



# Ministry of Defence

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Ministry of Defence  
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[REDACTED]  
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9 April 2014

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 10 March 2014 where you requested the following information:

*'Could you please supply with numbers of Royal Navy, Army and RAF personnel who are unable to deploy on operations because they have been medically down graded.'*

*'I would like the numbers of personnel in each service who are currently medically down graded and how many have been downgraded over the last three years.'*

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 the information in scope of your request is held, please find the information you requested below.

Service personnel with medical conditions or fitness issues which affect their ability to perform their duties will generally be referred to a medical board for a medical examination and review of their medical grading. The patient may be downgraded, to allow for treatment, recovery and rehabilitation. Medically downgraded personnel are those personnel who have been assessed by a medical board and subsequently awarded a Medical Deployability Standard (MDS) of either Medically Limited Deployable (MLD) or Medically Non Deployable (MND).

Medically Limited Deployable (MLD) personnel are medically fit for duty with minor employment limitations. MLD personnel may have a medical condition or functional limitation that prevents the meeting of all Medically Fully Deployable (MFD) requirements. MLD personnel can undertake full employment with possible limitations on their deployability. Their condition must not be vulnerable to exacerbation due to deployment or impose a constant demand on medical service on exercise or deployment.

Medically Non Deployable (MND) personnel are medically fit for duty with major employment limitations or are medically unfit for Service. MND personnel have a medical condition or functional limitation that prevents the meeting of all MLD requirements. MND personnel are not fit to deploy on Operations but may be deployable on UK based exercises and should be able to work effectively for at

least 32.5 hours per week. They may require continued medical care, long term medication and access to secondary care facilities

MND personnel become medically unfit for Service if they cannot perform their primary employment with reasonable adaptation, are unable to attend work for 32.5 hours per week, if they are unable to deploy on local exercises or if employment would exacerbate their condition and affect their health.

The numbers presented for the period 1 March 2011- 1 February 2014 represent the number of personnel downgraded at least once in this time period. It does not mean that these personnel were downgraded throughout this whole time period. The length of time downgraded can be short term or long term dependent on the individuals' medical condition(s). The numbers presented as at 1 February 2014 provide the number downgraded at a snapshot in time.

As at 1 February 2014, there were a total of **13,880** UK Armed Forces personnel full time trained and serving against requirement who were graded MLD, of which:

- **1,730** were Naval Service personnel
- **10,710** were Army personnel
- **1,430** were RAF personnel

As at 1 February 2014, there were a total of **14,050** UK Armed Forces personnel full time trained and serving against requirement who were graded MND, of which:

- **2,750** were Naval Service personnel
- **7,750** were Army personnel
- **3,560** were RAF personnel

For the period 1 March 2011 - 1 February 2014, a total of **75,110** UK Armed Forces personnel full time trained and serving against requirement were medically downgraded at least once, of which:

- **13,910** were Naval Service personnel
- **46,470** were Army personnel
- **14,720** were RAF personnel

If personnel are graded both MLD and MND during the period 1 March 2011 - 1 February 2014, they will be counted once in both populations.

For the period 1 March 2011 - 1 February 2014, a total of **41,680** UK Armed Forces personnel full time trained and serving against requirement were graded MLD at least once, of which:

- **5,330** were Naval Service personnel
- **31,440** were Army personnel
- **4,910** were RAF personnel

For the period 1 March 2011 - 1 February 2014, a total of **52,050** UK Armed Forces personnel full time trained and serving against requirement were graded MND at least once, of which:

- **11,640** were Naval Service personnel
- **27,840** were Army personnel
- **12,570** were RAF personnel

Under section 16 of the Act (Advice and Assistance), you may find it useful to note the following:

Medical Boards do not make decisions on attributability to Service. These decisions are made by administrators of the MOD pension and compensation schemes at Defence Business Services.

As part of the Joint Medical Employment Standard (JMES), when a Medical Board awards an MDS of Medically Limited Deployable or Medically Non Deployable, a decision is made as to whether this is temporary or permanent. A permanent marker does not imply that the JMES can never change - it is intended to assist personnel staff involved with employment decisions by distinguishing the longer term health problems from the relative short term ones. Please note of those personnel made MLD or MND over the last three years, many will have since been upgraded to full fitness.

Monthly snapshots were used containing the MDS as at the first of each month. Personnel included in this report comprise those who are MLD or MND in at least one of the monthly snapshots during the period 1 March 2011 - 1 February 2014.

UK Armed Forces personnel full time trained strength and trained requirement comprises trained UK Regular Forces, trained Gurkhas and elements of the Full Time Reserve Service (FTRS) that may be deployed overseas, including Full Commitment (FC), Limited Commitment (LC), Home Commitment (HC) personnel.

Data have been rounded to 10 in accordance with Defence Statistics (Manpower) policy. Totals and sub totals have been rounded separately and so may not equal the sums of their rounded parts. When rounded to the nearest 10, numbers ending in '5' have been rounded to the nearest 20 to avoid systematic bias.

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](mailto: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 you find this information useful

Yours sincerely,

Defence Statistics Health Head (B1)