

**PE1603**

Minister for the Armed Forces letter of 31 July 2017

Thank you for your letter of 16 June to the Secretary of State requesting data on visits to schools by the Armed Forces to assist the Scottish Parliament Public Petitions Committee consideration of Petition PE1603. This has been passed to me for reply as Minister for the Armed Forces.

My predecessor gave written evidence to the Public Petitions Committee in letters dated 23 October 2016 and 4 January 2017. The latter ordered a briefing and I am pleased the Petitions Committee is taking up the offer and that a date is being discussed for later in the year. We would like to reiterate that our Armed Forces never visit schools for recruitment purposes and only visit when they have been invited by the school to support activities. Whilst presentations may be given highlighting the careers available in the Armed Forces, no pupil or School student is ever signed-up or able to make a commitment to become a recruit in the Armed Forces during the course of a visit. The visits cover a range of activities such as career events, citizenship talks, science and maths challenges and other indoor or outdoor exercises.

The data you requested is attached to this letter. It covers the period from April 2016 to present. The Royal Navy data does not record the post codes of Schools.

Additionally, you may be interested in data published by the Army in response to a Freedom of Information request which details visits across the UK from March 2013 to July 2017.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/foi-responses-published-by-mod-week-commencing-2-november-2015>

I hope the above information is helpful. I am copying this letter to the Secretary of State for Scotland.