



Ministry
of Defence

Ministry of Defence
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Ref: FOI2024/02423

[Redacted]

26 February 2024

Dear [Redacted],

Thank you for your email from 7 February 2024 requesting the following information:

“The number of servicewomen who have been medically discharged from the three services for Endometriosis between 2022 and 2023. A broken down figure for each service, Navy, Army and RAF.”

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

I can advise that some of the information in scope of your request falls entirely within the scope of the exemption provided for at Sections 40 (Personal Data) of the FOIA and has been redacted. Section 40(2) has been applied to some of the information in order to protect personal information as governed by the Data Protection Act 2018. 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 has resulted in numbers fewer than five being suppressed to prevent inadvertent disclosure of individual identities.

The number of UK Armed Forces females medically discharged with a principal or contributory cause of Endometriosis in 2022 was **fewer than five** and **six** in 2023. Table 1 presents this information broken down by service and year.

Table 1: UK Regular Female Armed Forces personnel¹ medically discharged with a principal or contributory cause of Endometriosis, by service and year, numbers

1 January 2022 – 31 December 2023

Service	2022	2023
All	~	6
Royal Navy ²	~	~
Army	~	~
RAF	~	0

Source: DMICP, FMed 23 and JPA

¹ UK Regular Armed Forces includes trained and untrained personnel.

² Royal Navy includes Royal Navy and Royal Marines.

~In line with JSP 200 on statistical disclosure, figures fewer than five have been suppressed.

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

Medical discharge figures presented are for UK Regular female personnel (including Gurkhas and MPGS).

Medical discharges are the result of a number of specialists (medical, occupational, psychological, personnel, etc) coming to the conclusion that an individual is suffering from a medical condition that pre-empts their continued service in the Armed Forces. Statistics based on these discharges do not represent measures of true morbidity or pathology. At best they indicate a minimum burden of ill-health in the Armed Forces. Furthermore, the number and diversity of processes involved with administering a medical discharge introduce a series of time lags, as well as impact on the quality of data recorded.

Information on medical discharges was sourced from electronic medical records (DMICP) and manually entered paper documents (FMed 23s). The primary purpose of these medical documents is to ensure the appropriate administration of each individual patient's discharge. Statistical analysis and reporting are secondary functions.

Principal condition is the first principal ICD 10 code on the medical discharge documents (FMed 23). Contributory cause contains all other principal conditions and any contributory conditions on the medical discharge paper (FMed 23).

Medical discharges due to endometriosis were identified as personnel who were discharged with a principal or contributory cause coded as N80 (Endometriosis) in the International Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems Tenth Revision (ICD-10).

Defence Statistics release annual updates on medical discharges in the UK Armed Forces as an Official Statistic publication. The last statistical release was on 13 July 2023 which presented data up to 31 March 2023. The latest report can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/medical-discharges-among-uk-service-personnel-statistics-index>

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 gender and 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 (Analysis Directorate)