



Defence Business Services
DBS Secretariat
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Ref: FOI2022/07534

DBSRES-Secretariat@mod.gov.uk

13 July 2022

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email of 14 June 2022 to the Ministry of Defence (MOD), seeking information about Veterans UK appeals.

You requested the following information:

- "1. How many veterans are currently in an appeal process without either the veteran or VetsUK requesting an appeal?"*
- "2. Can you provide the Vets UK policy and procedure on how the organisation responds to questions, complaints and requests for appeals?"*

I am treating your correspondence as a request for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). However, I can confirm that your correspondence has also been registered by the Veterans UK Customer Resolution Team at Stage One of the complaints process, a response to your complaint is due by 18 July 2022.

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.

In regards to Question 1, there are no Veterans currently in an appeal process without either the Veteran or Veterans UK requesting an appeal. An appellant must lodge an appeal in order for Veterans UK to take any action. Veterans UK does not process any appeals that have not been lodged by the appellant or their representative.

In regards to Question 2, I must advise that the information you have requested falls entirely within the scope of an absolute exemption under Section 21 of the 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

However, under Section 16 (Advice and Guidance) you may be interested to know that information on how Veterans UK responds to questions, complaints and emails can be found in the Service Pensions Order(SPO) 2006 at the link:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2006/606/contents>

Furthermore, Veterans UK complaints procedure can be found at the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/veterans-uk/about/complaints-procedure>

Lastly, information relating to the process upon submitting an appeal to the War Pension Scheme, and the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme can be found at the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/learning-from-our-experiences-together>

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

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the sender.

Defence Business Services Secretariat