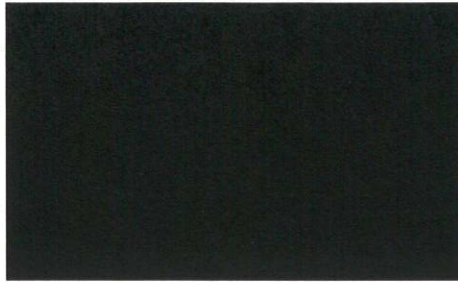




Ministry
of Defence



FOI2020/13321

E-mail: Navysef-foimailbox@mod.gov.uk



21 December 2020

Dear ,

Release of Information

Thank you for your correspondence of 3 November 2020 in which you requested the following information:

1. How many females have applied for Pilot in the past three years in the Royal Navy.
2. How many females have been successful in their application to join the Royal Navy as pilot in the past three years.
3. How many operational female pilots are there in the Royal Navy.
4. What is the average current holding time for a personnel who has completed BRNC waiting to commence pilot training?
5. What are the eyesight requirements for the role of Royal Navy pilot?

And then clarified on 26 November 2020:

'I am confirming that my information request (FOI2020/12156) has been given the correct interpretation by yourselves, and that the 'last 3 years' applies to the financial years 2018/2019, 2019/2020 and 2020 - to date.'

Your enquiry has been considered to be a request for information in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

A search has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence and I can confirm that information in scope of your request is held. In response to questions one, two and three, please see the table at Annex A to this letter where each question is addressed in order.

With regard to question four, the average holding time for personnel who have completed Britannia Royal Naval College and are waiting to commence pilot training is approximately 12 months.

In response to question five, information in relation to eyesight requirements for Royal Navy (RN) pilots can be found in the Royal Air Force policy document titled " Royal Air Force Manual, Assessment of Medical Fitness, AP 1269a, 3rd Edition, dated 30 April 2020 - the relevant extract from this policy is attached with this letter. In addition, I can confirm that the RN apply pilot visual standards to all aircrew – Pilots, Observers and Aircrewman.

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.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

Navy Command Secretariat - FOI Section

FOI 2020/13321

Q1. How many females have applied for Pilot in the past three years in the Royal Navy (RN)?

Table 1. Information in response to question one can be found in the table below. It may help if I explain that figures provided are recorded by Financial Year:

Recruiting Year	Female
2018/2019	85
2019/2020	75
2020/to 31 October 2020	65
Total	225

Q2. How many females have been successful in their application to join the RN as Pilot in the past three years?

Table 2. Female Intake to the Regular RN as a Pilot by Financial Year:

	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	Total
Intake	~	~	~	9

Source: Analysis (Navy)

1. Please note 'successful in their application' has been defined as personnel who joined the Royal Navy.
2. Intake is comprised of personnel joining the Regular Royal Navy. This includes personnel moving from the Reserves, another service and from outside the Armed Forces.
3. Figures of 5 or fewer are represented by '~'.

Q3. How many operational female Pilots are there in the Royal Navy?

As at 1 April 2020, there were less than five female trained Regular Pilots.

LEAFLET 4-02 ANNEX A: VISUAL STANDARDS AT SELECTION - REGULAR AIRCREW AND CONTROLLERS

	Visual Acuity (each eye separately)				Ref. Range		Muscle Balance (Maddox Rod/Maddox Wing)	Converge	Accommodation ¹ (with correction)	CP	Stereopsis (TNO Test)
	Uncorr. 2	Corr. 2	Inter ³	Near 4	Sph	Cyl					
Pilot	6/12	6/6	N14	N5	-0.75 to +1.75 dioptres	0.75 dioptres	Dist: Eso 6Δ to Exo 8Δ, ≤1ΔVertical Near: Eso 6Δ to Exo 16Δ, ≤1ΔVertical	≤10 cm	Age 17 – 20: 11 cm Age 21 – 25: 11 – 13 cm	2	120 secs of arc
WSO	6/24	6/6	-	N5	-2.00 to +3.00 dioptres	1.25 dioptres	As Pilot	≤ 10 cm	As Pilot	2	-
WSOp [All except WSOp(L)]	6/24 ⁵	6/6	-	N5	-2.00 to + 3.00 dioptres Estimated Spherical Equivalence ⁶		As Pilot	≤ 10 cm	As Pilot	2	120 secs of arc

¹ For candidates whose age is above 25, accommodation should fall within normal age parameters.

² If the examiner considers the candidate requires CFS he is to be assessed A2 and awarded the appropriate restriction (see [Lfls 2-03](#) and [5-14, Annex C](#)).

³ Each eye separately at 100 cm with spectacles if applicable

⁴ Each eye separately at the appropriate distance for age between 30-50 cm, with spectacles if applicable

⁵ To be employed on SAR, the WSOp's eyesight must be correctable to the required standard using contact lenses

⁶ The spherical equivalent is the algebraic sum of the spherical component of refraction plus half of the cylindrical component of the refraction. For example: Spherical +4.00D with cylindrical +2.00D = (+4) + (2/2) = ESE 5.00D Spherical +3.00D = (-7) + (3/2) = ESE -5.50

WSOp(L)	6/60 ⁷	6/6	-	N5	No standard	Trade/Branch entry standards	≤ 10 cm	As Pilot	4	No Standard
Mission Crew	6/36	6/6	-	N5	No standard	Trade/Branch entry standards	≤ 10 cm	As Pilot	2	No Standard
Airborne Technician	6/36	6/9	-	N5	Trade entry standards				2	No Standard
Cabin Crew	6/36	6/9	-	-	Trade entry standards				2/3 ⁸	No Standard
UAS/RPAS Operator Cat 1	>6/60	6/9 R 6/12 L	-	-	Trade entry standards				4	No Standard
UAS/RPAS Operator Cat 2	>6/60	6/6	-	N5	Trade entry standards				2/3 ⁸	No Standard
UAS/RPAS Operator Cat 3	>6/60	6/6	-	N5	-6.00 to + 6.00 dioptres	As Pilot	≤ 10 cm	As Pilot	2	No Standard
Aircraft Controllers (Air Ops (Control)) ⁹	>6/60	6/6	-	N5	Service entry standard	As Pilot	≤ 10 cm	As Pilot	2	No Standard
					2.00 dioptres					

⁷ WSOp(L) candidates requiring visual correction should be encouraged to wear contact lenses where clinically appropriate

⁸ CP3 for legacy candidates assessed prior to the obsolescence of the Holmes Wright Lantern

⁹ Benchmarked against CAA ATCO standards where appropriate to the military task