

Background Quality Report

Armed Forces Compensation Scheme Annual Statistics: 6 April 2005 to 31 March 2021

The purpose of a background quality report is to inform users of the statistics about the quality of the data used to produce the publication, and any statistics derived from that data. It also discusses existing uses of the statistics and user requirements.

This assessment relates to the annual 'Armed Forces Compensation Scheme' statistics published by Defence Statistics.

1. Introduction

1. This annual Statistical Notice provides summary statistics on claims and awards made under the Armed Forces and Reserve Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS), paying compensation for injury, illness or death caused by service.
2. The findings in these Statistics are presented in six sections:
 - **Registered and cleared claims under the AFCS by latest recorded outcome:** This section provides the overall numbers of claims registered and cleared under the scheme by the latest recorded outcome, broken down by claim type and financial year. This is provided to show the volume of claims that are dealt with under the scheme, the success rates associated with each type of claim and the key trends over time. This section also includes information on reconsiderations, appeals and reviews registered and cleared.
 - **AFCS claim clearance times:** This section presents the average clearance times (median number of working days) for cleared injury/illness claims, survivors' claims, reconsiderations and appeals, by financial year. This information is presented in order to show the average time (medium number of working days) that claimants have waited for their claim to be cleared.
 - **Recipients of Lump Sum Payments and Guaranteed Income Payments (GIPs) under the AFCS based on the outcome of their latest claim:** This section gives further details (e.g. by service, age-group, tariff level and tariff of injury grouping) for all Serving/ex-Serving personnel who have been awarded compensation for an injury/illness caused by service. Injury/illness claims make up the majority of all claim types and Defence Statistics deal with the highest volume of requests for this area. Therefore, further details are provided on the latest claim outcome to deal with the demand for information on these claims.
 - **Recipients of Guaranteed Income Payments (GIPs) only under the AFCS:** This section gives information on the number of people who are in receipt of ongoing compensation payments under the scheme (i.e. Serving/ex-service personnel with more severe injuries at tariff levels 1 to 11), and spouses/children in receipt of compensation as a result of a death caused by service. It also provides a summary of demographic factors for these individuals. A GIP only begins when an individual leaves the services and therefore this section is provided to show the number of people that are actually in receipt of a GIP, as opposed to the number who have been awarded a GIP.
 - **AFCS expenditure:** This section gives information on the amounts paid out to Serving/ex-service personnel in the form of lump sum awards and guaranteed income payments by financial year. It also provides information on survivor's guaranteed income payments by financial year.
 - **Registered and cleared claims under the AFCS by initial recorded outcome:** This section provides the overall numbers of claims registered and cleared under the scheme by

the initial recorded outcome. This is provided to show the volume of claims that are dealt with under the scheme and the initial success rate.

3. These statistics, first released in September 2008, presented quarterly trends over time since the scheme began on 6 April 2005, and were subsequently published on a quarterly basis. Following consultation with internal and external users, the frequency of reporting was reduced to biannual in June 2011, and annual in June 2018.
4. In May 2018, an internal consultation was run to seek approval to remove initial AFCS claim outcomes and quarterly trends from the accompanying tables to the annual report, and change the methodology used to calculate the AFCS clearance times from 1 April 2017. These changes have been applied since the publication of the 2017/18 statistics in June 2018.
5. These statistics were designated National Statistics in 2013, and are published as National Statistics, adhering to the [UK Statistics Authority \(UKSA\)](#) protocols on [pre-release access](#).
6. Ad-hoc interrogation of the data used to compile these statistics is regularly undertaken by Defence Statistics to answer Freedom of Information requests, Parliamentary questions and internal queries from within the Ministry of Defence.

Scheme information and definitions

7. This section provides a summary of the AFCS. Full scheme information, including advice on how to submit a claim for compensation under the AFCS can be found on the [Gov.uk website](#).
8. The AFCS came into force on 6 April 2005 and is managed by the Ministry of Defence (MOD), with all compensation claims administered by Defence Business Services (DBS) [Veterans UK](#). The AFCS replaced the previous compensation arrangements provided by the War Pensions Scheme (WPS) and the attributable elements of the Armed Forces Pensions Scheme. Defence Statistics also publishes separate [annual WPS National Statistics](#) on claims and awards under the WPS.

AFCS Injury / Illness claims and awards

9. All current and former members of the UK Armed Forces, including reservists, may submit a claim for compensation under the AFCS where injury or illness has been caused, or made worse, by service on or after 6 April 2005. Unlike the War Pension Scheme, claimants can submit a claim for compensation whilst still in service. Individuals have up to seven years to make an injury/illness claim from the date of their initial injury/diagnosis. There are some exceptions to this such as late-onset illnesses. Claims for a late-onset illness can be made at any time after the event to which it relates, as long as it is done so within three years of diagnosis. A late onset illness is a malignancy or other physical disorder which is capable of being caused by an occupational exposure occurring more than seven years before the onset of the illness. Late onset also covers mental disorders which are capable of being caused by an incident occurring more than seven years before the onset of the illness.
10. Full details of the eligibility criteria to claim and the decision-making process can be found in the MOD's JSP 765 [AFCS Statement of Policy](#).
11. Injury/illness claims are presented within the supplementary tables and the Statistical Bulletin in three groups:
 - a) **In-service claims:** Those registered by serving members of the UK Armed Forces at the date of their claim.
 - b) **Post-service claims:** Those registered by former UK Armed Forces personnel at the date of their claim.

- c) **Medical discharge claims:** Automatic claims raised by the MOD for personnel medically discharged from service where they meet the following criteria:
- i) They have served more than two years' reckonable service.
 - ii) Their medical discharge was as a result of injury/illness due to service on or after 6 April 2005. Where injury/illness was a result of service prior to this date they will be considered under the WPS.
 - iii) They have not been previously awarded under the scheme following an in-service claim for the injury/illness/condition which led to their medical discharge.
 - iv) They are a member of the Armed Forces Pension Scheme (AFPS) 75; or they are a member of the AFPS 05 scheme AND are in receipt of Tier 2 or Tier 3 ill health benefits from that scheme. Further information on the [AFPS 05 ill health benefits](#) can be found on the Gov.uk website.
12. An initial decision is made by the MOD on whether to award each injury/illness claim. There are three outcomes to an initial injury/illness claim:
- a) Awarded: Injury/illness accepted as due to service AND falls under one of the 15 tariff levels, as discussed in paragraph 15 below.
 - b) Accepted- No award: Injury/illness accepted as due to service but the severity does not meet the minimum tariff level, and therefore no financial compensation is paid out.
 - c) Rejected: Injury/illness not accepted as due to service.
13. **Tax-free lump sum awards** are paid to all service personnel and veterans as compensation for pain and suffering for an injury or illness that is predominantly caused or made worse by service. Lump sum awards can be made whilst the claimant is still in service.
14. All injuries/illnesses are considered under a relevant tariff of injury table. There are nine tables which each cover the legislation surrounding the payment of compensation for 1. Burns; 2. Injury, Wounds and Scarring; 3. Mental Disorders; 4. Physical Disorders; 5. Amputations; 6. Neurological Disorders; 7. Senses; 8. Fractures and Dislocations; 9. Musculoskeletal Disorders. This legislation determines the tariff level at which each injury/illness should be paid compensation. The full [tariff of injury tables](#) are published online by legislation.gov.uk.
15. There are 15 tariff levels under which successful claimants are awarded, each reflecting the severity of the injury or illness:
- Tariffs 1 to 4: Claimant will be unable to work again.
- Tariffs 5 to 6: Claimant will be able to work but at a significantly reduced earning capacity.
- Tariffs 7 to 8: Claimant will be able to work but their earning capacity will be reduced by around half.
- Tariffs 9 to 11: Claimant will be able to work but will experience a lower level of earnings due to their injury.
- Tariffs 12 to 15: Claimant's future civilian earning capacity will be unaffected by their injury/illness as it does not have any significant permanent effects.
16. The lower numerical tariff levels (i.e. 1 to 4) reflect the more severe injuries/illnesses. Where a lump sum award has been made at tariff levels 1 to 11 (reflecting a more serious injury/illness), the claimant will also be awarded a tax-free index-linked income stream known as a **Guaranteed Income Payment (GIP)**. A GIP will be paid from service termination for life to recognise long-term loss of earnings.
17. Tariff levels 1 to 11 are divided into four bands and they refer to the percentage used to calculate the annual amount of the GIP; 100% for Band A (most severe condition awarded at tariff levels 1-4), 75% for Band B (most severe condition awarded at tariff levels 5-6), 50% for Band C (most severe condition awarded at tariff levels 7 to 8) and 30% for Band D (most severe condition awarded at tariff levels 9 to 11).

18. Service personnel awarded a GIP at 50% or above (Tariff Bands A to C) are eligible to apply for additional financial support via the [Armed Forces Independence Payment \(AFIP\)](#). The AFIP is a benefit to help with the extra costs of a long-term health condition or disability. The weekly AFIP payment is the same as the enhanced rate of the [Personal Independence Payment \(PIP\)](#) components and the highest rate of the [Disability Living Allowance \(DLA\)](#) components. Therefore, veterans already receiving the enhanced PIP or the highest rate DLA support may not apply to receive the AFIP since the benefits are the same.
19. The AFCS aims to compensate as early as reasonably possible. In most cases it is possible, on the advice of medical advisors, to determine the long-term severity of successful injury/illness claims and claimants are awarded in accordance with the appropriate tariff of injury table and tariff level. However, in some cases it is not possible to make an early decision on the appropriate compensation amount. In these cases, successful claims will be awarded an interim award. Interim awards are made where a service-attributable injury or illness has been determined but its long-term effect is not clear. The MOD will provide claimants with some financial security pending their full and final award. Interim awards are reviewed after two years, via an **interim review**, and then if necessary again at four years, to determine a final award.
20. There are several other ways in which initial claim outcomes can also be reviewed. All types of review discussed below, as well as interim reviews, are presented together within these National Statistics:
- a) Where a claimant has made a claim under the AFCS and an award has been made within the seven years prior to their leaving service, they can request a **Service Termination Review** of their award up to a year after leaving. In cases where the injury for which the initial award was made has worsened, or a further injury developed, this review can result in the award being maintained or increased. This review cannot result in the reduction or removal of an award.
 - b) The scheme is designed to provide a full and final award, taking into account the expected effects of the injury and its treatment through life. There may, however, be circumstances where an injury unexpectedly deteriorates, or consequential problems develop beyond those anticipated. In these cases, the award given may not be appropriate in the longer term. If this occurs within ten years from the original decision, the claimant can request an **Exceptional Review** of their award. This review can result in the award being maintained or increased and cannot result in the reduction or removal of an award.
 - c) A decision under the AFCS can be reviewed at any time if it was made in ignorance of a fact or based on a mistake as to a material fact or of a mistake as to the law. An **Ignorance or Mistake Review** can be instigated either by the claimant or the MOD. This review can lead to the previous award being maintained or increased, it can also lead to a previous award being cancelled or reduced where there is compelling evidence of a mistake or ignorance of a fact.
 - d) Where more than ten years have passed since the AFCS decision, a **Final Review** of an AFCS award can be requested. Given the number of review points that are available for an award before the ten-year point, and the basis of AFCS as a Scheme which makes final decisions only once prognosis is clear, it is anticipated that there will be exceptionally rare occasions where the AFCS award is found to be inappropriate beyond the ten-year point. Where this does happen and the claimant can provide new and compelling evidence that maintaining the award as it stands would be manifestly unjust, then this type of review can be requested. This final review cannot result in a reduction or removal of an award.
21. In cases where claimants are unhappy with the initial outcome of their claim, they can request for DBS Veterans UK to arrange a different assessing officer to reassess their claim, via a **reconsideration**. During reconsideration, DBS Veterans UK can either maintain the decision already made or increase the award. The award cannot be reduced or removed.

22. If a claimant continues to be unhappy with the reconsidered outcome of their claim they can lodge an **appeal** to an independent tribunal. Where an appeal has been lodged and a reconsideration has not already been carried out, the MOD must carry out a reconsideration of the original decision and notify both the claimant and the Tribunal of the reconsideration outcome. The request must be received within six months of the notification date of the reconsideration outcome. The Tribunal is held by the [HM Courts and Tribunals Service](#) (England, Scotland and Wales) and the [Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service](#) and is independent from the MOD. Tribunal decisions are legally binding on both the appellant and the MOD. The Tribunal is bound by the rules of the scheme.

AFCS Survivors' claims and awards

23. Where the death of an individual was caused by service in the UK Armed Forces, the AFCS pays benefits to the individual's dependents. AFCS payments can be made to an eligible partner in recognition of the financial loss suffered as a result of the bereavement.

24. An eligible partner is a person who was married to the deceased or was their civil partner, and the marriage or civil partnership was in place for at least six months before the bereavement. If there is no spouse or civil partner, a person who fulfils the following criteria may be entitled to benefits under the Scheme:

- They lived with the deceased as partners in a substantial and exclusive relationship.
- They were not prevented from marrying or forming a civil partnership; and they were financially dependent on the deceased or they were financially interdependent.

25. In the event of a death caused by service where there is no spouse or civil partner, it will be important to establish whether a relationship meets the above criteria to determine whether compensation is due to be paid.

26. Payments may also be made to eligible children. An eligible child is a birth child, an adopted child or other child who was financially dependent on the deceased. A child is defined for these purposes as someone who is under 18 years of age or, if in full-time education or vocational training, someone under 23 years of age. This includes a child born to the individual's partner within 12 months of the bereavement. The age criteria do not apply if the child is unable to support themselves because they are suffering physical or mental disability.

27. Compensation is paid to an eligible partner and /or child when death is caused by service and:

I. The death occurred in service;

or

II. The death occurred within seven years from when service ends and was caused by:

- An injury which was caused by service, or
- The worsening by service of an injury which existed before or arose during service and which was not caused by service;

or

III. The death occurred more than seven years after service ends and:

- The death is caused by a late-onset illness which was caused by service
- The predominant cause of the death is an injury for which an AFCS award has been made where the lump sum fell within levels 1 to 9 of the tariff (tariff level 9 refers to the lowest tariff level of injury descriptor which has a 'permanent' effect).

28. Where death is not wholly caused by service, compensation is only payable if service is the predominant cause of the death, on the balance of probabilities.

29. Full details of the eligibility criteria for eligible partners and children can be found in the MOD's JSP 765 [AFCS Statement of Policy](#).

30. **Survivors' claims** are presented within the supplementary tables and the Statistical Bulletin in three groups:
- **Death-in-service claims:** Claims following an in-service death.
 - **Death-post-service claims:** Those registered by surviving dependents of veterans who died after leaving service.
 - **Additional child claims:** Those registered for an additional child who was not included within the initial claim.
31. An initial decision is made by the MOD on whether to award each survivors' claim. There are two outcomes to an initial survivors' claim:
- a) Awarded: Death accepted as caused by service.
 - b) Rejected: Death not caused by service.
32. Where death is caused by service the AFCS provides an income stream known as the **Survivor's Guaranteed Income Payment (SGIP)**. This is payable to the spouse, civil partner or adult dependent for life. Compensation is also paid to eligible children whilst they are in full-time education, known as the Child Payment (CP).
33. If a claimant is unhappy with the outcome of their claim, they are entitled to request for their claim to be reassessed via a **reconsideration** (as detailed in paragraph 21), and **appeal** (as detailed in paragraph 22).

Reviews of the Scheme

34. **Lord Boyce Review:** In 2010 a review of the AFCS was conducted under the independent chairmanship of former Chief of Defence Staff, Admiral the Lord Boyce. The Review found the Scheme was fundamentally sound but required adjustment in some areas. A full summary of the [Lord Boyce Review](#) can be found on the Gov.UK website. A principal amendment to the scheme was the increased lump sum award amounts assigned to the scheme's tariff levels (presented in **Table A1**), with those awarded prior to the review also receiving a 'top-up' to make up the difference. Information presented within the Statistical Bulletin on the total amounts paid out under the scheme reflect the increased payments.
35. **Quinquennial Review:** In 2016 a further independent review, the [Quinquennial Review, or QQR](#), was conducted to make sure that, ten years on, the scheme remained fit for purpose and displayed the flexibility to adapt to changing conditions and environments. Overall the QQR concluded that the AFCS remained on track and fit for purpose, with some areas needing improvement. It recognised that the scheme had evolved over the years, and had the flexibility to adapt to changing circumstances. The QQR team suggested a combination of building on existing measures and creating new ones for future improvements to the scheme.
36. In April 2018, the MOD published the ['One Year On' Report](#) to discuss the response to the recommendations and progress on implementation over the previous year. The key recommendations were:
- An uplift of tariff 1 lump sum from £570,000 to £650,000, and tariff 2 to 15 lump sum awards to be uplifted by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) measure of inflation to maintain their value.
 - An increase in the total lump sum payment awarded for multiple injuries from £570,000 to £650,000.
 - A review of the maximum tariff level award for mental health conditions upwards (potentially from level 6 (£140,000) to level 4 (£290,000)).
37. These recommendations were implemented on 9 April 2018 for new claimants only – these recommendations have not been applied retrospectively to those awarded under the scheme prior to 9 April 2008.

Table A1: AFCS Lump Sum Award Values by Tariff Level, £

6 April 2005 to 1 April 2021

Tariff level	Lump Sum Award Values			
	Start of the scheme ¹	Post-additional lump sum exercise ²	Post-Lord Boyce review ³	Awards on or after 9 April 2018 ⁴
1	285,000	570,000	570,000	650,000
2	201,250	402,500	470,000	484,100
3	115,000	230,000	380,000	391,400
4	86,250	172,500	290,000	298,700
5	57,500	115,000	175,000	180,250
6	46,000	92,000	140,000	144,200
7	34,500	63,825	90,000	92,700
8	28,750	48,875	60,000	61,800
9	22,000	34,100	40,000	41,200
10	16,500	23,100	27,000	27,810
11	11,000	13,750	15,500	15,965
12	8,250	9,075	10,000	10,300
13	5,250	5,775	6,000	6,180
14	2,625	2,888	3,000	3,090
15	1,050	1,155	1,200	1,236

- Lump sum awards paid out to successful injury/illness claimants from the start of the scheme (6 April 2005) to 14 December 2008.
- Lump sum awards paid out to successful injury/illness claimants from 15 December 2008 to 8 May 2011. Note that those awarded prior to 15 December 2008 had their awards retrospectively uplifted.
- Lump sum awards paid out to successful injury/illness claimants after the Lord Boyce Review recommendations were implemented, from 9 May 2011 until 8 April 2018. Note that those awarded prior to the Lord Boyce Review had their awards retrospectively uplifted.
- Lump sum awards paid out to successful injury/illness claimants on or after 9 April 2018. Note that uplifts were not paid retrospectively.

Methodology

Data Sources

- Most of the information presented within this Statistical Bulletin is sourced from quarterly AFCS data extracts from the Compensation and Pension System (CAPS), managed by DBS Veterans UK.
- Defence Statistics also receive separate datasets from the DBS Veterans UK Finance team which are used to report on recipients of Guaranteed Income Payments, and the overall financial amounts paid out under the scheme.
- Separate Excel spreadsheets managed by DBS Veterans UK have been used to provide information on the number of individuals in receipt of the AFIP.
- Deployment data were used to determine those awarded under the AFCS that have previously deployed to Iraq and/or Afghanistan. Defence Statistics maintains a database of individual deployment records from November 2001. Data prior to April 2007 was derived from the single services Operation Location tracking (OPLOC) systems and data since April 2007 is obtained from the Joint Personnel Administration (JPA) system. The data covers deployments on Op TELIC (2003 to 2009) and Op VERITAS/Op HERRICK (2001 to 2014).

Data Extraction and Manipulation Process

42. The raw data extracts from the CAPS include 'non-genuine' AFCS claims which include the following:
- 'Spanning' claims: Claims considered for entitlement under the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme but passed to the War Pension Scheme where the cause of injury or onset of illness occurred prior to 6 April 2005. Between 6 April 2005 and 31 March 2021 there were 13,186 spanning cases included within the AFCS claims processing workload which were not reflected within these statistics.
 - 'Treat as never made' claims: Claims which are entered onto CAPS but later abandoned either due to the claim being entered in error or the claim having been withdrawn by the claimant.
 - Claims that have been entered onto the CAPS in error, e.g. duplicate entries.
43. Following the removal of non-genuine AFCS claims, Defence Statistics conduct a series of consistency checks on the data. For example, the number of records received is compared to the previous extract to ensure the total number is as expected. If any data quality issues are evident following receipt of data, Defence Statistics liaise with DBS Veterans UK to determine whether any investigation is required.
44. The CAPS data are processed through a series of automated programming in a MYSQL database that produces a series of summary tables on AFCS claims and awards that are then used to populate final tables within the report. The tables within the report present information on claims and awards over the length of the scheme by financial year. This enables long-term comparisons to be made.

Reporting Registered Claims, Reconsiderations, Reviews and Appeals

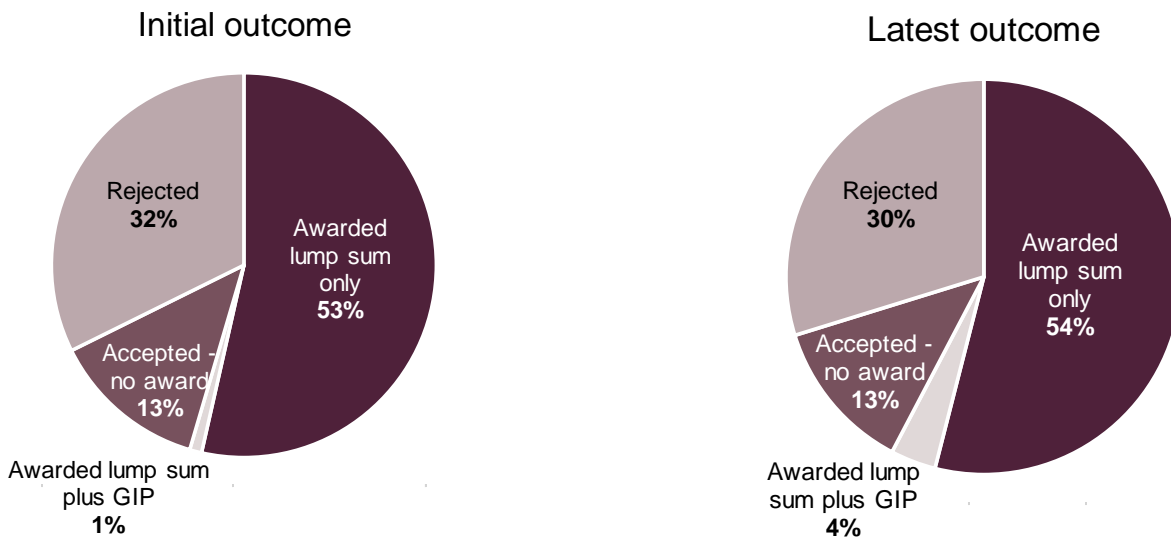
45. Summary counts of registered events are presented, as recorded on the CAPS. Injury/illness claims, not automatically registered following a medical discharge, are further split into those registered by claimants still Serving (in-service claims) and those registered by veterans (post-service claims), determined by claimant service information as recorded on the CAPS.
46. Note that the following figures are provisional (marked with a 'p') as the numbers may change once pending cases are cleared. See 'Accuracy' section below for further detail:
- Numbers of registered claims in 2006/07, 2012/13, 2017/18, 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21 and subsequently for 'All Years'.
 - Numbers of registered reviews and reconsiderations in 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21 and subsequently for 'All Years'.
47. There have been no changes in methodology to produce these figures since these statistics were designated National Statistics in November 2013.

Reporting Claim Outcomes

48. The latest outcomes of all registered claims, as recorded on the CAPS, are presented as follows:
- Initial claim outcomes were reported where there was no further claim activity as at the reporting date (i.e. no subsequent reconsiderations, appeals, reviews etc.).
 - Initial claims with later registered reconsiderations, appeals and/or reviews were analysed to determine the latest tariff level awarded for each condition awarded compensation.
49. Note that claim outcomes are provisional (marked with a 'p') for all financial years (and subsequently for 'All Years') which have pending cases. See 'Accuracy' section below for further detail.

50. There has been one methodology change to these statistics since they were designated National Statistics in November 2013. Prior to the publication of the 2017/18 Statistical Bulletin, published claim outcomes were compiled based on initial claim outcomes only. The methodology was changed in 2017 to reflect latest claim outcomes (following reconsideration etc.) as at the end of the reporting financial year. This methodology change was agreed following an internal MOD consultation.
51. Historical figures were revised using the new methodology. The impact of this methodology change was minimal and did not affect any trends over time. **Figure A1** compares initial and latest claim outcomes for all cleared claims as at 31 March 2021.

Figure A1: AFCS cleared injury/illness claims by initial and latest outcomes, percentages
6 April 2005 to 31 March 2021



Source: Compensation and Pension System (CAPS)

52. Outcomes of all initial claims continue to be presented in Table 20 of **the Supplementary Tables**.

Reporting outcomes of Reviews, Reconsiderations and Appeals

53. Following an internal MOD consultation for agreement to amend the methodology to report on latest claim outcomes (as discussed in paras 48 to 51 above), some MOD stakeholders requested continued access to outcomes of Reviews, Reconsiderations and Appeals. Therefore, this information has continued to be presented within this report.
54. Note that 2018/19 outcomes for Reviews and Reconsiderations, and 2019/20 outcomes for Reviews, are reported as having low reliability and are marked with a 'u'. See 'Accuracy' section below for further detail.
55. There have been two methodology changes to these statistics since they were designated National Statistics in November 2013. Both methodology changes were made during the production of the 2018/19 Statistical Bulletin.
56. The first methodology change came following a consultation with DBS Veterans UK to discuss Defence Statistics' classification of Review, Reconsideration and Appeal outcomes. This consultation concluded that Defence Statistics had previously incorrectly categorised outcomes of Reviews and Reconsiderations. Appeal outcomes were correct.

57. There are six outcomes recorded for Reviews and Reconsiderations on the CAPS. **Tables A2** and **A3** present the old and new methods for categorising these outcomes, with the new methods approved by DBS Veterans UK. All cleared Reviews and Reconsiderations since the start of the scheme (as at 31 March 2021) have been categorised using the new methodology and historical figures have been revised.

Table A2: Reconsideration outcome classifications

CAPS outcome	Pre-2018/19 Reporting	Post-2018/19 Reporting
Allowed	New	Maintained
Interim	New	Maintained
Maintained	Maintained	Maintained
Disallowed	Maintained	Disallowed
Increased	Increased	Increased
Reduced	Reduced	Reduced

Table A3: Review outcome classifications

CAPS outcome	Pre-2018/19 Reporting	Post-2018/19 Reporting
Allowed	Awarded	Maintained
Maintained	Maintained	Maintained
Interim	Interim	Interim
Disallowed	Rejected	Disallowed
Increased	Increased	Increased
Reduced	Reduced	Reduced

58. The second methodology change was a result of an internal Defence Statistics review of the processing of outcome data for Reviews, Reconsideration and Appeals. It was determined that these events registered following an injury/illness claim were split in 'In-service' or 'Post-service' events based on the date of the initial injury/illness claim and not the date on which the specific event (e.g. Review) had been registered. This error was corrected during the production of the 2018/19 statistics, with historical figures revised accordingly. This change in methodology is in line with other methodology changes, whereby the latest claim outcome is reported on rather than the initial claim outcome.
59. This methodology change resulted in a decrease in the number of registered 'in-service' events, and an increase in the number of registered 'post-service' events, due to many claimants having made their initial claim whilst in service, but later registered their subsequent Reviews, Reconsiderations and/or Appeals after leaving service.
60. Both methodology changes resulted in revised figures presented within the 2018/19 statistics. Since this is the first report to present this information, a note has been included within the report to inform users that figures presented in Table 3 (Reconsideration outcomes), Table 4 (Appeal outcomes) and Table 5 (Review outcomes) of the Supplementary Tables supersede any previously published figures pertaining to outcomes of Reviews, Reconsiderations and Appeals.
61. The impact of these methodology changes is considered minimal since the key findings discussed in the main Statistical Bulletin do not include information presented within these tables. External interest remains on the latest outcomes of claims, and not the outcomes of individual claim events. Internal MOD users of these statistics are aware of the errors and methodology changes and are content that the impact of the changes is minimal.

Reporting Clearance Times

62. These statistics were first presented within the 2014/15 Statistical Bulletin following increased external user interest in the time taken to clear AFCS claims.
63. Clearance times calculations are conducted separately to the automated process. All closed genuine AFCS claims (claims with a 'cleared date' recorded on the CAPS) are identified, and the number of working days (excluding weekends and bank holidays) are calculated to clear injury/illness claims, survivors' claims, reconsiderations and appeals. The average (median) has been provided as an indication of how long, on average, claimants waited for a decision to be made. Due to variations in the time taken to process each type of AFCS claim, average clearance times were calculated separately for each claim type: injury/illness claims, survivors' claims, reconsiderations and appeals.
64. Information on AFCS 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 are affected less by outliers and better reflects the average typical experience for the individual making a claim. 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 centre 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 dataset (from smallest value to largest value) 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.
65. Note that the mean average is also presented in the Supplementary Tables as this is used internally as a measure of performance on the management of cases by DBS Veterans UK.
66. Survival analysis has been used to investigate further the length of time between claims being received by DBS Veterans UK and cleared, taking into account pending cases as well as cleared cases. This analysis was carried out for each claim type: injury/illness claims, survivors claims, reconsideration and appeals. Survival analysis is a statistical method designed to identify if two or more populations show differences in the rate of a "failure" event over time, and to predict the probability that a failure will or will not have occurred after a set period of time. The analysis takes account of open claims as well as cleared claims and is used to predict the probability that a claim will have been cleared by a certain point in time. 2017/18 – 2018/19 registered claims were tracked for a period of 480 working days (two calendar years) from the claim being received by DBS Veterans UK. The survival probability was estimated using a Kaplan-Meier estimate. In the context of this report "Survival" does not refer to a death, but to the length of time taken for a claim to be cleared by the MOD. A "failure" will occur when a claim is cleared by the MOD, i.e. a decision is made on the outcome of the claim.
67. There has been one methodology correction to published Survival Analysis since first being published in December 2015.
68. Prior to the publication of the 2020/21 statistics, the Kaplan-Meier (KM) estimates were incorrectly based on all cleared claims from 1 April 2017 to the latest reported financial year. This meant claims were not tracked for the same period of time. Since the 2020/21 report, registered claims were tracked for a period of 480 working days, with the claim status at the end of the period being used to calculate the KM estimates. Due to registered claims only being tracked for 480 working days, we are unable to present estimates for the timeframe it would

take for all claims to be cleared. The correction to the methodology has not changed the key message from the survival analysis.

69. There have been two methodology changes to published clearance times since these statistics were first published in June 2015.
70. The first methodology change was made to provide a more accurate reflection of the full end-to-end claim clearance process. Prior to the publication of the 2017/18 statistics, clearance times were calculated from the date each event was registered on the CAPS to the date each outcome was cleared (decision was made on the outcome), in line with DBS Veterans UK methodology. However, it transpired that some cases were not immediately being recorded on the CAPS. Therefore, the methodology was changed to capture the time between the date each claim form was received by Veterans UK and the date each event was cleared, to incorporate any time lag. The time lag can be considerable in complex cases, for example where detailed assessments have to be conducted initially to determine whether the claim should be formally assessed under the AFCS or the WPS.
71. Information on when claim forms were received by DBS Veterans UK has only been captured since late 2016/17 and has not been entered retrospectively on the CAPS. As such, it was not possible to revise the historic time series for clearance times. Therefore, Tables 6 to 9 of the Supplementary Tables present a break in the time series between 2016/17 and 2017/18 to reflect the change in methodology. It is important to note that any increase in clearance times between 2016/17 and 2017/18 does not necessarily mean that claimants have had to wait longer for their claim to be cleared; simply that figures since 2017/18 are a more accurate reflection of the full end-to-end claim clearance process.
72. The second methodology change was made following the identification of an error in Defence Statistics' clearance time calculations for reconsiderations and appeals. During the production of the 2018/19 statistics it was discovered that survivors' reconsiderations and appeals were not included in clearance times calculations. This error has now been rectified. Historical clearance times were also updated with revisions highlighted within Tables 8 and 9 of the Supplementary Tables. The information presented within the 2018/19 National Statistic supersedes information presented in previous Statistical Bulletins. A note has been included within the report to highlight this to the reader.
73. The impact of the methodology changes is considered minimal since they do not affect trends over time, and better reflect the full end-to-end claimant experience.

Reporting Lump Sum Payments Awarded

74. Counts of lump sum payments awarded under the AFCS are summarised by demographics, as recorded on the CAPS. Injury/illness claims, not automatically registered following a medical discharge, are further split into those registered by claimants still Serving (in-service claims) and those registered by veterans (post-service claims), determined by claimant service information as recorded on the CAPS.
75. Note that the numbers of lump sum awards made following claims registered in 2012/13, 2017/18, 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21 and subsequently for 'All Years', are provisional (marked with a 'p') as pending cases are cleared. See 'Accuracy' section below for further detail.
76. There has been one methodology change to these statistics since they were designated National Statistics in November 2013. Prior to the publication of the 2017/18 Statistical Bulletin, published figures on lump sum awards were compiled based on initial claim outcomes only. The methodology was changed in 2017 to reflect latest claim outcomes (following reconsideration etc.) as at the end of the reporting financial year. This methodology change was agreed following an internal MOD consultation.

77. Historical figures were revised using the new methodology and presented by financial year in which claims were registered. Previously, information was presented by financial year in which claims were cleared. The impact of this methodology change was minimal and did not affect any trends over time.

Reporting Guaranteed Income Payments Awarded

78. Counts of GIPs awarded and in payment are summarised by demographics, using data supplied by the DBS Veterans UK finance team.

79. There have been no changes in methodology to produce these figures since these statistics were designated National Statistics in November 2013.

Reporting Financial Amounts Paid Out

80. These statistics were first presented within the 2015/16 Statistical Bulletin following increased external user interest in financial amounts paid out under the AFCS. This information is compiled using data supplied by the DBS Veterans UK finance team.

81. Note that figures for 2020/21 are provisional (marked with a 'p'). See 'Accuracy' section below for further detail.

82. There have been no changes in methodology to produce these figures since these statistics were first published in June 2016.

Reporting Interim Awards

83. These statistics were first presented within the 2016/17 Statistical Bulletin following external interest in interim awards (see paragraph 19 for definition), specifically from the [Independent Medical Expert Group](#). Summary statistics are compiled using data as recorded on the CAPS in Tables 21 and 22 of the Supplementary Tables.

84. There have been no changes in methodology to produce these figures since these statistics were first published in June 2017.

Determining awarded claimants who previously deployed to Iraq and/or Afghanistan

85. These statistics were first presented in the 2012/13 Statistical Bulletin following a high volume of external requests for information on service personnel awarded compensation under the AFCS for injuries sustained on Op TELIC (Iraq) and Op HERRICK (Afghanistan). During production of the 2019/20 statistics the Afghanistan deployment data was expanded to also include those who deployed on Op VERITAS (Afghanistan 2001 to 2006). The AFCS compensates for service-attributable injury/ill health and **it is not possible to attribute injuries/illnesses to a specific deployment.**

86. The only information that can be supplied is on those who have been awarded compensation under the AFCS who previously deployed on Op TELIC or Op VERITAS/Op HERRICK. Note that individuals may have been awarded compensation for non-operational injuries/illnesses.

87. The CAPS data were linked to Defence Statistics' deployment data. Prior to the introduction of the Joint Personnel Administration (JPA) system in April 2007, dates in and out of theatre are unreliable and therefore it is only possible to identify that a service person has deployed and not when they deployed/returned from Operations.

88. There were 365 awards made to claimants deployed on Op TELIC, and 71 awards made to claimants deployed on Op VERITAS/Op HERRICK where it was not possible to determine the specific date of deployment. Therefore, there is a chance that these awards were made prior to the individual's deployment.
89. Please note that person level deployment data for Afghanistan was not available between 1 January 2003 and 14 October 2005. Therefore, it is possible that some UK Armed Forces personnel who were deployed to Afghanistan between 6 April 2005 and 14 October 2005 may not have been included in the figures provided.
90. There have been no changes in methodology to produce these figures since these statistics were designated National Statistics in November 2013. However, during the production of the 2019/20 statistics, processing errors were identified whereby some individuals who had deployed to Iraq and/or Afghanistan had been omitted from the deployment file. This processing error has now been corrected resulting in the numbers of individuals awarded compensation who had deployed to Iraq only increasing. Even though this has increased the numbers of individuals previously deployed on these Operations who went on to have a successful AFCS claim the impact of this error is minimal as the increase is less than 4%.

Reporting on Armed Forces Independence Payment (AFIP) recipients

91. These statistics were first presented in the 2015/16 Statistical Bulletin to reflect the numbers of successful AFCS claimants taking up the Armed Forces Independence Payment (see paragraph 18 for further information on the AFIP).
92. Data on those in receipt of the AFIP are sourced directly from DBS Veterans UK.

There have been no changes in methodology to produce these figures since these statistics were first published in June 2016.

Statistical methods

93. The z test difference between two proportions was used to identify any significant differences between the percentage points estimates over time. The significance test provided confidence to state that an observed difference between the percentages was a real difference and did not occur due to chance. Upper and lower confidence intervals were also calculated from the z test. A significance level of 0.05 has been used throughout this report, however, where appropriate, a Bonferroni correction has been applied to allow for multiple testing (when more than two groups are being compared). A Bonferroni correction helps to reduce the likelihood of a difference being classed as significant when it is not (a false positive). To do this the level of significance (0.05) was divided by the number of tests being carried out. Statistical significance was then only assumed when the p-value was less than the corrected significance level.

2. Relevance

Coverage

94. The data presented include all claims for compensation under the AFCS registered between 6 April 2005 and 31 March 2021 by regular and reserve UK service personnel and their dependants following injury/illness/death potentially caused by service on or after 6 April 2005.
95. Although the figures presented cover all claims registered during the reported time period, the figures do not represent all individuals who have sustained a service related injury/illness during that time. This is because there can be a time lag between an individual's injury/illness and the date they make a claim. Individuals have up to seven years to make an injury/illness claim from

the date of their initial injury/diagnosis. There are some exceptions to this such as late-onset illnesses. Claims for a late-onset illness can be made at any time after the event to which it relates, as long as it is done so within three years of seeking medical advice. Families have up to three years to make a claim as a result of a death caused by service.

96. Please note that some information on the outcomes of appeals made under the AFCS is not recorded on the CAPS and is therefore not presented in this report. All registered appeals are recorded on the CAPS. However, only outcomes at the first stage of the appeal process (First Tier Tribunal) are recorded on the CAPS. Information on appeals that progress to further stages (e.g. Upper Tier Tribunal) is held offline, i.e. not on the CAPS. Defence Statistics are planning to work with DBS Veterans UK to investigate how final appeal outcomes are captured in order to improve the information presented in the future.
97. DBS Veterans UK have migrated data from their interim system onto the CAPS. The interim system contains claims registered under the AFCS at the start of the scheme between 6 April 2005 and 31 October 2005. Please note that Veterans UK have only migrated successful interim system claims to the CAPS and therefore interim system claims that were rejected or withdrawn are not included in the publication tables. For information, there were 115 injury claims and 25 survivors' claims rejected, as recorded on the interim system.
98. In a given table, numbers of people for each financial year may not sum to the total number of people. This is because one person can make more than one claim spanning different financial years, but would only be counted once in the overall total.

User Needs

99. These statistics have been provided in response to an increasing number of requests for information about claims and awards under the scheme, including the number of individuals currently in receipt of compensation payments under the scheme and the time taken for a claim to be cleared.
100. A range of information is requested including further details of claims and awards (e.g. by claim type or outcome) and further information on those awarded compensation (e.g. age and service at time of award). Requests are also frequently made for information on AFCS awards made to specific sub-groups of people e.g. those who have submitted a compensation claim following an injury sustained in Afghanistan, those who have been medically discharged for a specific condition, or those living in a particular area of the country. Defence Statistics are often able to link to other sources of data to provide this additional information.
101. In 2012 and 2013, Defence Statistics carried out an internal and an external consultation to review the War Pension Scheme (WPS) National Statistic and the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS) National Statistic to ensure they are coherent and continue to meet users' needs. The consultations were prompted by the UK Statistics Authority Assessment Report 197: Statistics on Defence Health, which required a review of the content of the publications in consultation with users.
102. Following the consultations the majority of the recommendations were implemented. Recommendations included presenting numbers in terms of people as well as the number of claims and presenting information on numbers awarded who have been deployed.
103. Further additions have been made to these statistics during 2015 following public interest (in the form of Freedom of Information requests) and requests for information submitted by the House of Commons Defence Committee: information on clearance times, recipients of AFIP and total financial spend.

3. Accuracy

104. DBS Veterans UK is responsible for ensuring the quality of the CAPS data supplied to Defence Statistics. The CAPS is a large administrative database and is subject to the data quality issues of any large administrative system with data collated by a large number of staff for operational delivery purposes.
105. Further validation checks are carried out after the data has been processed to ensure all processes and queries have run correctly and the final numbers are an accurate reflection of data received from DBS Veterans UK. Manual checks are carried out on the final report to ensure that figures quoted in the commentary reflect those in the tables, and the numbers sum to the totals provided.
106. The main sources of potential error in the production of the AFCS statistics are as follows:
 - Incomplete/incorrect CAPS data extracts.
 - Data processing errors resulting in incorrect data outputs.
 - Manual error during production of report tables, graphs and commentary.
107. Defence Statistics work closely with colleagues in DBS Veterans UK to continually review the quality of AFCS data to ensure accuracy in reporting. To ensure that potential errors are identified and resolved, Defence Statistics implement a series of data quality checks throughout the report production.
108. Where there is concern over the accuracy of the data, Defence Statistics will not update tables/figures from the previous year. For example, concerns were raised over the accuracy of the underlying data used to compile the 2017/18 outcome tables for Reconsiderations, Appeals and Reviews (Tables 3, 4 and 5 in the Supplementary Tables). This information was not published in the June 2018 Statistical Bulletin. Defence Statistics worked with DBS Veterans UK and determined that the data covering this period were fit for purpose and have therefore been published within more recent updates of the Statistical Bulletin.

Revisions

109. These statistics are subject to routine revisions as the CAPS is a live data system and historic data is amended between data extracts. These figures can be identified by a revision marker ('r').
110. Please note that methodology changes have been made in previous releases of this bulletin – please see the Methodology section above for more information on these changes.

Provisional Data

111. As at 31 March 2021 there were 1,703 pending initial injury/illness claims (registered in 2012/13, 2017/18, 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21) and 44 pending initial survivors' claims (registered in 2006/07, 2017/18, 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/21), with no outcome recorded on the CAPS. It is anticipated that some of these initial claims may go on to be excluded from future analysis if they are later recorded as non-genuine claims, as discussed in paragraph 42 on page 8.
112. Information on the numbers of registered initial claims during 2006/07, 2012/13, 2017/18, 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21 and subsequently 'All Years', are marked provisional as any future exclusion of non-genuine initial claims may result in the numbers of registered claims decreasing. Based on historical observations of the number of injury/illness claims registered, claims for 2020/21 are expected to decrease by approximately 6% as pending claims are later identified as non-'genuine', as shown in **Table A4** below.

Table A4: Registered injury/illness claims reported, numbers¹

1 April 2015 to 31 March 2020

Financial Year	2015/16			2016/17			2017/18			2018/19			2019/20		
Report Year	15/16	16/17	Diff	16/17	17/18	Diff	17/18	18/19	Diff	18/19	19/20	Diff	19/20	20/21	Diff
Injury/illness claims	9,933	9,357	-576	9,735	9,130	-605	10,134	9,499	-635	9,356	8,895	-461	8,558	8,103	-455

1. Columns highlighted in grey denote self-reported years

113. Information on claim outcomes for initial claims registered during 2006/07, 2012/13, 2017/18, 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21 and subsequently 'All Years', are marked provisional within the statistics as genuine pending initial claims are cleared and their outcomes determined.

Table A5: Injury/illness claims, survivors' claims, reviews, reconsiderations and appeals reported across reports, numbers (columns highlighted in grey denote self-reported years)

1 April 2016 to 31 March 2020

Financial Year	2016/17			2017/18			2018/19			2019/20		
Report Year	16/17	17/18	Diff	17/18	18/19	Diff	18/19	19/20	Diff	19/20	20/21	Diff
Reviews	1,017	1,494	+477	1,185	1,635	+450	1,584	2,141	+557	2,066	2,098	+32
Reconsiderations	649	1,580	+931	1,230	1,972	+742	1,333	1,922	+589	1,423	1,969	+546

114. Figures presented for the 2020/21 financial year in Table 19 of the Supplementary Tables are also marked provisional. Accounts for the 2020/21 financial year are pending an audit and may change in future.
115. All figures based on provisional data are marked with a 'p' within the Statistical Bulletin and accompanying Excel tables in the Supplementary Tables.

Quality concerns

116. During production of the 2018/19 AFCS statistics, a large increase was observed in the numbers of reconsiderations and reviews cleared in 2018/19 that had an outcome of 'increased', compared with 2017/18 outcomes; and a subsequent decrease in the numbers with an outcome of 'maintained'.
117. On 9 April 2018 the tariff amounts awarded for all tariff levels from 1 to 15 were increased (see page 7 for more information). Under the principle 2011 AFCS Order, the value of an award was determined by the tariff amount in force at the date of decision. Therefore, any reconsiderations or reviews awarded compensation on or after this date were awarded the new tariff amounts, even when the tariff level did not change. Due to how this information is captured on the CAPS, this has had the effect of making maintained decisions appear as if they have been increased. This did not apply to appeal decisions with a maintained tariff amount.
118. It was not possible, without manually searching the CAPS electronic record for all increased reconsiderations and reviews (over 2,500 cases) to determine which cases had a genuine increase in tariff and cases which had their tariff maintained, but the amount paid out increased in line with the QQR recommendations (as discussed on page 7). Therefore, the figures for 2018/19 were reported having low reliability and were marked with a 'u' within the Statistical Bulletin and accompanying Excel tables in the Supplementary Tables.
119. To maintain equality between decisions made by the Secretary of State and those made by an appropriate tribunal, an amendment has been made with effect from 8 April 2019, so that the value of an award will be determined by the tariff amount at the date of the original claim. This

will bring consistency to the scheme and reinforces the principle that an award is made in full and final settlement of a claim.

120. Defence Statistics have observed that the proportion with an increased outcome for reviews cleared during 2018/19 and 2019/20 appear higher than expected and the proportion of maintained outcomes appear lower than expected. The figures for claimed reviews in these years are marked with a 'u'. For claims cleared during 2020/21 the proportion increased and maintained is in line with prior to 2018/19. Defence Statistics are working with DBS Veterans UK to investigate this further.
121. Due to external public interest, estimates of awards for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) have been presented within this report. It is possible to determine awards for mental health disorders, but it is not possible to accurately determine awards made specifically for PTSD. Estimates have been compiled using a free-text search field, searching for PTSD and related terms. However, claimants may have claimed compensation for PTSD, but they may have been awarded compensation for a different mental health disorder. Therefore, these figures should be interpreted with caution.

4. Timeliness and Punctuality

Timeliness

122. Data are provided to Defence Statistics on a quarterly basis. From September 2008 to March 2011, figures were published on a quarterly basis. Following user consultation, the frequency of publication was reduced from quarterly to biannual from June 2011, and from biannual to annual from June 2018.
123. Figures as at 31 March are published in June. It takes four weeks to extract, validate and process data extracted from the CAPS. It takes a further six weeks to compile and to quality assure the report.

Punctuality

124. The National Statistic reports have all been published on time to meet pre-announced release dates. Future publication dates will also be announced on the Gov.UK at least one month in advance.

5. Accessibility and Clarity

Accessibility

125. The Armed Forces Compensation Scheme statistics can be accessed through the [GOV.UK website](#) and as of June 2021, is published as an accessible PDF document.
126. 24 hour pre-release access to the report is available to a limited distribution list within MOD. The full list can be found in the pre-release access list available on the [Gov.UK website](#).
127. Microsoft Excel and Open Document Spreadsheet (ODS) versions of all AFCS report tables are also available on the Gov.UK website alongside each published report.

Clarity

128. Users with an interest in the key findings can read a short summary of main messages on the front page of the report. The report is then split into six distinct sections to help users navigate their way through the publication.

129. A glossary of key terms is provided in the Statistical Bulletin.

6. Coherence and Comparability

130. The CAPS is the administration system for the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme; and is the only source for information on the AFCS. Location information is presented in line with ONS geographical regions to enable comparisons with other statistical publications. Similarly, age bands are presented in line with other Defence Statistics Health reports.

131. All definitions within this bulletin are consistent with the terms used by Veterans UK.

132. The COVID-19 pandemic affected operational delivery of the AFCS during 2020/21 as casework, including new claims and appeals against previous claim decisions, paused for a short period from March 2020 because it could not be delivered remotely. DBS Veterans UK continued to have limited operational delivery capability throughout the year which has impacted on various aspects of performance. Comparisons with previous years should therefore be made with caution. This may have contributed to the observed decline in registered claims and increase in clearance times in 2020/21, and comparisons with previous years should therefore be made with caution.

7. Trade-offs between output quality components

133. Defence Statistics minimise the cost to Government of producing these statistics through using data already collated for operational delivery purposes within the MOD's administrative system. As a large administrative system, data quality across fields is of varying quality and completeness and this limits the information available to customers in our statistics and requests for information.

8. Assessment of User Needs and Perceptions

134. In reference to the UK Statistics Authority report, [The Use Made of Official Statistics](#), the AFCS statistics are used by:

- (i) Government – Policy Making
- (ii) Government – Policy Monitoring
- (iii) Local Government – service Delivery
- (iv) Academia – Facilitating Research
- (v) Charities – service Delivery

Description of Users and Usage of Statistics

135. The AFCS statistics have been published in response to user demand. Interest has come from internal MOD policy makers, Parliament, Government Departments, the third Sector, academics, the media, and the general public.

136. The AFCS statistics are used by the following groups of customers:

- AFCS policy teams use these statistical publications as a basis for policy making. The MOD uses these figures for background information and for planning purposes e.g. estimating the volume/workload for different types of claims. These statistics allowed the MOD to forecast the financial implications of proposed changes to the AFCS as part of the 2010 AFCS Review and the QQR One Year On Report.
- External organisations such as Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), local Government and Armed Forces charities (e.g. Royal British Legion) use the reports

and location figures as part of estimating and planning veteran casework provision e.g. to assess the numbers and needs of service personnel and veterans.

- AFCS statistics are also used by the media to give context to reports on Armed Forces Compensation.

137. The publication of these statistics also plays an important part in ensuring the Department's accountability to the British public.
138. AFCS questions from outside the MOD (e.g. FOI requests) tend to ask for more detailed information on the data provided e.g. age, service, location breakdowns. Defence Statistics receive a high volume of requests asking for information on compensation paid out for particular conditions and for information on the financial amounts paid out in compensation to particular subsets of individuals. Defence Statistics also receive a high volume of requests from external organisations e.g. NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups and charities, who use breakdowns by detailed location for estimating the number of veterans in particular regions of the UK.
139. Following the MOD's launch of the Armed Forces Community Covenant in June 2011, Defence Statistics received an increasing volume of requests from within the MOD, local Government departments and CCGs for information on the number of veterans by location. This was required to assist with planning for the needs of service personnel and veterans in each specific area of the UK.
140. To meet these requirements, Defence Statistics compiled information on the numbers of Armed Forces Pension Scheme (AFPS), War Pension Scheme (WPS) and Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS) recipients with summaries by location. This was initially published in November 2011, and Defence Statistics has continued to publish annual updates, with the latest statistics on the [Location of Armed Forces Pension and Compensation recipients](#), as at 31 March 2020, published on the Gov.UK website.

Strengths and Weakness in Relation to User Needs

141. Defence Statistics has carried out consultations to review the War Pension Scheme (WPS) National Statistic and the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS) National Statistic to ensure they are coherent and continue to meet users' needs. The consultations were prompted by the UK Statistics Authority Assessment Report 197: Statistics on Defence Health, which required a review of the content of the publications in consultation with users.
142. A consultation was carried out with internal stakeholders in September 2012. Based on the feedback received during the internal consultation, an external consultation was run alongside the release of the AFCS Official Statistic on 6 December 2012. This gave an opportunity for external customers to give feedback on the proposed changes to the AFCS and WPS publications.
143. During 2020/21, the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme National Statistic had over 600 unique web hits via the Gov.UK website.
144. The key strength of the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme data is the efficient methods adopted to capture AFCS data extracts. Validation checks are undertaken to ensure that the information provided in the reports is accurate.
145. The key weakness is that Defence Statistics have to rely on the level of detail that DBS Veterans UK manually enter for each claim. There are no other data sources that can be used to validate the information provided to Defence Statistics. Furthermore, a great deal of the information is recorded in free text fields.

146. Users external to the MOD are encouraged to give feedback via email (Analysis-Health-PQ-FOI@mod.gov.uk).

9. Performance cost and respondent burden

147. The AFCS report uses an administrative data source which is already collected by the MOD. Therefore, the main operational cost to produce the statistic is liaising with DBS Veterans UK, for quality assurance and data interpretation.

10. Confidentiality, Transparency and Security

148. Defence Statistics have data access agreements with DBS Veterans UK with respect to obtaining the CAPS data extracts. All Defence Statistics staff involved in the production have signed a declaration that they have completed the Government wide Responsible for Information: General User training and they understand their responsibilities under the Data Protection Act and the Official Statistics Code of Practice.
149. Only individuals who produce these statistics have access to the underlying data. Defence Statistics ensures that the AFCS data are kept confidential by holding this data on a secure server.
150. 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:
- a) 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. In most cases the secondary suppression has been applied to the next smallest figures. However in Table 14 in the Supplementary Tables, Northern Ireland figures were the next smallest figures after primary suppression of 'Other UK' in some financial years. Due to public interest in the location of service personnel and veterans awarded compensation under the AFCS, the 'UK Unknown' figures instead had secondary suppression applied, since these figures were less useful to external users of these statistics.
 - b) Figures have been rounded to the nearest five: In some 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. Due to rounding, the totals may not be equal to the sum of their components. This method of suppression has been applied to the following Tables in the Supplementary Tables: 3, 4, 5, 12, 13 and 22.

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