



Ministry
of Defence

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Ref: FOI2023/07583
[REDACTED]

20 July 2023

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email of 19 June 2023 requesting the following information:

“Under the FOI act can you please advise how many pregnant service women have undergone a termination procedure since 2015. I would like figures broken down by year and service.”

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 all the information in scope of your request is held.

Between 1 January 2015 and 1 May 2023, **907** UK armed forces personnel had a Read code for a pregnancy termination entered onto their electronic medical record. A breakdown by service and calendar year are presented in **Table 1**.

Please note that personnel were counted once per year and service, and once overall; therefore the numbers in the tables do not sum to the overall total. The figures show that a Read code was entered in a particular year; this may be for a new pregnancy termination or for ongoing treatment after the initial procedure. This does not show the number of new pregnancy terminations in a particular year.

Table 1: UK armed forces personnel¹ with a pregnancy termination Read code by service and calendar year, numbers²

1 January 2015 to 1 May 2023

	All	Royal Navy ³	Army	RAF
All	907	176	524	207
2015	135	22	86	27
2016	103	18	61	24
2017	117	32	61	24
2018	121	20	80	21
2019	109	23	65	21
2020	97	16	54	27
2021	125	17	74	34
2022	152	35	79	38
2023⁴	52	15	27	10

Source: DMICP and JPA

¹ Includes trained and untrained regular and reservist personnel.

² Personnel were counted once per service and year and once overall; thus, the sum of each year does not equal the total personnel with a Read code in that service. This applies to the overall totals and the subtotals for each service and year. E.g., if someone had a pregnancy termination Read code entered while in the Royal Navy and another while in the Army, they were counted once in Royal Navy and once in Army but only once in the total.

³ Royal Navy includes Royal Navy and Royal Marines.

⁴ Includes data from 1 January 2023 to 30 April 2023 only.

Under section 16 of the Act (Advice and Assistance), you may find it useful to note the following:

The figures presented in this response include all UK armed forces regular and reservist personnel. This does not include entitled or non-entitled civilians, foreign service or non-UK military. All personnel who had a DMICP record and served between 1 January 2015 and 1 May 2023 were included and numbers are not limited to the currently serving population.

Reservist personnel were included, however, please note that the majority of reservist personnel receive their primary medical care from the NHS. Any personnel who were seen only by the NHS were not included in the figures presented for the number of personnel with a Read code entered into their military medical record.

The figures provided are likely a minimum because individuals may not approach their medical centre for assistance and could instead utilise local services such as the British Pregnancy Advisory Service or pay to access private services. Also, some of the procedures are performed in secondary care. A hospital may then advise a military GP of the termination in the form of a letter. A military GP can record this information in a number of ways: a paper letter may be filed in a paper medical record, a letter may be scanned into the electronic patient record (in a pdf format) or the GP may enter Read codes into the electronic patient record which can be searched for electronically. Defence Statistics Health are only able to identify cases when a Read code has been entered into the electronic patient record.

Information was derived from the Defence Medical Information Capability Programme (DMICP). DMICP has a centralised data warehouse of Read coded information. It is the source of electronic, integrated healthcare records for primary healthcare and some MOD specialist care providers from which searches can be run.

Please note that if information was entered as free text in the patient record then it is not available in the DMICP data warehouse and will not be retrieved using the search for Read codes.

The following Read Codes were used to identify personnel who have undergone a pregnancy termination:

Read code	Description
7E066	Hysterotomy and termination of pregnancy
7E070-1	Dilation cervix uteri & curettage for termination pregnancy
7E071-3	Curettage of uterus for termination of pregnancy NEC
7E071-4	Curettage of uterus for termination of pregnancy NEC
7E084	Suction termination of pregnancy
7E084-1	Vacuum termination of pregnancy
7E085	Dilation of cervix and extraction termination of pregnancy
7E086	Termination of pregnancy NEC
L05-2	Termination of pregnancy
ZV253-1	[V]Admission for termination of pregnancy (TOP)
ZV253-3	[V]Admission for termination of pregnancy

DMICP is a live data source and is subject to change. Date of extract 30 June 2023.

Joint Personnel Administration (JPA) is the most accurate source for demographic information for UK armed forces personnel and was used to gather information on a person's 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 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/>.

Yours sincerely,

Defence Statistics Health