

Application for referral

A referral is a letter from the Service Complaints Ombudsman for the Armed Forces (SCOAF) to your Service that says you want to make a Service Complaint. It will be sent to the Service Complaints secretariat for your Service. They will then determine who will deal with it. This will usually be your chain of command or former chain of command if you are no longer serving.

SCOAF can't make referrals about issues that happened before 2008.

A referral:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> can be made for current or former Service personnel | <input type="checkbox"/> is not a formal Service Complaint |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> places a legal obligation on the Service to find out if the individual wants to make a formal complaint and get the process started | <input type="checkbox"/> can't be made if you have already submitted a formal complaint (in writing) to your chain of command about the same issue |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> requires SCOAF to be updated after key events | <input type="checkbox"/> is not the start of an investigation by SCOAF |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> does not mean SCOAF thinks that any complaint made following a referral should be upheld |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> does not prevent informal resolution |



A Service Complaint usually needs to be made within 3 months of the date of the wrong being complained about. Submitting this application form, or a referral, does not “stop the clock” on this time limit. The only way to “stop the clock” is to submit a completed Annex F or written statement of complaint to your chain of command.

If you need further information, or assistance to complete this form please phone **020 7877 3450** or email contact@scoaf.org.uk.

Section 1 – Your personal details

Please complete all fields in this section.

Title (Mr, Mrs, Rank)			
First name			
Surname			
Gender		OR <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to answer	
Address			
Email			
Phone			
What is your preferred method of contact?	<input type="checkbox"/> Email	<input type="checkbox"/> Phone – Home	<input type="checkbox"/> Phone – Mobile
	<input type="checkbox"/> Phone – Work	<input type="checkbox"/> Phone – Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Post
Service Number		Rank	
Please tick which Service you are, or were, in			
<input type="checkbox"/> Royal Navy	<input type="checkbox"/> Royal Marines	<input type="checkbox"/> Army	<input type="checkbox"/> RAF
Are you, or were you previously, a Reservist?			
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to answer	
Are you currently serving? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Date of discharge			
If no longer serving, what was your rank on discharge?			

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What is your current unit and location?



It doesn't matter if this is different from the unit you were in at the time of the issue you want to complain about.

If you are no longer serving, please provide the details of your last unit.

Are there any restrictions on when/how we can contact you?



It is really important that we can contact you if we need to follow up on something to do with your application. Please let us know if there are certain days or times when we can't contact you – including periods of leave or deployment. If we can't contact you, we might have to close your case on our system.

Reasonable adjustment



Sometimes, because of a disability or long-term health condition, people need to ask us to make changes to the way we do things so that they are not disadvantaged.

This could include providing information in plain language or a different format.

You can find more information about reasonable adjustment on our [website](#).

Do you need us to make any reasonable adjustments? Yes No

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If yes, please let us know what we can do.

Section 2 – What do you want the Ombudsman to refer?

Please complete all fields in this section.

What do you want to make a complaint about?



We don't need all the details of what happened. The purpose of a referral is simply to help you to raise your issue with the right person in your Service.

On this form, we only need you to tell us the broad issue and when it happened. For example: 'I would like to make a complaint about my SJAR from October 2019'.

Is your Commanding Officer (CO) implicated in your complaint?



This means: are you making a complaint about something your CO was directly involved in?

The Ombudsman doesn't decide who handles your complaint, but we can let the Service know if the CO might be implicated. If the CO is implicated, the Service will decide who the referral should be sent to instead of your CO.

Yes, my CO is implicated

No, my CO is not implicated

If yes, please explain how your CO was involved. This will be included in the referral letter.

Section 3 - Privacy statement

SCOAF is committed to the protection of your privacy in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. Our aim is to ensure that the information you provide to us is handled in a secure, efficient and confidential manner.

How do we process your information?

When you complete our application form we will transfer your information to our Case Management System.

In the next section you will be asked to give consent for us to process and use your information. We have clearly set out each of the ways SCOAF may use your information.

What if I have concerns about how my personal information is handled?

If you are concerned about how we handle your personal information you have the right to make a complaint. You can do this by contacting our data protection officer at privacy@scoaf.org.uk

For more information about what we do with your personal information please read our [privacy policy](#).

Section 4 - Consent

Please read through the following information carefully and tick each box to indicate that you have understood before signing and dating the consent. If you don't complete this section we can't process your application.

If you are completing this form electronically, simply type your name into the signature box. We will accept this as consent if you send the application from your own personal email account or named MOD email account.

I give consent for SCOAF to refer my intention to make a Service Complaint to my Service/the relevant Service.	<input type="checkbox"/>		
I declare that I have not submitted a formal complaint (in writing) about the same issues raised in this application.	<input type="checkbox"/>		
I understand that after reviewing my application SCOAF may decide that my application cannot be accepted for referral and I will be provided with a decision letter explaining why if this happens.	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<p>SCOAF is registered under the Data Protection Act 2018 (registration number ZA117749). I understand that SCOAF must keep a record of the personal information that I provide. SCOAF may also need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ask the Service for information about whether I made a formal complaint following referral and the outcome of that complaint • use anonymised information about my application in the Annual Report • report any concerns for my safety or the safety of others to the appropriate people. 	<input type="checkbox"/>		
I understand that SCOAF will share the relevant information contained in Sections 1 and 2 with my Service/the appropriate Service.	<input type="checkbox"/>		
I understand that SCOAF will keep a record of the personal information I provide for no less than 6 years and that my file will be destroyed after this.	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Signature		Date	

Independence | Impartiality | Integrity

Checklist

Before you submit your form take time to double-check that you have:

completed all fields in Section 1 and told us about any limitations on how/when we can contact you	<input type="checkbox"/>
given a brief overview of the issue you want us to refer	<input type="checkbox"/>
ticked all the boxes in the consent section	<input type="checkbox"/>
signed and dated your form	<input type="checkbox"/>
saved a copy of your completed form for your own records	<input type="checkbox"/>

How long will the process take?

2 days	We will acknowledge your application within 2 working days of receiving it. If you have not received an acknowledgement after that time please email contact@scoaf.org.uk
7 days	We aim to make all referrals within 7 working days of receiving a completed application form. If SCOAF decides that a referral cannot be made, we will send you a letter explaining this decision within 7 days.

How to submit your form

You can submit your completed application form by email or post.



contact@scoaf.org.uk



Enquiries and Referrals Team
Service Complaints Ombudsman for the Armed Forces
PO Box 72252
London
SW1P 9ZZ

Points to note:

- Do not send any other documents with your application unless it is a completed Annex F. **Any additional documents received will be destroyed without being acknowledged.**
- The server for our contact mailbox can't accept emails over 20MB.
- If you are posting your application, please obtain proof of posting or use recorded delivery through Royal Mail.
- Items signed for on delivery are not signed for by our office but staff at the post office. There is a delay between the date items are received at the PO Box and the date they reach our office.