



# Ministry of Defence

Ref: FOI2024/23742

Defence Statistics Health  
Ministry of Defence  
Oak 0 West (#6028)  
Abbey Wood North  
Bristol BS34 8JH  
United Kingdom

E-mail: [Analysis-Health-PQ-FOI@mod.gov.uk](mailto:Analysis-Health-PQ-FOI@mod.gov.uk)

6 January 2025

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email from 3 December requesting the following information:

- “1. The number of military helicopter aircrew diagnosed with cancer after exposure to helicopter fumes in the last five years.
2. The number of military helicopter aircrew who have died as a result of cancer caused by exposure to helicopter fumes in the last five years.
3. The number of military helicopter aircrew who have filed lawsuits against the Ministry of Defence (MoD) alleging that their cancer was caused by exposure to helicopter fumes in the last five years.”

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 some information in scope of your request is held.

Information relating to whether a cancer diagnosis occurred after exposure to helicopter fumes or whether a cancer death was caused by exposure to helicopter fumes is not held by the Ministry of Defence (MOD).

Between 7 January 2020 and 6 January 2025, 33 military helicopter aircrew have filed lawsuits (common law legal claims) against the MOD alleging that their cancer was caused by exposure to helicopter fumes.

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

- Common law claims are dealt with by the Claims Unit within the Department’s Directorate of Judicial Engagement Policy (DJEP), by contractors operating in accordance with instructions provided by the Claims Unit, or by delegated authorities. When compensation claims are received, they are considered on the basis of whether or not the MOD has a legal liability to pay compensation. Where there is a proven legal liability, compensation is paid.
- Data regarding common law claims are collated by DJEP from information on the Claims Handling Information Payment system, CHIPS for in-house claims as well as information from the MOD’s contracted claims handlers Davies Group Limited.
- Defence Statistics Health compiles the Department’s authoritative deaths database for all UK armed forces personnel who died whilst in service going back to 1984. Information is compiled from several internal and external sources from which we release several internal analyses and Accredited Official Statistics.

- You may be interest to note the following publication presents the number of UK armed forces deaths:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-armed-forces-deaths-in-service-statistics-index>

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](mailto: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](mailto: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