



Ministry
of Defence

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
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RT HON DR ANDREW MURRISON MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE AND MINISTER
FOR DEFENCE PEOPLE AND FAMILIES

UIN No: 4441

11 January 2024

Dear Emma,

On 5 December 2023 I undertook to write to you with the answer to your Parliamentary Question asking how many initial army training staff were (a) investigated for and (b) convicted of sexual offences against recruits under the age of 18 in the last three years. The answer to that question is below.

My response relates to investigations and convictions via the Service Justice System only. While some information is held by the Army on crimes investigated by the Civilian Police, which are prosecuted through criminal courts, the information recorded is based on that provided by or obtained from the Civilian Police or the subject, therefore the Department is unable to provide official data in this respect.

Not all investigations result in an arrest or a charge and anyone accused is innocent until proved guilty. In the interests of protecting the anonymity of both alleged perpetrators and the victims of sexual offences, and to ensure that victims of sexual offences are not deterred from coming forward, I will not be providing the information requested on Service Police investigations of sexual offences where the victims were recruits under the age of 18 and the alleged perpetrators were initial Army Training staff.

This is consistent with my answer to Question 182068 and Question 199692

A breakdown of Court Martial cases in scope of your question is not held centrally and validated figures could only be provided at disproportionate cost. It may however be helpful for you to note that an initial search of Court Martial information based on the perpetrator's unit at the time of charge or court martial provided a nil return. It is possible that the return does not capture all relevant data as alleged perpetrators may have moved to other units after an alleged offence took place but before referral or Court Martial.

Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

The MOD publish annual Service Justice System statistics in the Murder, Manslaughter, Sexual Offences and Domestic Abuse (MMSODA) report available on gov.uk. While they do not contain the requested breakdown of figures, they are Official Statistics which are scrutinised and vetted before release. When vetting data to be published by the Department, the MOD Statistics team also consider the quality and trustworthiness of the information, and whether to release statistics which are of a sensitive nature and may create risk of harm in cases of deliberate or inadvertent disclosure and which could be withheld under GDPR and Data Protection Acts.

I am placing a copy of this response in the Library of the House.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew Murrison." The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial 'M'.

RT HON DR ANDREW MURRISON MP