



Ministry of Defence

J9 FOI Secretariat

Permanent Joint Headquarters (United Kingdom)
Northwood Headquarters
Sandy Lane
Northwood
Middlesex
HA6 3HP

E-Mail: PJHQ-J9-FOI-Group@mod.gov.uk

Reference: FOI [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

9 October 2018

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 17 August 2018 requesting the following information:

"In a written statement about "Afghanistan (Locally Employed Staff)" made by the Minister for the Armed Forces, the Rt Hon Mark Lancaster TD MP on 12 December 2017, it was expressed that "the UK Government recognise that they have a special debt of gratitude to these individuals and we aim to complete this review by the spring of next year, giving priority to the more severely disabled cases" and that "(...)we initiated work to review the payments to adjust them for the different economic conditions of life in the UK."

I am aware that there are severely disabled Locally Employed Staff that to this day, unable to claim essential benefits like PIP due to requirements such as time limit that doesn't apply to those who have refugee status or rights. Following your statement, I assume that Ministry of Defence, as well as the government, are aware of the challenges faced by relocated LECs, and rightfully stating that there will be improvements.

Therefore, following the statement published on 12 December 2017, I am writing to find out the outcome of the review, which was to be completed by Spring 2018, and which policies were or are planning to be introduced to support severely disabled cases. Additionally, I would like to learn the outcome of the initiated review which was conducted in Autumn 2017, that was aiming at reviewing the payment to adjust different economic conditions of life in the UK. If there is a link or pdf file that includes the reviews I stated above, I would like to request access to them too."

Your correspondence has been treated as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

A search for the information has now been completed within the Ministry of Defence, and we can confirm that all the information in scope of your request is held.

The two reviews are in fact one review, which was initiated to review the payments given to our severely disabled former Locally Employed Civilians (LECs) who have relocated to the UK. There is no formal policy document however I can offer the following information:

MOD announced in December 2017 its intention to review the medical payments made to 12 former Afghan LECs injured whilst on active duty, who have since relocated to the UK under the Ex-Gratia Scheme. This is because the original payments were made in line with the economic conditions the individuals were living in in Afghanistan. As these individuals are now living in the UK, it is necessary to amend the payments so they are in line with UK economic conditions. Work has been ongoing since to reassess the values of the payments.

LECs who were seriously disabled as a result of injury whilst on active duty received Ex-Gratia payments comprised of a Pain and Suffering Loss of Amenity (PSLA) payment and a Loss of Earnings (LoE) payment. Payments were also made in some cases to cover the costs of medical treatment not available in Afghan hospitals and/or adaptations to accommodate their injury.

There was no requirement for medical or adjustments payments as the individual will now have access to free medical care and mobility benefits, where applicable.

The review has concluded that 12 payments will be made to reflect that outlined above. Staff are currently in the process of informing recipients of their individual awards.

If you have any queries regarding the content of this letter, please contact this office in the first instance.

If you wish to complain about the handling of your request, or the content of this response, you can request an independent internal review by contacting the Information Rights Compliance team, Ground Floor, MOD Main Building, Whitehall, SW1A 2HB (e-mail CIO-FOI-IR@mod.gov.uk). Please note that any request for an internal review should be made within 40 working days of the date of this response.

If you remain dissatisfied following an internal review, you may raise your complaint directly to the Information Commissioner under the provisions of Section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act. Please note that the Information Commissioner will not normally investigate your case until the MOD internal review process has been completed. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at: Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. Further details of the role and powers of the Information Commissioner can be found on the Commissioner's website at <https://ico.org.uk/>.

Yours sincerely,

PJHQ J9 FOI Secretariat