



Ministry
of Defence

Ministry of Defence
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Ref: FOI2024/02334

[Redacted]

28 February 2024

Dear [Redacted],

Thank you for your email from 5 February 2024 requesting the following information:

“In a previous FoI response that you provided in 2019 [Ref: 2019/06012] you provided a table showing the UK Regular Forces by Service and Medical Deployability Standard as at 1.4.19. Could you please supply me with two similar tables showing what the situation was as of 1.4.23?”

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.

Table 1 presents the number of UK full time (trade) trained armed forces personnel by Medical Deployability Standard (MDS) as at 1 April 2023, split by service and MDS.

Table 1: UK full time trained armed forces personnel¹ by Medical Deployability Standard (MDS)² and service, numbers

1 April 2023

MDS	All	Royal Navy ³	Army	RAF
All	133,567	29,348	74,834	29,385
Medically Fully Deployable	104,562	23,859	57,890	22,813
Medically Limited Deployable	13,948	2,197	9,263	2,488
Medically Not Deployable	15,036	3,286	7,669	4,081

Source: DMICP and JPA

¹ Regular full time trained personnel (trained Royal Navy/RAF and trade trained Army), including Gurkhas and reservists

² Please note that the MDS was not available for a small number (0.02%) of personnel.

³ Royal Navy includes Royal Navy and Royal Marines.

Please note figures in this response may differ from the previous FOI you referred to from 2019 (FOI2019/06012) which reported on medical deployment standard (MDS) for untrained and trained regular personnel. This response includes MDS for all full time trained (Royal Navy/ RAF)/ trade trained (army) personnel, including Gurkhas and reservists. This is because this is the most appropriate population when looking at MDS as the medical capacity for deployment, as untrained personnel cannot deploy. The methodology also differs from previous FOIs from 2022 (FOI2022/01660) and 2023 (FOI2023/01881), as it includes full time trained Gurkhas and reservists.

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

MDS figures provided are for all UK Regular Full Time Trained (Royal Navy/RAF)/ Trade Trained (Army) Armed Forces personnel in service as at 1 April 2023, including Gurkhas and reservists.

Service personnel with medical conditions or fitness issues which affect their ability to perform their duties will generally be referred to a medical board for a medical examination and review of their medical grading. The patient may be downgraded, to allow for treatment, recovery and rehabilitation. The MDS awarded can be on a temporary or permanent basis. The definitions of MDS categories are as follows:

- Medically Fully Deployable (MFD): Personnel medically fit for duty with no employment limitations.
- Medically Limited Deployable (MLD): Personnel medically fit for duty with minor employment limitations. MLD personnel may have a medical condition or functional limitation that prevents the meeting of all Medically Fully Deployable (MFD) requirements.
- Medically Not Deployable (MND): Personnel medically fit for duty with major employment limitations. MND personnel are not fit to deploy on Operations but may be deployable on UK based exercises and should be able to work effectively for at least 32.5 hours per week.

The Defence Medical Information Capability programme (DMICP) was used to obtain information on MDS.

DMICP has a centralised data warehouse of coded information. It is the source of electronic, integrated medical records for primary healthcare and some MOD specialist care providers. It was rolled out in 2007 and is the source of electronic, integrated healthcare records for primary healthcare and some MOD specialist care providers.

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 service.

You may be interested in previous figures on this subject which are available in the public domain, having been included in a previous FOI response. For data as at 1 April 2020, 1 April 2021 and 1 April 2022, please refer to the below:

1 April 2020 and 1 April 2021:

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/63ef9c18d3bf7f62e3d3ff20/FOI2022-01660.pdf>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/foi-responses-released-by-mod-week-commencing-13-february-2023-part-3>

1 April 2022:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/646f3bf3ab40bf000c196a48/20230216 -](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/646f3bf3ab40bf000c196a48/20230216_-_FOI2023_01881_Response_Redacted.pdf)

[FOI2023 01881 Response Redacted.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/646f3bf3ab40bf000c196a48/20230216_-_FOI2023_01881_Response_Redacted.pdf)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/foi-responses-published-by-mod-week-commencing-22-may-2023>

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)