



Ministry of Defence

Defence Statistics Health
Ministry of Defence
Oak 0 West (#6028)
Abbey Wood North
Bristol BS34 8JH
United Kingdom

Telephone: +44 (0)30679 84423
E-mail: Analysis-Health-PQ-FOI@mod.gov.uk

Ref: FOI2021/06519

14 July 2021

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email of 18 June 2021 requesting the following information:

"1. In a previous FOI response [FOI2018/09363] you provided two tables, broken down by services, for those people in the military treated for (a) alcohol abuse/misuse and (b) sexual transmitted diseases. Could you provide me with similar updated tables that provide statistics separately for 2020?

2. In relation to 2020 could you provide a breakdown of the STDs in a similar format to that provided in a previous response [FOI 2018/10121]?"

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. Some of the information falls within the scope of the absolute exemption provided for at section 40 (personnel data) of the FOI Act and has been withheld.

Section 40(2) has been applied to some of the information to protect personal information as governed by the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR. In line with JSP200 Statistics Disclosure Guidance, numbers fewer than five have been suppressed to reduce the possible inadvertent disclosure of individual identities; secondary suppression has been applied so numbers cannot be derived. Section 40 is an absolute exemption and there is therefore no requirement to consider the public interest in making a decision to withhold the information.

Between 1 January 2020 and 31 December 2020, **882** UK armed forces personnel had at least one Read code for alcohol misuse entered onto their electronic medical record (**Table 1**).

Table 1: UK armed forces personnel¹ with an alcohol misuse Read code by service and gender, numbers² and percentages³

1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020

	All		Male		Female	
All	882	0.43%	795	0.43%	87	0.37%
Royal Navy ⁴	227	0.54%	201	0.54%	26	0.60%
Army	540	0.43%	499	0.44%	41	0.31%
RAF	115	0.29%	95	0.28%	20	0.33%

Source: DMICP and JPA

¹ Includes trained and untrained regular and reservist personnel.

² Personnel were counted once per service but only once in the total. E.g. if someone had an alcohol misuse Read code entered while in the Royal Navy and another while in the Army, they were counted once in Royal Navy and once in Army but only once in the total.

³ Percentages were calculated using the total number of trained and untrained regular and reservist personnel who served at any time during 2020.

⁴ Royal Navy includes Royal Navy and Royal Marines personnel.

Between 1 January 2020 and 31 December 2020, **1,701** UK armed forces personnel had at least one Read code for an STD entered onto their electronic medical record (**Table 2**).

Table 2: UK armed forces personnel¹ with an STD Read code by service and gender, numbers² and percentages³

1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020

	All		Male		Female	
All	1,701	0.82%	1,437	0.79%	264	1.12%
Royal Navy ⁴	392	0.94%	349	0.93%	43	0.98%
Army	984	0.79%	831	0.74%	153	1.17%
RAF	326	0.82%	258	0.77%	68	1.11%

Source: DMICP and JPA

¹ Includes trained and untrained regular and reservist personnel.

² Personnel were counted once per service but only once in the total. E.g. if someone had an STD Read code entered while in the Royal Navy and another while in the Army, they were counted once in Royal Navy and once in Army but only once in the total.

³ Percentages were calculated using the total number of trained and untrained regular and reservist personnel who served at any time during 2020

⁴ Royal Navy includes Royal Navy and Royal Marines personnel.

Table 3 displays the numbers of personnel with at least one Read code for an STD entered in their electronic medical record between 1 January 2020 and 31 December 2020. This information is presented by service, gender and infection.

Table 3: UK armed forces personnel¹, with an STD Read code by service, gender and infection², numbers³

1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020

	All	Royal Navy ⁴		Army		RAF	
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
All	1,701	349	43	831	153	258	68
Chlamydia	549	114	16	286	57	57	20
Genital Herpes	345	52	19	132	61	41	40
Genital Warts	254	61	~	141	6	39	~
Gonorrhoea	29	~	0	22	~	0	0
Hepatitis	51	~	~	42	~	~	0
HIV	57	8	~	29	11	~	0
Mycoplasma Genitalium	~	~	0	~	0	0	0
Pediculosis Pubis	~	~	0	~	0	0	0
PID and epididymitis	441	110	~	196	15	115	~
Syphilis	20	~	0	13	~	~	0
Trichomonas	~	0	0	0	~	0	~
Unspecified STD	~	0	0	~	0	0	0

Source: DMICP and JPA

¹ Includes trained and untrained regular and reservist personnel.

² Personnel were counted once per infection and once overall; thus, the sum of each infection does not equal the total personnel with a Read code for an STD – this applies to the overall total and to the totals for each gender within each service. E.g. if someone had Chlamydia, Gonorrhoea and Hepatitis they would be counted once each for Chlamydia, Gonorrhoea and Hepatitis and once in the total personnel with a Read code for an STD.

³ In line with JSP 200, the suppression methodology has been applied to ensure individuals are not inadvertently identified dependent on the risk of disclosure. Numbers fewer than five have been suppressed and presented as '~'. 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.

⁴ Royal Navy includes Royal Navy and Royal Marines.

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

Personnel include all UK armed forces regular and reservist personnel. This does not include entitled or non-entitled civilians, foreign service or non-UK military. This response relates to all personnel who had a DMICP record and served between 1 January 2020 and 31 December 2020, and is not limited to the currently serving population.

All reservist personnel were included in the total population to calculate the presented percentages. However, please note that the majority of reservist personnel receive their primary medical care from the NHS. Any personnel who were seen only by the NHS were not included in the figures presented for the number of personnel with a Read code entered into their military medical record.

As within wider society, there is no quick fix to reduce alcohol misuse in the armed forces. We provide a package of measures to educate personnel on the dangers of alcohol misuse to help them make informed decisions, and have introduced extensive policy and guidance for Commanders.

It is defence policy that service personnel can choose to attend NHS and private sexual health clinics. Therefore, STD figures may not represent all personnel who have had an STD within the time periods.

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 from which searches can be run.

Please see **Annex A** for a list of the Read codes that have been searched for alcohol misuse and STDs.

Please note, Read codes for alcohol misuse cover a variety of issues which range in severity, from inebriety to alcoholism. Not all the personnel in the tables above fall into the severe categories; some are cases of intoxication.

The conditions for inclusion of STD Read codes were identified from the Sexual Health and HIV Activity Property Type (SHHAPT) coding. This is the way in which Public Health England have directed that sexual health and HIV activity be recorded both within sexual health clinics and within Defence Primary Healthcare.

For some of the conditions searched for, sexual transmission is not the only route of transmission, therefore these figures may overestimate the number of personnel with an STD.

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

DMICP is a live data source and is subject to change. Date of extract 23 June 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 service and gender.

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

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,

Defence Statistics Health