



Ministry of Defence Police

Freedom of Information Manager

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Our Ref: eCase: FOI 2021/04114

Date: 13 May 2021

Dear [REDACTED]

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000: MINISTRY OF DEFENCE POLICE: MARINE UNIT INFORMATION.

We refer to your email dated 6 April 2021 to the Ministry of Defence which was acknowledged on 27 April 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. **How many officers have been recruited into the Marine Unit in Portsmouth/the South West since July 2019?**
2. **At what level have those officers been recruited?**
3. **What are the fitness requirements for an Officer joining the Marine Unit? Is it only a bleep running test?**
4. **Would an injury/weakness in one wrist rule out an officer from even being considered for a role as a Marine Officer? If not, would they be assessed by a suitably qualified medical expert?**
5. **Can the firearm required for the role be operated in either hand?**
6. **Is it possible for the role to be adapted so as to avoid certain tasks for those officers who are injured or who have a weak wrist? i.e. can they be tasked with steering the vessel whilst other officers aid any rescues from sea?**
7. **Could the Claimant be assigned to a larger vessel where rescue's are undertaken using a mechanical scoop?**
8. **Given that the Claimant has previous experience and given that he holds a number of marine Qualifications, would he be considered for the role or would his wrist injury automatically rule him out? We want to know whether he stands just as much chance as another suitably qualified candidate of securing the role subject to meeting the required fitness standard, passing the required courses and performing well at interview. We accept you cannot answer whether he would have been**

awarded the role as there are too many variables. We simply want to know whether the wrist injury rules him out regardless.

9. What is the average retirement age of Marine Officers?'

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. How many officers have been recruited into the Marine Unit in Portsmouth/the South West since July 2019?

65

2. At what level have those officers been recruited?

The majority of officers are Constable rank, a small percentage are Sergeants.

3. What are the fitness requirements for an Officer joining the Marine Unit? Is it only a bleep running test?

In order to join MDP recruits must achieve 7.6 on the 15m Multi Shuttle Fitness Test. In order to join the marine unit officers must complete a swim test, comprising of a 40m swim in clothing, remain afloat for three minutes in a 1m square area and finally climb out of the pool unaided. Officers must also successfully complete a Royal Yacht Association Sea Survival course, which is physically demanding.

4. Would an injury/weakness in one wrist rule out an officer from even being considered for a role as a Marine Officer? If not, would they be assessed by a suitably qualified medical expert?

On recruitment officers must undertake a force medical conducted by the MOD Occupational Health Service Provider, Optima Health assessing against the MDP medical standards. Optima may seek further medical evidence about a candidates health and make a recommendation in line with the relevant job description. Prior to joining the marine unit, officers must complete a marine medical. The force medical is an annual requirement and the marine medical is completed every five years.

5. Can the firearm required for the role be operated in either hand?

All firearms used by the marine unit can be used ambidextrously. All weapons are used double handed, officers use a grip hand and a support hand.

6. Is it possible for the role to be adapted so as to avoid certain tasks for those officers who are injured or who have a weak wrist? i.e. can they be tasked with steering the vessel whilst other officers aid any rescues from sea?

All officers should be able to carry out the role required, in order to substitute for a colleague who may be injured. Usually the most experienced officer should take the helm (wheel) during an incident.

7. Could the Claimant be assigned to a larger vessel where rescue's are undertaken using a mechanical scoop?

At Portsmouth marine unit the largest vessel is 15m long. All launches are equipped with a 'Jacobs Cradle' that is a hydraulic lifting system to assist with the recovery of large and/or heavy items from the water, however, this system is not always the most appropriate equipment when considering the circumstances at the time. Whilst crewing smaller boats officers will have to lift large items into the vessel when carrying out recovery tasks.

- 8. Given that the Claimant has previous experience and given that he holds a number of marine Qualifications, would he be considered for the role or would his wrist injury automatically rule him out? We want to know whether he stands just as much chance as another suitably qualified candidate of securing the role subject to meeting the required fitness standard, passing the required courses and performing well at interview. We accept you cannot answer whether he would have been awarded the role as there are too many variables. We simply want to know whether the wrist injury rules him out regardless.**

Please see below Section 16 (Advice and Assistance).

9. What is the average retirement age of Marine Officers?

For 20/21 this has been averaged as age 60.

In accordance with Section 16 (Advice and Assistance), it may be helpful to note that a public authority does not have to answer questions if this would mean creating new information or giving an opinion or judgment that is not already recorded.

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