



**Defence Business Services**  
Secretariat  
Room 6303  
Tomlinson House  
Norcross  
Thornton-Cleveleys  
Lancashire FY5 3WP

Ref: FOI2022/03654

[DBSRES-Secretariat@mod.gov.uk](mailto:DBSRES-Secretariat@mod.gov.uk)

31 March 2022

Dear 

Thank you for your email of 16 March 2022 to the Ministry of Defence (MOD), requesting:

*“Please furnish me with the following information under the FOI Act.*

*This should be a reasonably easy request to fulfil.*

*As an ex service member I know that the MODMO operate an extremely efficient system of accounting.*

*Please let me know,*

*How Many Bars to the GSM for service in Northern Ireland in total were issued during Op Banner?*

*I do not want any information about recipients, and information about costs or suppliers, just the basic number.*

*MODMO know exactly how many of these were purchased. How many are still in stock? Subtract the latter from the former.....and we shall have the figure”*

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

A search for the information has now been completed within the MOD and I can confirm some information in scope of your request is held. However, I must advise you that we will not be able to answer your request without exceeding the appropriate limit. This is because the information is not held centrally, and a large number of hard copy records would need to be scrutinised. Furthermore, these records are held at a number of locations, all of which would need to be cross referenced.

Section 12 of the FOIA makes provision for public authorities to refuse requests for information where the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate limit, which for central government is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3.5 working days in determining whether the department holds the information,

and locating, retrieving, and extracting it.

Under Section 16 of the FOIA (Advice and Assistance), it may be helpful if I explain why we are unable to fulfil the request based on the methodology you have suggested. The GSM NI began being issued in 1970, however, MODMO do not hold stock figures dating this far back. Furthermore, MODMO now only keep baseline stock figures of medals and clasps, regular re-orders are based on estimated cases on the database.

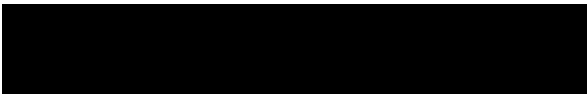
Additionally, the department is required to offer suggestions on how you may wish to refine your request to bring it within the appropriate cost limit to answer. As such, you may be interested to know that we may be able to provide information relating to the number of GSM with clasp NI issued since the introduction of the Ministry of Defence Medal Office centralised database in May 2012, known as the Complimentary Applications and Standalone System. Should you wish to refine your request, we would be happy to investigate further.

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](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

A solid black rectangular box redacting the signature of the Defence Business Services Secretariat.

Defence Business Services Secretariat