

Background Quality Report

Naval Service Pocket Brief

1. Introduction

Overview

The Naval Service Pocket Brief is an Official Statistic which was first produced in July 2003 to show summary strengths and flows of the Royal Naval Service. It was initially produced as a 'one off' special edition in 2003 and became a quarterly product from April 2005 to meet the needs of both the Naval staff and the general public. There have been two user consultations in 2005 and 2008 where feedback resulted in the removal of civilian data from table 8.

Methodology and Production

The Naval Service Pocket Brief shows summary strengths and flows of the Royal Naval Service as at the first day of the quarter, 1st January, 1st April, 1st July and 1st October. Full Time Reserve Service Personnel (FTRS) and mobilised reservists are included in two of the tables.

A monthly extract, as at the first of each month, is taken from the Joint Personnel Administration (JPA) system on the sixth calendar day of each month. The lag helps to minimise the impact of individuals not immediately updating their JPA record. The data undergoes a series of automatic validation checks and edits to ensure its basic quality. The extract is then stored on a MySQL database as part of a time-series of extracts maintained by Defence Statistics (Navy). A series of validation checks and corrections are made using expert knowledge and data obtained from other sources within the Department.

SQL code is used to create strength and flow pivot tables within Microsoft Excel for each member of the Naval Service for the situation date being published. The published tables are created by combining the data with liability information provided by Fleet. All tables are checked and amended as necessary. The file is then secured in Adobe Acrobat Professional.

The Naval Service Pocket Brief is an official statistic produced and published in line with the UK Code of Practice for Official Statistics. The publication date is pre-announced on the Release Calendar on the Defence Statistics Website. No pre-release access is given. The Naval Service Pocket Brief is published on [The Defence Statistics Website](#)

Contact Details:

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Defence Statistics (Navy) welcome feedback on this Background Quality Report or any of the statistics mentioned.

2. Relevance

The Naval Service Pocket Brief reports summary strengths and flows of the Royal Naval Service. This meets the requirements of all known users of the product. Customers requiring greater detail are directed to other publications, for example the Naval Service Monthly Situation Report.

3. Accuracy

Data sources

The main data source for compiling the Naval Service Pocket Brief output is the database of monthly extracts from the Joint Personnel Administration (JPA) system. These extracts capture all personnel in the Armed Forces. Key information for managing individuals is recorded and updated centrally with other information being completed by the individual through a self-service tool. A known issue is the short delay in the updating of individual's JPA record, obtaining the extract on the sixth calendar day of the month has been demonstrated to overcome much of the impact of late reporting.

Defence Statistics (Navy) cleanse and correct around 600 Naval Service records within each monthly extract to ensure the quality of the key fields (service, branch, assignment type, rank and exit category) is sufficient for Defence Statistics (Navy)'s main National and Official Statistics.

Outputs

All figures published in the Naval Service Pocket Brief are rounded to the nearest 10 with numbers ending in 5 rounded to the nearest 20 to prevent systematic bias. Rounded figures are less precise, but not less accurate. Less precision improves the clarity of the outputs and provides an appropriate indication of the underlying accuracy. Rounding in this way is Defence Statistics (Navy)'s preferred method of disclosure control in published statistics as it preserves anonymity of data subjects.

4. Timeliness and Punctuality

The time lapse between the reference date of the Naval Service Pocket Brief and the date of publication is approximately 6 weeks. It takes at least 12 days for the data to become available and for any necessary corrections to be made. The Naval Service Pocket Brief then takes up to 1 week for production, checking and amending as necessary. Publication is delayed until the Tri-Service data has been released via the Monthly Manning Report.

All publication deadlines have been met since the implementation of JPA.

5. Accessibility and Clarity

All Naval Service Pocket Brief publications dating back to July 2003 are available as pdf documents from [The Defence Statistics Website](#). They are also available through the [UK National Statistics Publications Hub](#).

The publication contains notes explaining the main categories and definitions used. Graphics are used to present time series and distributions by lengths of service. Detailed analysis and commentary is not provided.

6. Coherence and Compatibility

The Naval Service Pocket Brief is always fully consistent in terms of the total numbers of servicing regular personnel with the other Naval and Tri-service publications produced by Defence Statistics, and inconsistencies are identified and rectified before publication.

7. Assessment of User Needs and Perceptions.

Key users of the Naval Service Pocket Brief include the Commodore of Naval Personnel Strategy (CNPS) and Naval training establishments, who use the publication to provide a current snapshot of the Naval Service. The Naval Service Pocket Brief is also used to inform public and parliamentary debate.

8. Performance, Cost and Respondent Burden

Cost effectiveness has been improved by automating the production of the Naval Service Pocket Brief and linking it to Microsoft Publisher. Hard copies are no longer produced, the document is published in electronic format only for customers to view and print as required.

The burden on data suppliers on producing the Naval Service Pocket Brief is minimal. Extracts from JPA are required by Defence Statistics (Navy) irrespective of the production of the Naval Service Pocket Brief. Additional data such as liability and information from training establishments are produced for management purposes, the extra burden of providing it to Defence Statistics (Navy) is minimal.

9. Confidentiality, Transparency and Security.

Security

All staff involved in the production process are bound by the Official Secrets Act and have undertaken training in relation to the Data Protection Act. All data is stored, accessed and analysed using the Ministry of Defence's restricted network and IT systems. The access of raw data via JPA and SQL databases is password protected.

Confidentiality

Some of the data collected and stored for the Naval Service Pocket Brief contains service numbers and is restricted. All published outputs provide rounded totals of individuals shown by strengths and flows ensuring disclosure is not feasible. Defence Statistics rounding policy is used for all Naval Service Pocket Brief outputs; this ensures consistency in statistical disclosure control. Access to unrounded data would only be provided with approval via a Data Access Agreement.

Transparency

The production process is transparent. This quality report informs users of the method, production and quality of the output. Any significant errors identified after publication would result in revisions in the next publication and explanations to the reasons behind the revisions.

10. References

Reference	Link to Website
Naval Service Pocket Brief publications	Naval Service Pocket Brief publications
Royal Naval Monthly Situation Personnel Report	Royal Navy Monthly Situation Personnel Report
UK Code of Practice for Official Statistics	UK Code of Practice for Official Statistics
UK National Statistics Publications Hub	UK National Statistics Publications Hub
Defence Statistics Website	Defence Statistics Website
Quarterly Manning Report	Quarterly Manning Report