



Ministry of Defence

Ref: FOI2021/11131

Defence Business Services Secretariat
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21 October 2021

Dear

Thank you for your email of 3 September 2021 to the Ministry of Defence (MOD), seeking the following information:

“I got your details from the royal British legion and advised to email you , I am after handbooks and guidelines royal British legion pension representatives use when helping veterans with war pension claims and also at war pension tribunals, also any other guidelines or books the pension specialists use” .

And your email of 29 September 2021 following our letter of the same day requesting clarification of your request:

You clarified your request as follows:

“Royal British legion war pension specialist I initially queried and was told by rbl they had nothing in relation to what staff use for war pension advice / helping with veterans claims, I was advised to contact your department.

Also I had information declined in relation to medical advisors at norcross and was told it was declined as per general medical councils advice , but the general medical council advised they can't decline current general practitioners details and also a veteran was given a medical advisors name and gmc number only last year by your department, so this requires investigating. As gmc can't understand why veterans Uk would lie ?”

I am treating your correspondence 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 I can confirm that some information in scope of your request is held.

To answer the first part of your request I can confirm that no information is held by the Department on the guidance Royal British Legion use to advise veterans.

However, under Section 16 of the FOIA (Advice and Assistance) I can confirm that the attached Veterans UK leaflets two and three are sent to veterans with their notification of a decision. It is possible that the Royal British Legion also has copies of these leaflets and refers to them to advise veterans on their Appeals.

Also under Section 16, I can confirm that when we are asked for the name and details of Veterans UK Medical Advisors (MA) the individual MA is approached and asked if they wish to release their details. This approach has been agreed with the General Medical Council (GMC), as MAs are not affecting veterans' health records or providing any treatment to them. If a Veterans UK MA does not wish to disclose their details, they are withheld under Section 40 of the FOIA. Section 40 is an absolute exemption and not subject to public interest test.

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

Defence Business Services Secretariat