



Ministry of Defence

Defence Business Services
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Ref: FOI2023/04433

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[REDACTED]
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[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

4 May 2023

Dear [REDACTED]

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

"This is an information request relating to sick leave in the department.

Please include the following information for the 2022/23 financial year

- The number of employees taking more than seven days of absence without a sick note*
- The total number of days lost in excess of the seven days. For example, if an individual has taken off 10 days without a sick note, then this would be 3 days in excess of the seven days*

If it is not possible to provide the information requested due to the information exceeding the cost of compliance limits identified in Section 12, please provide advice and assistance, under the Section 16 obligations of the Act, as to how I can refine my request."

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 that all information in scope of your request is held.

I will first explain that sick notes were replaced by fit notes in 2010. I have presumed that this is what is being referred to in the question.

Please see below the requested information for civilian staff, which is all that can be provided within the cost limit. The information provided below is the recorded information held on MyHR, the MOD human resources system. I have interpreted question two to mean a count of the number of sick absence days over the initial seven where individuals are shown on the central MyHR system as not having recorded a fit note.

Management of staff absence is the responsibility of the individual line manager. There is a

reminder on HR Systems for managers to obtain and record the fit note for absences that have reached eight days. There is also a manual process for submitting fit notes to the individual's personnel file, which is separate to the HR System. For sickness absences of eight calendar days or more, the fit note should be submitted as soon as possible or upon the employee's return to work.

	FY 2022/23
Number of Individuals	2,112
Number of Days in Excess of Seven	35,065

- The number of sick absence days is based on all periods of sick absence recorded in MyHR (whether open or closed) that exceed seven days where there is no start date recorded for a Doctor's Fit Note after the sickness commences and before the sickness ends.
- The count of individuals is based on the date the absence period commenced, it is a unique count of all individuals who have a period of sick absence that commenced between 1 April and 31 March of FY2022/23, where the duration is over seven days and no details of a Doctor's medical certificate (Fit Note) for any date between the start and end of the absence has been recorded.
- All absence counts are in calendar days and represent the number of days absent beyond seven (i.e. the count starts from day eight of the absence).
- The data cut used to produce these figures is from 31 March 2023, so there may well be additional instances in April where sickness commenced in late March and the number of days has exceeded seven without a medical certificate, these absences will not be included in this extract.
- Data has been obtained from the MyHR system which manages MOD Main, the Submarine Delivery Agency and Defence Equipment & Support.
- Areas of MOD which manage their own HR systems, such as the Royal Fleet Auxiliary, Agencies and Arm's Length Bodies are therefore not held by the MOD.

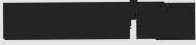
Under Section 16 of the FOIA (Advice and Assistance), I can confirm that it is possible to identify the number of fit notes submitted manually by cross-referencing the personnel file, for each individual to establish if a fit note is held on file. However, to do this would far exceed the cost limit of £600 in accordance with Section 12 of the FOIA 2000.

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



Defence Business Services Secretariat

