



# Ministry of Defence

Ref: FOI2021/13463

Ministry of Defence  
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21 December 2021

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 4 November 2021 requesting the following information:

“Can you provide details of the number of tests for sexually transmitted diseases taken by UK service personnel broken down by year for the past five years and service? Please also break this information down by base.”

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 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 cost limit. This is because to identify how many individual Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) tests have been taken by UK service personnel for the time period requested would require a review of centrally held data relating to STIs for each patient. It would take in excess of **one week** of effort to review the data relating to STI tests.

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

The MOD may be able to provide some information in scope of your request if you reduce or refine your request to bring the cost of compliance under the limit.

Under Section 16 (Advice and Assistance) you may find it helpful to note MOD may consider providing the following information which is in scope:

The number of UK armed forces personnel who have had a diagnostic read code entered into their electronic health record for a sexually transmitted infection between January 2017 and December 2021 (to date), broken down by year and Service.

If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance.

Would you like to be added to our contact list, so that we can inform you about updates to our statistical publications covering primary care 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](mailto:Analysis-Health-PQ-FOI@mod.gov.uk)

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/>.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely

Defence Statistics Health