



Ministry
of Defence

Ministry of Defence
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Ref: FOI2021/06611

Mr Ollie Booth
request-765745-1c409f8b@whatdotheyknow.com

20 July 2021

Dear Mr Booth,

Thank you for your original email of 16 June 2021 and your clarification of 22 June 2021 requesting the following information, which applies to civilian staff and Service Personnel:

"Please can you provide the following:

- 1. Do you have a disability staff network? If so: How long has it been running? The grade of the chair and deputy chair? Does the network use storytelling as part of its communication strategy?*
- 2. The number of members of staff who have provided information about their disability to HR broken down by Year since 2010 - Grade / Seniority – Location.*
- 3. Sickness absence as a result of disability or mental health issue logged by the department broken down by: - Year since 2010 - Grade / Seniority – Location.*
- 4. Return to work rates following disability or mental health related sickness logged by the department broken down by: - Year since 2010 - Grade / Seniority – Location.*
- 5. Costs (i.e. sick leave payments, salary loss, costs of replacements, adjustment costs, occupation health referrals etc) relating to disability and mental health related illness broken down by: - Year since 2010 - Grade / Seniority – Location."*

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). Under Section 12 of the FOIA, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) is not obliged to comply with a request for information if the cost of doing so would exceed the appropriate limit. This is currently set at £600 for central government. The Fees Regulations require that the costs are estimated at the rate of £25 per person per hour. The £600 appropriate limit relates to an official devoting around three and a half days (24

hours) of chargeable staff effort to a request. To provide a response would take a minimum of six working days to complete which is significantly above the cost threshold. FOIA requires the MOD to provide information that it already holds. New data would also need to be created to answer your request, which the MOD is not obliged to do. Therefore, the MOD will not be providing a response to your request.

Under Section 16 (Advice and Assistance) of the FOIA you may wish to consider reducing the number and range of questions in any subsequent request. I have enclosed links to some existing government reports that contain some of the information that you have requested.

MOD staff networks

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/mod-diversity-networks>

Civil Service Disability Network

<https://civilservice.blog.gov.uk/civil-service-disability-network/>

Civilian Absence Report:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/mod-civilian-sickness-absence>

Civilian Diversity Report

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/mod-diversity-dashboard-index>.

Armed Forces Diversity Report

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-armed-forces-biannual-diversity-statistics-index>

Defence Mental Health Statistics

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/defence-mental-health-statistics-index>

Medical discharges among UK Service Personnel Statistics

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/medical-discharges-among-uk-service-personnel-statistics-index>

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 us in the first instance at the address above. 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.gov.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 normally 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, <http://www.ico.org.uk>.

Yours sincerely,

Defence People Secretariat