



Defence Business Services
Secretariat
Room 6303
Tomlinson House
Norcross
Thornton-Cleveleys
Lancashire FY5 3WP

Ref: FOI2022/02294

DBSRES-Secretariat@mod.gov.uk

Mr [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

March 2022

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 21 February to the Ministry of Defence (MOD), requesting the following information:

“Please could you provide me with:

- 1. Defence Business Services' annual reports for 2019/20 and 2020/21.*
- 2. Veterans UK's annual reports for 2019/20 and 2020/21.*
- 3. Veterans UK's success at meeting its KPI targets for 2020, as detailed on page 20 of the DBS Corporate Plan 2020-2025 and copied in below (the cut-off figures were as depicted in the document provided to me):*

<i>Description of Veterans UK KPI</i>	<i>Target</i>
<i>Clear claims for War Pensions within 127 working days</i>	<i>127 working days</i>
<i>98% financial and administration accuracy</i>	<i>98%</i>
<i>Clear claims for AFCS within ACT of 90 working days</i>	<i>90 working days</i>
<i>98% financial and administration accuracy</i>	<i>98%</i>
<i>Make 99.3% of all service pension payments by due date</i>	<i>99%</i>
<i>Make 99% of all service payments with 99% accuracy over 6 months</i>	<i>99%</i>
<i>Recently bereaved widow(er) visits achieved <15 days after request</i>	<i>100%</i>

- 4. A copy of the “MOD Empowerment Agenda”*

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 MOD and I can confirm some of the information in scope of your request is held.

The information you have requested for question one and two is not held. This is because neither Defence Business Services (DBS) nor Veterans UK, which is the public facing name given to Veterans Services provided by DBS, publish separate annual financial reports.

Under Section 16 (Advice and Guidance) you may be interested to know that accounts for DBS are consolidated into the MOD Main accounts. A link to the MOD Annual Report and Accounts can be found at the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ministry-of-defence-annual-report-and-accounts-2020-to-2021>

In answer to question three, over the financial year ending 31 March 2021, DBS achieved the following Key Performance Indicators for delivering War Pension Scheme/Armed Forces Compensation Scheme claims and for visiting recently bereaved widow(er)s:

War Pension Scheme:

Clear Claims within 127 working days = 179.6 days
 98% Financial accuracy = 99.6%
 98% Administration accuracy = 99.2%

Armed Forces Compensation Scheme:

Clear Claims within ACT 90 working days = 121.4 days
 98% Financial accuracy = 100%
 98% Administration accuracy = 99.5%

Veterans Welfare Service:

Recently bereaved widow(ers) visits achieved <15 days after request =100%

Armed Forces Pension Scheme Financial year 20/21:

<u>“Make 99.3% of all service pension payments by due date”</u>		<u>“Make all Service Pension Payments with 99% accuracy over 6 months”</u>	
Apr 2020	100%	Apr 2020	100%
May 2020	100%	May 2020	99.99%
Jun 2020	100%	Jun 2020	100%
Jul 2020	100%	Jul 2020	100%
Aug 2020	100%	Aug 2020	100%
Sep 2020	100%	Sep 2020	100%
Oct 2020	100%	Oct 2020	100%
Nov 2020	100%	Nov 2020	100%
Dec 2020	100%	Dec 2020	100%
Jan 2021	100%	Jan 2021	100%
Feb 2021	100%	Feb 2021	99.87%
Mar 2021	100%	Mar 2021	100%

With regards to question four, the information requested is not held. The Department does not have a document called “MOD empowerment agenda”.

Under Section 16 (Advice and Assistance) we can provide some information detailing our ambition for an empowered workforce. The Defence Purpose is to protect the people of the United Kingdom, prevent conflict, and be ready to fight our enemies. We will achieve this by being curious, collaborative, and committed, and providing challenge.

Empowerment is a critical enabler to deliver the Defence Purpose and vision as detailed in the Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy 2021: “Global Britain in a Competitive Age.” More specifically, the Empowerment Programme aims to unlock the potential of the MOD’s people by giving them the capability, opportunity, and motivation to drive meaningful improvements in the way we operate in Defence. Empowerment aims to ensure:

- Our people have access to the right tools, equipment, and learning and development opportunities.
- Clear objectives are provided so everyone knows how they’re contributing to Defence.
- Better feedback and recognition are received for a job well done.
- Opportunity is given to safely challenge, be innovative and continuously improve Defence.
- Our people feel motivated because we are all respected and valued for who we are.
- Inclusive behaviours are embedded, with more coaching and staff development from their line managers.

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

Whilst we do not hold a document titled the “MOD empowerment agenda”, we have provided a copy of the Empowerment Rich Picture. This is a pictorial visualisation of the Empowerment Programme’s broader vision and strategy and is included at Annex A to assist you.

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 Secretariat