



Ministry of Defence

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Further to your Parliamentary Question (131874) of 9 March 2018 that asked how many Armed Forces personnel in specialist positions have been informed they are no longer eligible for specialist pay and are required to repay it. You will recall that I responded on 14 March to advise you that it would take time to gather the information requested. I am now in a position to provide a substantive response. I apologise for the length of time it has taken.

Unfortunately, in an organisation as large and complex as Defence, the definition of a 'specialist' is difficult to determine. We have therefore interpreted 'specialist' to refer to those members of the Armed Forces who are in receipt of Recruitment and Retention Pay (RRP) in their current role. Even using this rather narrow definition, my officials have concluded that the information you requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. Our estimate is that it would take ten full days of work to provide the answer.

You will be interested to note, however, that all changes to RRP rates, or withdrawals of RRP, are recommended by the independent Armed Forces' Pay Review Body (AFPRB). In the event of a decrease or withdrawal of an RRP, every attempt is made to give 12 months' notice to all affected recipients. For example, when RRP for Aeromedical and Escort Duty was withdrawn on 1 April 2016, this was announced in the AFPRB report published in March 2015. The 12 months' notice period also applies when an individual post formally loses its RRP designation.

Recipients of RRP sometimes receive 'reserve banding' (a reduced RRP) when they are not in a position to conduct the duties which qualify them for RRP; for example, pilots who are not conducting flying duties while in a desk job receive a reduced RRP as they will potentially return to a role attracting the full RRP.

A copy of this letter has been placed in the Library of the House.

Yours sincerely,

THE RT HON TOBIAS ELLWOOD MP

Alex Sobel MP
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Written questions and answers

Q Asked by **Alex Sobel** (Leeds North West) [N]

Ministry of Defence

Commons **131874**

Armed Forces: Pay

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many armed forces personnel in specialist positions have been informed they are no longer eligible for specialist pay and are required to repay it.

A Answered by: **Mr Tobias Ellwood**

Answered on: 14 March 2018

It will take some time to gather the information required to answer the hon. Member's question and I will write to him shortly.