

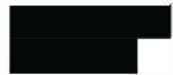


# Ministry of Defence

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Date: 24<sup>th</sup> October, 2022

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email received by the Ministry of Defence on the 21<sup>st</sup> September 2022 requesting the following information:

*Dear [REDACTED] I have been reading your review "<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-armed-forces-biannual-diversity-statistics-2021>*

*And quote the following "At 1 April 2021, BAME personnel represented:*

*2.7 per cent of Officers and 10.6 per cent of Other Ranks in the UK Regular Forces."*

*My question is how many of the 2.7% wear a bear skin? Your statistical review is avoiding the tough questions of institutional/structural racism within the armed forces, particularly the Army.*

*Have you tracked the career path of senior officers (staff rank) and monitored access for BME officers to the initial rungs of that ladder? If the majority of generals started their career in the Household Division how many BME officers are in that Division?*

*I served in HM Forces in the 1980's. Black other ranks were "allowed" in certain Corps (Pioneers Catering) and Regiments (RGJ for example). My Corp ([REDACTED]) had an unwritten colour bar.*

*Great strides have clearly been made. But unless your statistical review addresses historic cultural structures the Armed Forces will never reflect our diverse society.*

We are treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). We have now completed a search for the information you requested, and I can confirm that some of information in scope of your request is held.

Answers to the following two questions in your request can be found in the below table 1:

**1. How many of the 2.7% (Ethnic Minority Officers in the Regular Forces) wear a bear skin?**

**2. If the majority of generals started their career in the Household Division how many BME officers are in that Division?"**

**Table 1. Regular Ethnic Minority (EM) Officers, as at 1 April 2021**

Population	Total Officers	Of which EM	Of which EM % <sup>6</sup>
Total Trained and Untrained Tri-Service	28,160	750	2.7%
Total Trade Trained Army <sup>3</sup>	12,200	355	2.9%
Trade Trained Household Division <sup>4</sup> (Question 2)	465	5	1.1%
Of which Trade Trained Foot Guards <sup>5</sup> (Question 1)	370	~	<1%

**Notes/Caveats:**

1. Army 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 GURTAM to UKTAP.
2. Officers with a Paid Rank of Colonel and above who are in the General Staff are excluded from Household Division/Foot Guards figures regardless of late Arm/Service. However, these personnel are included in the total Officer figure.
3. Army, Household Division and Foot Guards figures are for Trade Trained Regular Army Officers only. Untrained Officers at Royal Military Academy Sandhurst are not assigned an Arm/Service until they have Commissioned and therefore it would not be appropriate to compare Arm/Service level figures with Total Army figures for the Trade Trained and Non Trade Trained population. The figure quoted in the question of 2.7% Regular Ethnic Minority Officers refers to Trained and Untrained Officers in the Regular Army, Royal Navy/Royal Marines and Royal Air Force. For context, as at 1 April 2021, Ethnic Minority personnel made up 3.0% of all Regular Army Trained and Untrained Officers.
4. The Household Division is made up of the Life Guards, the Blues and Royals, the Grenadier Guards, the Coldstream Guards, the Scots Guards, the Irish Guards and the Welsh Guards. The Life Guards and the Blues and Royals constitute the Household Cavalry and the Grenadier, Coldstream, Scots, Irish and Welsh Guards constitute the Foot Guards Division. Foot Guard figures are therefore a subset of Household Division figures.
5. Anyone in the Foot Guards Division may be expected to wear a bearskin at some stage in their career in order to perform ceremonial duties.
6. Percentages are Trade Trained Regular Ethnic Minority Officers as a percentage of all Trade Trained Regular Officers with a known ethnicity within the specified population of that row.
7. The data have been rounded to the nearest 5 to limit disclosure and ensure confidentiality.
8. "~" denotes fewer than 5.
9. Unrounded figures are used in the calculation of percentages.

For the following part of your question:

**3. Have you tracked the career path of senior officers (staff rank) and monitored access for BME officers to the initial rungs of that ladder?**

We don't hold this information beyond the specific statistics included in our Biannual Diversity Statistics Publication. Our ambition is to build Defence into an institutionally inclusive organisation for the whole force, that is fair for all, and reflective, at all levels, of the diverse society we serve.

Section 40(2) has been applied to some of the information to protect personal information as governed by the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR. In line with JSP200 Statistics Disclosure Guidance, numbers fewer than five have been suppressed to reduce the possible inadvertent disclosure of individual identities; secondary suppression has been applied so numbers cannot be derived. Section 40 is an absolute exemption and there is therefore no requirement to consider the public interest in making a decision to withhold the information.

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.

Would you like to be added to our contact list, so that we can inform you about updates to our statistical publications covering **Military Personnel** and consult you if we are thinking of making changes? You can subscribe to updates by emailing [Analysis-Tri-Service@mod.gov.uk](mailto:Analysis-Tri-Service@mod.gov.uk)

Yours sincerely,

Analysis (Tri-Service)