



Ministry
of Defence

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FOI2021/08657
[REDACTED]

9 November 2021

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email of 9 August 2021 requesting the following information:

“Under the provision of the FOI laws I would like a copy of any Environmental, Health and Safety Report, Risk Assessments or recommendations for British Forces Personnel including air quality reports for the following

Camp Souter Kabus Afghanistan in 2002 pre occupation by British Forces or since this date.

For United Nations British Personnel or visitors to Nicosia International Airport at any time from 2014 - to today.

Medical statistics for British Forces Personnel serving in Kabul Afghanistan for any environmentally attributable Interstitial Lung disease and the same for any British Forces Personnel serving on UN duty in Cyprus.

Statistics for the number of claims, successful and unsuccessful either through the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme for Interstitial Lung Disease since 2002 and details of cause and where any cases were attributed to.”

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. I am writing to advise you that following a search of our recorded information, I have established that the information you requested on cases of environmentally attributable interstitial lung disease is not held by the Ministry of Defence. However I can confirm that other information in scope of your request is held and has been provided below.

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 are suppressed to reduce the possible inadvertent disclosure of individual identities. 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.

A search has been carried out within the Ministry of Defence for environmental reports, health and safety reports, risk assessments and recommendations related to the two locations you specified in your request (Camp Souter Kabul and Nicosia International Airport). The search resulted in one air quality report related to Camp Souter, carried out in 2006. A copy of this report has been included with this response.

As at 8 September 2021:

- **fewer than five** UK armed forces personnel who deployed to Kabul Afghanistan had at least one Read code for interstitial lung disease entered onto their medical record.
- there were **no** UK armed forces personnel who served on UN duty in Cyprus with a Read code for interstitial lung disease entered onto their medical record.

The Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS) came into force on 6 April 2005 to pay compensation for injury, illness or death attributable to Service that occurred on or after that date.

Between 6 April 2005 and 31 March 2021, there were **fewer than five** claims made for Interstitial Lung Disease (ILD) under the AFCS, of which **none were awarded**.

Of those claims where details of cause were recorded by the claimant, they included causes such as exposure to asbestos or as a result of drug therapy. No details were submitted within the claims about the location they were attributed to.

AFCS claims consist of several events such as reviews, reconsiderations and appeals of which there can be multiple within a single claim. The figures presented in this response show the latest event and outcome of the claim.

Under Section 16 (Advice and Assistance) you may find it helpful to note the following.

Cases of interstitial lung disease

The figures provided are for 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 April 2007 and 8 September 2021 and is not limited to the currently serving population.

Reservist personnel have been included. However, please note that most reservist personnel receive their primary medical care from the NHS. Any personnel who were only seen by the NHS regarding interstitial lung disease and have not informed the MOD are therefore not included in these figures.

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. The following Read code was used to identify personnel with interstitial lung disease: H58y3 Interstitial lung disease NEC.

DMICP commenced during 2007 and by 2010, DMICP was in place for the UK and the majority of Germany. Rollout to other overseas locations commenced in November 2011. Please note that due to the gradual rollout of the system, data for the period 2007-2010 may be incomplete and therefore the figures provided above should be treated as a **minimum**.

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.

As mentioned above, it is not possible to identify whether a case of interstitial lung disease is environmentally attributable. There is no requirement for a GP to record the cause of the interstitial lung disease when completing the medical record.

DMICP is a live data source and is subject to change. Date of data extract 8 September 2021.

MOD deployment data was used to identify personnel who deployed to Kabul, Afghanistan or Cyprus. Deployment data is held from April 2007 onwards and is sourced from the Joint Personnel Administration (JPA) system. Deployment records with a location of Cyprus were reviewed by UKStratCom to assess whether they were serving on UN duty.

Compensation claims

The AFCS came into force on 6 April 2005 to pay compensation for injury, illness or death attributable to Service that occurred on or after that date. It replaced the previous compensation arrangements

provided by the War Pensions Scheme (WPS) and the attributable elements of the Armed Forces Pensions Scheme. AFCS data is sourced from the Compensation and Pension System (CAPS) which is administrated and managed by DBS Veterans UK.

Interstitial Lung Disease claims were identified based on a free text search of the condition claimed for using the following terms: 'Interstitial lung' and 'pulmonary fibrosis'. The condition claimed for is based on information supplied by the claimant and does not necessarily reflect a diagnosis of ILD.

As conditions are sometimes spelled incorrectly it is also possible that some claims for ILD have not been identified. Therefore, the figures supplied should be treated as a minimum.

Claimants' injuries/illnesses considered to be Service-attributable are awarded under the AFCS in line with one of nine tariff injury tables, which each cover the legislation surrounding the payment of compensation: Table 1 - Burns; Table 2 - Injury, Wounds and Scarring; Table 3 - Mental Disorders; Table 4 - Physical Disorders; Table 5 - Amputations; Table 6 - Neurological Disorders; Table 7 - Senses; Table 8 - Fractures and Dislocations; and Table 9 - Musculoskeletal Disorders.

Defence Statistics publish an annual National Statistic on claims and awards under the AFCS: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/armed-forces-compensation-scheme-statistics-index>
The latest update was published on 24 June 2021 (as at 31 March 2021).

Would you like to be added to our contact list, so that we can inform you about updates to our statistical publications covering medical discharges in the UK Armed Forces 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 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