



Ministry of Defence Police

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Your Ref: RFI: 234.14

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Date: 14th January 2015

Dear [REDACTED]

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000. MINISTRY OF DEFENCE POLICE: WORK STRESS RISK ASSESSMENTS.

I acknowledge receipt of your e-mail of 20 December 2014, which we are treating as request for information in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA 2000).

In your e-mail of 20 December, you requested the following information:

1- In HSG256- Table 3- Permanent shifts- Advice- It states "If reasonably practicable, offer workers the choice between permanent and rotating shifts".

- Can you please tell me how many MDP Authorised Firearms Officers(AFOs) have been offered the choice between permanent and rotating shifts during the period of publication of HSG256, i.e. 2006 to date?*

2- In HSG 256- Table 7- Rest Days- Advice- It states "In general, a limit of 5-7 consecutive working days should be set for standard (ie 7-8 hour) shifts. Where shifts are longer than this, for night shifts and for shifts with early morning starts it may be better to set a limit of 2-3 consecutive shifts, followed by 2-3 rest days to allow workers to recover."

- Please can you tell me on how many occasions in the past 12 months have MDP AFOs at RAF Menwith Hill worked shifts of more than 3, twelve hour shifts in a row?*

3- In HSG256-Table 7- Rest days- Advice- It states "When switching from day to night shifts or vice versa, make provision to allow workers a minimum of 2 nights of full sleep to enable them to adjust to the new schedule."

- *Officers at RAF Menwith Hill work a rotating shift pattern. Please can you tell me on how many occasions in the past 12 months have MDP AFOs at RAF Menwith Hill gone from 12 hour early morning start to a 12 hour night shift without the provision of 2 nights of full sleep between the two?*

4- *The MDP at RAF Menwith Hill work a VSA with a shift pattern that does not comply with the advice in No3 above.*

- *What documents exist relating to AFOs at RAF Menwith Hill, that justify not following the advice in no 3 above?*

A search for information has now been completed and I can confirm that information in scope of your request is held:

1- *In HSG256- Table 3- Permanent shifts- Advice- It states "If reasonably practicable, offer workers the choice between permanent and rotating shifts".*

- *Can you please tell me how many MDP Authorised Firearms Officers(AFOs) have been offered the choice between permanent and rotating shifts during the period of publication of HSG256, i.e. 2006 to date?*

It is not "reasonably practical" to offer individual AFO's a choice due to the Variable Shift Arrangement (VSA) as agreed by a minimum of 75% of the complement. Unless there was a fair balance of permanent early turn to night turn officers, too many early turn would put unfair pressure on rotating shift officers to cover short falls.

2- *In HSG 256- Table 7- Rest Days- Advice- It states "In general, a limit of 5-7 consecutive working days should be set for standard (ie 7-8 hour) shifts. Where shifts are longer than this, for night shifts and for shifts with early morning starts it may be better to set a limit of 2-3 consecutive shifts, followed by 2-3 rest days to allow workers to recover."*

- *Please can you tell me on how many occasions in the past 12 months have MDP AFOs at RAF Menwith Hill worked shifts of more than 3, twelve hour shifts in a row?*

Due to the VSA arrangements as agreed by 75% or more on this station the majority of AFO's exceed this on a regular basis, either through the natural shift pattern or having to cover for short falls i.e. courses, sickness, annual leave or detached duty.

3- *In HSG256-Table 7- Rest days- Advice- It states "When switching from day to night shifts or vice versa, make provision to allow workers a minimum of 2 nights of full sleep to enable them to adjust to the new schedule."*

- *Officers at RAF Menwith Hill work a rotating shift pattern. Please can you tell me on how many occasions in the past 12 months have MDP AFOs at RAF Menwith Hill gone from 12 hour early morning start to a 12 hour night shift without the provision of 2 nights of full sleep between the two?*

All officers have a minimum of 11hrs rest between shifts as required under the EU Working Time Directive and days off of between 4 and 5 days unless overtime is worked. Also officers were consulted on their agreement to work the current shift pattern as reflected in the ballot for VSA with a 75% majority as a minimum required to implement.

4- The MDP at RAF Menwith Hill work a VSA with a shift pattern that does not comply with the advice in No3 above.

- What documents exist relating to AFOs at RAF Menwith Hill, that justify not following the advice in no 3 above?

I refer to the answer given in question 3

If you are not satisfied with this response or 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 Team, 1st Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, London SW1A 2HB (email 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 the 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>).

Yours sincerely

