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Ref: ArmySec/C/U/FOI2022/14352

[REDACTED]

23 December 2022

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 30 November 2022 in which you requested the following information:

- 1) How many personnel used the anti-bullying helpline in: 2020, 2021, 2022, broken down by gender if such information is available?**
- 2) How many personnel used the Army's Speak Out Service in 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, broken down by gender if such information is available?**
- 3) What percentage of all female personnel reported being subject to sexual harassment in a Service environment in the last 12 months in the Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey for the years: 2018, 2019, 2020, 2022?**
- 4) How many female personnel left the army as a result of discrimination or sexual harassment in the years : 2018, 2019, 2020, 2022?**

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. I can confirm that the Ministry of Defence holds some of the information you have requested.

Information in relation to part one of your request is not held; only the number of calls is held. There is no way of identifying if there are repeat callers because it is an anonymous helpline. To be helpful, information on the number of calls has been provided at Annex A.

Information relating to part two of your request is held and has been provided at Annex A.

Information held in relation to part three of your request is held but it is exempt from release under Section 21 of the FOIA because it is reasonably accessible to you by other means as it is already in the public domain. Section 21 of the Act is an absolute exemption and there is therefore no requirement to consider the public interest in making a decision to withhold the information.

Information held in relation to part four of your request has been provided at Annex A, however some of the information in scope of your request falls entirely within the scope of

the exemption provided for at Section 40 (Personal Data) of the FOIA and has been redacted. Section 40(2) has been applied to some of the information in order to protect personal information as governed by the Data Protection Act 2018.

Section 40(2) requires the Department to conduct a balancing exercise, this exercise involves balancing the rights and interests of individuals against the legitimate interests in disclosure, this is not the same as carrying out the public interest test associated with certain exemptions in FOIA. The balancing exercise is carried out in order to decide whether the absolute exemption in section 40(2) is engaged. In particular, there is no assumption of disclosure in the legitimate interests test, as there is with qualified exemptions. The outcome of the balancing exercise lay in withholding the third-party personal data identified in the attached information.

Information in scope of Part four have been sourced from the Notice to Terminate Application submitted via the Joint Personnel Administration System. This field is voluntary based on individual self-report; personnel may choose not to declare that their Notice to Terminate is affected by these factors or choose not to answer this question. Further notes on the information provided are detailed at Annex A.

Information on reasons for leaving is also contained in the voluntary Army Exit Survey. This Survey is still in its infancy and only currently has a 13% response rate among all Army Service leavers. The Survey provides the option for individuals to select whether unfair treatment had an impact on their decision to leave. The aspects of unfair treatment include: bullying, discrimination and harassment, but not specifically sexual harassment, and responses are not mandated.

Under Section 16 of the Act (Advice and Assistance) you may find it helpful to note that information on the number of calls by gender to the anti-bullying helpline is available here: <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-06-30/28480>

Information answering part three of your request is available in the published Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Surveys, under the Fairness at Work subheading. The surveys are published here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/armed-forces-continuous-attitude-survey-index>

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

Army Sec
Pers Leader B

Annex A

Information provided in relation to parts one, and two are estimates as they are not official statistics produced by Defence Statistics.

Part One: How many callers (rather than number of personnel) used the anti-bullying helpline in: 2020, 2021, 2022, broken down by gender if such information is available?

While the number of callers is not held, the number of calls is, and has been provided to be helpful. There is no way of identifying if there are repeat callers because it is an anonymous helpline.

Caveats:

- The information in the tables contain the number of callers to the Bullying, Harassment, and Discrimination Helpline from all Civilians and Military personnel in the MOD.
- The helpline went live in September 2020, so the data for 2020 only contains three months' worth of helpline calls.
- The data only goes up to 15 August 2022, as data after this point is not yet held.
- When breaking the data down by male and female callers, the figures do not represent all of the calls made to the BHD Helpline. This is because people are not obliged to give their gender when calling the helpline.

Calls where gender information was provided			
Gender	Sept 2020 - Dec 2020	2021	Jan 2022 - Aug 2022
Male	79	123	69
Female	67	90	63

Calls where gender information was not provided		
Sept 2020 - Dec 2020	2021	Jan 2022 - Aug 2022
30	152	67

Part Two How many personnel used the Army's Speak Out Service in 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, broken down by gender.

Please note: Army Personnel call the Speak Out Service for many reasons, including workplace disputes, career management problems, on behalf of others, to be directed to policy and sometimes just to find out more about the service before they advertise it.

Callers have only been counted in the year they raised their case.

Year	Total different callers	Male	Female	Gender not provided
2018	160	56%	44%	0%
2019	247	60%	35%	5%
2020	265	60%	36%	5%
2021	286	66%	34%	1%
2022 (as at 5 Dec 22)	176	64%	31%	5%

Part Four: female personnel declaring that they have left the army as a result of discrimination or sexual harassment in the years : 2018, 2019, 2020, 2022

While not requested, figures for 2021 have been provided to be helpful.

Number of Army Regular Trade Trained Female personnel Voluntarily Outflowing having declared Sexual Harassment, Sexual Discrimination or Racial Discrimination as a contributing factor, 1 January 2018 - 1 October 2022 (estimate).

Please note the limitations of this information:

1. Figures are for the Trade Trained Regular Army only and therefore exclude Gurkhas, Full Time Reserve Service, Mobilised Reserves, Army Reserve and all other Reserves, but includes those personnel that have transferred from the Gurkhas to Regular Army.
2. Figures are for female personnel who Voluntarily Outflowed from the Regular Army and indicated on their Notice to Terminate Application submitted via the Joint Personnel Administration System (JPA) that sexual harassment, sexual discrimination or racial discrimination contributed to their decision to request Voluntary Outflow. Other factors may also have contributed to these personnel's request to leave the Army.
3. This field is likely to be a poor indicator of the level of Voluntary Outflow due to sexual harassment/discrimination as there is no indication of the level of coverage of the field. There is no option to select that the Notice to Terminate has **not** been influenced by harassment/discrimination and therefore it is not possible to distinguish between "no" responses and "declined to declare" responses.
4. It is also important to note that the opportunity to declare that harassment/discrimination has influenced Notice to Terminate is there, but that very few personnel have chosen to do so.
5. No information is available regarding whether sexual harassment, sexual discrimination or racial discrimination has contributed to the Outflow of personnel who do not Voluntarily Outflow e.g. those who leave due to Time Expiry or Medical Discharge.
6. Figures exclude personnel Outflowing to the Royal Navy, Royal Marines or Royal Air Force. Figures include personnel Outflowing from the Regular Army to join other Army populations, such as the Volunteer Reserve.
7. The data have been rounded to the nearest 5 to limit disclosure and ensure confidentiality.
8. "~" denotes fewer than 5.

Year	Total
2018	~
2019	10
2020	~
2021	5
2022	10

Source: Analysis Army