



Ministry  
of Defence

Defence Statistics Health  
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Ref: **FOI 2021/14842**

21 December 2021

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email of 5 December 2021 requesting the following information:

“Please provide the number of UK regular armed forces personnel who have chosen not to receive one or more COVID-19 vaccines.

*Please also confirm whether vaccination status has an impact on medical deployability standard (MDS)”*

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.

As of 10 December 2021, **885** regular UK armed forces personnel had a Read code for declining a COVID-19 vaccination in their electronic medical record and did not have a subsequent record of receiving a COVID-19 vaccination.

At present, COVID-19 vaccination is not treated as an Occupational Vaccine, thus, there is no change to an individual's medical deployment standard with respect to their COVID-19 vaccination status. However, some countries require full or partial COVID-19 vaccination as a condition of entry. This may affect individuals' eligibility to deploy to certain areas. This is managed by individuals' Chain of Command.

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

COVID-19 vaccinations are provided predominately by the NHS, in line with the national vaccination rollout and direction of the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI). Information is transferred from the NHS National Immunisation Management Service (NIMS) to MOD on a regular basis. Any information entered in MOD medical records using free text only is not available in the data warehouse from which searches are run; therefore, the figures provided are a minimum.

Please note defence policy directs that Service personnel should be given the information to make them fully aware of the benefits and risks associated with any vaccination before accepting or declining the offer. This is part of the informed consent process. If personnel do have concerns, their healthcare provider will be able to discuss the vaccine with them. However, it is strongly recommended that if personnel are offered a COVID-19 vaccine, they should take it to protect themselves and their family.

Defence policy directs those who are not vaccinated to be managed on a case-by-case basis following a risk assessment. The risk assessment and subsequent management of individuals who choose not to be

vaccinated against preventable disease is managed by the single service Chain of Command with medical advice.

Personnel include all regular UK armed forces personnel serving as at 1 November 2021. Vaccination status is correct as at 10 December 2021.

Information was derived using electronic medical records from the Defence Medical Information Capability Programme (DMICP), and includes regular UK armed forces personnel with a COVID-19 vaccination declined Read code (“^ESCT1299086” “2019-nCoV (novel coronavirus) vaccination declined”) whom had not received a subsequent vaccine.

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 note that DMICP is a live data source and subject to change. Date of data extract 13 December 2021.

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/>.

Yours sincerely,

Defence Statistics Health