

Application for a substance and/or maladministration investigation

Please complete this application form if you want the Service Complaints Ombudsman for the Armed Forces (SCOAF) to conduct an investigation into the substance and/or maladministration of your Service Complaint.

What is a substance investigation?

A substance investigation means that we investigate the allegations you made in your original Service Complaint.

What is maladministration?

It means that something was wrong or improper in the way your complaint was handled.

This type of investigation does not look at whether your complaint should have been upheld or not.



You can only ask for these investigations once you have received a final decision on your complaint at the end of the internal process.

Not all applications for investigation are accepted. Each application is assessed to determine if:



- the application was made in time
- there is a reasonable prospect a new investigation would result in a different outcome
- an investigation would be a proportionate use of the Ombudsman's powers
- the redress requested can be achieved
- there is a public interest in conducting an investigation

If your application is not accepted, you will receive a decision letter explaining why.

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

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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 you have changed units since you made your original Service Complaint.

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.

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Section 2 – Details of your complaint

Please complete all fields in this section

Date of the final decision



Applications to SCOAF need to be made within 6 weeks and 2 days of the date the final decision was emailed or posted. Late applications can be accepted if it is just and equitable. This means that there are reasons that SCOAF consider make it fair and reasonable to accept the late application.

Accepting a late application is an exception.

Was the decision emailed or posted more than 6 weeks and 2 days ago?

Yes

No

If yes, why was your application late? Why do you think it would be just and equitable for SCOAF to accept it?

What type of investigation are you applying for?



You can use this form to apply for a substance investigation, a maladministration investigation, or both.

Please only apply for the type of investigation/s you think you need.

Substance

complete Sections 3 and 6 of this form

Maladministration

complete Sections 4 and 6 of this form

Both

complete Sections 3, 4, and 6 of this form

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Section 3 – Substance

Please complete all fields in this section

What was your original complaint about?



Please provide a brief summary in your own words. Do not cut and paste from your Annex F, especially if you think your complaint was misinterpreted.

SCOAF can only consider the issues that were accepted as admissible on your original Service Complaint. You can't make any new allegations here.

Why do you think the final decision was wrong?



You need to be specific about what parts of the decision you disagree with. You also need to give reasons why you disagree with it.

For example: Was your complaint misinterpreted? Were key witnesses not interviewed? How would a new investigation come to a different conclusion?

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What redress do you want if your complaint is upheld?



You need to be specific about what you are hoping to achieve from a new investigation. There are limits to the Ombudsman's powers. The Ombudsman can only make recommendations about redress and does not have the power to direct or compel the Services or MOD to provide specific redress.

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Section 4 – Maladministration

Please complete all fields in this section

Why do you think your complaint wasn't handled properly?



You need to be specific about what you allege was wrong with the handling of your complaint.

How has this affected you?



You need to be specific about the impact the alleged improper handling of your complaint has had on you and any injustice you have suffered as a result.

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What redress do you want if we find that there was maladministration?



You need to be specific about what redress you want if it is identified that there was maladministration in the handling of your Service Complaint.

There are limits to the Ombudsman's powers. The Ombudsman can only make recommendations about redress and does not have the power to direct or compel the Services or MOD to provide specific redress.

Section 5 - 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 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 the information you provide 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](#).

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Section 6 - Consent

Please read through the following information carefully and tick each box to indicate that you have understood before signing and dating the consent. We cannot process your application if you do not complete this section.

If you are completing this form electronically, you can 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 investigate the substance and/or handling of my Service Complaint	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that SCOAF may decide that my application can't be accepted, either in whole or part	<input type="checkbox"/>
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: <ul style="list-style-type: none">ask the Service for information about my complaintuse anonymised information about my application in the Annual Reportreport any concerns for my safety or the safety of others, to the appropriate people	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that if SCOAF conducts an investigation, a copy of parts of this application form will be shared with the relevant Service as required by Regulation 5(3) of <i>The Armed Forces (Service Complaints Ombudsman Investigations) Regulations 2015</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I _____ give consent for the Service to release any relevant medical information contained within my Service Complaint file to SCOAF for the purpose of considering my application or conducting an investigation	
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 that time	<input type="checkbox"/>
Signature	Date

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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 reasons for any delay if your application is being made more than 6 weeks and 2 days after the date the final decision on your complaint was emailed or posted to you	<input type="checkbox"/>
ticked all the boxes in the consent section	<input type="checkbox"/>
signed and dated your form	<input type="checkbox"/>
attached your written statement of complaint/Annex F form	<input type="checkbox"/>
attached the original admissibility decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
attached both the Decision and Appeal Bodies' decision letters (if applicable)	<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 .
10 days	We aim to complete the initial assessment of your application within 10 working days.
100 days	Once your application has been allocated to an investigator, we aim to provide you with a final decision within 100 working days.

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How to submit your form

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



contact@scoaf.org.uk



Service Complaints Ombudsman for the Armed Forces
PO Box 72252
London
SW1P 9ZZ

Points to note:

- Remember to attach the following documents to your application:
 - Annex F
 - Admissibility decision
 - Decision letters from both the Decision Body and Appeal Body

Do not send any other documents through with your application. **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.