



Ministry
of Defence

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24 January 2025

Thank you for your email of 25 August 2024 in which you requested the following information:

1. *“How many serving police dogs do you currently have?”*
2. *How many police dog handlers do you currently have?*
3. *How many police dog trainers do you currently have?*
4. *Please confirm the gender split of female and male police dog handlers?*
5. *Please confirm number of police dogs in your force which have died or been euthanised while still enrolled as a police dog (please include cause of death for each dog) from January 2020 until present.*
6. *How many police dogs have retired from the force since January 2020 until present day? Please include reason for retirement.*
7. *How many police dogs have been euthanised as they’re deemed unsuitable for retirement since January 2020 until present day?*
8. *How many police dogs have failed their initial training course, and subsequently been re-homed or euthanised since January 2020 until present day?*
9. *What is the yearly expenditure for all police dogs?*
10. *Do your police dog handlers undertake canine first aid training? If so, how often are they provided a refresher course?*

11. *Are your police dogs supplied with personal protective equipment? If so, please state the equipment provided, brand of the equipment and confirm if it's personal issue to each serving police dog?*
12. *Are your police dogs provided with a direct financial assistance in their retirement from your police force or police crime commissioner?*
13. *How many suspects have been arrested by your force under 'Finn's Law' aka The Animal Welfare (Service Animals) for causing unnecessary suffering to a service animal since 8th June 2019 until present day?*
14. *How many suspects have been charged by your force under 'Finn's Law' aka The Animal Welfare (Service Animals) for causing unnecessary suffering to a service animal since 8th June 2019 until present day?*
15. *How many suspects have been convicted by your force under 'Finn's Law' aka The Animal Welfare (Service Animals) for causing unnecessary suffering to a service animal since 8th June 2019 until present day?"*

In response to our request for clarification, you requested the following on 25 September 2024.

"I am happy to amend the request to the below timeframes as outlined.

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) may be able to provide some information in scope of your request if you refine your request to bring the cost of compliance under the limit. If you were to reduce the timeframes for Questions 6 and 7 to February 2023-August 2024 and for Question 9 to a period of financial years, such as 2020/2021 to 2023/2024, then the MOD would likely be able to provide a response within the cost of compliance."

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. I have referred to your requests as 1-15 within this letter. Please accept my apologies for the delay in providing a response.

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 and below.

1. How many serving police dogs do you currently have?

As at 25 September 2024, 108.

2. How many police dog handlers do you currently have?

As at 25 September 2024, 112.

3. How many police dog trainers do you currently have?

As at 25 September 2024, 11.

4. Please confirm the gender split of female and male police dog handlers?

As at 25 September 2024, 87 male, 25 female.

5. Please confirm number of police dogs in your force which have died or been euthanised while still enrolled as a police dog (please include cause of death for each dog) from January 2020 until present.

Cause of Death	Number of MDP Dogs
Euthanasia – Veterinary condition causing unnecessary suffering	6
Euthanasia – Unacceptable Risk to Safety	6
Other causes	0
Total	12

6. How many police dogs have retired from the force since February 2023 until August 2024? Please include reason for retirement.

We have interpreted the use of 'retired' as MDP dogs that have been rehomed.

Reason for Rehoming	Number of MDP Dogs Rehomed
Normal age-related change	43
Veterinary grounds	26
Insufficient drive or performance	9
Surplus to requirements	1
Total	79

7. How many police dogs have been euthanised as they're deemed unsuitable for retirement since February 2023 until August 2024?

Reason for Euthanasia	Number of MDP Dogs
Euthanasia – Veterinary condition causing unnecessary suffering	2
Euthanasia – Unacceptable Risk to Safety	1
Total	3

8. How many police dogs have failed their initial training course, and subsequently been re-homed or euthanised since January 2020 until present day?

Outcome of MDP Dogs that have Failed Initial Training	Number of MDP Dogs
Reallocated within Defence	14
Rehomed	5
Euthanised	0
Total	19

9. What is the yearly expenditure for all police dogs?

Financial Year	Annual Spend
2020/2021	£72,416
2021/2022	£94,911
2022/2023	£159,015
2023/2024	£211,048
2024/2025 (for 4 months)	£50,420

10. Do your police dog handlers undertake canine first aid training? If so, how often are they provided a refresher course?

As part of the Kennel assistant course, handlers undertake the First Aid Module. There is no separate first aid course and therefore, there is no refresher course.

11. Are your police dogs supplied with personal protective equipment? If so, please state the equipment provided, brand of the equipment and confirm if it's personal issue to each serving police dog?

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is not routinely issued, however, can be provided through personal issue. PPE equipment is available through the Von-Wolf catalogue, which includes protective boots, goggles and earmuffs.

12. Are your police dogs provided with a direct financial assistance in their retirement from your police force or police crime commissioner?

No.

13. How many suspects have been arrested by your force under 'Finn's Law' aka The Animal Welfare (Service Animals) for causing unnecessary suffering to a service animal since 8th June 2019 until present day?

As at 25 September 2024, 0.

14. How many suspects have been charged by your force under 'Finn's Law' aka The Animal Welfare (Service Animals) for causing unnecessary suffering to a service animal since 8th June 2019 until present day?

As at 25 September 2024, 0.

15. How many suspects have been convicted by your force under 'Finn's Law' aka The Animal Welfare (Service Animals) for causing unnecessary suffering to a service animal since 8th June 2019 until present day?"

As at 25 September 2024, 0.

Caveats to Questions 1-15.

1. Please note, these figures are single Service estimates based on management information which is not gathered for statistical purposes or subject to the same level of scrutiny as official statistics produced by Defence Statistics. The figures provided may therefore be subject to data quality issues affecting their accuracy.
2. We have interpreted 'present' as the date of the clarified request, 25 September 2024. All of your questions citing 'present' reflect that date.

If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance. Following this, 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,

Equipment & Operations Team
Army Policy & Secretariat