



Defence Business Services  
Secretariat  
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Ref: FOI2022/02494

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

18 March 2022

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 25 February 2022 to the Ministry of Defence (MOD), requesting the following information:

*"I wish to submit a FOI request. I have four questions, highlighted in bold:*

- 1. When handling a veteran's pension and allowance claims/reconsiderations/reviews/appeals, what computer programme/system does Veterans UK use to manage the process?**
- 2. The SPVA merged with Defence Business Services in 2014. Does Veterans UK retain a SPVA department/unit/team?**
- 3. How many Veterans UK staff and teams use email names/sender names that include the letters SPVA?**
- 4. The Senior President of Tribunals, the Rt Hon Sir Keith Lindblom, published his 2021 Annual Report in September 2021. His report stated under "War Pensions and Armed Forces Compensation Chamber" on page 51 that "The Chamber now has its own Jurisdictional Board and the benefit of much greater support and oversight of the resource needs of the Chamber. A major and long-standing issue is the fact that our appeals are not lodged directly with the Chamber but are instead sent by the appellant to Veterans' UK, an agency of the Ministry of Defence (MoD) which is wholly unsatisfactory. Last year it was agreed in principle that the process of direct lodgement of appeals to the Chamber will be implemented. Despite an outline commitment by MoD to work towards implementing Direct Lodgement by the end of 2021, and even making allowances for the interruption of the pandemic, progress has been disappointingly slow. MoJ Policy are working with MoD to try and get the project moving again and I very much hope to be able to report next year that, at last, Direct Lodgement has been achieved or is on course to be achieved in 2022" (page 51).**
  - a. When is the "Direct Lodgement" of appeals intended to be launched?**
  - b. How much does the MOD expect "Direct Lodgement" to save the MOD in annual costs?:"**

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) 2000.

A search for the information has now been completed within the MOD and I can confirm that some information in scope of your request is held.

To answer your first question, I can confirm that the War Pension Computer System is used for War Pension Scheme cases and the Compensation and Pension System is used for Armed Forces Compensation Scheme cases.

For questions two and three, I can confirm that when the Service Personnel and Veterans Agency (SPVA) merged with Defence Business Services (DBS) in 2014, 'Veterans UK' was adopted as the public facing name for Veterans Services provided by the veterans team in DBS. All externally facing email addresses are now @Veterans-UK.gov.uk, however, SPVA still shows in some internal email addresses.

To answer your final question, parts a) and b), Direct Lodgement of Appeals is a Ministry of Justice (MOJ) led initiative and its implementation, including the time scales they set, will be dictated by changes to MOJ legislation. The MOD is effectively a stakeholder in the project and will adapt processes to accommodate the rule changes. The MOJ has not yet shared its aspirations with the MOD about what changes it wishes to make to the rules or how Direct Lodgement will affect the respective roles and responsibilities. The MOD is therefore currently unable to assess any changes in delivery costs.

Under Section 16 (Information and Assistance) of the FOIA, I can advise that you may wish to submit a further FOI Request to the MOJ at the following address:

Ministry of Justice  
Disclosure team  
Postal Point 10.38, Floor 10  
102 Petty France  
London  
SW1H 9AJ  
United Kingdom

Email: [data.access@justice.gov.uk](mailto:data.access@justice.gov.uk)

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



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