



Ministry  
of Defence

Defence Business Services  
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Ref: FOI2024/23336

Email: [DBSRES-Secretariat@mod.gov.uk](mailto:DBSRES-Secretariat@mod.gov.uk)

18 December 2024

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 29 November 2024 to the Ministry of Defence (MOD) requesting the following information:

*"Please could you provide me with a detailed breakdown for your department's annual leave policy for civil servants, including any leave entitlement in addition to holiday allowance and public holidays. This could include any of the following:*

- *Special / privilege leave*
- *Volunteering leave*
- *Sports leave*
- *Study leave*
- *Trade union activities*
- *Unplanned leave not recorded as sick absence*
- *Sabbaticals*

*For each category, please provide the maximum number of days allowed per year and an explanation of the circumstances under which a civil servant is entitled to take them.*

*Could you also provide the total number of days taken off by civil servants in addition to but excluding regular holiday or sick leave for the years 2022, 2023 and 2024, broken down by leave type e.g. special, volunteering, sabbatical etc.*

*For each sabbatical taken, could you provide a summary of the reason and destination of the sabbatical, and whether it was paid or unpaid."*

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 of the information in scope of your request is held. Information relating to the destination and paid status of sabbaticals is not held on the MOD's Human Resources (HR) system.

Civil Service contractual annual leave policy is delegated which enables individual departments to decide any rules on an employee's entitlement to contractual annual and

Public & Privilege leave over and above the statutory requirement. Please find the latest MOD Leave Policy attached.

The remainder of the information you have requested has been presented in a table format in calendar days and can be found below.

Total number of absences taken by Civil Servants, excluding regular annual leave and sick leave, in 2022, 2023, and 2024 broken down by the type of absence

Absence Type	2022	2023	2024
Career Break	39442	57813	67817
Facility Time (TU Duties - Paid)	2382	2565	2662
Health & Safety Representative	74	55	101
Learning Representative	0	0	1
Privilege Day	40463	38207	36302
Reservist Mobilisation (Special Unpaid Leave)	3068	2157	4702
Special Paid Leave	48431	51860	51046
Special Unpaid Leave	3629	4752	5512
Trade Union Activities (Unpaid)	14	6	5
Volunteering (Hours) - Paid	713	1201	4641
Volunteering (Hours) - Unpaid	0	0	130
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>138216</b>	<b>158616</b>	<b>172919</b>

Total number of career breaks taken by Civil Servants in 2022, 2023, and 2024 broken down by the type of career break reason

Career Break Reason	2022	2023	2024
Accompanying Spouse/Partner/Cohabiting Couple Overseas	7793	14129	15959
Accompanying Spouse/Partner/Cohabiting Couple UK	359	1357	1085
Break after Maternity/Adoption Leave	838	2057	2479
Career Break	124	0	0
Caring	1336	2932	3392
International Org Transfer	23249	25002	22388
Other	4523	9755	18531
Reservist Mobilisation	364	485	384
Secondment to Industry	849	1321	1822
Travel	7	775	1777
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>39442</b>	<b>57813</b>	<b>67817</b>

Please be aware that the data provided above includes core workforce personnel only from MOD Main, Defence Equipment & Support, and the Submarine Delivery Agency. The data covers 1 January to 31 December for each year except 2024 which covers 1 January to 30 November instead. The data is based on scheduled days i.e. would only include days that an individual was due to work based on their work schedule.

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.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 Business Services (Secretariat)