



Ministry
of Defence

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24 May 2021

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 20 April in which you requested the following information:

"This request is being made under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) 2000.

Could you please provide me with the following information,

1) How many serving soldiers have known food allergy?

2) How many soldiers with a known food allergy have been diagnosed with an allergy to crustaceans/shellfish/fish?

3) How many of them carry an Auto-injector, (epipen)?

4) How many serving soldiers who carry an auto-injector have been deployed and where have they been deployed to?

5) How many soldiers in the past 3 years have been medically discharged because of a diagnosed food allergy?

6) How many soldiers with a known food allergy have been graded as fit for a medically limited deployment and what roles do they perform?

Thank you for your assistance in this matter."

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. A search for the information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence, and I can confirm that the information in scope of your request is held and is attached.

Some of this information is exempt from release under section 40 (Personal Data) of the FOIA. Section 40(2) has been applied to some of the information to protect personal information as governed by the Data Protection Act 2018. Section 40 is an absolute exemption and there is therefore no requirement to consider the public interest in deciding to withhold the information.

If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance. Following this, 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.uk](mailto:CIO-FOI-IR@mod.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,

Workforce Portfolio 2
Army Secretariat

10 May 2021

Army Sec-Group (MULTIUSER)

CONTRIBUTION TO FOI2021/04207

Issue

Defence Statistics Health have been asked to provide input to the following FOI:

“Could you please provide me with the following information,

- 1)How many serving soldiers have known food allergy?*
- 2)How many soldiers with a known food allergy have been diagnosed with an allergy to crustaceans/shellfish/fish?*
- 3)How many of them carry an Auto-injector, (epipen)?*
- 4)How many serving soldiers who carry an auto-injector have been deployed and where have they been deployed to?*
- 5)How many soldiers in the past 3 years have been medically discharged because of a diagnosed food allergy?*
- 6)How many soldiers with a known food allergy have been graded as fit for a medically limited deployment and what roles do they perform?”*

Findings

- 1)As at 1 March 2021, **1,208** UK army other ranks personnel¹ had a food allergy Read code entered into their electronic primary health care record².
- 2)Of the 1,208 UK army other ranks personnel with a food allergy, **35** had a fish, shellfish and/or seafood allergy.
- 3)Of the 1,208 UK army other ranks personnel with a food allergy, **34** personnel had a current prescription for an epinephrine autoinjector. Of the 34, **five** were personnel with a fish, shellfish and/or seafood allergy. An epinephrine autoinjector prescription was considered current if it was made within the previous 18 months.
- 4)As at 1 March 2021, **50** UK army other ranks personnel had a current prescription for an epinephrine autoinjector and had been deployed. Please note this includes all personnel prescribed an epinephrine autoinjector, including those for allergies other than food allergies. All deployments were included, therefore deployment may have occurred prior to prescription of an epinephrine autoinjector. Please see annex **Table 1** for information of deployment by country.
- 5)Between 1 April 2017 and 31 March 2020, **fewer than five** regular army other ranks personnel were medically discharged with food allergy listed as a principal and/or contributory cause.
- 6)As at 1 March 2021 of the 1,208 UK army other ranks personnel with a food allergy, **184** personnel were graded Medically Limited Deployable (MLD). Please note that the diagnosis of a food allergy may not have been listed as a principal or contributory cause, and the MLD grading may have been for an unrelated condition. Please see annex **Table 2** for information by trade.

¹ Includes UK army other ranks (soldiers) full time trade-trained and serving against requirement.

² Defence Medical Information Capability Programme (DMICP).

Background Notes

The figures provided in this response, relate to UK army other ranks (soldiers) full time trade-trained and serving against requirement. Officers were not included.

Food Allergies

Information was derived from the Defence Medical Information Capability Programme (DMICP). DMICP has a centralised data warehouse of Read coded information. It is the source of electronic, integrated healthcare records for primary healthcare and some MOD specialist care providers.

The following Read codes were used to identify personnel with a food allergy:

Read Code	Description	Read Code	Description
13A6	Milk free diet - allergy	SN584	Wheat allergy
13A6-1	Milk free diet	SN589	Allergy to strawberries
13A7	Egg free diet - allergy	SN589-1	Strawberry allergy
14M1	H/O: food allergy	SN58A	Allergy to soya
14M3	H/O: multiple allergies	SN58B	Allergy to banana
SN582	Peanut allergy	SN58C	Allergy to tomato
SN583	Nut allergy	ZV1B3	[V]Personal history of food induced anaphylaxis
EGTON140	Multiple allergies	SN500	Anaphylactic shock due to adverse food reaction
EMISCFO4	Food allergy	2126D	Cow's milk protein allergy symptoms resolved
EMISNQAL11	Allergy to strawberries	DMS4578	Patient states they are allergic to eggs
ESCTAL8	Allergy to pork	^ESCTAL769611	Allergy to hazelnut
J432-2	Cow's milk allergy	SN585	Fish allergy
SN58	Food allergy	SN586	Seafood allergy
SN580	Egg allergy	SN587	Shellfish allergy
SN581	Egg protein allergy		

The following Read codes were used to identify personnel with a fish, seafood & shellfish allergy: SN585, SN586, SN587.

Please note that if information was entered as free text in the patient record then it was not available in the DMICP data warehouse and was not retrieved using the search for Read codes.

The Ministry of Defence only holds information on food allergies which have a medical effect on the individual. Information on minor allergies which do not have a medical effect will not be recorded in most instances, therefore, these figures should be considered a minimum.

Epinephrine Autoinjector

Please note that EpiPen is a brand of epinephrine autoinjector therefore to give the most complete picture of this type of prescription, the information in this response includes **all** epinephrine autoinjectors.

The following terms were used to search within the DMICP data warehouse for epinephrine autoinjector prescriptions:

- EpiPen
- EpiPen Junior
- Jext
- Emerade
- Anapen
- Anapen Junior

Advice from pharmacist Subject Matter Experts is that epinephrine autoinjectors expire within approximately 18 months of issue from a pharmacy. Prescriptions made prior to 1 September 2019 (18 months from 1 March 2021) are therefore not considered current and were not included in the information provided.

Please note, it is not possible to determine from the centrally held database whether the epinephrine autoinjectors have been used.

DMICP is a live data source and subject to change. Date of extract 22 April

2021. *Deployment*

Deployment data was derived from the Joint Personnel Administration (JPA) system which was introduced in April 2007. JPA is a combination of mandatory and non-mandatory fields populated by unit administrators and voluntary fields that armed forces personnel can choose to complete.

Medical Discharges

Medical discharges due to a food allergy were identified as personnel who were medically discharged with a principal or contributory cause coded as the following, in the International Classification of Diseases, version 10 (ICD-10):

ICD-10 Code	Description
T780	Anaphylactic shock due to adverse food reaction
T781	Other adverse food reactions, not elsewhere classified
L236	Allergic contact dermatitis due to food in contact with skin
L246	Irritant contact dermatitis due to food in contact with skin
L254	Unspecified contact dermatitis due to food in contact with skin
L272	Dermatitis due to ingested food

Medical discharges are the result of several specialists (medical, occupational, psychological, personnel, etc) concluding that an individual is suffering from a medical condition that pre-empts their continued service in the armed forces. Statistics based on these discharges do not represent measures of true morbidity or pathology. At best they indicate a minimum burden of ill-health in the armed forces. Furthermore, the number and diversity of processes involved with administering a medical discharge introduce a series of time lags, as well as impact on the quality of data recorded.

Defence Statistics release annual updates on medical discharges in the UK armed forces as an Official Statistic publication. The last statistical release was on 20 August 2020 which presented data up to 31 March 2020. The latest report can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/medical-discharges-among-uk-service-personnel-statistics-index>

Medical Deployability Standard

Service personnel with medical conditions or fitness issues which affect their ability to perform their duties are assessed in Primary Care or referred to a Medical Board for a medical examination and review of their medical grading. Personnel medically fit for duty with minor employment limitations are classed as Medically Limited Deployable (MLD).

Yours sincerely,

Primary Care Analyst
Defence Statistics Health

Table 1: UK armed forces army personnel¹ who have a current prescription for an epinephrine autoinjector² and have deployed, by country of deployment, numbers³

As at 1 March 2021

Country	Personnel
Army Total	50
Afghanistan	32
Bosnia	~
Cyprus	11
Denmark	~
Estonia	6
Falklands	8
Germany	~
Great Britain	20
Iraq	10
Kuwait	~
Latvia	~
Libya	~
Lithuania	~
Oman	~
Poland	~
Sierra Leone	~
Somalia	~
South Sudan	~
Ukraine	~
United Arab Emirates	~

Source: DMICP and JPA

¹ Includes UK army other ranks (soldiers) full time trade-trained and serving against requirement.

² An epinephrine autoinjector prescription was considered current if it was made within the previous 18 months.

³ UK armed forces army personnel may have deployed to several different countries and will have been counted once in each country, then once overall. Therefore the total is less than the sum of its parts.

~ In line with JSP 200 on statistical disclosure, figures less than five have been suppressed. Where there was only one cell in a row or column that was fewer than five, the next smallest number has also been suppressed so that numbers cannot simply be derived from totals.

Table 2: UK armed forces army personnel¹ with an food allergy Read code and graded Medically Limited Deployable, by arm/service and trade², numbers
As at 1 March 2021

Arm / Service and Trade	Personnel
Army Total	184
Royal Armoured Corps	7
CREW\CREW	7
Royal Regiment of Artillery	16
COMMAND SYSTEMS	~
GUIDED WEAPONS	~
LOGISTICS	~
STRIKE	5
TARGETING	~
Unmanned Aerial Systems	~
Corps of Royal Engineers	17
ME Command Control and Communication Systems	~
ME CBT\Building AND Structural Finisher	~
ME CBT\Carpenter AND Joiner	~
ME CBT\Electrician	~
ME CBT\Fabricator	~
ME CBT\Fitter Equipment	~
ME Clerks of Work\ Construction	~
ME Clerks of Work\ Electrical	~
ME Logistic Specialist	~
Military Engineer - Driver - RE	~
Royal Corps of Signals	16
Communications Infrastructure Engineer	~
Electronic Warfare and Signals Intelligence	~
Information Services Engineer	5
NETWORKS ENGR	5
POWER ENGINEER	~
SUPPLY CHAIN OP	~
Infantry	23
Infantry	23
Army Air Corps	~
GROUNDCREW SLDR\GND CREW SPEC	~
The Royal Logistic Corps	40
Ammunition Technician - RLC	~
Chef - RLC	12
Driver - RLC	6
Driver Communications Specialist	~
Logistic Supply Specialist	12
Movement Controller - RLC	~
POSTAL & COURIER OP	~
Systems Analyst - RLC	~
Driver Vehicle Support Specialist	~
Royal Army Medical Corps	8
COMBAT MED TECH	8

Corps of Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers	13
<i>Armourer</i>	~
<i>ARTIFICER Vehicles</i>	~
<i>ARTIFICER Weapons</i>	~
<i>Recovery Mechanic</i>	~
<i>Electronics Technician</i>	~
<i>Aircraft Technician</i>	~
<i>Avionics Technician</i>	~
<i>Technical Support Specialist</i>	~
<i>Vehicle mechanic</i>	~
Adjutant General Corps	23
<i>Army Welfare Worker - AGC</i>	~
<i>MIL PERS ADMIN</i>	20
<i>Military Police (General Police Duties)</i>	~
Royal Army Veterinary Corps	~
<i>DOG HANDLER</i>	~
Intelligence Corps	8
<i>Operator Military Intelligence</i>	6
<i>Operator Technical Intelligence</i>	~
Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps	5
<i>HEALTH CARE ASSIST</i>	~
<i>Nurses Spine - (QARANC)</i>	~
Corps of Army Music	~
<i>Musician - CAMUS</i>	~

Source: DMICP and JPA

¹ Includes UK army other ranks (soldiers) full time trade-trained and serving against requirement.

² Trade data is presented as recorded on the Joint Personnel Administration (JPA). This is the system used by the UK armed forces to deal with matters of pay, leave and other personnel administrative tasks . Trade data is recorded as main trade for pay on JPA.

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