



Defence Business Services
DBS Secretariat
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Ref: FOI2022/04409

DBSRES-Secretariat@mod.gov.uk

29 April 2022

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 31 March 2022 to the Ministry of Defence (MOD), requesting the following information:

“For each complaint you have received over the past three years, I would like the following information:

- 1. How many staff complaints about racial discrimination have been recorded?*
- 2. How many staff complaints about racial discrimination led to an investigation?*
- 3. How many investigations on staff complaints about racial discrimination resulted in a disciplinary action?*
- 4. Did the complainant, whether a current or former staff member, receive compensation as a result of experiencing racial discrimination?*
- 5. How many people, if any, were fired following a complaint for having racially discriminated against a staff member?*
- 6. How many staff complaints about racial discrimination were referred to the police?*

I am interested in both civilian and military personnel. Thank you.”

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 all information in scope of your request is held. However, I have to advise you that we would not be able to answer your questions relating to Civilian personnel without exceeding the appropriate limit.

Section 12 of the FOI Act 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, locating it, retrieving it and extracting it.

As the methodology for recording Military and Civilian data drastically differs, it would not be possible to break down number of civilian grievances that relate to Racial Discrimination. This is because the categorisation field is free text and not always informative of the actual issue(s) being investigated, therefore, in order to accurately answer this part of your request, it would require locating, manually calling and interrogating each civilian personnel file where a grievance has been identified to ascertain if any are in the possible scope of your request.

There are 642 grievance cases recorded in the years you have requested, therefore based on that figure, it would take at least 321 hours to check and extract the information requested. At the rate of £25 per hour, this would equate to approximately £8,025 of effort, exceeding the appropriate cost limit.

However, under Section 16 (Advice and Assistance), as Military data is recorded differently, if you were to just limit your request to Military personnel, the Department may be able to provide some information in the scope of your request. Although it is not guaranteed that your refined request may fall within the cost limit, we would be happy to look at it again.

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/>.

Yours sincerely

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