



Ministry  
of Defence

**Ministry of Defence**

Defence Business Services Secretariat  
Room 6303  
Tomlinson House  
Norcross  
Thornton-Cleveleys  
FY5 3WP

Ref: FOI2021/08117

Email: [DBSRES-Secretariat@mod.gov.uk](mailto:DBSRES-Secretariat@mod.gov.uk)

24<sup>th</sup> August 2021

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 23 July 2021 to the Ministry of Defence (MOD), requesting the following information:

*“We write in response to your letter dated 20 July 2021 and would like to refine our request to only the following questions:*

*1. How many of complaints of bullying were made by members of staff in 2020 and 2021 that were raised as grievances for management investigation?*

*2. How many members of staff were disciplined for bullying in 2020 and 2021?”*

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 some of the information in scope of your request is held. However, I must advise you that we would not be able to answer your request without exceeding the appropriate cost limit.

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

As explained in our reply of 20 July 2021 (ref FOI2021/06779), grievance categories recorded in the Human Resource Management System (HRMS) are not specific enough to answer your request. To answer question 1 of your request would require a manual search through each recorded case to determine which were relevant. Additionally, discipline categories are also not specific enough to answer your request and would also require a manual search through each recorded case to determine which were relevant to question 2. To answer your questions would involve a manual check of circa 800 records. At a conservative estimate of 30 minutes per file, this would equate to 400 hours. At the rate of £25 per hour, this is equal to approximately £10,000 worth of effort, exceeding the appropriate cost limit.

Under Section 16 of the FOIA (Advice and Assistance) the department may be able to provide some information in scope of your request if you were to refine your request by significantly limiting the time period of data you are asking for.

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](mailto: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,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the sender.

Defence Business Services (Secretariat)