



Ministry of Defence

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Date: **03/11/2021**

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email received by the Ministry Of Defence on 06/10/2021 requesting the following information:

I am requesting that no part of the response to this Freedom of Information request is rounded up. Please note that there are 4 parts to this question.

1. In April of each year, from 2017 up to and including 2021, what was the total number of people serving across the Army, Navy, Air Force and (if possible) Royal Marines. This includes reservists.
2. In April of each year, from 2017 up to and including 2021, what was the total number of BAME people serving across the Army, Navy, Air Force and (if possible) Royal Marines. This includes reservists. As well as an overall total for BAME people, please provide a breakdown for mixed, Asian, black and other.
3. In April of each year, from 2017 up to and including 2021, what was the total number of people serving with the ranks of Lieutenant Colonel and above in the Army. This includes reservists.
4. In April of each year, from 2017 up to and including 2021, what was the number of BAME people serving with the ranks of Lieutenant Colonel and above in the Army. This includes reservists. As well as an overall total for BAME people, please provide a breakdown for mixed, Asian, black and other.

We are treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

We have now completed a search for the information you requested and I can confirm that all information in scope of your request is held.

Please note we do hold information for parts 1 and 3 of your request, however this is exempt under Section 21 of the FOIA, as it is reasonably available in the public domain.

The Service Personnel Statistics (SPS) publication contains information on the total number of personnel serving across the RM/RN, Army and RAF for both Regulars and Reserves, as well as contains information regarding total number of personnel serving by rank. The SPS gets published quarterly, with the most recent publication as at 1 July 2021 can be accessed via the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/quarterly-service-personnel-statistics-2021>

In the MS Excel and ODS versions of this publication, breakdown of Regulars data can be found in tables 1, 2a, 2b and 2c. The breakdown of FR20 Reserves data can be found in tables 6a and 6b. The breakdown of personnel by rank for Regulars and FR20 Reserves can be found in tables 11a and 11c respectively, where rank of Lieutenant Colonel comes under OF-4 in the Army. Please take note of the caveats included below tables.

As for parts 2 and 4 of your request, please see the tables below.

Table 2a: Yearly strength of UK Regulars¹, by ethnicity² and service, as at 1 April.

| | 01-Apr-17 | 01-Apr-18 | 01-Apr-19 | 01-Apr-20 | 01-Apr-21 |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| RN/RM | 32 544 | 32 483 | 32 537 | 32 755 | 33 848 |
| BAME | 1 132 | 1 232 | 1 318 | 1 494 | 1 613 |
| Asian | 103 | 109 | 112 | 140 | 171 |
| Black | 559 | 631 | 691 | 833 | 890 |
| Mixed | 367 | 389 | 416 | 421 | 455 |
| Other | 103 | 103 | 99 | 100 | 97 |
| White | 31 156 | 31 028 | 31 032 | 31 030 | 31 914 |
| Unknown | 256 | 223 | 187 | 231 | 321 |
| Army | 83 561 | 81 116 | 79 029 | 79 624 | 82 231 |
| BAME | 8 820 | 8 993 | 9 031 | 10 339 | 11 005 |
| Asian | 2 328 | 2 529 | 2 709 | 2 937 | 3 102 |
| Black | 4 619 | 4 532 | 4 431 | 5 210 | 5 539 |
| Mixed | 1 338 | 1 332 | 1 297 | 1 413 | 1 508 |
| Other | 535 | 600 | 594 | 779 | 856 |
| White | 74 632 | 71 918 | 69 771 | 69 030 | 71 003 |
| Unknown | 109 | 205 | 227 | 255 | 223 |
| RAF | 33 261 | 32 957 | 32 862 | 32 938 | 33 201 |
| BAME | 724 | 749 | 832 | 915 | 1 073 |
| Asian | 150 | 172 | 210 | 241 | 292 |
| Black | 152 | 158 | 182 | 209 | 252 |
| Mixed | 362 | 360 | 378 | 413 | 463 |
| Other | 60 | 59 | 62 | 52 | 66 |
| White | 31 669 | 31 366 | 31 305 | 31 359 | 31 512 |
| Unknown | 868 | 842 | 725 | 664 | 616 |

Table 2b: Yearly strength of FR20³, by ethnicity² and service, as at 1 April.

| | 01-Apr-17 | 01-Apr-18 | 01-Apr-19 | 01-Apr-20 | 01-Apr-21 |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| RN/RM | 3 555 | 3 595 | 3 854 | 3 874 | 4 077 |
| BAME | 97 | 105 | 120 | 129 | 140 |
| Asian | 27 | 33 | 36 | 38 | 47 |
| Black | 23 | 28 | 31 | 34 | 34 |
| Mixed | 35 | 37 | 42 | 45 | 46 |
| Other | 12 | 7 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| White | 3 300 | 3 329 | 3 622 | 3 629 | 3 802 |
| Unknown | 158 | 161 | 112 | 116 | 135 |
| Army | 29 941 | 29 709 | 29 466 | 29 929 | 30 033 |
| BAME | 1 722 | 1 728 | 1 726 | 1 800 | 1 799 |
| Asian | 524 | 546 | 582 | 632 | 654 |
| Black | 660 | 632 | 606 | 609 | 575 |
| Mixed | 413 | 420 | 410 | 424 | 437 |
| Other | 125 | 130 | 128 | 135 | 133 |
| White | 28 080 | 27 857 | 27 593 | 27 976 | 28 053 |
| Unknown | 139 | 124 | 147 | 153 | 181 |
| RAF | 2 726 | 2 952 | 3 083 | 3 205 | 3 301 |
| BAME | 119 | 134 | 142 | 153 | 153 |
| Asian | 32 | 39 | 47 | 52 | 53 |
| Black | 41 | 44 | 49 | 51 | 51 |
| Mixed | 37 | 41 | 40 | 44 | 43 |
| Other | 9 | 10 | 6 | 6 | 6 |
| White | 2 504 | 2 717 | 2 834 | 2 940 | 3 045 |
| Unknown | 103 | 101 | 107 | 112 | 103 |

Table 4a: Yearly Army strength of UK Regulars¹ with a NATO Rank⁴ of OF-4 and above, by ethnicity² and service, as at 1 April.

| | 01-Apr-17 | 01-Apr-18 | 01-Apr-19 | 01-Apr-20 | 01-Apr-21 |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| BAME | 50 | 52 | 51 | 57 | 60 |
| Asian | 10 | 11 | 11 | 14 | 15 |
| Black | 9 | 8 | 7 | 8 | 11 |
| Mixed | 26 | 28 | 27 | 29 | 29 |
| Other | ~ | ~ | 6 | 6 | ~ |
| White | 2 327 | 2 346 | 2 374 | 2 386 | 2 411 |
| Unknown | 16 | 16 | 16 | 14 | 14 |

Table 4b: Yearly Army strength of FR20³ with a NATO Rank⁴ of OF-4 and above, by ethnicity² and service, as at 1 April.

| | 01-Apr-17 | 01-Apr-18 | 01-Apr-19 | 01-Apr-20 | 01-Apr-21 |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| BAME | 18 | 23 | 22 | 25 | 29 |
| Asian | 6 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 |
| Black | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ |
| Mixed | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | 9 |
| Other | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ | ~ |
| White | 628 | 704 | 767 | 816 | 834 |
| Unknown | 6 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 7 |

Notes/Caveats for all tables:

1. UK Regulars comprise Full time Service personnel, including Nursing Services, but excluding Full Time Reserve Service (FTRS) personnel, Gurkhas, mobilised Reservists, Military Provost Guard Service (MPGS), Locally Engaged Personnel (LEP), Non Regular Permanent Staff (NRPS), High Readiness Reserve (HRR) and Expeditionary Forces Institute (EFI) personnel. Unless otherwise stated, includes trained and untrained personnel.
2. Ethnic type as self declared in JPA. Unknown includes those with an unrecorded ethnic type, and those who chose not to declare.
3. Future Reserves 2020 includes volunteer reserves who are mobilised, HRR and volunteer reserve personnel serving on ADC or FTRS contracts. Sponsored Reserves who provide a more cost effective solution than volunteer reserve are also included in the Army Reserve FR20. Non Regular Permanent Staff (NRPS), Expeditionary Forces Institute (EFI) and University Officer Cadets and Regular Reservists are excluded.
4. Figures are based on individuals paid rank.
5. Figures which are 5 or fewer is represented by '~', 0 is represented by '-', in line with disclosure control policy.

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.

Would you like to be added to our contact list, so that we can inform you about updates to our statistical publications covering **Military Personnel** and consult you if we are thinking of making changes? You can subscribe to updates by emailing Analysis-Tri-Service@mod.gov.uk

Yours sincerely,

Analysis (Tri-Service)