



Ministry
of Defence

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19 October 2021

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email dated 5 October 2021 requesting the following information:

I am seeking information about the number of service deaths by accident and service-related disease, since 1945 whilst not engaged and deployed in operations. This would be accidental deaths in exercise, training, military aid to the civil community and in road traffic, rail and air accidents whilst not engaged in military operations/active service

If possible, I'd like the information to include the number by service and total number of deaths either year or decade.

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 information in scope of your request is held.

From 1 January 1948 to 31 December 2020, **31,450** UK armed forces personnel died because of accidents or disease-related conditions whilst not deployed on operations. **Table 1** and **Table 2** below present the number of deaths by service and decade or year of death.

Table 1: UK armed forces personnel deaths, accidental or disease-related conditions whilst not deployed on operations, numbers

1 January 1948 to 31 December 1983

Years	ALL	Royal Navy ¹	Army	RAF
1948 - 1949	2,740	464	1,401	875
1950 - 1959	10,885	1,606	5,310	3,969
1960 - 1969	7,145	1,129	3,962	2,054
1970 - 1979	4,366	768	2,436	1,162
1980 - 1983	1,474	252	873	349

Source: Armed Forces Memorial database

1. Royal Navy includes Royal Navy and Royal Marines.

Table 2: UK armed forces personnel deaths, accidental or disease-related conditions whilst not deployed on operations, numbers

1 January 1984 to 31 December 2020

Year	ALL	Royal Navy ¹	Army	RAF
1984	295	57	140	98
1985	277	47	128	102
1986	236	43	116	77
1987	260	30	156	74
1988	244	38	132	74
1989	280	55	154	71
1990	249	40	131	78
1991	207	43	116	48
1992	207	42	116	49
1993	184	38	96	50
1994	163	29	91	43
1995	143	27	65	51
1996	100	20	52	28
1997	126	33	66	27
1998	130	24	69	37
1999	102	20	55	27
2000	102	18	58	26
2001	114	31	57	26
2002	125	22	76	27
2003	96	19	50	27
2004	120	34	53	33
2005	113	21	65	27
2006	107	24	54	29
2007	102	16	60	26
2008	74	24	37	13
2009	75	12	42	21
2010	74	11	46	17
2011	66	6	48	12
2012	67	15	43	9
2013	66	9	47	10
2014	51	8	29	14
2015	46	10	29	7
2016	61	15	34	12
2017	44	6	30	8
2018	40	11	21	8
2019	49	7	26	16
2020	45	12	21	12

Source: Defence Statistics Health

1. Royal Navy includes Royal Navy and Royal Marines.

Please note the size and composition of the UK armed forces has changed significantly over the last 75 years and should be considered when comparing numbers of deaths over different time periods.

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

Defence Statistics Health compiles the Department's authoritative deaths database for all UK Armed Forces personnel who died whilst in Service since 1984. Information is compiled from

several internal and external sources from which we release several internal analyses and external National Statistics Notices.

For data prior to 1984, Defence Statistics have access to the Armed Forces Memorial (AFM) database owned by the tri-Service Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre. The AFM database was created to identify Service personnel whose names were and continue to be engraved on the Armed Forces Memorial at the National Arboretum in Staffordshire. The AFM database records the deaths of all personnel who have died in Service since 1st Jan 1948, and for those who were killed or who died in Palestine from 1st Aug 1945 to 31st Aug 1948.

Please note, the AFM database is not regarded as a validated source of historical fatality information, therefore, it cannot be guaranteed to be 100% complete or accurate due to it being populated manually from Service files.

Table 1 has been compiled using data from the Armed Forces Memorial (AFM) database and has not been validated. The table excludes personnel who are identified as having died on Operations (and thus included in the 'UK armed forces operational deaths post World War 2' Official Statistic). The table also excludes personnel where their cause of death was recorded in the AFM as either Killed in Action, Died of wounds, Terrorist Activity, Friendly Action/Fire, Hostile Action, Judicial Execution, Self-inflicted, Murdered, Manslaughter, Operation Accident, Violent/Unnatural, Suicide, Terrorist Action, or Missing.

Table 2 has been compiled using data from the Defence Statistics Health deaths database and excludes personnel where a cause of death was a result of Hostile Action, Other violent deaths, or Suicide. The table also excludes all deaths to personnel which occurred whilst deployed on operations (and thus have been included in the 'UK armed forces operational deaths post World War 2' official statistic and the 'UK armed forces and UK civilian operational casualty and fatality' official statistic).

Hostile Action includes deaths categorised as Killed in Action (KIA) and Died of Wounds (DOW). KIA is a battle casualty who is killed outright or who dies because of wounds or other injuries before reaching a medical treatment facility. DOW is a battle casualty who dies of wounds or other injuries received in action, after having reached a medical treatment facility. 'Other Violent' deaths include assaults and excludes deaths because of hostile action. Deaths recorded as suicides meet the National Statistics definition of Suicide and these may be a suicide, open verdict, or narrative verdict conclusion from the Coroner.

All deaths recorded in the Defence Statistics Health deaths database are cause coded to the International Classification of Diseases 10th edition (ICD-10) which is produced by the World Health Organisation (WHO). Information held in death certificates is analysed and assigned the appropriate ICD code.

The 'UK armed forces operational deaths post World War 2' Official Statistic provides summary information on the number of in service deaths among UK armed forces personnel that occurred as a result of a British, United Nations or North Atlantic Treaty Organisation medal earning operation since World War 2. This report is updated annually at the end of March and six weeks after the end of each medal earning operation and can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-armed-forces-operational-deaths-post-world-war-2>

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/>.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely

Defence Statistics Health Head (B1)