



Ministry of Defence

Statistical Series 5 – Activities Bulletin 5.01 – Military Aid to the Civil Authorities 2014

Statistical release

Published 12 June 2014

Issued by:
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The Background Quality Report for this publication can be found [here](#).

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Statistical Bulletin Series 5 gives information on various activities of the UK Armed Forces, including Military Search and Rescue, and the activities of the Royal Navy Fishery Protection Squadron within British fishery limits.

Bulletin 5.01 is an annual publication which provides information on the number of vessels boarded by the Royal Navy Fishery Protection Squadron within British fishery limits, and convictions arising from the boarding of vessels.

This edition gives statistics for financial years 2007/08 to 2013/14, with a base year of 2000/01, and updates figures released in Bulletin 5.01 in 2013.

Key Points and Trends

- In 2013/14, 575 vessels were boarded by the Royal Navy Fisheries Protection Squadron within British fishing limits, the lowest annual figure since at least 1997/98. It is a 36% decrease since 2012/13, and a 59% decrease compared to 2011/12, which was the highest figure for seven years.
- The reduction may be explained by the following factors:
 - a. Under a new agreement (from April 2013) between the Marine Management Organisation and the Royal Navy (RN), the RN ships are no longer exclusively tasked with Marine Enforcement, and are now therefore likely to be involved in other RN activities.
 - b. The adverse weather experienced in 2013/14 may also have resulted in fewer boardings.
- By 25 April 2014, there had been 8 court convictions and Fisheries Administration Penalties resulting from the 575 boardings in 2013/14.

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These tables are Official Statistics but have not been badged as National Statistics.

Further Information

Defence Statistics welcomes feedback on statistical products. If you have any comments or questions about this Statistical Bulletin or about our statistics in general, you can contact us as follows:

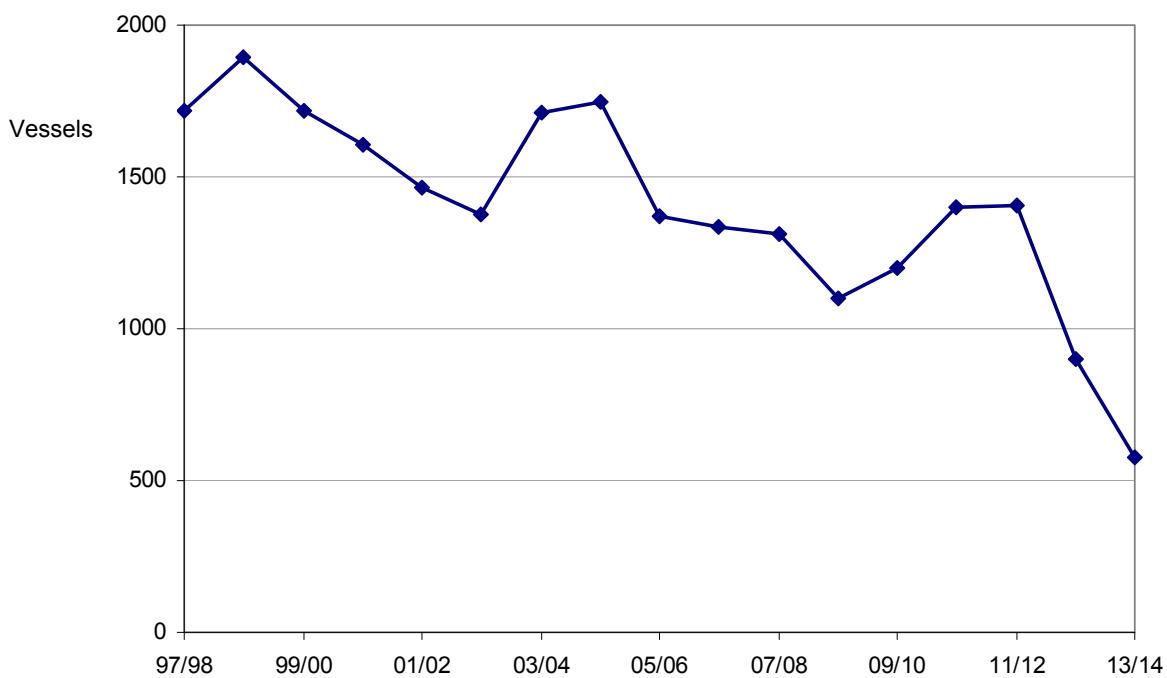
- Phone Defence Statistics (Web Development and Surveys) 020 7807 8792, or mil: 9621 78792.
- Email DefStrat-Stat-Enquiries-Mailbox@mod.uk

If you require information which is not available within this or other available publications, you may wish to submit a Request for Information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to the Ministry of Defence via the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-defence#freedom-of-information>

Key Findings

1. Number of vessels boarded by the Royal Navy Fishery Protection Squadron within British fishing limits, each financial year

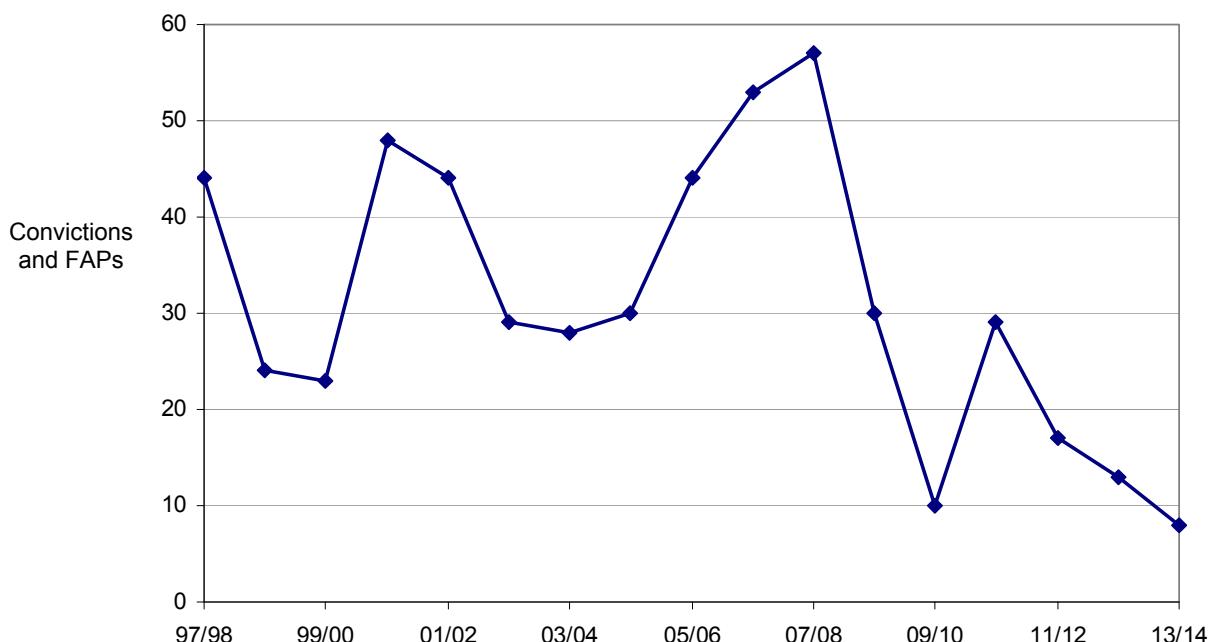


Source: Historical editions of [UK Defence Statistics](#).

- In 2013/14, 575 vessels were boarded by the Royal Navy (RN) Fisheries Protection Squadron within British fishing limits. This is the lowest annual figure since at least 1997/98. It is a 36% decrease since 2012/13, and a 59% decrease compared to 2011/12, which was the highest figure for seven years.
- The latest reduction may be due to the change in the way the RN is operating under the new agreement between the RN and the Marine Management Organisation (from April 2013). The key change of this agreement is the non-exclusive use of the RN ships, as only 12 hours on task each day are required to be for Marine Enforcement tasks. Therefore, RN ships are now likely to be involved in other RN activity during a 24-hour period, which has led to a substantial decrease in the number of boardings. The non-Marine Enforcement tasks are mainly in the South West area, due to the concentration of RN training areas, ranges and trial areas in this location.
- The adverse weather experienced in 2013/14 may also have had an effect.
- This continues a longer-term decreasing trend. Since 1997/98, the average annual change has been a 5% decrease.
- In recent years, about 30% of boardings have been in the North Sea, and about 70% in the Bristol Channel, Celtic Sea, English Channel, Irish Sea, and Western Approaches. (The Faroes, Rockall and West of Scotland are not covered by the Royal Navy Fishery Protection Squadron.)

Detailed figures on the number of vessels boarded by the Royal Navy Fishery Protection Squadron each year since 2007/08 can be found in [Table 5.01.01](#).

2. Convictions and Fisheries Administration Penalties arising from the boarding of vessels by the Royal Navy Fishery Protection Squadron within British fishing limits, each financial year



Source: Historical editions of [UK Defence Statistics](#).

- The Fisheries Administration Penalty (FAP) was introduced in 2008/09. This streamlined the penalty process, and removed the necessity for most of the crews of vessels that would previously have been sent to Court from actually having to attend Court.
- By 25 April 2014, there had been 8 court convictions and FAPs resulting from the 575 boardings in 2013/14. This is the lowest annual figure since at least 1997/98, though it may increase as some cases may not be heard in court until a year or more after the initial boarding.
- Longer-term there is an irregular pattern, with several years of consecutive rises followed by several years of consecutive falls. The number of convictions is currently on a downward trend, having had 3 successive annual decreases.
- In the six years since the FAP was introduced, 39% of convictions and FAPs have been of French nationals, followed by the UK nationals (21%), Belgians (13%), and Irish (9%).

Detailed figures on the number of convictions and Fisheries Administration Penalties each year since 2007/08 can be found in [Table 5.01.02](#).

Background Information

The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) is an executive, non-departmental public body (NDPB) established and given powers under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. The Ministry of Defence (MOD) has an agreement with MMO for the provision of Marine Enforcement Services, such as fishery protection. A copy of a Memorandum of Understanding between MMO and the MOD relating to the provision of these services can be accessed on the MMO website¹.

The Royal Navy Fisheries Protection Squadron is the oldest front line squadron in the Royal Navy. It has three River Class Fishing Patrol Vessels covering UK waters, and one Offshore Patrol Vessel (Helicopter) stationed in the Falkland Islands. The River Class Fishing Patrol Vessels cover the fishery limits of England, Wales and Northern Ireland – an area that covers over 80,000 square miles of sea, and stretches up to 200 miles from the coastline. These vessels can be used in the Maritime Counter Terrorism, Pollution Control or Anti-drug Surveillance role in addition to their main task of fishery protection.²

Context

The main users of this data will be those interested in MOD activities, especially MOD support for fishery protection. This is most likely to be the media, politicians and the general public who are situated in areas with a fishing industry.

Data Sources

The data in this table are provided by the MMO. Data are extracted by MMO from the UK Monitoring, Control and Surveillance System, and are collated manually.

Data Quality

Both the MMO and the Royal Navy have undertaken quality control on the data provided in these tables. The data have also been subjected to sense checks by Government statisticians.

More information about the quality of this data can be found in the background quality report, which can be found via the link on the front page of this bulletin.

¹ <http://www.marinemanagement.org.uk/about/documents/mou/mod.pdf>

² <http://www.royalnavy.mod.uk/Operations/Enduring-Operations/UK/Fishery-Protection>

Symbols and Conventions

Symbols

- || discontinuity in time series
- r Revised
- Zero or rounded to zero

Italic figures are used for percentages and other rates, except where otherwise indicated.

Revisions

There are no regular planned revisions of this Bulletin. Amendments to figures for earlier years may be identified during the compilation of this Bulletin. This will be addressed in one of two ways:

- i. where the number of figures updated in a table is small, figures will be updated and those which have been revised will be identified with the symbol "r". An explanation for the revision will be given in the footnotes to the table.
- ii. where the number of figures updated in a table is substantial, the revisions to the table, together with the reason for the revisions, will be identified in the commentary at the beginning, and in the commentary next to affected tables. Revisions will not be identified by the symbol "r" since where there are a large number of revisions in a table this could make them more difficult to read.

Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

DEFRA Department for the Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs. DEFRA is the ministerial department responsible for policy and regulations on environmental, food and rural issues.

FAP Fisheries Administration Penalty.

FPV Fishing Patrol Vessel.

MMO Marine Management Organisation. The MMO is an executive non-departmental public body (NDPB) established and given powers under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. It has a wide range of responsibilities including managing UK fishing fleet capacity and UK fisheries quotas and responding to marine emergencies alongside other agencies.

RN see **Royal Navy**.

Royal Navy The sea-going defence forces of the UK, including ships, submarines, and Naval aircraft and their personnel, but excluding the Royal Marines and the Royal Fleet Auxiliary Service (RFA). From 1 April 2000 the Royal Navy incorporated Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service (QARNNS).

Squadron In the Naval Service (i) a group of vessels, normally commanded by a Commander; (ii) a group of naval aircraft, normally commanded by a Commander; (iii) a group of particular personnel, such as divers, commanded by a Commander; (iv) a group of Royal Marines on board ship or an amphibious assault group, normally under the command of a Lt Col (Royal Marines); (v) a sub-unit of the Special Boat Service, normally commanded by a Major (Royal Marines) or Lieutenant Commander (Royal Navy).

In the Army, a sub-unit of some regiments, normally commanded by a Major.

In the Royal Air Force (i) a unit of a number of aircraft larger than a Flight and smaller than a Group; (ii) a unit of personnel, including sub-units of the RAF Regiment. An RAF squadron is usually commanded by a Wing Commander.

Table 5.01.01

Number of vessels boarded by the Royal Navy Fishery Protection Squadron within British fishing limits, each financial year

This shows the activities of the Royal Navy Fishery Protection Squadron operating within British fishery limits under an agreement with the Marine Management Organisation (MMO). More information about this agreement can be found in the Background Information section of this report.

Boardings carried out by vessels of the Scottish Executive Environment Directorate and the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development for Northern Ireland are not included.

The data in this Table are not National Statistics, and they have not been put forward to the UK Statistics Authority for assessment.

	Number of vessels							
	2000/01	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Vessels boarded	1 603	1 309	1 102	1 201	1 399	1 408	898	575
<i>By sea areas¹:</i>								
North Sea	627	367	306	338	411	417	169	172
Bristol Channel, Celtic Sea, English Channel, Irish Sea, and Western Approaches	976	942	796	863	988	991	729	403

Source: Marine Management Organisation

1. The Faroes, Rockall and West of Scotland are not covered by the Royal Navy Fishery Protection Squadron.

Table 5.01.02

Convictions and Fisheries Administration Penalties arising from the boarding of vessels by the Royal Navy Fishery Protection Squadron within British fishing limits, each financial year

Convictions arising from Royal Navy boardings are convictions of infringements detected by the Royal Navy Fishery Protection Squadron offshore patrol vessels in that year operating under service level agreement to the Marine Management Organisation (MMO), who undertake a range of delivery functions of DEFRA. Figures may change retrospectively as some cases may not be heard in court until a year or more after the initial Royal Navy boarding.

In financial year 08/09, the Marine and Fisheries Agency (known as the MMO since April 2010) introduced the Fisheries Administration Penalty (FAP). This has streamlined the penalty process, and has removed the necessity for most of the crews of vessels that would previously have been sent to Court from actually having to attend Court. Convictions from 2008/09 onwards are based on the number of offences addressed by the Courts that resulted in a Court conviction, not the number of fishing vessel crews that attended Court. That is, the same fishing vessel crew could be required to attend Court for one or more offences to be heard and each offence would count separately.

The data in this Table are not National Statistics, and they have not been put forward to the UK Statistics Authority for assessment.

	Number of convictions and Fisheries Administration Penalties								
	2000/01	2007/08	2008/09 ¹	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	
Convictions arising from boardings	48	57	 	30	10	29	17	13^r	8
<i>By nationality:</i>									
Belgium	4	19		5	3	1	2	2	1
Denmark	3	-		-	-	-	-	-	-
Eire	4	6		-	1	3	3	1	2
Faroës	3	-		-	-	-	-	-	-
France	8	16		12	1	14	6	6	3
Germany	-	-		-	-	2	-	-	-
Netherlands	6	-		2	-	3	2	2 ^r	-
Spain	-	-		3	1	1	2	-	-
United Kingdom	20	16		8	4	5	2	2 ^r	2

Source: Marine Management Organisation

1. From 2008/09, these figures include Fisheries Administration Penalties.

^r Since the publication of the 2012/13 bulletin in July 2013, the total number of convictions arising from boardings in the 2012/13 financial year has increased from 10 to 13. The number of UK convictions has increased from 0 to 2, and Netherlands convictions have increased from 1 to 2.