



Ministry
of Defence

Ministry of Defence
Defence Business Services
Secretariat Team
Room F10
Imjin Barracks
Gloucester
GL3 1HW

Ref: FOI2015/04017

Mr Henry Gledhill

Email: request-255418-8bce8e99@whatdotheyknow.com

6th May 2015

Dear Mr Gledhill,

Thank you for your further email of 8 April, to the “what do they know” website, requesting the following information:

“Dear Service Personnel and Veterans Agency, In the past 12 (twelve) months please advise:-

1. Number of letters you received requiring an answer, 2. Number acknowledged, 3. Number replied to, 4. Mode of reply

Please confine to Veterans UK.”

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.

As previously explained on 11 March and 8 April 2015, the Service Personnel and Veterans Agency merged with Defence Business Services, to form one organisation including Veterans UK, which is made up of a number of functional areas located at various sites throughout the United Kingdom. The Armed Forces Pension Scheme (AFPS) is based at Kentigern House, Glasgow, The Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS) and the War Pension Scheme (WPS) are based at Norcross, Blackpool and our Veterans Welfare Service (VWS) is based at four main sites, these are: Blackpool, Kidderminster, Gosport and Glasgow.

The AFPS does not record the number of correspondence received/ acknowledged/ replied and the mode of reply. This is due to the fact that the AFPS resides with several other organisations in Kentigern House and unfortunately, the post room does not keep a record of each piece of correspondence received/ sent by each organisation.

With regards to the AFCS and the WPS, the Norcross post room has advised that they receive approximately 15,000 items of post each month, which would equate to

approximately 180,000 over a 12 month period. Unfortunately, due to the vast number of correspondence they do not record the number of correspondence acknowledged/ replied to nor the mode of reply.

Finally, our VWS have advised that they receive approximately 885 written enquiries over a 12 month period. Unfortunately, they do not distinguish between the number of emails/ letters received but have confirmed that all correspondence is acknowledged and responded to. Regrettably, they do not record the mode of reply, as each response is considered on a case by case basis.

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, 1st 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/>.