



Ministry of Defence Police

Freedom of Information Manager

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Our Ref: eCase: FOI 2020/00770
RFI:031/21

Date: 10 February 2021

Dear [REDACTED]

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000: MINISTRY OF DEFENCE POLICE: KNEE PROTECTION.

We refer to your email dated 24 January 2021 to the Ministry of Defence Police which was acknowledged on the 25 January 2021.

We are treating your email as a request for information in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA 2000).

In your email you requested the following information:

1. **Could you please confirm that contained within the Firearms SOPs for the force that it states No knee protection is to be worn. Could you please clarify where in the SOPs, the sentence and what this means?**
2. **What is the SOPs and do we all have to adhere to them?**
3. **Who in the force is allowed to wear knee protection, who is it issued to and why? where is this in writing (SOPs etc)**
4. **What is the reasoning behind not issuing all officers in a firearms role knee protection ?**
5. **If you injure your Knees what is the correct procedure to apply for knee protection?**
6. **Are you allowed to wear your own knee protection both on the range and for tactics training? If not, why not?"**

A search for information has now been completed by the Ministry of Defence Police and I can confirm that we do hold information in scope of your request.

1. Could you please confirm that contained within the Firearms SOPs for the force that it states No knee protection is to be worn. Could you please clarify where in the SOPs, the sentence and what this means?

A reference to 'knee pads' is contained within the MDP Firearms Training Standard Operation Procedures.

"No other PPE (knee pads etc) will be worn unless there is an identified risk on the range necessitating their use to mitigate said risk, in which case extra PPE may be issued by instructional staff. This will be recorded on the dynamic risk assessment" Firearms Training SOPs version 5.1 JXB, para 23.4 Personal Protective Equipment.

2. What is the SOPs and do we all have to adhere to them?

SOPs stands for Standard Operating Procedures. They contain procedure for compliance. Policy and procedure is set nationally and within the Ministry of Defence Police. Dispensations against policy are permitted in certain circumstances. SOPs are reviewed annually as a matter of course and continuously on application.

3. Who in the force is allowed to wear knee protection, who is it issued to and why? where is this in writing (SOPs etc)

Tactical Firearms Unit officers are issued with a bespoke uniform knee protector. This is based upon the nature and requirements of the role. Licenced Search officers and Search Dog Handlers (non-firearms) are also issued with knee pads. This is based upon the nature and requirements of their roles. All equipment issued is written into their scale of issue documents.

4. What is the reasoning behind not issuing all officers in a firearms role knee protection ?

There has been no personal scale of issue application for knee pads and no submission of evidence to support a case for general issue, for either operational or training use.

5. If you injure your Knees what is the correct procedure to apply for knee protection?

All injuries which prevent officers performing operational duty and/or training activity would be subject to an Occupational Health advisor referral. If a reasonable adjustment application is necessary in relation to additional protective equipment, this would be recorded and considered. Knee Pads and any other PPE worn as operational or training equipment, must be evaluated as fit for purpose. Suitable chosen equipment could then be specified and procured as required.

6. Are you allowed to wear your own knee protection both on the range and for tactics training? If not, why not?

There are personal health and safety risks and employer liability issues associated with the use of privately acquired equipment for police purposes. Non official uniform and equipment is not permitted for this reason.

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

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/>.

Yours sincerely

MDP Secretariat and Freedom of Information Office