

EXTERNAL CONSULTATION ON THE CESSATION OF MILITARY AID TO CIVIL AUTHORITIES

SUMMARY

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) currently publishes the [Military Aid to Civil Authorities](#) on an annual basis. We are now seeking external users' views on ceasing publication.

BACKGROUND

This is an annual publication that provides information on the number of vessels boarded by the Royal Navy Fishery Protection Squadron (RN FPS) within British fishery limits, and the number of court convictions and Financial Administration Penalties (FAPs) issued as a result of the boardings. It provides statistics from financial year 1999/2000 onwards.

The RN FPS enforces fishery protection laws by patrolling the British fishery limits and conducting inspections of fishing vessels. Any infringements that are identified as a result of the boardings are followed up by the Marine Management Organisation (MMO). This may involve prosecuting offenders or administering FAPs.

REASONS FOR THE PROPOSED CHANGE

Defence Statistics (WDS) is proposing to cease publication of this Official Statistic as the numbers of boardings, convictions and administrative penalties have seen a significant decline over the last decade, and levels of public and political interest in the statistics are low.

The number of vessels boarded by the RN FPS has fallen from 1335 in 2006/07 to 460 in 2015/16, a decrease of 66% over the decade. The number of convictions and administrative penalties has fallen from 53 in 2006/07 to 4 in 2015/16, a decrease of 92% over the decade.

The number of web-hits for the publication page has fallen from 535 in 2015/16 to 343 in 2016/17, a decrease of 36%.

The numbers of Freedom of Information (FOI) requests and Parliamentary Questions (PQs) about the RN FPS are very low. Two FOIs about the RN FPS have been submitted over the last 12 months, only one of which was answered with information contained in the publication. No PQs about the RN FPS have been submitted over the last 12 months. Neither PQ was answered with information contained in the publication.

TIMINGS

This consultation will run for **four weeks**, from **17 July 2017 to 14 August 2017**. This consultation complies with the Government's Code of Practice on Consultations.

As long as there is no objection during the consultation period, the cessation of the report will proceed as planned and the June 2017 bulletin will be the final annual report produced.

RESPONDING TO THE CONSULTATION

Considering the reasons for the proposed changes, we now invite the feedback of our external data users and are keen to know what impact ceasing publication will have on you.

Ways to respond:

If you have any comments on the proposed changes please send:

By email to: DefStrat-Stat-WDS-Pubs@mod.uk

By post to:

Defence Statistics (WDS)
Ministry of Defence,
Main Building,
Floor 3 Zone M,
Whitehall,
London,
SW1A 2HB

When sending your comments please include contact details (your name and either e mail address, postal address or telephone number) so that we can follow up if clarification is needed.