

Changes to Ministry of Defence Armed Forces Personnel Statistics: Response to External Consultation

BACKGROUND

1. On 20 March 2015, the Ministry of Defence opened a consultation with stakeholders about proposed changes to Armed Forces Personnel Statistics.
2. These personnel statistics are primarily counts of Armed Forces personnel (strengths), those joining (intake) and those leaving (outflow), reported by various categories of interest. Strength counts are reported against requirement figures for UK Regular Armed Forces, which enables surpluses and deficits to be calculated.
3. The Ministry of Defence (MOD) currently publishes these personnel statistics in nine National and Official Statistics Releases on the GOV.UK website¹. The publications are as follows:

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Monthly Personnel Report (MPR) | Annual Maternity Report |
| Quarterly Personnel Report (QPR) | Diversity Dashboard (biannual) |
| Annual Personnel Report (APR) | Quarterly Location Statistics |
| Annual Tri Service Personnel Bulletin | Annual Reserve Forces & Cadets Strengths |
| Annual Service & Civilian Bulletin | |

Table 1: Ministry of Defence (Tri-Service) publications.

4. Following the internal review of content, the aim of the consultation was to seek users views on the proposals for the deletion or reduced frequency of a number of personnel statistics, because following policy developments these statistics were felt to be misleading or no longer necessary.
5. The initial consultation period ended on 16 April 2015. Due to restrictions associated with publicising consultations during the pre-election period, MOD decided to re-open the consultation from 27 May 2015 until 18 June 2015, to allow further time for users to comment.

RESULTS

6. There was one response to the consultation from an external stakeholder and additional informal interest in the consultation on twitter. The stakeholder response is summarised as follows:

External user 1: Agreed with the move towards a reduction in frequency of diversity statistics and unrealistically, given it is a legal requirement, requested the cessation of all statistical outputs.

7. There were no objections to the deletion or reduced frequency of the proposed Service personnel statistics. As a result, MOD will be making all the changes proposed in the consultation. In addition, all Diversity statistics, including diversity statistics in the Royal

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-defence/about/statistics>

Navy / Royal Marines quarterly pocket brief, will be published on a biannual basis instead of the current quarterly or annual basis.

8. As outlined in the consultation, in future, Armed Forces Personnel Statistics will be amalgamated into four new accessible publications, instead of the nine existing publications (Table 1). The four new publications will be:

| Publication | Coverage based on existing published statistics | Existing publications from which statistics will be included |
|--|--|---|
| Service Personnel Statistics (monthly) | Military personnel statistics on strengths, intake and outflow, for both Regulars and Reserves. Content produced on a monthly, quarterly or annual basis will be included in this report at the relevant times of the year. | Monthly Personnel Report; Quarterly Personnel Report; Annual Personnel Report; Annual Tri Service Personnel Bulletin; Annual Service & Civilian Bulletin; Annual Reserve Forces & Cadets Strengths. |
| Diversity Statistics (biannual) | Military personnel strengths and flows statistics on diversity. This includes various age, rank, ethnic origin, gender, religion and nationality breakdowns for Regular personnel and age, ethnic origin and gender breakdowns for the Reserves. | Quarterly Personnel Report; Annual Personnel Report; Annual Tri Service Personnel Bulletin; Annual Maternity Report; Diversity Dashboard; Annual Reserve Forces & Cadets Strengths. |
| Quarterly Location Statistics | Statistics on the stationed location of all UK Regular service and Civilian personnel, and all international global locations. This will include new historic comparisons that will be added as resources allow. | Quarterly Location Statistics |
| MOD Sponsored Cadet Forces Statistics (annual) | Cadet statistics will be moved into a separate publication, to reinforce that cadets are members of the MOD's sponsored youth organisations and not military personnel. | Annual Reserve Forces & Cadets Strengths |

9. These changes will be incrementally implemented during 2015-16. The first Service Personnel Statistics will be published on GOV.UK on 13 August 2015. This will replace the existing Monthly Personnel Report and Quarterly Personnel Report usually published at this time. The last publication date for the Monthly Personnel Report will be 9 July 2015.

10. Release dates for future editions of Service Personnel Statistics and the remaining new publications will be pre-announced on GOV.UK in the Calendar of Upcoming Statistical Releases².

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-defence/about/statistics>