



Ministry  
of Defence

Air Command Secretariat  
Spitfire Block  
Headquarters Air Command  
Royal Air Force  
High Wycombe  
Buckinghamshire  
HP14 4UE

Ref: FOI2023/07346

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

11 July 2023

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your e-mail on 10 July 2023, requesting the following information:

*How many people have you recruited within 2021- 2023 who have dust or house dust mite allergies?*

*How many people have you recruited within 2021-2023 who have any allergy classed as severe?*

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, and I can confirm that information in scope of your request is held.

Of the Royal Air Force (RAF) personnel who joined the Service between 1 January 2021 and 31 May 2023 fewer than five have dust or dust mite allergy entered into their medical record.

For the second question in your request, the reference to "severe allergy" has been interpreted as anaphylaxis. Of the RAF personnel who joined the Service between 1 January 2021 and 31 May 2023 fewer than five had anaphylaxis entered into their medical record.

Section 40(2) has been applied to the response 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 are 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.

Under Section 16 (Advice and Assistance) please note the following:

Figures provided in this response include UK armed forces regular and reservist personnel. This does not include entitled or non-entitled civilians, Foreign Service or non-UK military.

Please note that most reservist personnel receive their primary medical care from the NHS. Any personnel who were only seen by the NHS regarding allergies and anaphylaxis, and have not informed the MOD are therefore not included in these figures.

Anaphylaxis is a bar to entry into the armed forces. Therefore, it can be assumed that anyone with a Read code for anaphylaxis had the condition identified whilst in service.

The development of anaphylaxis during service is dealt with on a case-by-case basis and a risk assessment conducted with due regard to continuing employment and the specific medical and logistic support requirements of the individual.

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 for Read codes can be run.

The following Read codes were used to identify personnel with a dust or dust mite allergy:

- H171-5 House dust allergy
- H171-6 House dust mite allergy

The following Read codes were used to identify personnel with a record of anaphylaxis:

- SN50 Anaphylactic shock
- SN50-1 Anaphylaxis
- SN500 Anaphylactic shock due to adverse food reaction
- SN593 Anaphylactic shock due to bee sting
- SN594 Anaphylactic shock due to wasp sting
- ZV1B3 [V]Personal history of food induced anaphylaxis
- 14M5 H/O: anaphylactic shock

The figure presented for anaphylaxis is a minimum; this is because anaphylaxis requires emergency secondary care which may have been provided by the NHS. A hospital may then inform a military GP 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 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 conditions when a Read code has been entered into the electronic patient record.

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 was not retrieved using the search for Read codes.

DMICP is a live data source and is subject to change. Date of data extract 3 July 2023.

Joint Personnel Administration (JPA) is the most accurate source for demographic information for UK armed forces personnel and was used to identify RAF personnel who joined between 1 January 2021 and 31 May 2023. Please note that the intake data used as a basis for these figures included transfers into the RAF from other services.

If you are not satisfied with this response or you wish to complain about any aspect of the handling of your request, then you should contact us in the first instance at the address above. If informal resolution is not possible and you are still dissatisfied then you may

apply for 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.uk). Please note that any request for an internal review must be made within 40 working days of the date on which the attempt to reach informal resolution has come to an end.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may take your complaint 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 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,

[signed electronically]

Air Command Secretariat