



Ministry  
of Defence

Army Secretariat  
Army Headquarters  
IDL 24 Blenheim Building  
Marlborough Lines  
Andover  
Hampshire, SP11 8HJ  
United Kingdom

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E-mail: [ArmySec-Group@mod.gov.uk](mailto:ArmySec-Group@mod.gov.uk)

Website: [www.army.mod.uk](http://www.army.mod.uk)

05 May 2020

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 09 March in which you requested the following information:

*"Please can you provide me with the most recent figures for the following:*

*How many soldiers are currently serving in the 4th Battalion the Parachute Regiment?*

*How many recruits start each training cadre/intake to serve in the 4th Battalion the Parachute Regiment and when do these cadres start?*

*What is the percentage of reserve 4 Para recruits that pass P-Company?*

*How many L85A2 weapon systems are in service?*

*How many L85A3 weapon systems are in service?*

*How many L85A3's have been and are planned to be ordered?"*

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. A search for the information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence, and I can confirm that the information is held and is below. I apologise that it has taken slightly longer to reply than it would normally have done, but hope you will understand this is because of the unusual circumstances in which we are currently working.

In response to first question, there are currently 520 Trained Army FR20 Personnel Serving in the 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion Parachute Regiment.

Notes/Caveats:

1. The FR20 population consists of Group A Army Reserves, some Sponsored Reserves and those personnel serving on FTRS contracts who were previously Army Reservists. The figure does not include Regular personnel.
2. The table include those people in attached/supporting Arms serving with 4<sup>th</sup> Battalion Parachute Regiment.
3. Numbers are irrelevant of who has undertaken P Company training.
4. Figures have been rounded to 10; numbers ending in "5" have been rounded to the nearest multiple of 20 to prevent systematic bias.

In response to your second and third questions, please see the tables below:

Cadre	Start date	Total number of recruits starting Cadre	Remarks
20.01	10-Jun-20	60	This Cadre is currently on training pause
19.02	14-Jun-19	40	
19.01	11-Jan-19	30	
18.02	15-Jun-18	30	

Course	Dates	Loaded to Course	Passed Course	% Pass
19.02	6-14 Mar 20	30	20	69%
19.01	8-11 Oct 19	20	20	80%
18.03	8-16 Mar 19	20	20	77%

Notes/Caveats:

1. Figures have been rounded to 10 for presentational purposes; numbers ending in "5" have been rounded to the nearest multiple of 20 to prevent systematic bias.
2. Unrounded figures are used in the calculation of percentages.

In response to your last three questions, please note that there are 145,196 L85A2 weapon systems in service. 5000 L85A3 weapon systems were purchased in 2018/2019. Over 10,000 further SA80 A2 are due to be upgraded under the new contract. There are options to upgrade additional weapons, subject to funding being committed in the future.

If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance. Following this, 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.uk](mailto:CIO-FOI-IR@mod.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,

Manning Portfolio 2  
Army Secretariat