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Ref: FOI2023/08259

31 July 2023

Dear ███████████

Thank you for your email of 3 July 2023 to the Ministry of Defence (MOD) requesting the following information:

> "*Freedom of Information Request regarding the Award of a Clasp to the Accumulated Campaign Service Medal 2011 I would respectfully like to know the following:*
>
> *1. Since 2011, how many Royal Marines have been awarded a first clasp to the Accumulated Campaign Service Medal (ACSM) 2011, denoting the individual having completed 1,440 days of operational service? Please list this answer by year in table form, eg*
>
> *Line 1: 2011 - 10,*
> *Line 2: 2012 - 15 etc.*
>
> *I do not require any personal details regarding any individual awarded the clasp to the ACSM 2011.*
>
> *2. Of those Royal Marines from question 1, how many were listed on JPA as being members of the Heavy Weapons (Mortars) specialist qualification within the Royal Marines? Please provide this answer in a sentence, no need for a table. I do not need any personal information regarding these individuals.*
>
> *Line 1: 2011 - 5 Army, 2 RAF, 0 Navy*
> *Line 2: 2012 - 10 Army, 4 RAF, 3 Navy etc.*"

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 Ministry of Defence (MOD), and I can confirm that all information in scope of your request is held. However, to protect personal information governed by the Data Protection Act 2018, Section 40(2) of the FOI Act has been applied to some of the information by supplementing numbers fewer than five with a tilde (~). Section 40(2) requires the Department to conduct a balancing exercise, this exercise involves balancing the rights and interests of individuals against the legitimate interests in

disclosure, this is not the same as carrying out the public interest test associated with certain exemptions in FOIA.

The balancing exercise is carried out in order to decide whether the absolute exemption in section 40(2) is engaged. In particular, there is no assumption of disclosure in the legitimate interests test, as there is with qualified exemptions. The outcome of the balancing exercise lay in withholding the third-party personal data identified in the attached information.

In answer to Q1, the table below shows the number of Royal Marines awarded a first clasp to the Accumulated Campaign Service Medal (ACSM) 2011, denoting the individual having completed 1,440 days of operational service since 2011, by year.

Year	Total number of Royal Marines awarded
2011	0
2012	0
2013	~
2014	0
2015	0
2016	0
2017	0
2018	0
2019	0
2020	0
2021	0
2022	0
2023	0

In answer to Q2, I can confirm that none of the Royal Marines held a 'Heavy Weapons (Mortars) specialist qualification'.

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)