



Ministry
of Defence

Ministry of Defence

Defence Business Services Secretariat
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Ref: FOI2020/12512

Email: DBSRES-Secretariat@mod.gov.uk

8 December 2020

[REDACTED] Thank you for your further email of 13 November 2020, following our most

recent reply of

30 October 2020 inviting you to refine your request.

Your originally asked for the following information:

"I would like to know how many Military Veterans there are who were unfortunate enough to leave service before 1975 and not receive a pension".

On 5 October 2020 you refined your request as follows:

"Would it be possible to ascertain the numbers between 1955 and 1980 or even 1960 and 1980, which hopefully would give some idea to the numbers involved which I could then pass on to my Member of Parliament and other interested parties".

Furthermore, you have now refined your request to the following:

"To only for veterans of the Royal Navy for the same date period."

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

A search for the information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence and I can confirm that all information in scope of your request is held. However, I must advise you that to answer your refined request would still exceed the appropriate cost limit.

Section 12 of the FOI Act makes provision for public authorities to refuse requests for information where the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate limit, which for Central Government is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3.5 working days in determining whether the department holds the information, locating it, retrieving it and extracting it.

Answering your request would involve the cross-referencing of many thousands of Service Numbers against pensions in payment. This would not include those who received a

pension but had subsequently died so further searches would also then need to be carried out. The number of veterans who served in the Royal Navy during the time periods specified would run to many thousands and cross referencing these would far exceed the cost limit.

As previously explained, we have an obligation under Section 16 (Advice and Guidance) of the FOIA to offer as much advice and assistance as is reasonably practicable and as such we would normally suggest ways in which you can refine your request to bring it below the cost limit. However, the MOD is unable to provide any information which would assist you as we only hold electronic data for service leavers from 1970 onwards and this is subject to the same requirement to cross reference for pension information. As an example, to answer your request solely for the year 1971 would still exceed the appropriate cost limit due to the requirement to cross reference for pension information.

We may be able to provide the numbers of Royal Navy service leavers since 1970 or the numbers in receipt of pension under a particular pension scheme if you would find that of use.

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,

Defence Business Services (Secretariat)