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of Defence

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30 March 2023

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email of 2 March 2023 requesting the following information:

“Many thanks for your helpful response. This has prompted my Chairman to ask if you could provide the same year-by-year breakdown of initial WPS and AFCS claims, which would provide an understanding of the proportion that go to appeal.”

Your response was in relation to FOI 2023/01046 in which we provided the number of appeals registered under the War Pension Scheme (WPS) and Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS) between 1 April 2017 and 31 March 2022, by financial year, broken down by service and age of the appellant.

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.

We have provided the number of initial injury/illness claims cleared under the AFCS and the number of first disablement claims cleared under the WPS between 1 April 2017 and 31 March 2022, by financial year, broken down by service and by the age of the claimant.

Cleared initial claims by service

Between 1 April 2017 and 31 March 2022, there were **37,683** initial injury/illness claims cleared under AFCS. **Table 1** presents a breakdown of cleared claims by service and financial year.

Between 1 April 2017 and 31 March 2022 there were **15,250** first claims cleared under the WPS. **Table 2** presents a breakdown of cleared claims by service and financial year. Due to a data quality issue, we were not able to identify a service for all of the WPS claims and have therefore classified claims without recorded service information as Unknown. Please note, it is possible for an individual to register claims under both the WPS and AFCS if they meet the eligibility criteria for both schemes (see Section 16 for further information).

Table 1: Initial Injury/Illness claims cleared under the AFCS by financial year and service of the claimant, numbers¹

1 April 2017 - 31 March 2022

Service	Year claim was cleared					TOTAL
	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	
Royal Navy ²	1,410	1,360	1,430	940	1,045	6,185
Army	7,000	6,135	5,845	3,760	3,725	26,465
RAF	1,240	1,195	1,160	670	760	5,030
TOTAL	9,650	8,690	8,435	5,370	5,530	37,675

Source: Compensation and Pension System (CAPS)

1. Numbers have been rounded to align with figures presented in the AFCS National Statistic.
2. Royal Navy includes Royal Navy and Royal Marines

Table 2: First disablement claims cleared under the WPS by financial year and service of the claimant, numbers¹

1 April 2017 - 31 March 2022

Service	Year claim was cleared					TOTAL
	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	
Royal Navy ²	633	455	528	484	432	2,532
Army	2,426	1,672	1,859	1,480	1,463	8,900
RAF	580	435	476	391	389	2,271
Unknown ³	279	480	340	224	224	1,547
TOTAL	3,918	3,042	3,203	2,579	2,508	15,250

Source: War Pension Computer System (WPCS)

1. First disablement claims include current invaliding and first claims to pension
2. Royal Navy includes Royal Navy, Royal Marines and Mercantile Marines
3. The Unknown service category includes claims for which it was not possible to obtain any service information for the claimant

Cleared initial claims by age

A summary of initial injury claims cleared by financial year and the age of the claimant at the date the claim was cleared for AFCS is provided in **Table 3**. First disablement claims cleared under the WPS by financial year and age of the claimant at the date the claim was cleared are shown in **Table 4**.

Please note that different age categories are presented for WPS and AFCS claims due to demographic differences between AFCS and WPS claimants resulting from the eligibility criteria for each of the schemes. To register a claim under the WPS, claimants needed to have served on or before 5th April 2005 and must have been at least 16 years of age to serve on this date. Therefore, the minimum possible age of a WPS claimant as at 1 April 2017 is 27 years.

Table 3: Initial Injury/Illness claims cleared under the AFCS by financial year and age of the claimant, numbers¹

1 April 2017 - 31 March 2022

Age at claim clearance date	Year claim was cleared					TOTAL
	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	
Under 25	1,435	1,235	1,055	630	690	5,050
25 to 29	2,720	2,280	1,945	1,115	1,070	9,130
30 to 34	2,380	2,180	2,050	1,255	1,260	9,120
35 to 39	1,635	1,480	1,570	1,015	1,015	6,715
40 to 44	825	760	990	750	745	4,070
45 to 49	420	415	430	310	385	1,960
50 to 54	170	225	265	190	210	1,060
55 and over	70	115	135	105	150	570
TOTAL	9,655	8,690	8,435	5,370	5,530	37,685

Source: Compensation and Pension System (CAPS)

1. Numbers have been rounded to align with figures presented in the AFCS National Statistic.

Table 4: First disablement claims cleared under the WPS by financial year and age of the claimant, numbers¹

1 April 2017 - 31 March 2022

Age at claim clearance date	Year claim was cleared					TOTAL
	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	
Under 35	172	74	51	15	3	315
35 to 39	313	221	199	135	104	972
40 to 44	466	312	353	251	279	1,661
45 to 49	535	359	406	303	332	1,935
50 to 54	396	302	338	307	352	1,695
55 to 59	416	321	370	344	380	1,831
60 to 64	219	192	214	218	257	1,100
65 to 69	149	137	162	135	160	743
70 to 74	190	180	179	161	113	823
75 to 79	240	194	168	148	119	869
80 to 84	403	352	350	259	150	1,514
85 to 89	253	245	236	201	171	1,106
90 and over	166	153	177	102	88	686
TOTAL	3,918	3,042	3,203	2,579	2,508	15,250

Source: War Pension Computer System (WPCS)

1. First disablement claims include current invaliding and first claims to pension

Under Section 16 (advice and assistance) you may wish to note the following:

War Pension Scheme

The WPS provides no-fault compensation for all ex-service personnel where illness, injury or death is caused by service from the start of the First World War in 1914 up until 5 April 2005. The WPS is managed by the Ministry of Defence (MOD) with all compensation claims administered by Defence Business Services (DBS) Veterans UK.

A first disablement claim will only be considered under the WPS if the claimant has left service and the claimed injury/onset of illness occurred prior to 6 April 2005 (post 6 April 2005 claims are passed to the AFCS for consideration). There is no time limit to claim. First disablement claims include current invaliding claims and first claims to pension.

WPS figures provided are sourced from data stored on the War Pensions Computer System (WPCS).

In cases where individuals had served in more than one of the three services, it was not possible to tell from the electronic WPS data held which service period the WPS claim was in relation to. In these cases, the service period with the most recent entry date prior to 5th April 2005 was used to classify the individual into a service category.

Further information on the eligibility to claim, and the processing of WPS claims and appeals, can be found on the Gov.uk website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/war-pension-scheme/war-pension-scheme-what-you-need-to-know>

Defence Statistics Health publish statistics on claims and awards made under the WPS. The latest publication presents statistics as at 31 March 2022 which was published on the Gov.uk website on 30 June 2022: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/war-pension-recipients-index>.

Armed Forces Compensation Scheme

The Armed Forces and Reserve Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS) came into force on 6 April 2005 to pay compensation for injury, illness or death attributable to service that occurred on or after that date. It replaced the previous compensation arrangements provided by the War Pensions Scheme (WPS) and the attributable elements of the Armed Forces and Reserve Forces Pensions Scheme.

AFCS data is sourced from the Compensation and Pension System (CAPS) which is administrated and managed by DBS Veterans UK.

Data was extracted from the CAPS as at 31 March 2022 to inform the latest published National Statistics, as published on the Gov.uk website on 30 June 2022: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/armed-forces-compensation-scheme-statistics-index>

For both the WPS and the AFCS, a claim is classed as cleared when Veterans UK issue a letter to the claimant informing them of the outcome of their claim.

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 statistics and consult you if we are thinking of making changes? You can subscribe to updates by emailing 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). 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