



Ministry
of Defence

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Mr B Ennis
request-182362-
xxxxxxxx@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx.xxx

22 November 2013

Dear Mr Ennis

Thank you for your email of 26 October requesting the following information:

When I was posted to a new unit I was told I must wear the Brigade cloth patch on my uniform, this was not a new thing to me as I had worn these in previous units. At my other units, the cloth patches had always been supplied for free, as part of my issued uniform, by the Army. However, at my new unit I was told I had to buy the patches with my own money, I was told I had no choice in the matter and I had to buy them as they were not available for free of charge. I had to buy two and they cost 50p each. Whilst this is a small amount of money I would like to know if this is correct practice? If the Army insists something is worn as part of my uniform then is it right that I am told I must buy it with my own money?

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

Section 1 of the Freedom of Information Act gives an applicant the right to access recorded information held by public authorities at the time the request is made and does not require public authorities to answer questions, provide explanations or give opinions, unless this is recorded information held. However, in order to be helpful in accordance with Section 16 of the Act, I can tell you in answer to your questions:

Both tactical recognition patches that indicate the wearer's Regiment or Corps, and formation flashes that indicate the wearer's current formation, are considered by the Army as optional items for wear on combat uniform. However, it is recognised that all Regiments and Corps now require their personnel to wear their tactical recognition patches as do some formations (e.g. Brigade and Divisions). Because these badges are considered by the Army as optional items, the Army cannot supply them or tailor them at public expense. They therefore have to be purchased and tailored at the individual's expense.

Some Regiments and Corps supply their own tactical recognition patches at no cost (i.e. from Corps or Regimental funds) to young soldiers on joining but subsequently the individual may need to purchase their own. Similarly some formations supply the appropriate formation flash to everyone. However there are Regiments, Corps and formations that do not supply the badges and therefore the individual needs to make his/her own arrangements.

The Army supplies everything that soldiers are required to wear on all uniforms. However tactical recognition patches and formation flashes are not Army requirements but are requirements of individual Regiments, Corps and formations.

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 Deputy Chief Information Officer, 2nd Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail CIO-FOxxxx@xxx.xx). 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, <http://www.ico.gov.uk>.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Roberts

Michael Roberts
Army Secretariat