



Ministry of Defence Police

Our Ref. FOI: FOI2016/03005

Your Ref: RFI: 085.16

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Date: 17 March 2016

Dear [REDACTED],

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000. MINISTRY OF DEFENCE POLICE: ATTENDANCE REFORMS.

I refer to your e-mail of 8 March 2016 2015, which we acknowledged on 9 March 2016. We are dealing with your e-mail of 87 March 2016 as a request for information in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

In your e-mail of 8 March 2016, you requested:

- 1) *What are the new MOD sick absence and attendance reforms referred to in section 2 of the Ministry of Defence Police Force Orders on the 7th January 2016?*
- 2) *The Ministry of Defence Police Force Orders on the 7th January 2016 section 5, states that the oversight of cases involving staff sickness and medical absence has now moved away from the Professional standards Department to the Performance and attendance Unit. What are the reasons behind this change?*
- 3) *As of February 2016, DBS Caseworkers are no longer permitted to advise both the line manager and employee involved in the same case. What are the reasons behind this change?*

A search for the information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence Police, and I can confirm that no information in scope of your request is held.

- 1) *What are the new MOD sick absence and attendance reforms referred to in section 2 of the Ministry of Defence Police Force Orders on the 7th January 2016?*

Defence Internal Brief 2015DIB/02 dated 3rd February 2015 introduced the new MOD Civilian Attendance Management Policy [attached] which came into effect from Monday 2nd

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February 2015. We communicated these changes to the Force in FOSN 35/15 on 19th March 2015. The new policy and main changes are highlighted in the FOSN:

The new policy builds on the previous policy, but includes key changes. The policy intent is to get people back in to work and to keep people at work. The emphasis is to:

- Ensure that support mechanisms are in place for anyone who is unable to attend work due to sickness absence
- Offer relevant support
- Take appropriate steps to proactively manage the absence in accordance with policy, eg OH referral and advice, reasonable adjustments, supporting absence etc.

Trigger Points - The previous trigger point for sickness was 14 calendar days. This has now changed to 8 working days in a rolling 12 month period or four spells/ occurrences of sickness. Line managers will receive an automatic prompt from DBS when their member of staff breaches the 4 spells or 8 working days trigger point.

2) The Ministry of Defence Police Force Orders on the 7th January 2016 section 5, states that the oversight of cases involving staff sickness and medical absence has now moved away from the Professional standards Department to the Performance and attendance Unit. What are the reasons behind this change?

As is detailed in FOSN 01/16, one of the main challenges identified by the original Capability Handling & Sickness Management (CHASM) project was the perception of the informal and formal elements of the Unsatisfactory Police Performance (UPP) Regulations 2012 as a disciplinary and punitive process/tool. Following discussions over a period of time with the Professional Standards Department and the Chief Officers Group (COG) the decision was made to remove the management of the informal Police Restoring Efficiency Programme (PREP) and formal UPP for Attendance and Performance (Medical Capability only) into the Performance & Attendance Unit. PSD remain responsible for all other Performance cases. This allows for the PAU to use UPP as an effective HR management tool to identify barriers to attendance and/or full capability and to work with the business and individual to ensure an outcome that is reasonable for both parties. The PAU advises Line Managers and Management as well as individual officers for Stage One and Stage Two, and then deal with the co-ordination and facilitation of Stage Three cases and any outcomes. [Please see extract from FOSN below.]

FOSN 01/16: Formal UPP under the Police (Performance) Regulations 2012

One of the main challenges identified in the management of performance and attendance across the MDP is the perceptions and use of PREP and formal UPP. As part of the new Strategy, the oversight of cases moving to formal UPP for attendance and performance (capability only) has moved from the Professional Standards Department (PSD) into the PAU. Where Line Managers would have referred the case to the local PSD Co-ordinator, the case must now be referred to the PAU (details below) who will review the informal actions taken and assess whether it should move to formal UPP. The responsibility to move through the UPP stages will remain the responsibility of the Line Manager/Management, but with the oversight of the PAU who will provide advice, guidance and support. PSD will continue to have oversight of and manage performance for all non medical performance and gross incompetency cases.

The PAU will be reviewing all formal cases that PSD have current involvement with over the following few weeks, making direct contact with the Line Manager/Management once completed. Once discussed with the assigned DBS HR Consultant, any new cases requiring advice and authority to move to formal UPP should be directed to the PAU using the group mailbox (see contact details below).

3) As of February 2016, DBS Caseworkers are no longer permitted to advise both the line manager and employee involved in the same case. What are the reasons behind this change?

The MOD Civil Service HR procedures have been aligned with the wider Civil Service HR community to provide the same advice accordingly supporting the One HR ethos. It has therefore been agreed on an Employee service to provide Policy and Process advice, any emotional support as previously given is now to be directed through to the Wellbeing Service. It is also to ensure confidentially that an Employee can attain advice without their being a perception of conflicts of interest.

If you are not satisfied with this response or wish to complain about any aspect of the handling of your request, then you should contact me in the first instance. If informal resolution is not possible and you are still dissatisfied then you may apply for an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights Team, 1st Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, London SW1A 2HB (email CIO-FOI-IR@mod.uk). Please note that any request for an internal review must be made within 40 working days of the date on which the attempt to reach informal resolution has come to an end.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may take your complaint to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not investigate the case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website (<http://www.ico.org.uk>).

Yours sincerely

