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Ref: Army/PolSec/M/M/FOI2023/01047

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21 February 2023

Dear Mr Osment

Thank you for your email of 25 January 2023 in which you requested the following information:

Please could I have data on career development information for Vehicle Mechanics (VMs) in the REME for the period 2017 to 2022 as follows:

- 1) The number of applicants to join the VM trade in the years 2017-2022.
- 2) The number of applicants enlisting in the years 2017-2022.
- 3) Average career progression, by length of service in each rank, and percentage chance of achieving each promotion.
- 4) Average length of total reckonable service on discharge from REME.
- 5) Criteria for VMs converting from VEng(Short) to VEng(Long) and numbers eligible/granted for the period 2017-2022.
- 6) Nos of VMs eligible for selection to artificer grade and the numbers accepted for the period 2017-2022.

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000. A search for the information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence, and I can confirm that the information in scope of your request is held and is below in Annex A. Under section 40 (personal information) of the FOIA 2000, figures that are less than 5 have been replaced with "~" to prevent the disclosure of personal information.

If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance. Following this, if you wish to complain about the handling of your request, or the content of this response, you can request 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](mailto:CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk)). Please note that any request for an internal review should be made within 40 working days of the date of this response.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may raise your complaint directly to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not normally investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Further details of the role and powers of the

Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website at <https://ico.org.uk/>.

Yours sincerely,

Personnel 5  
Army Policy & Secretariat

## Annex A

1) The number of applicants to join the VM trade in the years 2017-2022.

Stream	RY16/17	RY17/18	RY18/19	RY19/20	RY20/21	RY21/22
Regular Soldier	1832	1507	2219	1910	1857	1032
Reserve Soldier	460	273	327	223	148	87
<b>Total</b>	<b>2330</b>	<b>1799</b>	<b>2565</b>	<b>2154</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>1125</b>

Source: Army Recruiting and Initial Training Command (ARITC)

2) The number of applicants enlisting in the years 2017-2022.

**Table 1. Army Regular Trade Trained and Non Trade Trained REME VM Intake each year, 1 January 2017 - 30 September 2022**

Year	Intake
1 January - 30 September 2022	178
2021	276
2020	449
2019	381
2018	238
2017	359

Source: Analysis (Army)

3) Average career progression, by length of service in each rank, and percentage chance of achieving each promotion.

**Table 2: Army Regular REME Other Ranks Career Progressions, 2013 – 2020**

Rank	Average progress to given rank from Pte	% chance of promotion to given rank from Pte	% chance of promotion to that rank from the rank below
Lance Corporal	3 years 8 months	60.7%	60.7%
Corporal	7 years 3 months	36.4%	60.5%
Sergeant	11 years 7 months	20.0%	65.3%
Staff Sergeant	15 years 6 months	11.1%	59.5%
Warrant Officer, Class 2	18 years 8 months	7.4%	74.0%
Warrant Officer, Class 1	20 years 6 months	4.6%	68.8%

Source: Analysis (Army)

**Table 3: Army Regular REME VM Other Ranks Average Years Length of Service to Paid Rank Promotion from 1 October 2015 to 1 October 2022**

Paid Rank	Average progress to given rank from Pte
Lance Corporal	4 years
Corporal	9 years
Sergeant	13 years
Staff Sergeant	17 years
Warrant Officer, Class 2	20 years

Source: Analysis (Army)

- Please note that these figures are not comparable with Career Progression figures provided above.

4) Average length of total reckonable service on discharge from REME.

**Table 4: Average Length of Service of Army Regular Trade Trained REME VM on Outflow, 1 October 2015 - 30 September 2022**

Average Length of Service
9 years

Source: Analysis (Army)

5) Criteria for VMs converting from VEng(Short) to VEng(Long) and numbers eligible/granted for the period 2017-2022.

- Please be advised that it is not possible to convert from VEng(Short) straight to VEng(Long). You would have to go from a VEng(S), to VEng(Full) and then to a VEng(Long) contact. However, Other Ranks may only convert directly from Versatile Engagement (Short) to Versatile Engagement (Long) in exceptional circumstances.

**Table: 5 Army Regular Trade Trained REME VM Conversions from Versatile Engagement (Short) to Versatile Engagement (Long), 1 January 2017 - 30 September 2022**

Date	VEng(Short) to VEng(Long) conversions
1 January 2017 - 30 September 2022	~

Source: Analysis (Army)

**Table 6: Army Regular Trade Trained REME VM Conversions from Versatile Engagement (Short) to Versatile Engagement (Full), and from Versatile Engagement (Full) to Versatile Engagement (Long) 2017-2022**

Year	Accepted conversion from VEng(Short) to VEng(Full)	Accepted conversion from VEng(Full) to VEng(Long)
2017	24	-
2018	20	-
2019	180	~
2020	199	31
2021	98	9
2022	68	-

Source: REME

- “~” indicated less than 5 and “-“ indicated 0.

<b>REME</b>				
<b>From/To</b>	VEng(Short) to VEng(Full) – Automatic Selection Process	VEng(Short) to VEng(Full) – Conditional Selection Process	VEng(Full) to VEng(Long)	Open/Notice to VEng(Full)
<b>Criteria for Conversion</b>	Technicians: Corporal Class 1  Non-Technicians: Lance Corporal Class 1	Rank / trade class below that of the Automatic Selection Process  LoS 7-11 Minimum SJAR grading of B	Offers will be made only if specific workforce requirements exist as stipulated by REME WF Plans.	Offers will be made to all personnel provided they:  Have served a minimum of 3 years Reckonable Service in REME LoS 18 and below Have a minimum SJAR grading of B

6) Nos of VMs eligible for selection to artificer grade and the numbers accepted for the period 2017-2022.

**Table 7. Army Regular Trade Trained REME VM changing Main Trade to Artificer, 1 January 2017 - 2022**

Year	Eligible	Selected
2017	N/A	58
2018	238	20
2019	235	39
2020	226	42
2021	197	43
2022	202	42

Source: Analysis (Army) and REME

- The statistics for those eligible in 2017 are unavailable.
- The statistics for those selected in 2022 is from 1 January – 30 September.

### **Notes/Caveats relating to Part 2 onwards:**

1. Figures are for the Regular Army only and therefore exclude Gurkhas, Full Time Reserve Service, Mobilised Reserves, Army Reserve and all other Reserves, but includes those personnel that have transferred from GURTAM to UKTAP.
2. In Table 2, the career forecast is not based on the actual experience of any one individual, but rather is based on historical behaviour of individuals with similar characteristics (in terms of Arm/Service, gender, length of service and rank). The data provided for the chances of retention and chances of promotion are produced using historic data from 1 April 2013 –31 March 2020. The use of seven years data reduces fluctuations caused by one-off factors and covers a wider period of the economic cycle and policy changes which may influence outflow. By considering a cohort of individuals with the similar characteristics average career projections have been calculated.
3. In Table 2, '% chance of promotion to that rank from the rank below' considers the Arm/Service as a whole and is not specific to LoS. It is based on Trained and Untrained personnel within the Arm/Service.
4. In Table 3 and 4, Length of service has been calculated using entry date. There are known problems with the entry date information extracted from JPA which is supposed to reflect their 'current entry date' but if personnel have transferred to the Army from another Service, served under an alternative assignment type (e.g. Reserve forces), are re-entrants or have transferred from Other Ranks to Officers, their entry date may correspond to any of these events. The resulting LoS may reflect their current period of service, include previous service, or it may be the time that has elapsed since they first joined the Armed Forces, irrespective of any break in service. This is not equivalent to Reckonable Service, which reflects the years and days worked by an individual as a member of an Armed Forces Pension Scheme, regardless of whether this was in another Service, another Army population (including the Volunteer Reserve, after 1 April 2015) or whether an individual has left and rejoined the Armed Forces.
5. Other Ranks may only convert from Versatile Engagement (Short) to Versatile Engagement (Long) in exceptional circumstances.
6. "~" denotes fewer than 5.