



Dear Mr **Defence Business Services**  
Head DBS Secretariat  
Oak West Level 1  
MOD Abbey Wood North  
Bristol BS34 8QW

[DBSRES-Secretariat@mod.gov.uk](mailto:DBSRES-Secretariat@mod.gov.uk)

Ref: FOI2021/04364

13 May 2021

Thank you for your email of 23 April 2021 to the Ministry of Defence (MOD) requesting the following information:

*“Please can you send me information on all the aid and support a British veteran and his family are entitled to overseas, provided by the UK Government.”*

A search for the information has now been completed within the MOD and I can confirm all information in scope of your request is held. However, your question falls entirely within the scope of an absolute exemption under Section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) as it is reasonably accessible by other means. As Section 21 is an absolute exemption, there is no requirement to consider the public interest in making the decision to withhold the information.

Under Section 16 (Advice and Assistance) of the FOIA you may be interested to know that Veterans can access the same services provided by the Ministry of Defence no matter where in the world they live.

Veterans' Gateway is the first point of call for veterans needing support, signposting veterans to support organisations within their local area or country of residence. The service offers a 24/7 Instant Messaging facility to cater for overseas clients who might not be able to call at convenient times for reasons of time difference. Further information on the Veterans Gateway and their contact details can be found at the following link: [www.veteransgateway.org.uk](http://www.veteransgateway.org.uk)

The Veterans Welfare Service (VWS) also provides advice and information on areas such as health, statutory benefits and pensions support to all ex-service personnel, their families and dependents. As the VWS is located in the United Kingdom and Ireland, they do not have expert knowledge of local support for each country but are able to provide general advice. The VWS can be contacted by emailing [veterans-uk@mod.gov.uk](mailto:veterans-uk@mod.gov.uk) or by calling their helpline on +44 1253 866 043.

All veterans, whether living in the UK or overseas, can be considered for the [Armed Forces Compensation Scheme \(AFCS\)](#), [War Pension Scheme \(WPS\)](#) and [Armed Forces Pension Scheme \(AFPS\)](#), should they be entitled.

Support for veterans living overseas is predominately provided by ex-Service or other relevant charitable organisations, with different levels of support available depending on your country of residence. The Royal British Legion is one such organisation that offers support to veterans

overseas and has offices located around the world. Information can be found on their website, [Royal British Legion Overseas Support](#).

You may also be interested to know that this issue was raised in the House of Commons on 15 March 2021 and the Hansard transcript can be found at the following link:

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2021-03-15/debates/59D305EF-3A73-4668-959A-897811D772DC/VeteransOverseas>

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](mailto: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

A solid black rectangular box redacting the signature of the sender.

Defence Business Services Secretariat