



Defence Committee

Chair, Rt Hon Tobias Ellwood MP

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Leo Docherty MP

Minister for Defence People and Veterans

(By email)

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Following our productive session on 15 June on the work of the Office for Veterans Affairs, I wanted to write to you to set out those areas where the Committee requested additional information, which are listed in the attached Annex 1.

I also mentioned a specific case, and accordingly I attach a confidential Annex 2. In particular, the Committee is interested in your response to the issue raised by the correspondent around the 5-year waiting period for mental illnesses assessment, whereas "In stark contrast, with a physical injury caused by military service there is no such qualifying period or uncertainty, compensation and pensions are set and begin immediately upon medical discharge." (Paragraph 8). The Committee would appreciate a swift response.

Finally, I requested some broader updates: an indicative timeline for the Fleet Solid Support contract; revised Ajax Initial Operating Capability (IOC) and Full Operating Capability (FOC) dates; a long-promised briefing on nuclear matters emanating from the Integrated Review; and a date for the Committee visit to Hereford. I look forward to the Department's response to these requests.

Very best

Rt Hon. Tobias Ellwood MP
Chair of the Defence Committee

ANNEX 1

SERIAL	QUESTION	SUBJECT	REQUEST
01	Q11	Learning credits	Whether unused learning credits can be aggregated and used after an individual has left the Services.
02	Q58	Hearing loss	Whether there is an issue with veterans who left the Services before 2005 receiving help with hearing loss.
03	Q65-74	Tracking Iraq/Afghan veterans	Whether MoD has continued to identify and track those veterans severely injured in Iraq and Afghan, to ensure they receive the wider support they require - including social services, medical and housing needs.
04	Q76	MEG scanners	Whether MEG scanners are available to help diagnose traumatic brain injuries, and if not, why not.
05	Q93	OP COURAGE	How many veterans' cases have been referred across all three lines of OP COURAGE activity.
06	Q94	Overseas pensions	How many veterans do not receive an increase in their pension each year because they live in countries not covered by the annual uprating and how the specific example of the Falklands veteran has been addressed.
07	Q102	Pre-1975 pensions	How many veterans are affected by the policy of not paying pensions to those who left before completing their full military service before 1975, and whether an ex-gratia payment might be made.
08	Q112	War Widows pension	When the War Widows' pension issue (set out in Q103-Q111) is expected to be settled.
09	Q114	AF pensions' 'surplus'	Whether there is a surplus (Q114 claims c£300M) in the Armed Forces' pension pot, and if so, why that is?
10	Q115	Junior service	Whether junior service counts towards a Service pension (and if not, why not)
11	Q118 & Q128-129	Successful compensation appeals	Confirm Q118 figures are accurate (successful appeals between 2005-2021 – which Q128-129 note are 51% of all appeals) and why the success rate is seemingly so high; and provide figures for successful appeals for each of the last five years.
12	Q120	Loss of Earnings	Provide a description on how awards are calculated, including how loss of earnings is factored in.
13	Q121	Medical Advisers	Provide the professional qualifications of Medical Advisers, with an updated description as to why they are appropriate.
14	Q154-156	Veteran's ID cards	What security features are built into the Veteran's ID cards to avoid illegally copying
15	Q161	Veteran's lounge	Consideration of a Veterans lounge at Heathrow airport

16	Q163-165	National Defence Medal	Whether British veterans could receive a National Defence Medal (NDM) as one is already approved by the Queen for Commonwealth forces to wear.
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