Ministry of Defence

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Reference: [redacted] **RFI 25-11-2013-125220-003 correspondence dated: 28 November 2013**

[redacted]

Date: **19 December 2013**

Dear [redacted],

Thank you for your email of 28 November 2013 and subsequent emails clarifying your request on 3 December 2013 and 18 December 2013 requesting the following information:

" What is the number of people with in the RAF who have Bipolar Disorder by financial year between 2007/08 and 2012/13"

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000.

A search for the information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence, and I can confirm that information in scope of your request is held. The information you requested is enclosed.

Some information held by the Department falls entirely within the scope of the absolute exemptions provided for at section 40 (Personal Information) of the FOIA and has been withheld.

Section 40(2) has been applied to some of the information as it would disclose personal data whose release is governed by the Data Protection Act (DPA). Numbers less than five are therefore suppressed in line with Defence Statistics' rounding policy[a] (May 2009) in order to ensure individual identities are not revealed inadvertently.

Defence Statistics (DS) hold information on episodes of care for Service personnel who have an initial assessment at a Department for Community Mental Health (DCMH) or MOD inpatient provider for a mental health disorder. This data is sourced from the electronic patient record and the DS mental health database.

The data held by Defence Statistics contains a categorised description of a patient's condition, as recorded at their initial assessment at a MOD DCMH or In-Patient provider. The description under which bipolar disorder falls is 'Mood disorders of which manic episodes and bipolar affective disorders'.

Table 1 presents the number of RAF personnel who had at least one episode of care at a MOD DCMH or In-Patient provider with an initial assessment of 'Mood disorders of which manic episodes and bipolar affective disorders', by year between 2007/08 and 2012/13.

Table 1. RAF Personnel, MOD DCMH or In-Patient provider 'Mood disorders of which manic episodes and bipolar affective disorders' by financial year, 1 April 2007 – 31 March 2013, numbers.

	All	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
RAF	**20**	~	5	~	~	6	~

Source: DMICP, DS mental health database

1. Personnel can appear in more than one year therefore the total may be less than the sum of individual years.
2. "~" represents a number less than 5 or the next smallest number where there is only one cell in a row or column that is less than five.

[a] In keeping with Office for National Statistics guidelines

Between 1 April 2007 and 31 March 2013, **20** RAF personnel had at least one episode of care at a MOD DCMH or inpatient provider with an initial assessment of 'Mood disorders of which manic episodes and bipolar affective disorders'. Please note, some individuals may have had more than one DCMH episode of care or attended a DCMH as well as having an admission to an in-patient provider. These personnel have been included once in each of the years for which they have a record. Therefore the total will not add up to the sum of the individual years presented in Table 1.

Between 1 April 2007 and 31 March 2013, 112 RAF personnel who were seen at a MOD DCMH or In-Patient facility had no diagnosis recorded at the time of their admission. Therefore the numbers presented for UK Armed Forces personnel with Mood disorders of which manic episodes and bipolar affective disorders should be regarded as a minimum.

Background notes

Mental Health

DCMHs are specialised psychiatric services based on community mental health teams closely located with primary care services at sites in the UK and abroad. All UK based and aero-medically evacuated Service personnel based overseas requiring in-patient admission are treated by one of eight NHS trusts in the UK which are part of a consortium headed by the South Staffordshire and Shropshire NHS Foundation trust. UK based Service personnel from British Forces Germany are treated at Gilead IV hospital, Bielefield under a contract with SSAFA through the Limited Liability Partnership, prior April 2013 this contract was with Guys and St Thomas' Hospital London.

DCMH staff record the initial mental health assessment during a patient's first appointment, based on presenting complaints. The information is provisional and final diagnoses may differ as some patients do not present the full range of symptoms, signs or clinical history during their first appointment. The mental health assessment of condition data were categorised according to the World Health Organisation's International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Health-Related Disorders 10th edition (ICD-10). A number of patients present to DCMH with symptoms that require the treatment skills of DCMH staff, whilst not necessarily having a specific and identifiable mental disorder.

The following ICD-10 codes are used in the category of 'Mood disorders of which manic episodes and bipolar affective disorders'.

ICD-10 Code		Description
F30 - Manic Episode	F30.0	Hypomania
	F30.1	Mania without psychotic symptoms
	F30.2	Mania with psychotic symptoms
	F30.8	Other manic episodes
	F30.9	Manic episode, unspecified
F31 - Bipolar Affective Disorder	F31.0	Bipolar affective disorder, current episode hypomanic
	F31.1	Bipolar affective disorder, current episode manic without psychotic symptoms
	F31.2	Bipolar affective disorder, current episode manic with psychotic symptoms
	F31.3	Bipolar affective disorder, current episode mild or moderate depression
	F31.4	Bipolar affective disorder, current episode severe depression without psychotic symptoms
	F31.5	Bipolar affective disorder, current episode severe depression with psychotic symptoms
	F31.6	Bipolar affective disorder, current episode mixed
	F31.7	Bipolar affective disorder, currently in remission
	F31.8	Other bipolar affective disorders
	F31.9	Bipolar affective disorder, unspecified

The data in this response include regular UK Armed Forces personnel (including Ghurkhas and Military Provost Guard Staff), mobilised reservists, Full Time Reserve Service personnel and Non-regular Permanent Staff as all of these individuals are eligible for assessment at a DCMH.

Since 2007 DCMH staff record episodes of care using the Defence Statistics (DS) Database and submit these data electronically. In April 2012, system developments enabled the DCMH to begin recording episodes of care in mental health templates on the MOD's electronic patient record system, Defence Medical Information Capability Programme (DMICP), providing Defence Statistics with the same pseudo-anonymised information sourced from the legal patient record and these data have been used to produce this response. Full details of the data sources used in this response and the changes of

methodology are available in our annual and quarterly mental health statistics published on the Defence Statistics website at www.dasa.mod.uk.

Would you like to be added to our contact list, so that we can inform you about updates to our statistical publications covering mental health in the UK Armed Forces and consult you if we are thinking of making changes? You can subscribe to updates by emailing: DefStrat-Stat-Health-PQ-FOI@mod.uk.

The mental health of our personnel and veterans is a top priority for the Government that is why we have committed £7.4 million to ensure there is extensive mental health support in place for everyone who needs it.

We also have a wide range of support including tailored NHS mental health services, priority treatment for veterans, the Big White Wall online mental health wellbeing service and a 24-hour helpline with Combat Stress so Service Personnel and Veterans can seek help at any time.

If you are not satisfied with this response or you wish to complain about any aspect of the handling of your request, then you should contact me in the first instance. If informal resolution is not possible and you are still dissatisfied then you may apply for an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights Compliance team, 1st Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk). Please note that any request for an internal review must be made within 40 working days of the date on which the attempt to reach informal resolution has come to an end.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may take your complaint to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website, http://www.ico.gov.uk.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely

Defence Statistics (Health) Head (B1)