



BEACON ALERT

INSIGHTS: 01 APRIL 2024 - 31 MARCH 2025

Beacon Alert Insights

01 April 2024 - 31 March 2025

Introduction

Welcome to the Beacon Alert Annual Insights Report.

This document summarises information collected from Beacon Alerts issued between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025. The aim is to provide a clear, factual overview of trends observed in missing veteran and service personnel cases within the UK during this period.

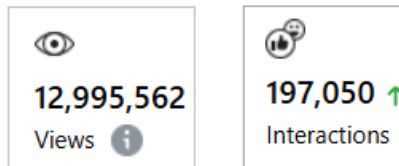
As the first report, it will be difficult to isolate definitive trends at this stage. However, it serves as a valuable indicator of where we are now and provides a foundation for building future insights. Already, the data from March onwards this year is showing differences, some positive, some negative, that we will be able to analyse and act upon in subsequent reports.

The purpose of this report is to inform our followers, partner organisations, police, the NHS, and specialist veteran support services. Our goal is to support better understanding, encourage early reporting, and strengthen cooperation between communities and agencies.

About Beacon Alert

Beacon Alert is dedicated to rapidly sharing information about missing UK veterans, serving armed forces personnel, and blue light workers. We work alongside families, friends, police, the NHS, and specialist veteran services to reduce the amount of time an individual is missing and improve the chances of a safe recovery.

Founded with the belief that speed saves lives, Beacon Alert ensures that urgent, verified information reaches the widest possible audience in the shortest possible time. Using structured alerts, we provide key details that can help the public assist in locating the missing person, while respecting privacy and safety.



Our mission is not only to aid in urgent searches but also to strengthen awareness, encourage early reporting, and support the mental health and welfare of those who have served. Monthly, we regularly reach upwards of 7-10 million people.

Website: beaconalert.co.uk

Facebook Page: facebook.com/BeaconAlert

WhatsApp Channels: [Beacon Alert WhatsApp](#)



About the Data

The data in this report was collected from Beacon Alerts issued between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025. These alerts are posted either:

- With the express permission of close relatives or friends of the missing individual, or
- Based on public appeals issued by the police forces leading the investigation.

Certain cases have been excluded to maintain the focus and integrity of this report:

Removals

Armed forces personnel or veterans missing abroad: Sadly, this accounted for three UK veterans during the period, one of whom was found deceased. These have been removed from the dataset in order to focus this report on cases in the UK.

Cases where it was later confirmed that the person was not a veteran or serving armed forces personnel: These were removed to avoid skewing the dataset.

While every missing person case is of concern, this report is focused solely on veterans and serving personnel.

What to do when a civilian goes missing

For civilian missing persons, the public should:

- Call 999 immediately in an emergency
- Call 101 for non-emergencies
- Contact the [Missing People charity](#) on 116 000 (freephone, available 24/7)

***Editor's Note:** Several alerts during the period were raised with Beacon Alert before the police had been contacted.*

If someone is missing and at risk, your first action should always be to call the police. In most cases, we require a police reference number to ensure an effective information channel and coordinated search effort.

Time Missing

The 'time missing' figure used in this report reflects the duration between the first Beacon Alert post and the last update received on that individual's case. It does not necessarily represent the total length of time the person was missing.

In some cases, the individual had already been missing for a significant period before Beacon Alert was informed, meaning the recorded duration may understate the full timeline. This distinction is important when interpreting the data, as our figures are primarily a measure of the public alert window rather than the entire missing period.

Key Insights

This section highlights the most relevant statistics from the reporting period, supported by contextual analysis to help interpret the figures. Each data point is followed by a short commentary explaining its potential significance, limitations, and any considerations for future monitoring. While these insights offer valuable indicators, they should be understood in the context of the dataset's scope and the specific nature of Beacon Alert's mission, which focuses exclusively on veterans, serving personnel, and blue light workers within the UK.

Total Cases

Total Cases in Period	50
Average Reporting Freq.	1 Case Every 7.3 Days
Average Time Missing	2.04 Days
Most Common Time Missing	1 Day

The reporting period saw 50 confirmed Beacon Alerts, equating to an average of one new case every 7.3 days. While this may seem relatively infrequent compared to general missing persons figures, it reflects the specific focus on veterans and serving personnel, who make up a small proportion of the UK population.

The average time missing across all cases was 2.04 days, suggesting that most incidents were resolved quickly once reported. This is reinforced by the most common (mode) time missing being 1 day,

highlighting the importance of rapid alerting and coordinated response.

Editor’s Note: Not all missing persons sent to our team make it to an public appeal. Some don’t meet the criteria for an alert, but most are resolved in the information gathering phase by alternate means.

Gender Distribution

MALE	FEMALE
45 (90%)	5 (10%)

Of the 50 cases recorded, 45 (90%) involved male individuals and 5 (10%) involved female individuals.

This disproportionate ratio reflects the demographic composition of the UK veteran and serving personnel population, which is predominantly male. It also aligns with national missing person statistics, which often show higher representation of men in certain high-risk categories, including suicide-related incidents.

While the low number of female cases in this dataset limits the ability to draw strong gender-based conclusions, the figures highlight the importance of ensuring that both male and female veterans have equal access to mental health, welfare, and crisis intervention services.

Outcome Distribution

Found Safe	Found Passed	Missing
41	7	2

Across the 50 recorded cases, 41 individuals (82%) were found safe, 7 were sadly found passed (14%), and two are still missing (4%).

***Editor's Note:** It's important to note that we have chosen not to separate "hospitalised" outcomes from "found safe." While hospitalisation was noted in some cases, the term is too broad to offer meaningful insight—it may represent anything from precautionary care to serious injury. Including it could risk misinterpretation or feel invasive without additional context.*

The **14% fatality rate** in this dataset is significantly higher than what is observed in the general UK missing person population. National research shows that [less than 1% of missing persons reports result in a confirmed fatal outcome](#).

This stark difference underscores the heightened vulnerability of veterans and serving personnel, and it reinforces the urgent need for rapid information sharing and early intervention to improve outcomes in these high-risk cases.

Age Statistics

Average Age	46 Years
Age Range	21 - 90
Average Age Found Passed	44

Of the 50 recorded cases in this reporting period, age was confirmed in 42 cases (84%). The average (mean) age across the dataset was 46.3 years. The youngest person recorded was 21, while the oldest was 90.

The distribution is skewed towards middle-aged individuals, with the majority of cases falling in the 40–60 age bracket. This is consistent with the demographic profile of the UK veteran population, which, according to the ONS Census 2021, has a median age of around 60 and where fewer than 15% are under 40.

It is important to note that some missing individuals were serving personnel, which accounts for the small proportion of younger cases in the dataset. The higher prevalence of middle-aged cases may be linked to a range of factors, including health conditions, social isolation, and the long-term impact of service.

For future reporting, improving the capture of age data will be a priority, as the 16% of cases without confirmed ages limits the depth of demographic analysis.

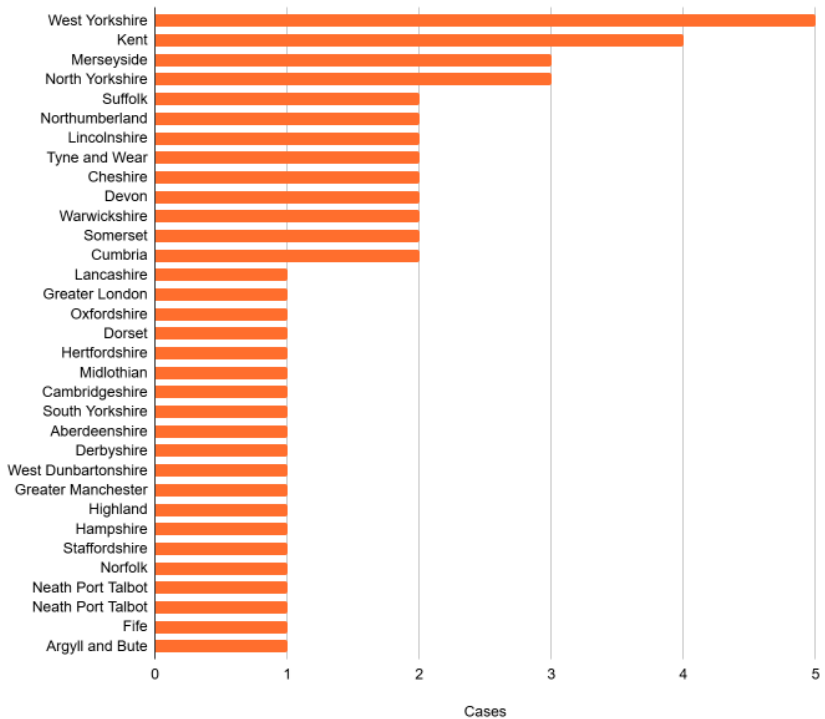
Geographic Breakdown By Country

England	43 cases (86%)
Scotland	6 cases (12%)
Wales	1 case (2%)

The 50 recorded cases in this reporting period were spread across three UK nations:

The high concentration in England reflects both the country's larger population and its higher share of the UK veteran community. Scotland's 12% share is proportionally higher than its share of the UK population (around 8%), while Wales' 2% share is slightly lower than its population share. These figures may reflect not only population distribution, but also regional differences in awareness of Beacon Alert and variations in local reporting practices.

Cases By County



Cases by County

Within England, cases were distributed across a broad range of counties, though some regions featured more prominently:

- West Yorkshire – 5 cases (10%)
- Kent – 4 cases (8%)
- Merseyside, North Yorkshire – 3 cases each (6%)

Suffolk, Northumberland, Lincolnshire, Tyne and Wear, Cheshire, Devon, Warwickshire, Somerset, Cumbria – 2 cases each (4%)

All other counties – 1 case each, including Greater London, Greater Manchester, Hampshire, Norfolk, Staffordshire, Lancashire, Oxfordshire, Dorset, Hertfordshire, Cambridgeshire, South Yorkshire, Derbyshire, Aberdeenshire, West Dunbartonshire, Midlothian, Highland, and Neath Port Talbot (Wales).

The concentration in counties like West Yorkshire and Kent may suggest localised factors, such as population size and veteran density. Conversely, the single-case counties may represent either genuinely low incidence or lower visibility of Beacon Alert in those areas.

Tracking these trends annually will help identify whether certain areas consistently feature more prominently, enabling more targeted outreach and collaboration with local services.

Summary

This first annual Beacon Alert Report provides an evidence-based snapshot of missing veteran and serving armed forces cases in the UK for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025. While the dataset is small compared to national missing persons statistics, the insights are significant.

This is by no means an exhaustive list of armed forces members who have gone missing in this time period, nor is it a complete account of all possible mental health-related deaths within this cohort. We can only report on the cases we are aware of (those brought to Beacon Alert either through public police appeals or with the express permission of relatives or close friends). That said, the data we do have is enough to recognise missing veterans and serving personnel as a particularly at-risk group, one that warrants special measures in both policy and practice.

One of the most striking findings is the disproportionately high fatality rate. In the general UK missing person population, fewer than 1% of cases end in confirmed death. In contrast, in this dataset, 14% (7 out of 50) of cases ended in confirmed fatalities; a rate 14 times higher than the national average. Given that suicide remains a leading cause of death among veterans, these figures underscore the urgent need for faster and more targeted interventions when a veteran or serving armed forces member is reported missing.

This is the driving purpose of the [Forcer Protocol](#): To ensure that when a veteran or serving armed forces member goes missing, the case is automatically escalated to the highest risk category, and that

relevant service history, health, and other data relating to their mental health is made available to assist in their rapid location and safe recovery. By embedding this escalation process within police force procedures, and by gathering critical contextual data in advance, the Forcer Protocol seeks to close the gap between going missing and being found.

Beacon Alert will continue to work closely with police forces and specialist veteran services to improve both the speed of response and the quality of information sharing.

This report provides a baseline from which we can track progress and highlight where change is working, and where more still needs to be done.

Talk to us about this report:

Email us on hello@beaconalert.co.uk

Getting Support

If you have found any part of this report distressing, please know that help is available. Discussions about missing persons, mental health, and suicide can be difficult and may bring up strong feelings.

We encourage anyone affected by the issues raised in this report - whether you are a veteran, serving personnel, family member, or friend - to reach out for support. You are not alone, and speaking to someone can make a difference.

You can find a list of trusted organisations and crisis support services on our [website's Getting Support](#) page. These include veteran-specific helplines, mental health services, and urgent crisis support lines.

If you or someone you know is in immediate danger, always call 999 in the UK.

Sources

With thanks to the several external organisations a data sources that helped provide context to this report:

Gender Split among UK Veterans (Census 2021)

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/armedforcescommunity/articles/characteristicsofukarmedforcesveteransenglandandwalescensus2021/census2021>

Fatal Outcomes in Missing Person Cases (General UK Population)

<https://www.missingpeople.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/3.-Fatal-outcome-cases-info-sheet.pdf>

https://www.missingpeople.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Final_Missing_Adults_Research.pdf

Cause of death in fatal missing person cases in England and Wales

[Cause of death in fatal missing person cases in England and Wales - Jessica Whibley, Geoff Newiss, Craig JR Collie, 2023](#)