

Key findings

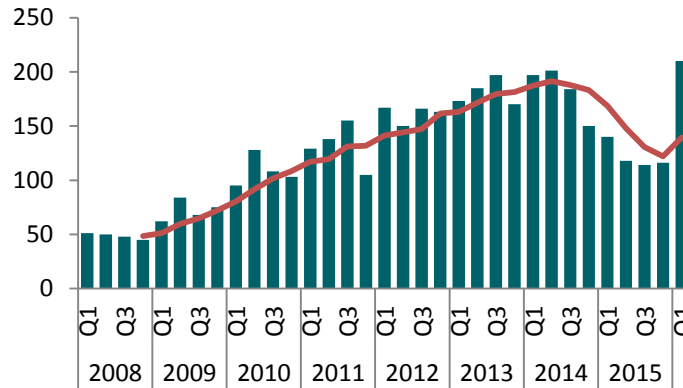
Referrals

- Increase seen in totals contacts received in Q1 2016 following transition to the SCO.
- 235 contacts, up 68% on the previous year – back to levels seen in 2014.
- Around 80% of contacts were considered as potential SCO business – similar to that in 2015.
- Referrals requests fell by 47% compared to 2015, with 55 referrals made in 2016 thus far.
- This fall is true for both the Army (42%) and RAF (70%).
- Referrals account for 30% of potential SCO business. A third (33%) of potential contacts are now passed to SCO investigators.

Investigations

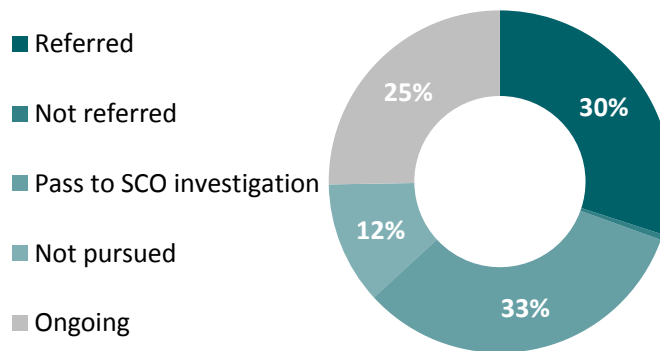
- Following transition in January 2016 the SCO has received 80 requests for investigation.
- Most requests relate to gateway decisions (39%) and undue delay in a Service complaint (34%).

Fig 1.1: Quarterly contacts¹ received by SCO and average



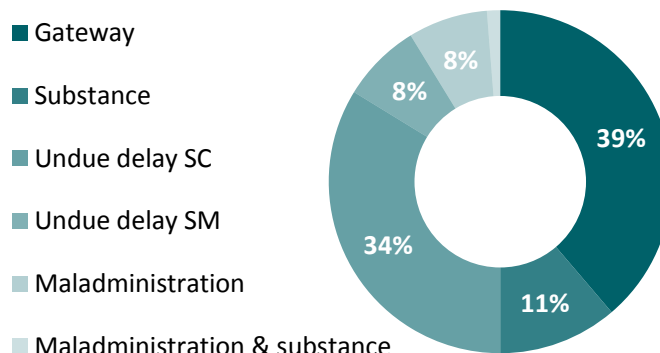
1) All contacts made to OSCO including potential and non-potential Service complaints
2) Since January 2016 the SCO have recorded all telephone contacts made for the first time.

Fig 1.2: Breakdown of potential SCO business¹



1) Excludes contacts from members of the public or not relating to service matters.

Fig 1.3: Investigation requests by type, Jan-Mar 2016



Background

The Service Complaints Ombudsman to the Armed Forces (SCO) provides an alternative point of contact for serving personnel to raise complaints about Service life with the chain of command. SCO also provides oversight of the SC process and reports to Parliament.

About

This quarterly factsheet presents key findings from the casework of the Office of the Service Complaints Ombudsman (OSCO).

It supplements data released in the [SCO Annual Report](#)

Figures presented are **provisional** and as such are subject to later revision.

Issued by

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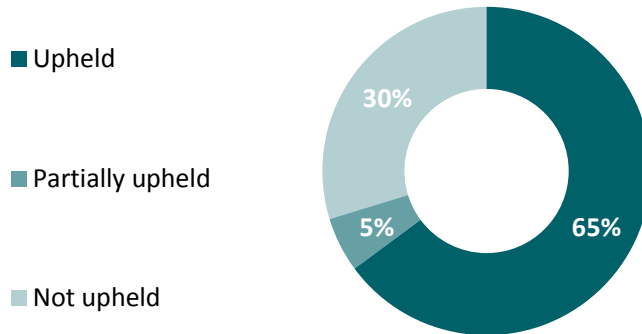
0207 877 3443

- Most requests for investigation come from Army personnel (72%).
- Where a decision has been made, only 8% of requests have been rejected by the SCO (4 cases).
- Where an outcome has been reached (37 cases), around two-thirds have been upheld in favour of the complainant.

Red flag

- At end February 2015, 665 complaints were open beyond the 24 week target. Of these, 64% were received in 2014 or earlier.
- During 2015 'red flag' cases stabilised at relatively high levels and have since fallen slightly – down 8% on a peak in April 2015 (725).
- Three-quarters (75%) of 'red flag' cases had been open for more than 48 weeks – an 11 percentage point increase on February 2014.
- On average red flag case had been open for 56 weeks beyond the 24 week target.

Fig 1.4: Investigation outcomes¹, Jan-Mar 2016



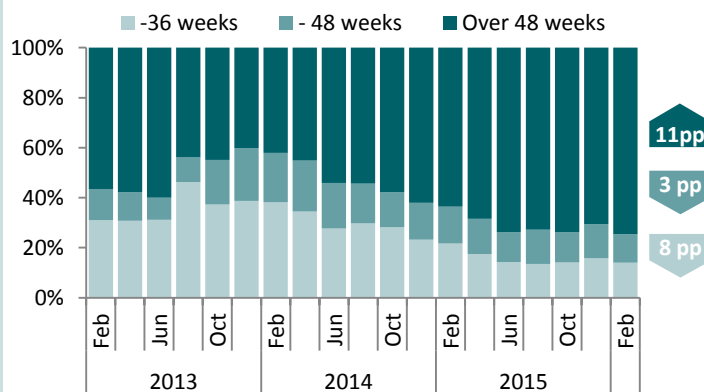
¹) Relates to accepted cases (e.g. not rejected by SCO) which have subsequently reached an outcome at the time of data extraction.

Fig 1.5: Service complaints beyond 24-week target¹



¹) Bimonthly return with last extract taken as at 29 February 2016.

Fig 1.6: Distribution of red flag case duration by weeks and percentage point change from previous year



¹) Bimonthly return with last extract taken as at 29 February 2016.

Contacts and referrals

Enquiries to the OSCC are known as **contacts**. Contacts forwarded to the Services for resolution are known as **referrals**.

Red flag

From January 2013, Services were tasked by MOD to resolve 90% of cases within a 24-week timeline. 'Red flag' cases are those which have exceeded this target.

About the data

Caseload statistics are extracted from local OSCO logs as at end **March 2016**.

Data on the 24-week target are provided by Services from MOD systems. The data is true as at end **February 2016**.

These statistics are produced to professional standards and in the spirit of the [Code of Practice for Official Statistics](#)

Feedback

We welcome feedback on all aspects of our statistics: [email us here](#)