

The Ministry of Defence has announced a new UK-wide study into cancer among serving personnel and veterans who have served since 1990.

The research will use existing NHS records, so no action is required by serving personnel or veterans. Initial findings are expected to be published annually from 2027.

Current evidence suggests that overall cancer rates among Armed Forces personnel are similar to, or lower than, those of the general population. The MOD stresses that the study has not been launched because of any particular concern or because any specific group is believed to be at increased risk.

The programme will begin by examining the Armed Forces community as a whole before looking in more detail at particular occupations or groups where service-related exposures may justify closer investigation.

From BAFF's perspective, this is a sensible development. Good evidence matters. If service is associated with increased risks in particular roles or environments, those risks should be identified so that protection, healthcare and, where appropriate, compensation arrangements can be improved. Equally, robust evidence can provide reassurance where concerns are not supported by the data.

The study is also expected to involve serving personnel, veterans and families in helping to shape future research priorities.

You can [read the full announcement on the COBSEO website](#), which includes further details of the study and links to the dedicated GOV.UK information page.