

Freedom of Information Manager

Ministry of Defence Police

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E-mail: MDP-FOI-DP@mod.gov.uk

Our Ref: eCase: FOI 2024/22345

RFI: 184/24

Date: 13 December 2024

Dear

<u>FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000: MINISTRY OF DEFENCE POLICE: MENTAL HEALTH QUERIES.</u>

We refer to your email dated 15 November 2024 to the Ministry of Defence Police (MDP), which was acknowledged on 19 November 2024

We are treating your email as a request for information in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA 2000).

In your email you requested the following information:

Question 2 - you say there is no wait time, however I had asked 'what is the current average waiting time for an officer to see a mental health professional in OH - not a nurse or other staff member' - is the person (people) who answer(s) the 24/7 help number trained and qualified mental health professional(s)? Do they provide any on the spot treatment?

Question 4 - so just to confirm, you are saying the MDP has spent no money over the last five years on mental health provision for its officers and staff? If the MoD picks up the tab, how much mental health provision for MDP officers and staff cost the MoD?

A search for information has been completed and I can confirm that the MDP do hold information in scope of your request.

Question 2 - you say there is no wait time, however I had asked 'what is the current average waiting time for an officer to see a mental health professional in OH - not a nurse or other staff member' - is the person (people) who answer(s) the 24/7 help number trained and qualified mental health professional(s)? Do they provide any on the spot treatment?

The MOD Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) service provides a complete support network to all MOD civilians and their line managers, which offers expert advice and compassionate guidance on a wide range of issues and is available 24/7 throughout the year.

Calls to the helpline are answered by trained 'EAP co-ordinators', these are not trained counsellors or mental health professionals. They will take details to confirm caller identity and eligibility for MOD EAP services and some basic information about the reasons for the call. This

ensures the caller is routed to the correct team. This may include triage risk assessment using industry standard mental health questionnaires.

If the caller requires emotional support – then a callback will be scheduled from a trained counsellor. Callback target is within two hours of the initial call. Where the customer prefers call back at a different time – then a two hour window is agreed with the customer. The EAP supplier has met this two hour target for all cases during the period 01 November 2023 to 31 October 2024.

In cases where the triage risk assessment identifies any risk of self harm – callers will be kept on the line and handed over to the next available counsellor. In cases where the risk is assessed as high or very high – the EAP services will make contact with the employees GP and / or emergency services.

Question 4 - so just to confirm, you are saying the MDP has spent no money over the last five years on mental health provision for its officers and staff? If the MoD picks up the tab, how much mental health provision for MDP officers and staff cost the MoD?

MOD funding for EAP services is based on employee headcount. Funding is provided centrally from within Head Office for all MOD civilian employees, which includes all MDP employees.

The EAP cost for MDP, for the period 01 January 2020 to 30 November 2024 was £75808.25. This includes headcount costs, paid centrally, and additional counselling costs paid direct by MDP. Prior to January 2020, the MOD did not have an EAP service.

If you are not satisfied with 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

MDP Secretariat and Freedom of Information Office