



Ministry
of Defence

Defence Statistics Health
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Ref: **FOI 2021/10691**

13 October 2021

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email of 16 September 2021 requesting the following information:

"I would like to know the statistics of loss of hearing for both regular and reserved.

If its possible could I obtain the reserves statistics separated from regulars?"

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

A search for the information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence, and I can confirm that all the information in scope of your request is held.

As at 1 August 2021, **4,538** UK armed forces personnel had impaired or poor hearing recorded in their electronic medical record. This includes **2,955** regular personnel and **1,583** reserve personnel.

Under section 16 of the Act (Advice and Assistance) you may find it useful to note:

Personnel include all UK armed forces regular and reserve trained and untrained personnel in service as at 1 August 2021.

Information was derived from the Defence Medical Information Capability Programme (DMICP). DMICP is the source of electronic, integrated healthcare records for primary healthcare and some MOD specialist care providers from which searches can be run.

Audiometry is the standard health surveillance tool for the assessment of noise-induced hearing loss and all new entrants must have their hearing acuity assessed by pure tone audiometry. The latest available data for each individual has been included in the analysis.

Hearing loss has been identified if personnel have an audiometric assessment resulting in a Hearing acuity grade (H grade) of 3 'impaired hearing' or 4 'poor hearing where continuing employment is subject to specialist assessment'

The basis of audiometric assessment is the summing of high and low frequency levels in decibels (dB) over six frequencies. The frequencies used are 0.5, 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 kilohertz (kHz); the low frequencies being 0.5, 1 and 2 kHz and the high frequencies 3, 4 and 6 kHz. The hearing in each ear is assessed and recorded separately. The assessment is recorded under the first H for the right ear, and under the second H for the left ear. Where there is a difference in the left and right assessments, the grade given is that of the ear with least auditory acuity.

DMICP is a live data source and is subject to change. Date of extract 6 October 2021.

Joint Personnel Administration (JPA) is the most accurate source for demographic information for UK Armed Forces personnel and was used to gather information on a person's regular/reserve status.

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,

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