



Ministry
of Defence

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19 October 2020

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 5 October 2020 requesting the following information:

“FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST UNDER AFCS SCHEME

We write to request the following information under the Freedom of Information Act.

- How many claims for melanoma have been made during the period of August 2017 to 2018 and from 2018 to 2019 and from 2019 to present date.
- How many melanoma claims that have been made during these time were ruled in favour of Applicant
- How many cases for melanoma have been successful at Tribunal”

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

Please note, 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 the Joint Service Publication 200 (JSP 200), in which numbers fewer than three have been withheld 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. Therefore, due to the small number of claims reported below, further breakdowns have not been provided by year.

Between 1 August 2017 and 31 March 2020 there were **6** claims registered under the AFCS for melanoma. Of these claims, **none** were ruled in favour of the claimant.

AFCS claimants may lodge an appeal to an appropriate Pension Appeal Tribunal if they are not satisfied with the outcome of their claim. As at 31 March 2020, none of the above claimants for melanoma had lodged an appeal at a tribunal.

Under Section 16 (advice and assistance) you may wish to note the following:

The Armed Forces and Reserve Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS) came into force on 6 April 2005 to pay compensation for injury, illness or death attributable to Service that occurred on or after that date. It replaced the previous compensation arrangements provided by the War Pension Scheme (WPS) and the attributable elements of the Armed Forces and Reserve Forces Pensions Scheme. AFCS data is sourced from the Compensation and Pension System (CAPS) which is administrated and managed by DBS Veterans UK.

Melanoma claims have been identified based on a free text search of the condition claimed for using the following terms: 'Melanoma' and 'CMM'. The condition claimed for is based on information supplied by the claimant and does not necessarily reflect a diagnosis of Melanoma.

As conditions are sometimes spelt incorrectly it is also possible that some claims for melanoma have not been identified. Therefore, the figures supplied should be treated as a minimum.

Defence Statistics publish annual National Statistics on the AFCS. The most recent update was published in June 2020 (as at 31 March 2020) on the Gov.uk website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/armed-forces-compensation-scheme-statistics-index>

Further information on the eligibility to claim, and the processing of AFCS claims can be found in the MOD's AFCS Statement of Policy:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/683176/20180215-JSP765-Official.pdf

If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance.

Would you like to be added to our contact list, so that we can inform you about updates to statistics and consult you if we are thinking of making changes? You can subscribe to updates by emailing Analysis-Health-PQ-FOI@mod.gov.uk.

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/>.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely

Defence Analysis Health