



Ministry  
of Defence

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FOI2023/06972  
[REDACTED]

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Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your request of 6 June 2023 for the following information:

“1. How many UK Armed Forces personnel were employed at SHAPE (Mons) Belgium during 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022. Given that personnel deploy in and out of theatre, I will be content to know what the normal make up of numbers is for Army/RAF/RN/RM personnel stationed at SHAPE. Please advise me if there was any significant difference from the normal number of PIDs during this period.

2. I would like to know the figures for the UK Armed Forces personnel stationed at SHAPE December 2019 - Dec 2022 who were vaccinated against covid, and those who were unvaccinated against covid from December 2019 to December 2022, by month if possible. Also:

- i. Please indicate annual totals for: 1st dose - 2nd dose - 1st booster - any subsequent boosters; also those remaining unvaccinated by month
- ii. Please indicate totals of vaccinations given, per month, for Pfizer, AstraZeneca and Moderna. Please inform me if there are any other covid vaccinations which were in use.
- iii. Please supply annual total figures for: those who had 1 dose only but no more, and 2 doses only but no more.”

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. Some of the information falls within the scope of the absolute exemption provided for at section 40 (personnel data) of the FOI Act and has been withheld.

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. 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.

Between 1 January 2019 and 1 December 2022, **588** unique UK armed forces personnel were stationed at SHAPE (Mons), Belgium, based on populations on the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month. **Table 1** presents annual snapshots of the number of UK armed forces personnel stationed at SHAPE broken down by service.

**Table 2** presents a monthly breakdown of UK armed forces personnel stationed at SHAPE by their COVID-19 vaccination status.

**Table 3** presents yearly totals of COVID-19 vaccine doses (i.e., first dose, second dose, first booster dose or Autumn 22 booster dose) administered to UK armed forces personnel who were stationed at SHAPE at any time in the calendar year. Please note that personnel may not have been stationed at SHAPE when the dose was administered.

**Table 4** presents a monthly breakdown of brands of COVID-19 vaccine doses administered to UK armed forces personnel who were stationed at SHAPE at any time in the calendar year. Please note that personnel may not have been stationed at SHAPE when the dose was administered. Personnel may have also received doses of the Janssen, Novavax or Valneva vaccines, but these brands have been omitted from the table because no personnel received these vaccines in the year that they were stationed at SHAPE.

**Table 5** presents a yearly breakdown of UK armed forces personnel who were stationed at SHAPE at any time in the calendar year by whether they were partially or fully vaccinated without having received any booster doses at the end of the year. Please note that personnel may not have been stationed at SHAPE when the dose was administered.

**Table 1: UK armed forces personnel<sup>1,2</sup> stationed at SHAPE (Mons), Belgium<sup>3,4,5</sup> 2019 to 2022, by service and date, numbers**

1 April 2019 to 1 April 2022

	Apr-19	Apr-20	Apr-21	Apr-22
<b>All</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>230</b>
<b>Royal Navy<sup>6</sup></b>	58	60	60	50
<b>Army</b>	98	104	93	98
<b>RAF</b>	85	80	82	82

Source: Analysis (Tri-Service)

<sup>1</sup> UK Armed Forces Service Personnel comprises UK Regular Forces, Gurkhas, Military Provost Guard Service (MPGS), Locally Engaged Personnel (LEP), Volunteer Reserve, Serving Regular Reserve, Sponsored Reserve, and FTRS of unknown origin. University Officer Cadets are excluded.

<sup>2</sup> The figures are estimates because the stationed location data for Reserves has not been fully verified.

<sup>3</sup> The personnel strength figures have been taken as at 1 April of each year. The monthly strength has remained stable throughout each calendar year.

<sup>4</sup> The figures are based on service personnel's stationed location and not their location of residence – where personnel work isn't necessarily where they live. Personnel deployed on operations to an area from their stationed location are shown against their most recent stationed location. The Royal Navy/Royal Marines personnel on sea service are included against the country containing the home port of the ship.

The figures are estimates because the stationed location data for Reserves has not been fully verified.

<sup>5</sup> Country as recorded in Joint Personnel Administration (JPA).

<sup>6</sup> Royal Navy includes Royal Navy and Royal Marine personnel.

**Table 2: UK armed forces personnel<sup>1</sup> stationed at SHAPE (Mons), Belgium by COVID-19 vaccination status<sup>2,3</sup> and date<sup>4</sup>, numbers<sup>5</sup>**

1 January 2021 to 1 December 2022

Date	Vaccinated				Unvaccinated
	Partially vaccinated	Fully vaccinated	Fully vaccinated with one booster	Fully vaccinated with two boosters	
1 Jan 2021	0	0	0	0	239
1 Feb 2021	0	0	0	0	231
1 Mar 2021	~	0	0	0	232
1 Apr 2021	83	0	0	0	152
1 May 2021	98	16	0	0	117
1 Jun 2021	117	89	0	0	26
1 Jul 2021	45	170	0	0	17
1 Aug 2021	7	209	0	0	14
1 Sep 2021	~	214	0	0	13
1 Oct 2021	~	216	0	0	14
1 Nov 2021	~	218	~	0	11
1 Dec 2021	~	155	66	0	8
1 Jan 2022	0	36	185	0	6
1 Feb 2022	0	25	201	0	6
1 Mar 2022	0	16	206	0	7
1 Apr 2022	0	13	210	0	7
1 May 2022	0	10	212	0	7
1 Jun 2022	0	10	215	0	6
1 Jul 2022	0	10	215	0	6
1 Aug 2022	0	13	222	0	6
1 Sep 2022	0	12	222	0	6
1 Oct 2022	0	9	222	~	5
1 Nov 2022	0	8	222	~	5
1 Dec 2022	0	9	174	52	5

Source: DMICP and JPA

<sup>1</sup> Includes trained and untrained regular and reservist personnel.

<sup>2</sup> Vaccination status is presented as at the first of the month.

<sup>3</sup> Personnel are listed as partially vaccinated when they have received one dose of the AstraZeneca, Moderna, Novavax, Pfizer-BioNTech or Valneva vaccines. Personnel are listed as fully vaccinated when they have received two doses of the AstraZeneca, Moderna, Novavax, Pfizer-BioNTech or Valneva vaccines at least 21 days apart, or after receiving one dose of the Janssen vaccine.

<sup>4</sup> Figures are presented from 2021 onwards because the rollout of the COVID-19 vaccination programme began in December 2020 and no UK armed forces personnel stationed at SHAPE had received a vaccine for COVID-19 before 2021.

<sup>5</sup> In line with JSP 200, the suppression methodology has been applied to ensure individuals are not inadvertently identified dependent on the risk of disclosure. Numbers fewer than five have been suppressed and presented as '~'.

**Table 3: COVID-19 vaccination doses administered to UK armed forces personnel<sup>1</sup> stationed at SHAPE (Mons), Belgium in the calendar year<sup>2</sup> by doses administered and year, numbers<sup>5</sup>**

1 January 2019 to 1 December 2022

Year	First dose	Second dose	Booster	Autumn 22 booster <sup>4</sup>
2019	0	0	0	0
2020	0	0	0	0
2021	319	311	243	0
2022	~	~	45	62

Source: DMICP and JPA

<sup>1</sup> Includes trained and untrained regular and reservist personnel.

<sup>2</sup> Doses were counted if the individual was stationed at SHAPE at any time in the same calendar year that the dose was administered; they may not have been stationed at SHAPE when the dose was administered. E.g., if someone who was stationed at SHAPE between April 2021 and September 2021 received their first vaccine dose in August 2021, their second vaccine dose November 2021 and a booster dose in February 2022. Their first and second doses would be included in the 2021 totals, but their booster dose would not be counted in the 2022 total.

<sup>3</sup> In line with JSP 200, the suppression methodology has been applied to ensure individuals are not inadvertently identified dependent on the risk of disclosure. Numbers fewer than five have been suppressed and presented as '~'.

<sup>4</sup> Autumn 22 booster doses refer to any booster doses administered later than 4 September 2022.

**Table 4: COVID-19 vaccination doses administered to UK armed forces personnel<sup>1</sup> stationed at SHAPE (Mons), Belgium in the calendar year<sup>2</sup> by vaccine brand and month<sup>3</sup>, numbers<sup>4</sup>**

1 January 2021 to 1 December 2022

Month	AstraZeneca	Moderna	Pfizer-BioNTech	Unknown <sup>5</sup>
Jan 2021	~	0	~	0
Feb 2021	~	~	~	~
Mar 2021	97	~	~	~
Apr 2021	56	~	16	~
May 2021	145	41	23	~
Jun 2021	61	48	18	0
Jul 2021	46	17	15	0
Aug 2021	~	6	5	0
Sep 2021	0	~	~	0
Oct 2021	0	~	~	0
Nov 2021	0	43	35	~
Dec 2021	0	20	146	0
Jan 2022	0	~	17	0
Feb 2022	0	~	11	0
Mar 2022	0	~	8	0
Apr 2022	0	0	~	0
May 2022	0	0	~	0
Jun 2022	0	0	0	0
Jul 2022	0	~	0	0
Aug 2022	0	~	0	0
Sep 2022	0	~	0	~
Oct 2022	0	~	~	~
Nov 2022	0	0	0	51
Dec 2022	0	0	0	5

Source: DMICP and JPA

<sup>1</sup> Includes trained and untrained regular and reservist personnel.

<sup>2</sup> Doses were counted if the individual was stationed at SHAPE at any time in the same calendar year that the dose was administered; they may not have been stationed at SHAPE when the dose was administered. E.g., if someone who was stationed at SHAPE between April 2021 and September 2021 received their first vaccine dose in August 2021, their second vaccine dose November 2021 and a booster dose in February 2022. Their first and second doses would be included in the August 2021 and November 2021 totals, but their booster dose would not be counted in the February 2022 total.

<sup>3</sup> Figures are presented from 2021 onwards because the rollout of the COVID-19 vaccination programme began in December 2020 and no UK armed forces personnel stationed at SHAPE had received a vaccine for COVID-19 before 2021.

<sup>4</sup> In line with JSP 200, the suppression methodology has been applied to ensure individuals are not inadvertently identified dependent on the risk of disclosure. Numbers fewer than five have been suppressed and presented as '~'.

<sup>5</sup> Unknown doses include any records where the brand of vaccination has not been coded into the patient's medical record. This information may have been recorded as free text which is not available for analysis in the data warehouse of coded information (see background notes for further information on Read codes).

**Table 5: UK armed forces personnel<sup>1,2</sup> stationed at SHAPE (Mons), Belgium in the calendar year<sup>2</sup> by COVID-19 year-end vaccination status<sup>3,4,5</sup> and calendar year, numbers**

1 January 2019 to 1 December 2022

Year	Fully vaccinated with	
	Partially vaccinated	no booster doses
2019	0	0
2020	0	0
2021	7	69
2022	0	15

Source: DMICP and JPA

<sup>1</sup> Includes trained and untrained regular and reservist personnel.

<sup>2</sup> Includes all personnel who were stationed at SHAPE at any time in the calendar year.

<sup>3</sup> Vaccination status is presented as at the end of the calendar year.

<sup>4</sup> Personnel are listed as partially vaccinated when they have received one dose of the AstraZeneca, Moderna, Novavax, Pfizer-BioNTech or Valneva vaccines. Personnel are listed as fully vaccinated when they have received two doses of the AstraZeneca, Moderna, Novavax, Pfizer-BioNTech or Valneva vaccines at least 21 days apart, or after receiving one dose of the Janssen vaccine.

<sup>5</sup> Personnel who had received booster doses have not been presented as this information was not requested.

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

UK Armed Forces Service Personnel comprises UK Regular Forces, Gurkhas, Military Provost Guard Service (MPGS), Locally Engaged Personnel (LEP), Volunteer Reserve, Serving Regular Reserve, Sponsored Reserve, and FTRS of unknown origin. University Officer Cadets are excluded. The population figures are based on service personnel's stationed location and not their location of residence – where personnel work isn't necessarily where they live – and the figures are estimates because the stationed location data for Reserves has not been fully verified. Personnel deployed on operations to an area from their stationed location are shown against their most recent stationed location. The Royal Navy/Royal Marines personnel on sea service are included against the country containing the home port of the ship.

Information was derived using electronic medical records 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 for Read codes can be run.

This COVID-19 vaccination information relates to all personnel who had a DMICP record and were serving between 1 January 2019 and 31 December 2022. Please note that personnel may have received their COVID-19 vaccinations while they were not stationed at SHAPE.

Please note that COVID-19 vaccinations were provided predominantly by the NHS, in line with the national vaccination rollout and direction of the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI). Information on vaccinations provided by the NHS in England and NHS Scotland is transferred to the military medical record. Therefore, any personnel who received their COVID-19 vaccinations from the NHS were included in the figures presented. At the present time there is no transfer of data from the NHS Devolved Administration system in Northern Ireland to the military medical record.

Figures presented include UK armed forces personnel with a record of the following COVID-19 vaccination Read codes in their medical record:

- ^ESCT129905 – 2019-nCoV (novel coronavirus) vaccination,
- ^ESCT1423363 – Immunisation course to maintain protection against SARS-CoV-2 (severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2),
- ^CVA00000001 – COVID-19 Booster Vaccination.

UK armed forces personnel may have received the AstraZeneca, Janssen, Moderna, Novavax, Pfizer-BioNTech or Valneva vaccines. The AstraZeneca, Moderna, Novavax, Pfizer-BioNTech and Valneva vaccines are two-dose vaccines; personnel are counted as partially vaccinated after receiving one dose of these vaccines, and fully vaccinated after receiving a second dose at least 21 days later. The Janssen vaccine is a single-dose COVID-19 vaccination, therefore personnel who receive one dose of this vaccine are counted as fully vaccinated.

The UK COVID-19 vaccine rollout began in December 2020, and individuals were eligible for their second dose 21 days after they had received their first dose. In September 2021 the first booster vaccination programme began, with booster doses offered to individuals who had received their last dose at least six months earlier and were clinically vulnerable or aged 50 and over; this was later extended to all individuals aged 16 and over, and the minimum gap between individuals receiving their last dose and receiving a booster dose was reduced to three months. From 5 September 2022 individuals who had received their last dose at least three months earlier and were clinically vulnerable or aged 50 and over were eligible for another booster dose as part of the Autumn 2022 seasonal booster campaign.

Where an individual's medical records provide an ambiguous or inconsistent summary of their vaccination status the most recent information has been used.

Please note that DMICP is a live data source and subject to change. Date of DMICP data extract 14 April 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 deployment and service.

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 at <https://ico.org.uk/>

Yours sincerely,  
Defence Statistics Health (Analysis Directorate)