



Ministry  
of Defence

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7 October 2021

Dear ,

Thank you for your email from 15 September 2021 requesting the following information:

*“Under the FOI act could you please provide information on the following: The numbers of UK Armed Forces personnel who have been identified as MND, MLD and MFD since 1 January 2017, broken down by service.*

Also could you provide the figures for the number of UK Armed Forces personnel who have been identified as MND, MLD and MFD for the latest date available. For these figures only, could you provide figures for the number of troops medically downgraded with mental health problems and separate figures for those with physical or other *injuries*.”

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 the information in scope of your request is held.

**Table 1** presents the service breakdown of the numbers of UK armed forces personnel by medical deployment standard (Medically Fully Deployable (MFD), Medically Limited Deployable (MLD), Medically Not Deployable (MLD)) from 1 January 2017 to 1 July 2021. Please note, personnel may have held multiple medical deployment standards (MDS) during the period, and therefore may be counted in one or more MDS categories, e.g. a person who was recorded as MLD in September 2018 and returned to MFD in January 2019 is included in both MLD and MFD totals.

**Table 1: UK armed forces personnel<sup>1</sup> medical deployment standards held<sup>2</sup> by service<sup>3</sup>, numbers**

1 January 2017 to 1 July 2021

	MFD	MLD	MND
Royal Navy <sup>4</sup>	37,616	7,071	13,611
Army	96,174	29,363	32,628
RAF	36,441	6,762	12,183

Source: DMICP & JPA.

<sup>1</sup> The figures provided are for full time trained (Royal Navy and RAF)/trade trained (army) and serving against requirement personnel in service. This does not include reserves, entitled or non-entitled civilians, foreign service or non-UK military.

<sup>2</sup> Personnel may have held multiple medical deployment standards (MDS), and therefore may be counted in one or more MDS categories; e.g. a person who was recorded as MLD in September 2018 and returned to MFD in January 2019 is included in both MLD and MFD totals.

<sup>3</sup> Personnel may have changed service and therefore may be counted in more than one service.

<sup>4</sup> Royal Navy includes Royal Navy and Royal Marines.

<sup>5</sup> The above numbers cannot be used to calculate proportions of personnel in each MDS category at any point in time, as these are counts of all gradings held over the entire five-year period.

**Table 2** presents the medical deployment standard (MDS) of UK armed forces personnel as at 1 July 2021.

**Table 2: UK armed forces personnel<sup>1</sup> medical deployment standard (MDS), numbers**  
1 July 2021

MDS	Total
MFD	110,318
MLD	13,786
MND	13,248
Unknown	42

Source: DMICP & JPA.

<sup>1</sup> The figures provided are for full time trained (Royal Navy and RAF)/trade trained (army) and serving against requirement personnel in service. This does not include reserves, entitled or non-entitled civilians, foreign service or non-UK military.

**Table 3** presents the principal cause of downgrading for personnel due to Mental and behavioural disorders and Musculoskeletal disorders and Injuries as at 1 July 2021.

**Table 3: UK armed forces personnel<sup>1</sup> medically downgraded with a principal ICD-10 cause code group of Mental and Behavioural Disorders and Musculoskeletal disorders and Injuries, numbers**

1 July 2021

Cause of Medical Downgrading	Total
Mental and Behavioural Disorders (F00 F99)	3,911
Musculoskeletal disorders (M00 M99) and Injuries (S00 T98)	12,822

Source: DMICP & JPA.

<sup>1</sup> The figures provided are for full time trained (Royal Navy and RAF)/trade trained (army) and serving against requirement personnel in service. This does not include reserves, entitled or non-entitled civilians, foreign service or non-UK military.

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

The figures provided are for full time trained (Royal Navy and RAF)/trade trained (army) and serving against requirement personnel in service. This does not include reserves, entitled or non-entitled civilians, foreign service or non-UK military.

JPA is the most accurate source for demographic information for UK armed forces personnel and was used to gather information on a person's service.

The Defence Medical Information Capability programme (DMICP) was used to obtain information on Medical Deployment Standard (MDS) and a patient's principal reason for medical downgrading.

DMICP has a centralised data warehouse of coded information. It is the source of electronic, integrated medical records for primary healthcare and some MOD specialist care providers.

It was rolled out in 2007 and is the source of electronic, integrated healthcare records for primary healthcare and some MOD specialist care providers.

Any data entered as free text only in patients' medical records was not included in the figures presented as this information is not available in the data warehouse.

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. A medical downgrading occurs when personnel are assigned a Medical Deployability Standard (MDS) of Medically Limited Deployable (MLD) or Medically Not Deployable (MND). The patient may be downgraded to allow for treatment and rehabilitation:

- Medically Limited Deployable (MLD): Personnel medically fit for duty with minor employment limitations. MLD personnel may have a medical condition or functional limitation that prevents the meeting of all Medically Fully Deployable (MFD) requirements.
- Medically Not Deployable (MND): Personnel medically fit for duty with major employment limitations. MND personnel are not fit to deploy on Operations but may be deployable on UK based exercises and should be able to work effectively for at least 32.5 hours per week.

Medical board templates were introduced in May 2014 and are used to enter medical deployability information including Medical Deployability Status (MDS) and the medical reasons for downgrading. All data entered through a template is stored as a Read code in the DMICP data warehouse.

Cause of medical downgrading figures were compiled using the principal condition cited on a medical board/grading template. Each principal condition has a Read code and description which was converted into the International Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems Tenth Revision (ICD-10) coding scheme. For the groups presented in Table 3, principal causes of medical downgrading were coded under the following ICD-10 code groups:

- Mental and behavioural disorders (F00 F99)
- Musculoskeletal disorders (M00 M99) and Injuries (S00 T98)

If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance.

Would you like to be added to our contact list, so that we can inform you about updates to statistics and consult you if we are thinking of making changes? You can subscribe to updates by emailing [Analysis-Health-PQ-FOI@mod.gov.uk](mailto:Analysis-Health-PQ-FOI@mod.gov.uk).

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/>.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely,  
Defence Statistics Health