



Ministry of Defence

Ministry of Defence
Main Building
Whitehall
London SW1A 2HB
United Kingdom

Telephone : +44 (0)20 721 89000

Our Reference: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email to the Ministry of Defence (MOD) dated [REDACTED] in which you requested the following information:

- 1) What constitutes "Outstanding Service" by MOD definition?
- 2) What is the criteria for an Operation to be awarded a Medal?
- 3) How are these decisions reached?
- 4) Who constitutes the committee (if done by committee) that makes such decisions?

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA Act). In regard to your request, the information is exempt under Section 21 of the FOIA, because it is reasonably accessible to you by other means.

We have understood your reference to "Outstanding Service" as meaning the award of the Meritorious Service Medal (MSM). To be eligible an individual must have "good, faithful, valuable and meritorious service with conduct judged to be irreproachable throughout." Further information about the MSM is already in the public domain via the MOD website at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/medals-campaigns-descriptions-and-eligibility#meritorious-service-medal>

The Prime Minister appointed Sir John Holmes four years ago to conduct an independent review of the policy governing the award of military medals. The aim was to draw a definitive line under issues which in some cases had been controversial for many years, ensuring that consistency and fairness were respected as far as possible, in a context where the judgments are often difficult, but need to be clear and defensible.

The report covered the current principles and rules of medallic recognition, the decision making process and the composition of the Committee on the Grant of Honours, Decorations and Medals. This report is already in the public domain at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/military-medals-review-report-by-sir-john-holmes>

If you are not satisfied with this response or you 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 Compliance team, 1st Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail 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 your 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,

Defence People

