



Ministry of Defence

**Defence Statistics (Tri-Service)
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Reference: FOI 2016 10560

[Redacted]

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Date: 5th December 2016

Thank you for your email received by the Ministry Of Defence on 6th November 2016 requesting the following information:

“How many known lesbian and homosexual recruits entered the Royal Navy, Royal Air Force and British Army during the period 2011-15?”

We are treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). We have now completed a search for the information you requested and I can confirm that some information in scope of your request is held. Data in the sexual orientation field on the Joint Personnel Administration (JPA) database is available from April 2015 onwards. The Sexual Orientation field is self-declared and non-mandatory. As a result, the latest overall declaration rate for UK Regular Forces is low; 17.1 per cent as at 1 November 2016. Table 1 (below) contains the information you have requested. The Sexual Orientation for 94.4 per cent of the personnel reported in Table 1 is unknown and therefore the figures for “Gay Man”, “Gay Woman/ Lesbian” and “Other” are highly likely to be underestimates.

Table 1: Personnel Joining UK Regular Forces¹ by Sexual Orientation during Financial Year 2015/16

	FY15/16
Total	13 780
Gay Man	10
Gay Woman/ Lesbian	10
Other ²	740
Unknown	13 010

Source: Defence Statistics (Tri-Service)

Notes:

1. UK Regular Forces comprises Full-time personnel but does not include Gurkhas, Full Time Reserve Service personnel and Reservists.
2. Other comprises “Bisexual”, “Heterosexual/ Straight”, “Other” and “Prefer not to say”.
3. Figures correspond to unique individuals joining the UK Regular Forces and are as reported on the Joint Personnel Administration (JPA) database.

Rounding:

Numbers are rounded to the nearest multiple of 10. Numbers ending in 5 are rounded to the nearest multiple of 20 to avoid systematic bias. Totals and sub-totals have been rounded separately and so may not equal the sums of their rounded parts.

We seek to recruit and retain talented personnel to play their part in safeguarding the UK's interests regardless of sexual identity, and are proud that the Armed Forces and the MOD are recognised for our positive culture and attitude towards LGBT people. The Naval Service was recognised as a Top 10 Employer in Stonewell's Workplace Equality Index 2016 and the Army was ranked 32nd.

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, Ground Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail 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, <https://ico.org.uk/>.

Would you like to be added to our contact list, so that we can inform you about updates to our statistical publications covering **Military Personnel** and consult you if we are thinking of making changes? You can subscribe to updates by emailing DefStrat-Stat-Tri-Enquiries@mod.uk

Yours sincerely,

Defence Statistics (Tri-Service)