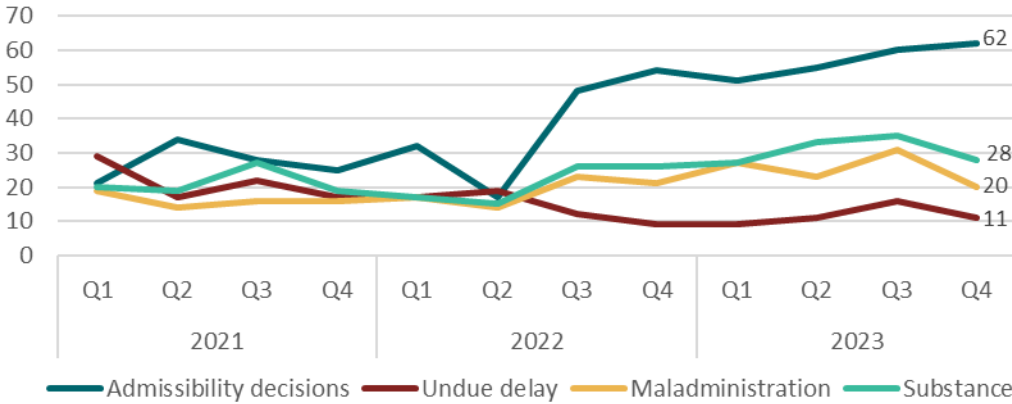


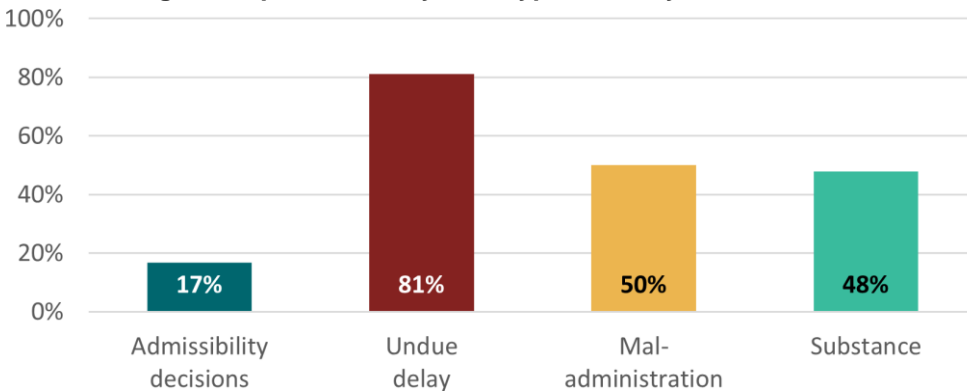
Quarterly number of investigation applications to SCOAF by case type, 2021 - 2023



Volume of SCOAF Investigations

- In Q4 2023, the Ombudsman received 121 investigation applications. This represents a decrease of 15% when compared to the previous quarter (142 applications in Q3 2023), but an increase of 10% when compared to the same period last year (110 applications in Q4 2022).
- The most frequent types of investigation applications concerned Admissibility decisions and the Substance of a complaint.
- In the last 12 months, 67% of all investigation applications received were accepted for investigating.

SCOAF investigation upheld rate¹ by case type, January 2023 – December 2023



¹ Investigations upheld in favour of the complainant fully or partially.

Upheld rates for SCOAF Investigations

- In the last 12 months, the Army had the highest percentage of determinations in favour of complainants (i.e. the upheld rate) for Admissibility Decisions at 20% and the Naval Service had the lowest with 6%. The RAF had an upheld rate of 12%.
- In the last 12 months, on a tri-Service basis, the upheld rate for Undue delay was 81%, for complaint Maladministration was 50% and for the Substance of a complaint was 48%. To put this in context, SCOAF Maladministration and Substance investigation applications were subject to triaging. In the last 12 months, 53% of eligible tri-Service Maladministration investigations and 59% of Substance investigations were triaged out (i.e. didn't receive a determination).

Timeliness rates for SCOAF Investigations

- In Q4 2023, 100% of eligible investigation requests closed were within SCOAF timeliness targets.
- Timeliness for the previous quarter was 100% and for the same quarter last year was 100%.

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](#)

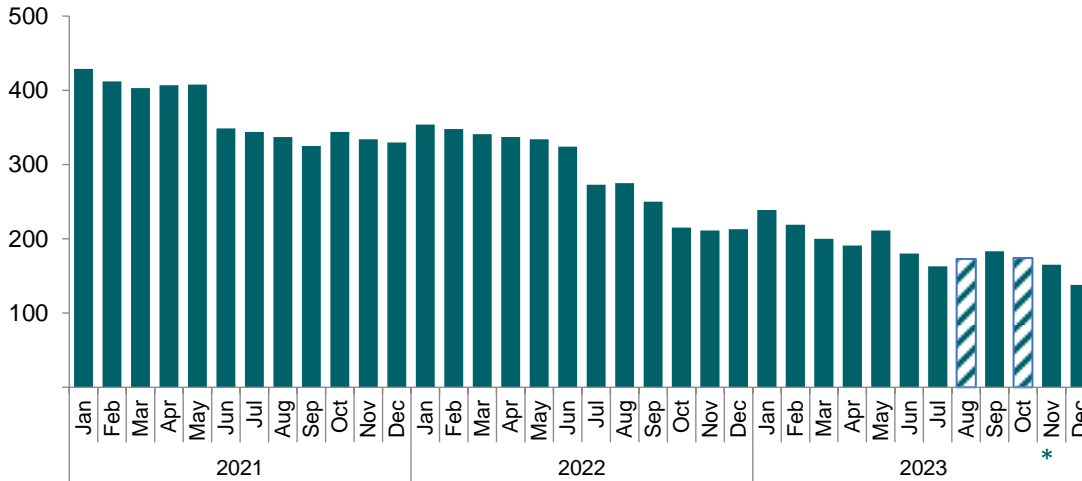
SCOAF Investigations

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

Please note: Complainants can submit multiple applications in the same quarter (e.g. maladministration and substance) and therefore be counted in multiple application categories.

Number of Service Complaints beyond 24 week target (i.e. red flag cases)



Tri Service 'red flag' cases

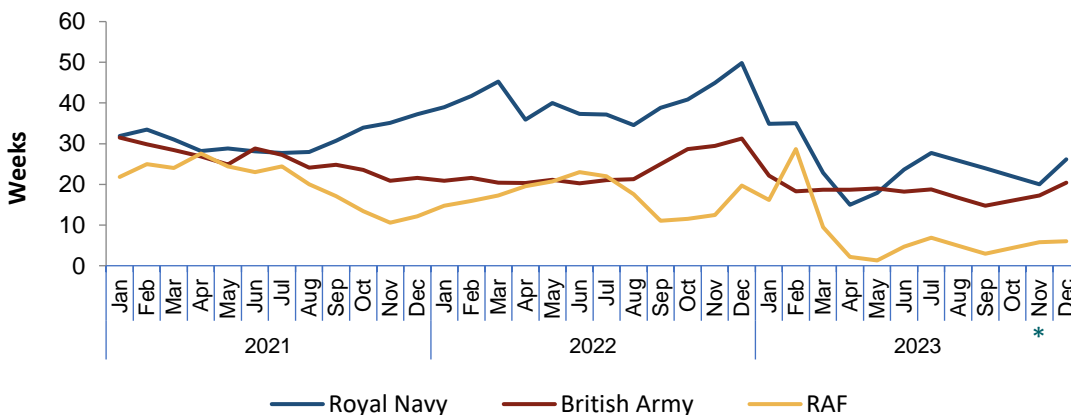
From January 2013, the Services were tasked by the Ministry of Defence (MOD) to resolve 90% of Service complaints within a 24-week timeline. 'Red flag' cases are those which have exceeded this target. It is a Key Performance Indicator as set out by MOD.

* Due to a JAVA issue, professional Service Complaints users of JPA were unable to access key areas over the period 17 Aug to 31 Aug, after which full functionality was restored. This means that red flag data as at 31st August was not available to SCOAF. Figures for August 2023 have been calculated as the mean of figures for July 2023 and September 2023. October 2023 had a similar issue and a similar resolution.

Number of 'red flag' cases

- At end of Q4 2023, the three Services had 138 'red flag' complaints open – a 25% decrease on 3 months previously (183 complaints in Q3 2023), and a decrease of 35% on the same time last year (213 complaints in Q4 2022).
- The Royal Navy reported a 10% decrease from 12 months ago (from 52 cases to 47 cases), while the Army reported a 46% decrease (from 150 cases to 81 cases) and the RAF reported a 9% decrease (from 11 to 10 cases).

Median² number of weeks spent over 24-week target for red flag cases by Service



2. 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.

Median² number of weeks spent over 24-week target for red flag cases by Service

- 45% of 'red flag' cases had been open for more than double the target period (48 weeks).
- On average (median), cases had spent 20 weeks beyond the 24 week target.
- The average (median) time a red flag case has spent beyond this target is 26 weeks for the Royal Navy, 20 weeks for the Army and 6 weeks for the RAF.
- The average (median) time beyond target time for red flag cases has, over 12 months, decreased by 47% for the Royal Navy (from 50 weeks to 26 weeks), while the Army reported a 35% a decrease (from 31 weeks to 20 weeks) and the RAF reported a 70% a decrease (from 20 weeks to 6 weeks).

Quarterly Statistical Report issued by
Service Complaints Ombudsman for the Armed Forces,
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About the data
SCOAF caseload data was extracted from the SCOAF casework system as at 31st March 2023.

Data on the tri Service 'red flag' cases was extracted from Joint Personnel Administration system (JPA) as at 31st March 2023.