 30 October 2017

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email of 26 September 2017 requesting the following information:

“Under the FOI Act could you supplies figures for the number of service personnel diagnosed with a traumatic brain injury after serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. If possible I would like the figures broken down by year.”

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

A search for the information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence, and I can confirm that the information in scope of your request is held by the MOD.

Section 40(2) has been applied to some of the information in order to protect personal information as governed by the Data Protection Act 1998. This is also in line with Joint Service Publication 200 (JSP) in which numbers fewer than five are suppressed in order to reduce the possible inadvertent disclosure of individual identities. Section 40 is an absolute exemption and there is therefore no requirement to consider the public interest in making a decision to withhold the information.

Between 1 January 2003 and 31 December 2014, **737** UK Service personnel patients were identified as having a traumatic brain injury (TBI). Of these **73** were as a result of injuries sustained in Iraq and **664** were as a result of injuries sustained in Afghanistan.

A TBI patient is identified when they appear in one of the four datasets (see Advice and Assistance section) for the first time. If they later appear on a separate data source they will not be counted again, unless the TBI is identified as a second or further separate trauma.

Table 1 presents the number of UK Service Personnel who were identified as having a TBI as a result of injuries sustained in Iraq or Afghanistan.

Table 1: UK Service Personnel Traumatic Brain Injury as a result of injuries sustained in Iraq and Afghanistan by year, 1 January 2003 – 31 December 2014, Numbers^{1,2,3,4}

Year	Number of personnel
All	737
2003	~
2004	8
2005	~
2006	23
2007	30
2008	60
2009	187
2010	167
2011	96
2012	71
2013	60
2014	26

Source: JTTR, NRG DMRC Database, mTBI Database, DMICP

1. Numbers presented are a minimum, please see Advice and Assistance for more information
2. Patients have been counted the first time they appear on any one of the three datasets. If they later appear on a separate data source they have not been counted again.
3. JTTR data was based on date of injury, the NRG data was based on date of admittance, the mTBI data was based on date of referral and DMICP was based on date the READ code was entered.
4. In line with JSP 200 (April 2016), and in keeping with the Office for National Statistics Guidelines, all numbers less than five have been suppressed and presented as '~' to prevent the inadvertent disclosure of individual identities.

Under Section 16 (Advice and Assistance) you may find it helpful to note the following:

The information contained within this response has been compiled from four data sources sources:

- a. Data held on the Military Audit of Clinical Effectiveness (MACE) database on the Joint Trauma and Theatre Register (JTTR). This data is available from 1 January 2003.
- b. Data held by the Neurology Rehabilitation Group (NRG) at the Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre (DMRC), Headley Court. This data is held from July 2006.
- c. Data held on the mTBI database which is maintained by the mTBI cell at DMRC Headley Court. This data reports from June 2008.
- d. Defence Medical Information Capability Programme (DMICP) has a centralised data warehouse of coded information. It is the source of electronic, integrated healthcare records for primary healthcare and some MOD specialist care providers. DMICP deployed rolled out in December 2008.

The numbers presented in this response should be treated as the minimum. The four data sources cover different time periods and therefore individuals suffering with a TBI from an injury on Op TELIC or Op HERRICK may not have been recorded electronically in earlier years and this information may only be available in paper medical records. All four data sources are available from 2008.

Personnel have been counted once overall and in Table 1 in the year of the earliest record of a TBI. Please note that these are live databases. This means that occasionally patient records can be updated which may change the figures presented in this response.

Please note the inclusion of patients who have subsequently died. Patients may sustain other injuries alongside their TBI and providing that the patients were alive at the point that they left the

Royal Centre of Defence Medicine (RCDM) they have been included in the response whether or not they have subsequently died of connected or unconnected causes.

JTTR

An extract of the JTTR data was based on the following criteria: surviving UK Service personnel who sustained an injury that contained the body region 'head'. The list of Service personnel with Abbreviated Injury Scale codes that would indicate they *may* have a TBI were reviewed by the Clinical Information Exploitation Team who advised on their inclusion in the TBI statistics.

DMICP

An extract of data held on DMICP deployed was taken and a search for the following TBI Read codes was conducted:

- DMSRC 132 – 'Traumatic brain injury'
- DMSRC 133 – 'Mild traumatic brain injury' (as indicated in JSP 950 Leaflet 2-4-3)

The information presented in this response have been structured to release information into the public domain in a way that contributes to the MOD accountability to the British public but which doesn't risk breaching individual's rights to medical confidentiality. In line with JSP 200 (April 2016), and in keeping with the Office for National Statistics Guidelines, all numbers less than five have been suppressed and presented as '~' to prevent the inadvertent disclosure of individual identities. Where there is only one cell in a row or column that is less than five, the next smallest number (or numbers where there are tied values) has also been suppressed so that numbers cannot simply be derived from totals.

If you are not satisfied with this response or you wish to complain about any aspect of the handling of your request, then you should contact me in the first instance. If informal resolution is not possible and you are still dissatisfied then you may apply for an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights Compliance team, 2nd Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk). Please note that any request for an internal review must be made within 40 working days of the date on which the attempt to reach informal resolution has come to an end.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may take your complaint to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website, <http://www.ico.gov.uk>.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely

Defence Statistics Health