

SCOAF Investigations

- In Q4 2020, the Ombudsman has received 61 investigation requests. This represents a decrease of 18% when compared to Q3 2020 (74 requests) and a decrease of 16% when compared to Q4 2019 (73 requests).
- The most frequent requests were for investigations into Admissibility Decisions and Undue Delay.
- 91% of all investigation requests were considered eligible for investigating.
- In Q4 2020, 73% of eligible investigation requests closed were within SCOAF timeliness targets⁶. There was a timeliness rate of 100% for Admissibility Decision Investigations and Undue Delay investigations, 31% for Maladministration and 30% for Substance investigations.
- As of 31st December 2020, we have 24 unallocated substance and mal-administration cases – this is a large fall from 31st December 2019.

Chart 1: Investigation requests to SCOAF by case type, Q4 2020³

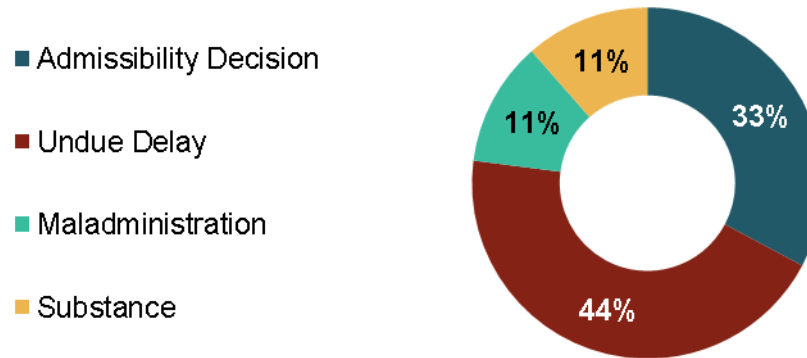
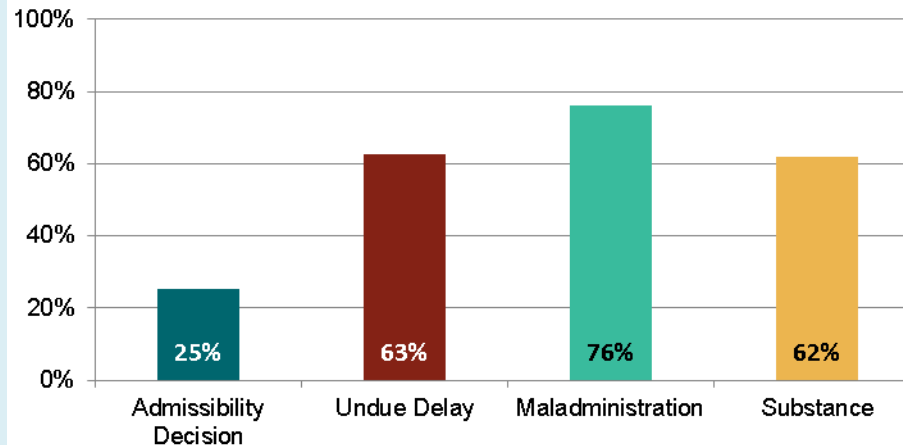


Chart 2: SCOAF investigation upheld rate⁵ by case type for the last 12 months, January – December 2020



3. The sum of the components of Chart 1 does not add up to 100% due to rounding. The actual percentages before rounding are: Admissibility Decision (32.9%); Undue Delay (44.3%); Maladministration (11.4%); Substance (11.4%).

4. Includes Royal Marines

5. Investigations upheld in favour of the complainant fully or partially.

6. The SCOAF investigations timeliness target is to complete the investigation and decision within 17 working days for investigations into Admissibility Decisions and Undue Delay and 100 working days for investigations into Maladministration and Substance.

Quarterly Statistical Report

This report presents key findings from the casework of the Service Complaints Ombudsman for the Armed Forces. It supplements data released in the [Annual Report](#)

Figures presented are **provisional** and are subject to later revision. They are produced in the spirit of the [Code of Practice for Official Statistics](#)

SCOAF Investigations

The Ombudsman's powers of investigation are limited to:

- Review of **admissibility decisions**
- Undue delay** in the handling of a Service complaint or Service matter
- Substance** (merits) of a Service complaint that has been finally determined
- Maladministration** of a Service complaint that has been finally determined

Tri Service 'red flag' cases

- At end of Q4 2020, the three Services had 435 'red flag' complaints open – a 1% decrease on the end of Q3 2020 (438 complaints), and a decrease of 3% on the end of Q4 2019 (450 complaints).
- The Royal Navy⁷ reported a 24% increase from 12 months ago, in the number of red flag cases (from 91 cases to 113 cases) while the Army reported a 14% decrease (from 294 cases to 252 cases) and the RAF reported a 8% increase (from 65 to 70 cases).
- 55% of 'red flag' cases have been open for more than double the target period (48 weeks).
- On average (median⁸), cases have spent 31 weeks beyond the 24 week target.
- The average (median⁸) time a red flag case has spent beyond the 24 week target is 28 weeks for the Royal Navy, 36 weeks for the Army and 20 weeks for the RAF.
- The average (median⁸) time beyond target time for red flag cases has fallen by 40% over 12 months for the Royal Navy⁷ (from 46 weeks to 28 weeks), while the Army reported an 31% increase (from 27 weeks to 36 weeks) and the RAF reported a 8% decrease (from 22 weeks to 20 weeks)⁹.

Chart 3: Number of Service complaints (tri Service) beyond 24 week target (i.e. red flag cases)

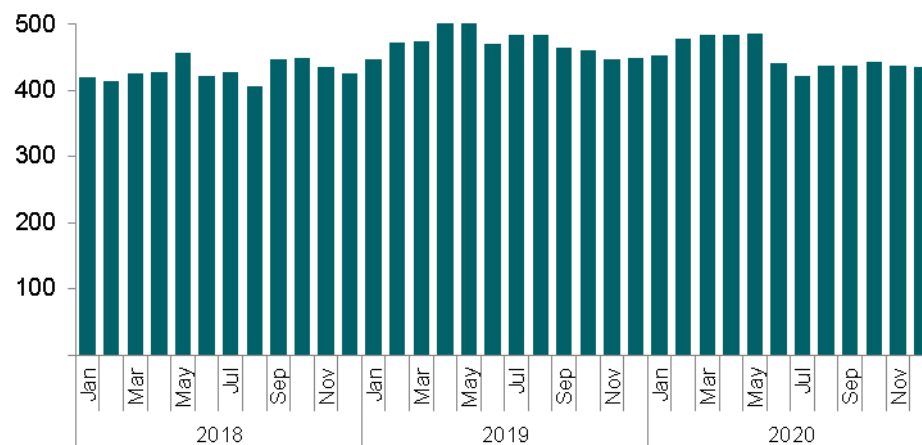
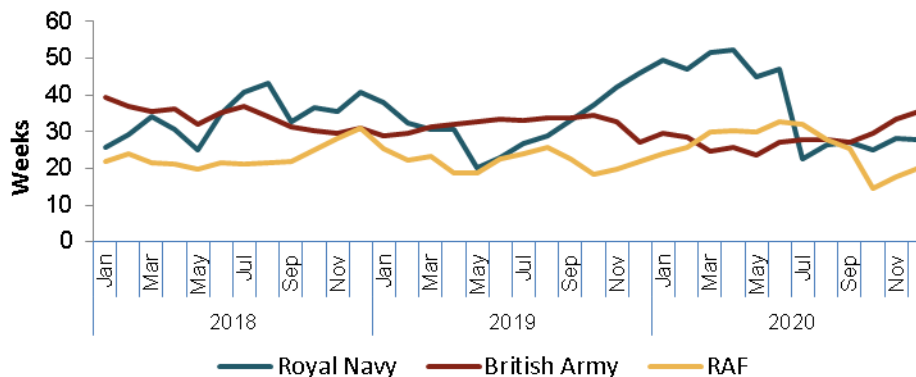


Chart 4: Median⁸ number of weeks spent over 24 week target for red flag cases by Service



7. Includes Royal Marines

8. The median is a type of average. The median case is the mid-ranked case of all cases ranked by number of weeks spent over target. The median number of weeks spent over target is the median case's number of weeks spent over target.

9. Figures have been rounded.

Tri Service 'red flag' cases

From January 2013, the Services were tasked by the Ministry of Defence (MOD) to resolve 90% of Service complaints within a 24-week timeline. 'Red flag' cases are those which have exceeded this target. It is a Key Performance Indicator as set out by MOD.

Quarterly Statistical Report issued by

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About the data

SCOAF caseload data was extracted from the SCOAF casework system as at 31st December 2020.

Data on the tri Service 'red flag' cases was extracted from Joint Personnel Administration system (JPA) as at 31st December 2020.