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of Defence



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DEATHS IN THE UK REGULAR ARMED FORCES 2013

INTRODUCTION

1. This annual National Statistical Notice provides summary statistics on deaths whilst in Service in 2013 among the UK regular Armed Forces, and trends over the ten year period, 2004-2013. This information updates previous notices and includes new data for 2013.
2. The information shown has been compiled from data held by Defence Statistics on 6 February 2014.
3. The data are presented for the Naval Service (Royal Navy and Royal Marines), the Army (including the Gurkhas), the Royal Air Force, and on a Tri-Service basis (**Table 1** and **Figure 1**). Non-regular members of the UK Armed Forces who died whilst deployed on operations are included in the data presented.
4. This notice provides information on the major categories of cause of death for the ten year period 2004-2013 (**Tables 5-8** and **Figure 4**). This notice also presents information on comparisons to the UK general population. Previously published data on the number of incidents and cause of death have been updated from the latest information received from coroners. In line with National Statistics protocols, amendments have been annotated by the letter 'r' and explanations provided in the section '**Changes to previously published data**'.
5. For data on suicide, this Notice includes both coroner-confirmed suicides and open verdict deaths in line with the definition used by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) in the publication of National Statistics. These data are published in more detail in the Statistical Notice, "Suicide and Open Verdict deaths in the UK regular Armed Forces 1984-2013", also released 27 March.
6. Details of the data sources and the methods used to collect and analyse the data and additional information are described in the section '**Data Sources & Methods**'.

KEY POINTS

7. In 2013, a total of 86 deaths occurred among the UK regular Armed Forces, of which 13 were serving in the Naval Service, 63 in the Army, and 10 in the RAF.
8. In 2013 the overall mortality rate was 50 per 100,000, whilst in the Naval Service the rate was 42, the Army 65 and the RAF 23 per 100,000 strength.
9. During the ten year period 2004-2013, the overall Armed Forces age and gender standardised mortality rates fluctuated from a high of 107 per 100,000 in 2009 to a low of 50 per 100,000 in 2013, this decrease is due to a reduction in the number of deaths as a result of Hostile Action.
10. The Naval Service mortality rate decreased from 55 per 100,000 in 2012 to 42 per 100,000 in 2013, the lowest rate in the ten year period.
11. The Army mortality rate decreased from 89 per 100,000 in 2012 to 65 per 100,000 in 2013, the lowest rate in the ten year period.
12. The RAF mortality rate decreased from 42 per 100,000 in 2012 to 23 per 100,000 in 2013, the lowest rate in the ten year period.
13. Overall, in 2013 the UK regular Armed Forces were at a significantly lower risk of dying compared to the UK general population (SMR = 53, 95% CI: 43 – 66). (Tested for significance by identifying 95% confidence intervals that do not overlap, see paragraph 12).
14. In 2013, for the regular UK Armed Forces:
 - o Cancer was the single largest cause of death: 19 deaths (22%);
 - o Other accidents was the second largest cause of death: 18 deaths (21%);
 - o Land transport accidents (LTA) accounted for 15 deaths (17%);
 - o and hostile action accounted for 9 deaths (10%);
15. In 2013 the UK Armed Forces were at a 68% significantly decreased risk of dying as a result of a disease related condition compared to the UK general population and were at a 26% significantly decreased risk of dying as a result of external causes of injury and poisoning compared to the UK general population.

DATA SOURCES & METHODS

Data Sources

1. Defence Statistics receive weekly notifications of all regular Armed Forces deaths from the Joint Casualty and Compassionate Cell (formerly the single Service casualty cells). Defence Statistics also receive cause of death information from military medical sources in the single Services. At the end of each calendar year, Defence Statistics cross-reference the medical information it holds against publicly available death certificate information available from the NHS. Regarding suicides and open verdicts, to ensure the highest accuracy of information and that all cases previously recorded as 'awaiting verdict' have been followed up, Defence Statistics carry out an annual audit of MOD data held by the ONS and other authorities.

2. To record information on cause and circumstances of death, Defence Statistics uses the World Health Organisation's International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Health-related Problems 10th revision (ICD-10). In addition, Defence Statistics also record the casualty reporting categories used by the Joint Casualty and Compassionate Cell, used for reporting to the Chain of Command and for notifying the next of kin.

3. Defence Statistics have included the Joint Casualty Compassionate Cell categories of killed in action and died of wounds which together provide information on the number of Service personnel who have died on operations as a result of hostile action. The term 'killed in action' is used when a battle casualty has died outright or as a result of injuries before reaching a medical facility, whilst 'died of wounds' refers to battle casualties who died of wounds or other injuries after reaching a medical treatment facility.

4. In line with the definitions in ICD-10 a land transport accident is defined as any accident involving a device that has been designed for, or is being used at the time for, the conveyance of either goods or people from one place to another on land. The scope of this definition covers incidents that occur on and off the public highways and incidents that involve non-motorised forms of transport. The definition therefore includes all military specific vehicles irrespective of where the accident took place. Road traffic accidents refer only to accidents on a public road.

5. Defence Statistics regularly check all deaths for information on coroner's verdicts (England & Wales) and the results of investigations by the Procurator Fiscal for Scotland where possible. For Northern Ireland, Defence Statistics liaise with the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) who handle the official information on behalf of the Northern Ireland Office. In this notice, all these sources of information are referred to as 'coroner's verdicts'. There is an obligation for all accidental deaths and those resulting from violent action to be referred to these officials. Inquests are usually held within a few months of the death, but occasionally a few years may elapse. Therefore some recent deaths may not have clearly defined cause information. Where this is the case, deaths are included with accidental deaths in **Tables 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8**.

6. Defence Statistics have undertaken a review of the deaths for which a verdict was outstanding (waiting verdict), as a proportion of those reported in this notice occurred a number of years ago and in some instances the deaths occurred overseas. Following investigations with ONS and the Defence Inquest Unit, Defence Statistics have been unable to trace awaiting verdicts prior to 2007 and have deemed it unlikely that the final outcome of these deaths (such as inquests) will be traced. The majority of the waiting verdicts that Defence Statistics were aware of prior to 2007 were for deaths that occurred to Service personnel overseas. As such Defence Statistics have identified that the earliest death still awaiting a coroner's inquest occurred in 2007. This has resulted in nine deaths awaiting verdicts prior to 2007 being finalised as accidental deaths (see para 5).

7. Where trends over time have been presented, an update on previous data published has been provided in the section '**Changes to previously published data**' and annotated with an 'r' to indicate a revision has been made.

Data Coverage

8. The information on deaths presented here are for the regular Armed Forces, including all trained and untrained personnel and non-regulars who died on deployment are also included since they are classified as 'regular' personnel for the duration of their overseas deployment.

9. The data in this notice exclude the Home Service of the Royal Irish Regiment, full time reservists, Territorial Army and Naval Activated Reservists since Defence Statistics do not receive routine notifications of all deaths among reservists and non-regulars, and because reliable denominator data to produce interpretable statistics are not available.

10. The Naval Service includes both the Royal Navy and the Royal Marines.

Methods

11. In order to compare time trends and to take into account the different age and gender structures of their respective single Service strengths, rates have been age and gender standardised. In order to facilitate

comparisons with previously published reports data has been standardised to the 2013 Armed Forces population. For this direct standardisation process, Defence Statistics have estimated the rates that would have been observed if each study population (i.e. each of the single Services) had the same age and gender structure as the standard population (the 2013 Armed Forces population).

12. The 95% confidence interval for a rate provides the range of values within which we expect to find the real value of the indicator under study, with a probability of 95%. If a 95% confidence interval around a rate excludes the comparison value, then a statistical test for the difference between the two values would be significant at the 0.05 level. If two confidence intervals do not overlap, a comparable statistical test would always indicate a statistically significant difference. The small number of deaths in some of the sub-group analysis may result in wide confidence intervals in the corresponding rate or ratios. The impact of this is that the range in which we expect the true value of that statistics to lie is much larger, making it harder to interpret the true underlying trend.

13. The effects of standardisation may, on occasion, lead to unexpected results particularly where small numbers are involved. Standardised rates can also be strongly influenced by variations in the age and gender structure of the deaths concerned, even when totals may remain the same. With the recent changes to the Armed Forces population through redundancy programmes, changes in recruitment patterns and the move to the new employment model and the new structures required to meet Future Force 2020¹, there will be an impact on the trends presented as the Armed Forces population shrinks and the age and gender profile of the serving population changes. As seen in 2012 for the RAF overall rate of deaths, caused by the reduction in recruitment of personnel under 20 years of age.

14. To enable comparisons with deaths in the UK population, Standardised Mortality Ratios (SMR), adjusted for age, gender and year, were calculated. An SMR is defined as the ratio of the number of deaths *observed* in the study population to the number of deaths *expected* if the study population had the same age- and gender-specific rates as the standard population in each specific year multiplied by 100 by convention. An SMR over (or under) 100 indicates a higher (or lower) number of observed deaths than expected (based on standard population rates). An SMR of 100 implies that there is no difference in rates when comparing the UK Regular Armed Forces population with the UK population.

15. The 95% confidence interval for a SMR provides the range of values within which we expect to find the real value of the indicator under study, with a probability of 95%. If the confidence interval for an SMR does not include 100, the result is deemed to be statistically significant. The small number of deaths in some of the sub-group analysis may result in wide confidence intervals in the corresponding rate or ratios. The impact of this is that the range in which we expect the true value of that statistics to lie is much larger, making it harder to interpret the true underlying trend.

16. Deaths data in England and Wales are supplied by and used with the permission of ONS. Deaths in Northern Ireland are supplied by and used with the permission of NISRA and GRO supply deaths in Scotland.

17. In 2006 the ONS changed from reporting the number of deaths that occurred in each year to the number of deaths that were registered in each year. A major driver for this change was that for an annual extract of death occurrences to be acceptably complete, it must be taken some months after the end of the data year to allow for late death registrations. This change has little effect on annual totals but allows the output of more timely mortality data. The UK death figures reported are based on deaths registered in the data year and therefore the year in which a death is registered may not correspond to the year in which the death occurred. Therefore the UK death data used by Defence Statistics up to and including 2005 is based on deaths that occurred in the year. The UK death data used by Defence Statistics for 2007 onwards is based on deaths that were registered in the year. To produce the UK death data for 2006 Defence Statistics have followed advice provided by the ONS and used deaths that both occurred and were registered in the year. Using UK population deaths that both occurred and were registered in year resulted in an increased dominator population for the 2006 SMR calculation which resulted in a lower SMR for 2006 (when compared with the 2006 SMR reported in publications before this change in methodology). Users should note that this revised corrected methodology has brought the 2006 SMR findings in line with the SMR findings for other years.

18. The UK population estimates used to calculate SMRs refer to the usually resident population on 30 June of each year. The usually resident population is defined by the standard United Nations definition for population estimates and includes people who reside in the area for a period of at least 12 months whatever their nationality. ONS mid-year population estimates are based on updates from the most recent census, allowing for births, deaths, net migration and ageing of the population.

19. The UK general population data for 2013 was not available for this report to calculate standard

¹ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/62487/Factsheet5-Future-Force-2020.pdf

mortality ratios (SMRs), therefore, Defence Statistics has used the 2012 data as an estimate for the 2013 figures as there is little year on year variation for the UK figures. Thus, any patterns reported here may be subject to minor fluctuations when the 2013 data becomes available.

Strengths and weaknesses of data presented in this notice

20. A strength of this publication is that considerable validation is undertaken against military and public records to ensure that the information provided is complete and accurate and users of this publication should be confident that the numbers of fatalities presented are accurate. However, some causes of death (including Suicide and Open Verdict deaths) require a Coroner's report before the cause of death can be formally classified and there is often a time lag between when the death occurred and when the Coroner's inquest takes place. This can result in final cause of death information not being timely and complete for recent years and these deaths are reported as 'other accidents' whilst waiting for final cause of death to be determined. This can lead to revisions in the cause of death categories when these verdicts are returned (see paragraph 48 for more information about the extent of these revisions).

21. In addition, deaths certificates for personnel who die overseas are issued by the MOD and if buried overseas, are not always subject to a coroner's inquest to certify cause of death. Users should be aware of this when using cause of death information.

22. The release of the information in this notice is controlled by the statistics code of practice as outlined in the Statistics and Registration Act, 2007. This stipulates that statistics in their final form cannot be released prior to a publication. Thus because it can take many months or even years for a coroner's inquest, Defence Statistics do not update the numbers in between the publication of this notice, to ensure there is no breach of the code of practice. Therefore, any requests for information on deaths among the UK Armed Forces are provided using the underlying dataset used to compile this notice.

23. The information presented in this publication has been structured in such a way to release sensitive deaths information into the public domain in a way that contributes to the MOD accountability to the British public but which doesn't compromise the operational security of UK Armed Forces personnel by revealing detail on individual incidents such as mechanism or type of military vehicle involved; nor that risk inadvertently revealing individual identities and therefore breaching the rights of the families of the deceased personnel (for which the MOD has a residual duty of care). Defence Statistics are regularly asked to release information such as date of death, location of death, deaths within a unit or rank held by the deceased, however, these requests are assessed on a case by case basis to ensure the information presented is aggregated to a level to ensure individual's cannot be identified or that compromises operational security.

24. The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

25. Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods; and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

26. Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

Changes to previously published data

27. In preparing this document, Defence Statistics carried out a review of the data recorded on deaths to Service personnel to ensure the highest accuracy of information and that all cases previously recorded as 'awaiting verdict' have been followed up with the ONS and other authorities. There have been 11 amendments to the classifications given to the cause of death previously reported :

- 2010 - one record has been amended from Cause Unavailable to Diseases of Circulatory System.
- 2012 - eight records have been amended from Other Accidents to Suicide and Open Verdict, one record has been amended from Other Accident to Other Violent and one record has been amended from Cause Unavailable to Diseases of Circulatory System.

28. Standard mortality ratios for 2012 have changed following updates from the ONS for the UK population. The 2012 notice used UK population data based on 2010 returns as estimates for the 2011 and 2012 population.

RESULTS

Overall numbers and rates

29. **Table 1** provides details of the number of deaths, together with the corresponding age and gender standardised rates (per 100,000 strength per year) by Service for the ten year period, 2004-2013.

30. In 2013, there were 86 deaths in the regular Armed Forces. Of these, 13 deaths were in the Naval Service, 63 in the Army and 10 in the RAF.

Table 1: UK regular Armed Forces deaths by Service, Year of occurrence 2004-2013, numbers, age and gender standardised rates¹.

Year	All		Naval Service		Army		RAF	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
2004	170	82	37	92	96	75	37	67
2005	160	82	27	69	93	90	40	72
2006	191	98	33	85	111	94	47	91
2007	204	106	27	74	145	128	32	73
2008	137	74	40	110	79	74	18	37
2009	205	107	23	58	158	133	24	55
2010	187	97	30	78	136	116	21	50
2011	132	69	19	52	98	89	15	33
2012	129	71	19	55	95	89	15	42
2013	86	50	13	42	63	65	10	23

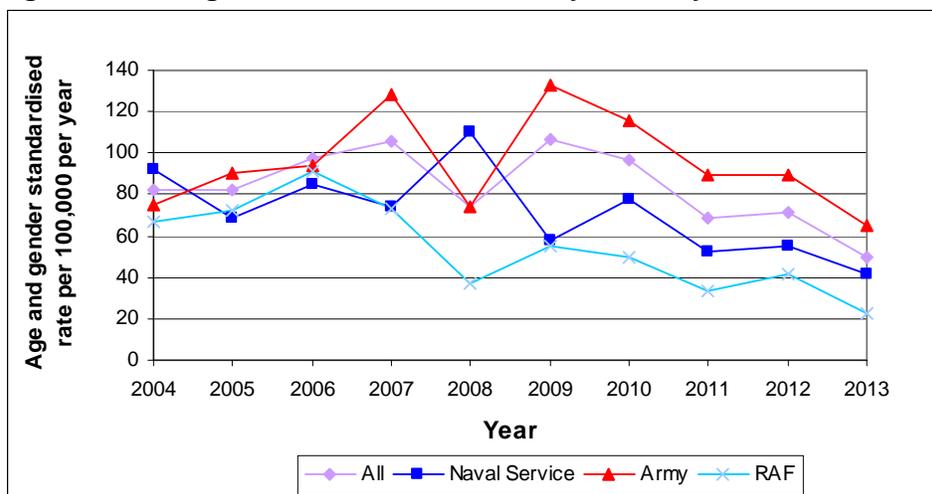
¹Rates have been age and gender standardised to the 2013 Armed Forces population, expressed per 100,000 strength.

31. In 2013 the mortality rate for the UK Armed Forces was 50 per 100,000. This was a 28% decrease on the previous 10 year low rate of 69 per 100,000 seen in 2011.

32. The highest mortality rate in 2013 was observed in the Army (65 per 100,000). This was significantly higher than the mortality rate observed in the RAF (23 per 100,000) but there was no statistically significant difference when compared to the mortality rate observed in the Naval Service (42 per 100,000) (see **Table 4** later in this publication).

33. **Figure 1** illustrates recent changes in overall mortality rates by Service.

Figure 1: UK Regular Armed Forces Mortality rates¹ by Service, 2004-2013.



¹Rates have been age and gender standardised to the 2013 Armed Forces population, expressed per 100,000 strength.

34. In 2004 there was a non-operational helicopter incident involving multiple deaths in the Naval Service. In 2006 there was one incident involving multiple fatalities when two Royal Marines died and another six Royal Marines and one Navy personnel died on operations in separate incidents. Operational fatalities due to hostile action amongst Royal Marines account for the increase in the mortality rate in the Naval Service in 2008 and 2010.

35. The fluctuations in Army fatality rates since 2006 were accounted for by operational

fatalities in Iraq and Afghanistan. In 2013 the number of lives lost as a result of hostile action fell to a low of nine (refer to **Table 7** later in this publication).

36. The increase in the RAF mortality rate from 67 per 100,000 in 2004 to 72 per 100,000 in 2005 was accounted for by a Hercules crash in Iraq which claimed the lives of nine RAF personnel. The similar increase from 72 to 91 per 100,000 in 2006 was accounted for by the loss of 12 RAF personnel in a Nimrod crash in Afghanistan in September 2006.

37. As multiple deaths occurred in the same incident on several occasions during the latest ten year period (e.g. air transport incidents), **Table 2** provides details of the number of separate incidents and the number of individual deaths, by year of occurrence, for all accidental and violent deaths excluding suicides.

Table 2: UK Regular Armed Forces Accidental and Violent deaths (excluding Suicides) by Service, 2004-2013, deaths and incidents, numbers.

Year	All		Naval Service		Army		RAF	
	Number	Incidents*	Number	Incidents	Number	Incidents	Number	Incidents
2004	106	91	16	13	73	62	17	16
2005	93	78	13	13	62	56	18	10
2006	138	107	23	21	87	76	28	16
2007	154	131	15	14	123	107	16	13
2008	88	74	27	22	57	50	4	3
2009	150	120	10	10	128	100	12	11
2010	150	137	22	22	118	105	10	10
2011	86	78	11	10	68	62	7	7
2012	r 74	r 59	r 7	r 7	r 60	r 50	r 7	r 5
2013	44	41	4	4	35	32	5	3

*In some instances, personnel from more than one Service have been killed in the same incident, therefore, the data for single Services may not add up to the total provided in the 'All incidents' column.

'r' indicates a change in previously published data (see paragraph 27).

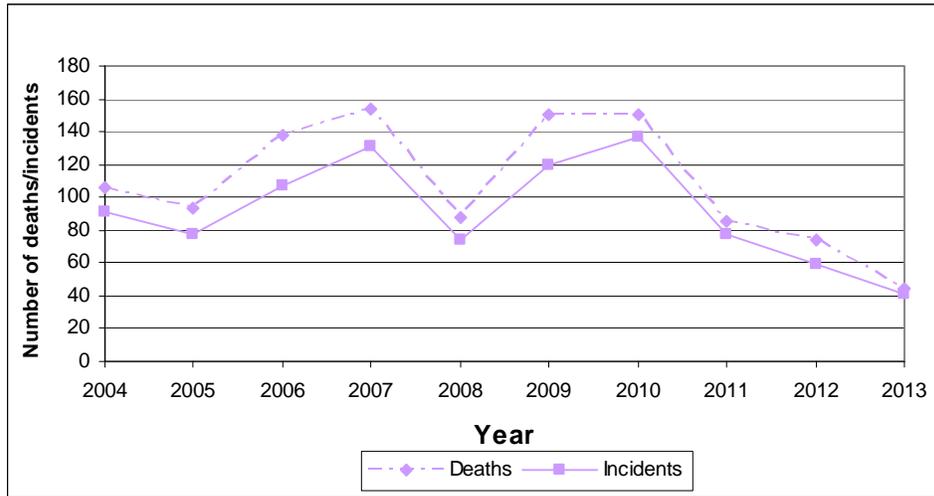
38. **Table 2** shows annual variations in the number of fatal incidents during the ten year period, 2004-2013 by Service. In 2013, there were 41 fatal incidents, representing a 31% decrease from 59 incidents in 2012.

39. In 2013 of the 41 fatal incidents seven occurred on operations (accounting for nine deaths). In comparison, there were 28 fatal incidents on operations (accounting for 41 deaths) in 2012.

40. In 2013, there were 34 non-operational fatal incidents (accounting for 35 deaths) compared to 31 non-operational fatal incidents (accounting for 33 deaths) in 2012.

41. These findings are illustrated in **Figure 2**, which shows both the annual changes in the number of deaths and the incidents for the total Armed Forces population.

Figure 2: UK regular Armed Forces deaths and fatal incidents, 2004-2013, numbers.



42. Since 2004 there have been 10 major incidents (where four or more deaths occurred) involving multiple deaths that occurred in the Middle East accounting for the deaths of 61 individuals. In the same time period, there were two other major incidents involving the deaths of 10 Service personnel that were not linked to the deployment in the Middle East. Five of these twelve major incidents involved aircraft.

Comparisons with the UK general population

43. In order to compare deaths among the UK regular Armed Forces with those among the general UK population, Standardised Mortality Ratios (SMR) have been calculated for each Service overall. The year on year changes in the UK general population have been taken into account in these calculations. An SMR below, equal to, or above 100 indicates that the rate for the Armed Forces or the Service is respectively below, equal to, or higher than the rate in the general UK population (see ‘Data Sources & Methods’ on page 2 for further clarification). If the 95% confidence interval does not encompass 100, then this difference is statistically significant. The width of the confidence interval gives us some idea about how uncertain we are about the reported statistic. The small numbers in some of the sub-group analysis presented in this notice may result in wide confidence intervals in the corresponding rate or ratios. The impact of this is that the range in which we expect the true value of that statistic to lie is large and there is a risk of misinterpreting a chance occurrence for a true finding (see paragraphs 12 and 15).

Table 3: UK Regular Armed Forces deaths by Service, 2004-2013¹, numbers, Standardised Mortality Ratios² (SMR) (95% confidence intervals (CI)).

Cause	All		Naval Service		Army		RAF	
	Number	SMR (95% CI)	Number	SMR (95% CI)	Number	SMR (95% CI)	Number	SMR (95% CI)
2004	170	76 (65-88)	37	82 (59-113)	96	86 (70-105)	37	55 (40-76)
2005	160	75 (64-88)	27	62 (41-91)	93	88 (71-107)	40	62 (46-85)
2006	191	87 (76-101)	33	73 (52-103)	111	100 (83-120)	47	75 (57-100)
2007	204	96 (84-110)	27	61 (40-89)	145	132 (112-155)	32	55 (39-78)
2008	137	65 (55-76)	40	89 (65-122)	79	72 (58-90)	18	32 (19-50)
2009	205	99 (86-113)	23	53 (33-79)	158	146 (125-170)	24	43 (28-64)
2010	187	94 (81-108)	30	71 (50-102)	136	131 (111-155)	21	39 (24-60)
2011	132	r 71 (60-84)	19	48 (29-76)	98	100 (82-122)	15	30 (17-50)
2012	129	r 75 (63-90)	19	r 53 r (32-82)	95	r 105 (86-128)	15	r 34 (19-56)
2013	86	53 (43-66)	13	38 (20-64)	63	74 (57-94)	10	24 (12-45)

¹ Change in how UK deaths collated, prior to 2006 includes deaths occurred in year, post 2006 includes deaths registered in year (see paragraph 66).

² Standardised mortality ratios have been age and gender standardised.

'r' indicates a change in previously published data (see paragraph 28).

44. In 2013, the UK regular Armed Forces were at a statistically significantly lower risk of dying than the UK general population (SMR = 53, 95% CI: 43-66) (see **Table 3**).

45. For the years 2004, 2006, 2008 and 2010 the Naval Service was not significantly different to the UK general population. Operational incidents account for the higher SMR for the Naval Service for these years with the exception of 2004 which saw a rise in deaths as a result of disease related conditions. For all other years the Naval Service SMR was statistically significantly lower than the UK population. In 2013 there was a 62% statistically significant decreased risk of dying in the Naval Service compared to the UK population (SMR = 38, 95% CI:20-64).

46. In 2007, 2009 and 2010, the Army was at a significantly increased risk of dying compared to the UK population, this can be accounted for by the increase in the number of operational deaths in Iraq and Afghanistan. For 2004, 2005, 2006, 2011 and 2012 the risk of dying for the Army was the same as the UK population. In 2013, the Army had a 26% statistically significant lower risk of dying than the UK general population (SMR = 74, 95% CI:57-94). This is the first time since 2008 that the Army have been at a statistically significant lower risk of dying than the UK general population.

47. In 2006, the risk of dying for the RAF was the same as the UK population. For all other years, the RAF annual SMR was statistically significantly lower than the UK general population. In 2013 there was a 76% statistically significant decreased risk of dying in the RAF compared to the UK population. (SMR = 24, 95% CI:12-45).

Cause of death information for 2013

48. **Table 4** provides a breakdown of the main cause of death for the UK regular Armed Forces as a whole and for each of the single Services.

49. The information provided in the following tables includes all deaths that occurred in-Service both on and off duty. It is not possible from the information presented in this National Statistic notice to identify those deaths that were work related that may or may not have been the result of health and safety failures.

50. One non-regular member of the UK Armed Forces, a Reservist, died whilst deployed on operations during 2013 as a result of hostile action. This death is included in the figures presented since reservists are classified as 'regular' personnel for the duration of their overseas deployment.

Table 4: UK regular Armed Forces deaths by Cause of death and Service, 2013, numbers, rates¹ and SMR^{2,3,4}.

Cause	All			Naval Service			Army			RAF		
	Number	Rate (95% CI)	SMR (95% CI)	Number	Rate (95% CI)	SMR (95% CI)	Number	Rate (95% CI)	SMR (95% CI)	Number	Rate (95% CI)	SMR (95% CI)
All	86	50 (41-62)	53 (43-66)	13	42 (22-72)	38 (20-64)	63	65 (51-83)	74 (57-94)	10	23 (11-41)	24 (12-45)
Disease-related conditions	29	17 (11-24)	32 (21-45)	6	18 (6-39)	29 (11-64)	18	20 (12-31)	40 (24-63)	5	9 (3-21)	19 (6-45)
Cancers	19	11 (7-17)	67 (40-104)	4	11 (3-29)	63 (17-162)	10	11 (5-19)	73 (35-135)	5	9 (3-21)	59 (19-138)
Diseases of the circulatory system	4	2 (1-6)	16 (4-41)	0	-	-	4	4 (1-11)	33 (9-85)	0	-	-
Other	6	4 (1-8)	16 (6-34)	2	6 (1-22)	24 (3-86)	4	5 (1-12)	20 (6-52)	0	-	-
External causes of injury and poisoning	49	29 (22-38)	74 (56-98)	6	21 (8-46)	45 (16-97)	38	38 (28-52)	98 (72-135)	5	14 (4-32)	35 (11-81)
Deaths due to accidents	33	19 (14-27)	98 (70-138)	3	9 (2-25)	44 (9-129)	25	25 (16-36)	127 (82-187)	5	14 (4-32)	69 (23-162)
Land Transport Accidents	15	9 (5-14)	158 (88-261)	1	3 (0-17)	55 (1-306)	12	11 (6-19)	205 (106-358)	2	5 (1-19)	110 (13-398)
Other	18	11 (6-17)	74 (44-118)	2	6 (1-20)	40 (5-146)	13	14 (7-23)	94 (50-161)	3	8 (2-25)	56 (11-163)
Deaths due to violence⁴	11	6 (3-11)	-	1	6 (0-35)	-	10	9 (5-17)	-	0	-	-
Hostile Action ³	9	5 (2-10)	-	0	-	-	9	8 (4-16)	-	0	-	-
Other	2	1 (0-4)	99 (12-358)	1	6 (0-35)	247 (6-1375)	1	1 (0-5)	84 (2-468)	0	-	-
Suicide and Open verdicts	5	3 (1-7)	16 (5-38)	2	6 (1-22)	32 (4-116)	3	4 (1-11)	17 (4-50)	0	-	-
Cause not currently available	8	5 (2-9)	265 (114-521)	1	3 (0-17)	157 (4-876)	7	7 (3-15)	425 (171-876)	0	-	-

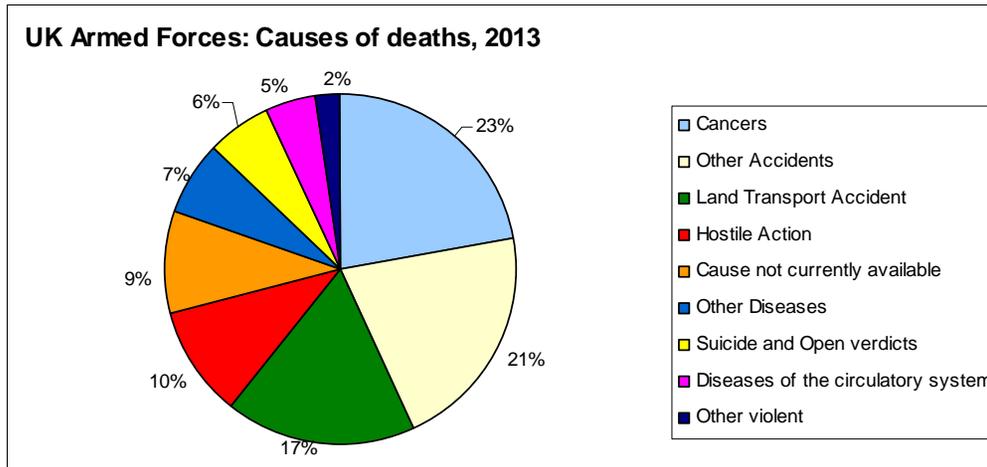
¹ Rates have been standardised to the 2013 Armed Forces population, expressed per 100,000 strength. Individual rates may not add up to totals due to rounding.

² Standardised mortality ratios have been age and gender standardised.

³ No comparisons between members of the UK Armed Forces and members of the UK general population for deaths due to hostile action were made as there is no equivalent cause of death in the UK population.

⁴ An overall SMR for deaths due to violence has not been calculated due to lack of comparable UK population data.

Figure 3: UK regular Armed Forces: Cause of death, 2013.



*Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Deaths due to disease

51. In 2013, 29 UK Armed Forces deaths (34%) were caused by disease-related conditions, of which 19 were due to cancers, four due to circulatory system disorders and six due to other causes (**Table 4** and **Figure 3**).

52. In 2013, the Tri-Service rate of deaths due to disease related conditions was 17 per 100,000 (95% CI:11-24). The Army and the Naval Service had the highest rate of deaths due to cancer at 11 per 100,000 in 2013. There was no significant difference between the rates of each of the three services.

53. In 2013, the UK Armed Forces were at a 68% statistically significant decreased risk of dying of a disease related condition compared to members of the UK general population (SMR = 32, 95% CI:21-45).

Deaths due to external causes of injury and poisoning

54. In 2013, 49 deaths (57%) were due to external causes of injury and poisoning, a rate of 29 per 100,000 (95% CI: 22-38) (**Table 4** and **Figure 3**).

55. In 2013 the UK Armed Forces were at a 26% statistically significant decreased risk of dying as a result of external cause of injury and poisoning compared to the UK general population (SMR = 74, 95% CI: 56-98). This is the first time in the 10 year period 2004-2013 that the UK Armed Forces have had a statistically significant lower risk of dying as a result of external cause of injury and poisoning. This is due to the decrease in the number of Hostile Action deaths in 2013 and the continuing decline in Land Transport Accident deaths throughout the period.

56. If the nine hostile action deaths are excluded from the SMR calculation for deaths due to external causes of injury and poisoning, the UK Armed Forces were at a 40% statistically significant decreased risk of dying as a result of external causes of injury and poisoning compared to the UK population (SMR=60, 95% CI:44-82).

Deaths due to accidents

57. In 2013, 33 deaths (38%) were caused by accidents (**Table 4** and **Figure 3**).

58. Land Transport Accidents accounted for 15 deaths (17% of all deaths) in the Armed Forces, the same number of deaths as 2012.

59. The highest mortality rate for Land Transport Accidents was observed among the Army (11 per 100,000, 95% CI: 6-19). This was not significantly higher than the mortality rate observed among either the Naval Service (3 per 100,000, 95% CI: 0-17) or the RAF (5 per 100,000, 95% CI: 1-19).

60. In 2013, the UK Armed Forces were not at a statistically significant different risk of dying as a result of a Land Transport Accident compared to the UK general population (SMR = 158, 95% CI:88-261).

61. All of the 15 Land Transport Accident deaths reported in **Table 4** were the result of road traffic accidents, occurring on a public road.

62. Other accidents resulted in 18 deaths (21%) in the Armed Forces in 2013. This was comparable with 2012 (17 deaths) but may be subject to change when the result of three deaths in 2013 which are awaiting coroner's verdict are returned (see paragraph 5).

Deaths due to violence

63. In 2013, 11 deaths (13%) were due to violent causes. Of these, nine were as a result of hostile action (**Table 4** and **Figure 3**).

64. Of the 11 deaths, one was in the Naval Service and 10 were in the Army. There were no RAF deaths due to violence in 2013 (**Table 4** and **Figure 3**).

65. The UK Armed Forces mortality rate in 2013 for deaths due to hostile action was 5 per 100,000 (**Table 4**). All hostile action deaths were among Army personnel at a rate of 8 per 100,000.

66. No comparisons were made between members of the UK Armed Forces and members of the UK general population for deaths due to hostile action as there is no equivalent cause of death in the UK population.

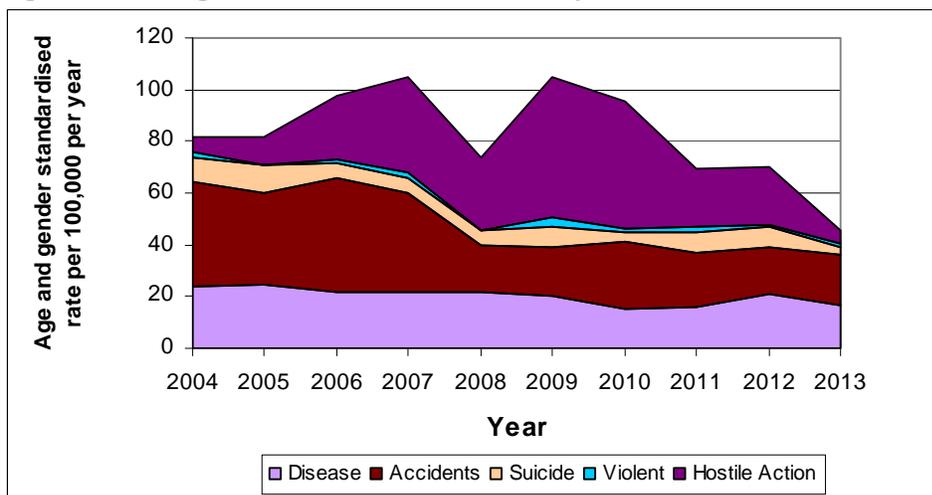
Deaths given either suicide or open verdicts

67. As at 6 February 2014 there were five coroner-confirmed suicides for deaths in 2013 at a rate of 3 per 100,000 (**Table 4**). There are 12 deaths which occurred since 2007 (of which three were in 2013) awaiting a coroner's inquest and it is therefore possible that the suicide data presented here may be revised when the results of any outstanding inquests are known. These deaths are included in the 'Accidents' classification until a verdict is given (see paragraph 5).

Time trends: Cause of death

68. Deaths as a result of accidents have shown a downward trend since 2006, from a rate of 44 per 100,000 in 2006 to 19 per 100,000 in 2013, largely as a result of a fall in Land Transport Accident deaths throughout the ten year period. Whilst deaths as a result of hostile action accounted for the single largest cause of death each year between 2007 and 2012, the rate has fluctuated year on year as a result of operational tempo (**Table 5** and **Figure 4**).

Figure 4: UK regular Armed Forces deaths by cause, 2004-2013, rates¹.



¹Rates have been age and gender standardised to the 2013 Armed Forces population, expressed per 100,000 strength.

69. **Tables 5-8** provide a breakdown of the main causes of death for the UK Armed Forces from 2004-2013 by Service. Information is presented as numbers, rates and standardised mortality ratios (SMR).

70. In comparison to the start of the ten year period (2004) there have been changes in the largest cause of death among UK Armed Forces personnel. In 2013, Cancer was the single largest cause of death compared to 2004 when Land Transport Accidents was the single largest cause of death. Throughout the period 2004-2013 there has been a fall in the rate of Land Transport Accidents deaths from 27 per 100,000 in 2004 to 9 per 100,000 in 2013. However the rate of Cancer deaths over this period has remained stable with 13 per 100,000 in 2004 compared to 11 per 100,000 in 2013. This suggests the change in the largest cause of death since the start of the ten year period was due to a decrease in the number of Land Transport Accident deaths rather than an increase in the number of Cancer deaths. The statistical notice 'Annual UK regular Armed Forces Land Transport Accident Deaths 2009-2013' provides a more detailed analysis of recent trends and populations at risk of Land Transport Accident deaths.

Standardised mortality ratios (SMR)

71. In 2012 (latest UK population data available) the three leading causes of death among the UK

population were disease-related conditions; Cancers, Circulatory disease and Digestive disease. In comparison, the three leading causes of death among the UK regular Armed Forces in 2013 consisted of one disease-related condition (Cancers) and two accident related causes (Other Accidents and Land Transport Accidents).

72. Throughout the last ten years, the UK regular Armed Forces have been at a significantly decreased risk of dying as a result of disease related conditions compared to the UK general population (**Table 5**).

73. The low SMR for UK regular Armed Forces deaths as a result of a disease related condition may partially be explained by the 'healthy worker effect' often observed in occupational studies. This is deemed to occur when 'workers' are found to have lower mortality or other adverse health outcome rates than the general population due to the fact that certain groups of people are excluded from employment, particularly those who are ill or who have disabilities. This is to be expected in studies of Armed Forces mortality, as this population are generally a highly selected group of individuals who are likely to have higher than usual levels of fitness and possibly lower levels of ill-health.

74. For the period 2004 to 2007 and 2010 the UK Armed Forces were at a significantly increased risk of dying as a result of accidents compared to the UK general population. For all other years there was no significant difference in deaths due to accidents between members of the UK Armed Forces and the UK general population (2013: SMR = 98, 95% CI:70-138). A number of other factors specific to Service life both on and off duty may play a role in the increased risk of UK Armed Forces dying as a result of an accident compared to the UK population.

75. For the periods 2004 to 2007 and 2009 to 2011, the UK regular Armed Forces have been at a significantly increased risk of dying as a result of Land Transport Accidents compared to the UK general population. However for the years 2008, 2012 and 2013 there was no significant difference in deaths due to Land Transport Accidents between members of the UK Armed Forces and the UK general population (2013 : SMR = 158, 95% CI: 88-261).

76. With the exception of 2008 (when there were no violent related deaths in the UK Armed Forces) and 2009 (where there were seven deaths, six incidents and there was a significantly increased risk of dying as a result of violence related deaths), the UK Armed Forces showed no significant difference with the UK general population for the occurrence of deaths related to violence, excluding hostile action deaths. The number of deaths due to violence related causes remains small throughout the period 2004-2013 and therefore the calculated SMR are subject to variation, making it difficult to interpret underlying trends.

77. Between 2004 and 2013, the UK Armed Forces have been at a 83% significantly decreased risk of dying as a result of a suicide compared to the UK general population (2013: SMR = 16, 95% CI: 5-38). Please note that this comparison includes deaths among males and females. The Statistical Notice "Suicide and Open Verdict deaths in the UK Armed Forces" provides comparisons to the UK general population for males only.

Table 5: Deaths in the UK regular Armed Forces: Causes, 2004-2013, numbers, rates¹ and standardised mortality ratios^{2,3,4,5}.

Cause	Numbers													Rates													SMR												
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013									
All	170	160	191	204	137	205	187	132	129	86	82	82	98	106	74	107	97	69	71	50	76	75	87	96	65	99	94	71	75	53									
Disease-related conditions	43	44	40	38	38	36	r 27	31	r 38	29	24	25	22	21	22	20	15	16	21	17	32	33	31	30	30	29	r 22	29	r 39	32									
Cancers	21	23	25	27	23	19	16	19	27	19	13	13	14	16	13	10	9	10	15	11	58	67	72	81	70	58	48	59	r 90	67									
Diseases of the circulatory system	18	16	14	7	10	9	r 8	9	r 6	4	9	9	7	3	6	5	4	5	3	2	50	45	41	22	30	28	r 25	31	r 22	16									
Other	4	5	1	4	5	8	3	3	5	6	2	3	0	2	3	5	1	1	3	4	6	8	2	7	8	13	5	6	r 12	16									
External causes of injury and poisoning	126	115	150	164	98	165	157	101	89	49	58	57	76	84	52	85	81	53	49	29	148	148	178	203	122	208	219	r 135	r 126	74									
Deaths due to accidents	89	71	88	77	36	36	52	39	r 32	33	40	35	44	39	18	19	27	20	18	19	213	179	202	171	83	83	138	r 101	r 89	98									
Land Transport Accidents	61	53	61	51	26	28	36	26	15	15	27	25	30	26	13	14	18	13	8	9	242	225	239	226	135	162	258	225	r 148	158									
Other	28	18	27	26	10	8	16	13	r 17	18	13	10	14	13	5	5	8	7	9	11	170	112	150	116	41	31	68	r 48	r 66	74									
Deaths due to violence⁴	17	22	50	77	52	114	98	47	r 42	11	8	11	26	40	28	58	51	25	23	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-									
Hostile Action ³	11	21	48	73	52	107	95	43	40	9	5	10	25	37	28	54	49	23	22	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-									
Other	6	1	2	4	0	7	3	4	r 2	2	3	<1	1	2	-	3	1	2	1	1	139	30	52	118	-	274	108	r 151	r 93	99									
Suicide and Open verdicts	20	22	12	10	10	15	7	15	r 15	5	9	10	-	5	6	8	3	8	8	3	52	63	33	31	30	45	22	r 45	r 46	16									
Cause not currently available	1	1	1	2	1	4	r 3	0	r 2	8	<1	1	1	1	1	2	2	-	1	5	26	28	24	48	27	105	r 75	r 62	265										

¹Rates have been age and gender standardised to the 2013 Armed Forces population, expressed per 100,000 strength. Individual rates may not add up to totals due to rounding.

²Standardised mortality ratios have been age and gender standardised.

³No comparisons between members of the UK Armed Forces and members of the UK general population for deaths due to hostile action were made as there is no equivalent cause of death in the UK population.

⁴An overall SMR for deaths due to violence has not been calculated due to lack of comparable UK population data.

⁵Change in how UK deaths collated, prior to 2006 includes deaths occurred in year, post 2006 includes deaths registered in year.

'r' indicates a change in previously published data (see paragraphs 27 and 28).

Table 6: Deaths in the Naval Service: Causes, 2004-2013, numbers, rates¹ and standardised mortality ratios^{2,3,4,5}.

Cause	Numbers													Rates													SMR												
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013									
All	37	27	33	27	40	23	30	19	19	13	92	69	85	74	110	58	78	52	55	42	82	62	73	61	89	53	71	48	r 53	38									
Disease-related conditions	19	9	10	8	12	10	4	4	9	6	48	24	27	21	32	24	11	11	25	18	68	33	36	29	43	37	15	17	r 42	29									
Cancers	9	4	5	5	6	5	2	2	7	4	25	11	12	12	14	12	6	5	20	11	123	57	69	71	85	71	28	29	r 107	63									
Diseases of the circulatory system	8	4	5	2	4	3	1	2	1	0	17	11	16	4	12	7	3	6	3	-	106	53	68	28	54	43	14	31	r 17	-									
Other	2	1	0	1	2	2	1	0	1	2	5	2	-	4	5	4	3	-	2	6	16	8	-	8	15	16	8	-	r 11	24									
External causes of injury and poisoning	18	18	23	19	27	13	26	15	9	6	44	44	58	53	76	34	67	42	27	21	109	118	137	117	166	82	180	99	r 64	45									
Deaths due to accidents	15	12	15	10	11	2	7	2	r 5	3	37	31	38	28	29	18	6	15	-	-	187	156	175	112	127	23	93	26	r 70	44									
Land Transport Accidents	10	7	10	6	8	2	3	2	2	1	22	16	24	16	21	4	8	6	6	3	210	156	204	137	213	60	110	r 90	r 105	55									
Other	5	5	5	4	3	0	4	0	r 3	2	14	16	14	12	8	-	10	-	9	6	152	156	137	88	61	-	84	-	r 58	40									
Deaths due to violence⁴	1	1	8	5	16	8	15	9	2	1	2	2	20	14	46	23	39	25	9	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-									
Hostile Action ³	0	0	8	5	16	7	15	8	2	0	-	-	20	14	46	20	39	23	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-									
Other	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	2	2	-	-	-	3	-	2	-	6	121	152	-	-	-	198	-	r 192	-	247									
Suicide and Open verdicts	2	5	0	4	0	3	4	4	r 2	2	5	11	-	10	-	7	9	11	6	6	26	72	-	60	-	44	62	r 59	r 31	32									
Cause not currently available	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	3	3	-	-	-	-	127	-	-	-	r 150	157									

¹Rates have been age and gender standardised to the 2013 Armed Forces population, expressed per 100,000 strength. Individual rates may not add up to totals due to rounding.

²Standardised mortality ratios have been age and gender standardised.

³No comparisons between members of the UK Armed Forces and members of the UK general population for deaths due to hostile action were made as there is no equivalent cause of death in the UK population.

⁴An overall SMR for deaths due to violence has not been calculated due to lack of comparable UK population data.

⁵Change in how UK deaths collated, prior to 2006 includes deaths occurred in year, post 2006 includes deaths registered in year.

'r' indicates a change in previously published data (see paragraphs 27 and 28).

Table 7: Deaths in the Army: Causes, 2004-2013, numbers, rates¹ and standardised mortality ratios^{2,3,4,5}

Cause	Numbers													Rates													SMR												
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013									
All	96	93	111	145	79	158	136	98	95	63	75	90	94	128	74	133	116	89	89	65	86	88	100	132	72	146	131	100	105	74									
Disease-related conditions	7	18	13	14	14	17	13	20	r 25	18	4	24	14	17	16	18	14	21	28	20	11	29	21	23	23	28	21	38	r 52	40									
Cancers	2	7	9	9	8	10	8	11	19	10	1	10	10	12	10	10	9	12	21	11	12	46	56	58	52	65	51	r 72	r 132	73									
Diseases of the circulatory system	4	8	4	4	4	4	4	6	r 3	4	2	10	4	4	5	5	4	6	4	4	25	52	26	27	26	27	26	43	r 23	33									
Other	1	3	0	1	2	3	1	3	3	4	1	4	-	1	2	3	1	3	3	5	3	10	-	3	6	10	3	13	r 14	20									
External causes of injury and poisoning	89	75	97	129	65	138	120	78	69	38	70	67	79	109	57	112	99	68	61	38	189	173	204	278	142	304	291	181	r 169	98									
Deaths due to accidents	57	50	48	56	24	23	36	31	r 22	25	44	44	39	47	20	19	30	27	19	25	242	221	191	213	95	91	165	r 139	r 105	127									
Land Transport Accidents	42	38	40	38	17	19	28	22	12	12	33	32	32	31	14	15	23	20	10	11	284	272	261	277	146	181	334	316	r 192	205									
Other	15	12	8	18	7	4	8	9	10	13	12	13	6	16	6	5	7	7	9	14	170	139	81	143	51	27	59	58	r 68	94									
Deaths due to violence⁴	16	12	39	67	33	105	82	37	r 38	10	13	10	33	56	30	84	67	32	33	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-									
Hostile Action ³	11	12	38	63	33	99	79	34	36	9	9	10	32	52	30	80	65	29	32	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-									
Other	5	0	1	4	0	6	3	3	r 2	1	4	-	1	4	-	5	2	2	1	1	203	-	45	202	-	400	183	r 193	r 159	84									
Suicide and Open verdicts	16	13	10	6	8	10	2	10	r 9	3	13	12	-	6	7	8	2	9	8	4	76	69	49	33	43	53	11	52	r 48	17									
Cause not currently available	0	0	1	2	0	3	3	0	r 1	7	-	-	1	1	-	3	3	-	1	7	-	-	47	90	-	147	140	-	r 57	425									

¹Rates have been age and gender standardised to the 2013 Armed Forces population, expressed per 100,000 strength. Individual rates may not add up to totals due to rounding.

²Standardised mortality ratios have been age and gender standardised.

³No comparisons between members of the UK Armed Forces and members of the UK general population for deaths due to hostile action were made as there is no equivalent cause of death in the UK population.

⁴An overall SMR for deaths due to violence has not been calculated due to lack of comparable UK population data.

⁵Change in how UK deaths collated, prior to 2006 includes deaths occurred in year, post 2006 includes deaths registered in year.

'r' indicates a change in previously published data (see paragraphs 27 and 28).

Table 8: Deaths in the RAF: Causes, 2004-2013, numbers, rates¹ and standardised mortality ratios^{2,3,4,5}

Cause	Numbers													Rates													SMR												
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013									
All	37	40	47	32	18	24	21	15	15	10	67	72	91	73	37	55	50	33	42	23	55	62	75	55	32	43	39	30	r 34	24									
Disease-related conditions	17	17	17	16	12	9	r 10	7	4	5	28	28	29	30	23	16	21	11	6	9	38	39	41	41	32	25	r 28	22	r 14	19									
Cancers	10	12	11	13	9	4	6	6	1	5	18	19	19	26	19	6	13	10	2	9	79	99	95	121	87	39	58	61	11	59									
Diseases of the circulatory system	6	4	5	1	2	2	r 3	1	2	0	9	7	8	1	3	4	6	1	3	-	46	32	43	9	19	20	r 30	11	r 25	-									
Other	1	1	1	2	1	3	1	0	1	0	2	2	1	2	1	6	3	-	2	-	5	5	6	12	6	18	6	-	r 9	-									
External causes of injury and poisoning	19	22	30	16	6	14	11	8	11	5	37	42	61	43	14	37	29	22	36	14	89	114	150	87	33	79	68	47	r 71	35									
Deaths due to accidents	17	9	25	11	1	11	9	6	r 5	5	33	21	52	28	-	29	24	16	21	14	168	95	253	112	11	116	109	r 70	r 64	69									
Land Transport Accidents	9	8	11	7	1	7	5	2	1	2	18	19	25	18	1	19	14	5	9	5	158	154	206	155	26	202	176	85	r 51	110									
Other	8	1	14	4	0	4	4	4	r 4	3	15	2	27	10	-	10	9	10	12	8	181	23	307	75	-	66	74	r 64	r 69	56									
Deaths due to violence⁴	0	9	3	5	3	1	1	1	2	0	-	14	5	15	7	3	3	3	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-									
Hostile Action ³	0	9	2	5	3	1	1	1	2	0	-	14	3	15	7	3	3	3	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-									
Other	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	116	-	-	-	-	-	-	-									
Suicide and Open verdicts	2	4	2	0	2	2	1	1	r 4	0	3	7	4	-	6	5	2	3	9	-	20	44	22	-	25	26	14	13	r 55	-									
Cause not currently available	1	1	0	0	0	1	r 0	0	0	0	2	1	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	92	97	-	-	-	102	r -	-	-	-									

¹Rates have been age and gender standardised to the 2013 Armed Forces population, expressed per 100,000 strength. Individual rates may not add up to totals due to rounding.

²Standardised mortality ratios have been age and gender standardised.

³No comparisons between members of the UK Armed Forces and members of the UK general population for deaths due to hostile action were made as there is no equivalent cause of death in the UK population.

⁴An overall SMR for deaths due to violence has not been calculated due to lack of comparable UK population data.

⁵Change in how UK deaths collated, prior to 2006 includes deaths occurred in year, post 2006 includes deaths registered in year.

'r' indicates a change in previously published data (see paragraphs 27 and 28).