

This factsheet provides a brief biography of Nicola Williams, the current Service Complaints Ombudsman for the Armed Forces, and some key information about her role.



Nicola Williams took up post as the first Service Complaints Ombudsman on 1 January 2016.

Prior to being appointed as the then Service Complaints Commissioner in 2015, Nicola held the post of the Complaints Commissioner for the Cayman Islands from 2009 to 2015, with a remit that extended over 93 government entities.

Since 2009, Nicola has also been a Crown Court Recorder sitting on the London and South Eastern Circuit.

Between 2004 and 2009, Nicola was a Commissioner at the Independent Police Complaints Commission, with particular responsibility for Kent, Sussex, the Ministry of Defence Police and part of the Metropolitan Police. Prior to this, she was a board member at the Police Complaints Authority from 2001 to 2004.

Between 1985 and 2001, Nicola was a barrister in private practice, practising in a number of fields before the High Court, Crown Court and Court of Appeal, and specialising in Criminal Law, including three successful Commonwealth death penalty appeals before the House of Lords sitting as the Privy Council.

Nicola is a founder member of the Independent Advisory Group to the Metropolitan Police Service (following recommendations arising from the Stephen Lawrence Report in 1999).

In addition to being actively engaged as a mentor for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, Nicola is also a published author.

## What can the Ombudsman do?

The Ombudsman can:

- help Service personnel access the Service complaints system
- review a decision that a complaint or appeal is inadmissible
- investigate allegations of undue delay in the handling of a Service complaint or Service matter
- investigate the substance (merits) of a Service complaint at the end of the internal process
- investigate whether a Service complaint was handled incorrectly (maladministration) at the end of the internal process

## Who can use the Ombudsman's services?

The Ombudsman's services can be used by all members of the Armed Forces, whether Regular or Reserve. Former serving members may also be able to use the Ombudsman's services.

## Does it cost money?

No. The Ombudsman is free, independent and impartial.

**For more information on the Office of the Service Complaints Ombudsman visit our website**

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