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|  | Ministry of DefenceMain Building WhitehallLondon SW1A 2HBUnited Kingdom |
| Ref: FOI2017/00224 | E-mail: DESTRAT-FOI-GROUP@mod.uk |  |
| Mr Thomas Edward request-380619-9d2f7d67@whatdotheyknow.com |  2nd February 2017 |

Dear Mr Edwards

Thank you for your email dated 08 January 2017 requesting the following information:

*“Please could you tell how many of your defence attaches have passed language examinations at or above the level mandated by their job descriptions? For the avoidance of doubt, I refer only to those personnel who are 'current' under MOD regulations- meaning those who passed examinations within the last 3 years.*

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

A search for the information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence, and I can confirm that some information in scope of your request is held. The information you have requested can be found below.

Available records demonstrate that 15 out of the 29 tested current Defence Attachés have passed examinations at or above the level mandated by their job specifications.

Under Section 16 of the Act (Advice and Assistance) you may find it helpful to note that:

* Whilst not all Defence Attachés reach the full language standard prior to their appointment, their abilities improve significantly once immersed in the host nation’s language and culture.
* Defence is constantly working to optimise the delivery of language and culture capabilities and in April 2016 it established the Defence Attaché and Loan Service Centre (DALSC). This unit, which aims to bring greater coherence and rigour to Defence Attachés training, will reach full operating capability in Q1 2017.

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/>.

Yours sincerely,

UK MOD Defence Engagement Strategy