



Ref: FOI2021/15576

Defence Business Services

Head DBS Secretariat
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Mr

17 January 2022

Dear

Thank you for your emails of 19 October 2021 and 14 December 2021 to the Ministry of Defence (MOD), seeking information about Medical Advisors

You requested the following information:

"I have a generic policy query regarding War Pension and AFCS Medical Advisors, are they required to sign any files they submit back to claimants if there is a box provided and if it states NAME are they also required to print their name? If any documents are not signed are they still viable documents in the remit of Veterans UK?"

14 December 2021 - what the internal policy is regarding Medical Advisors signing and printing names on Claimant's case files".

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 that some information in scope of your request is held. Please see the Annex below:

Under Section 16 of the FOIA (Information and Assistance) I can confirm that the names provided in the example are fictitious and do not relate to Medical Advisors names.

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

Veterans UK	OPPT Directive
Issue No:	10/2021
Date:	2 March 2021. Amended 4 Oct 21
Subject:	Medical Certification and Advice Authentication All Jurisdictions
For Action:	Operational Appeals and Support Teams
For Information:	Scheme Defence, OPTAG, QA Team, Medical Advisers
Published on:	SharePoint - Compensation Scheme Guidance Library DOI - OPPT WPS Guidance shared folder

Background

The decision-making process for both AFCS and WPS requires authentication from the caseworker on behalf of the Secretary of State and from the Medical Advisor (MA) where any medical certification or advice is provided.

The Tribunal have observed that there are occasions where the MA has either not signed or initialled their contribution to the decision.

OPPT Directive 22/2019 instructs what details should be redacted and this must be adhered to. There are a number of completed appeals waiting to be listed that may have unsigned documents which need action before proceeding to hearing.

Action for England and Wales

This directive must be read in conjunction with OPPT Directive 09/2021, Paper Hearings in England and Wales.

In addition to indicating Veterans UK's preference on the type of appeal on form AFCSWPS1648, the name of the MA needs to be confirmed for each piece of advice where a signature or initials do not appear.

You will need to check through the response and record those MA certificates or entries and indicate which MA provided that advice (example below):

Appeal Name	Page No	MA Advice or Certificate	MA details	Comments
Smith	32	Advice	Dr Sykes	
Smith	39	Advice	Dr Sykes	
Jones	13	Certificate	Dr Jedman	
Reeves	22	Advice	Unknown	Pool MA

When complete this form requires attaching to the top Tribunal and Departmental Representative (DR) copies only.

Action for Scotland and Northern Ireland

Paper Hearing nominations are currently not required in Scotland or Northern Ireland. A separate form, AFCSWPS1649, dedicated to MA signature/initials has been created using the table example shown above. When complete this form requires attaching to the top Tribunal and DR copies only.