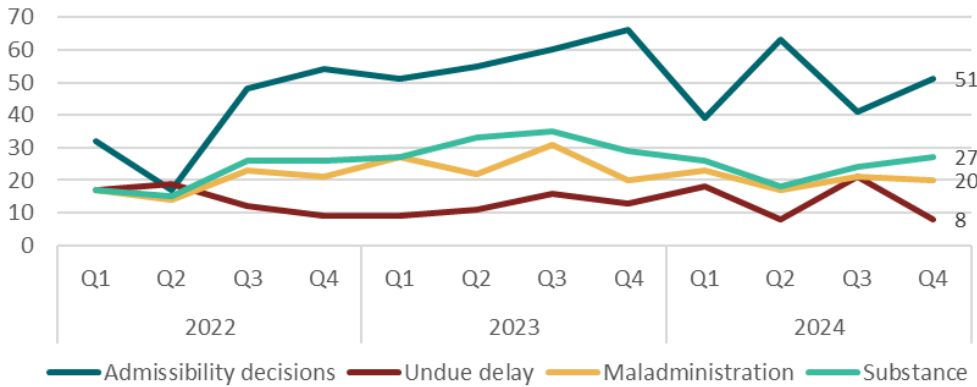


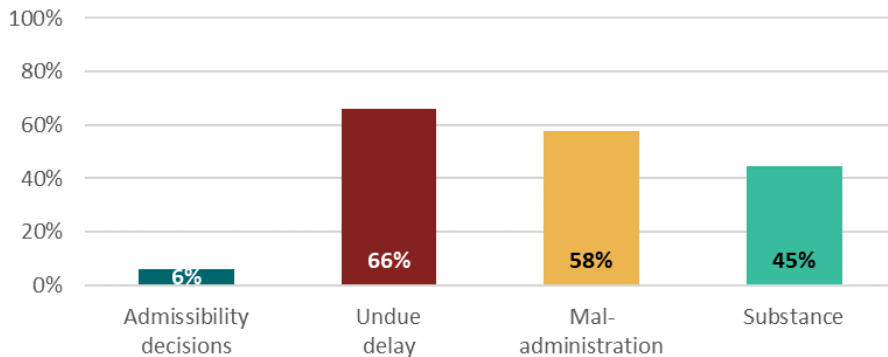
Quarterly number of investigation applications to SCOAF by case type, 2022 - 2024



Volume of SCOAF Investigations

- In Q4 2024, the Ombudsman received 106 investigation applications. This represents a 1% decrease when compared to the previous quarter (107 applications in Q3 2024), and a decrease of 17% when compared to the same period last year (128 applications in Q4 2023).
- The most frequent types of investigation applications concerned Admissibility decisions and the Substance of a complaint.
- In the last 12 months, 69% of all investigation applications received were accepted for investigating.

SCOAF investigation upheld rate¹ by case type, January 2024 – December 2024



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 7% and the RAF had the lowest with 3%. The Naval Service had an upheld rate of 4%.
- In the last 12 months, on a tri-Service basis, the upheld rate for Undue delay was 66%, for complaint Maladministration was 58% and for the Substance of a complaint was 45%. To put this in context, SCOAF Maladministration and Substance investigation applications were subject to triaging. In the last 12 months, 54% of eligible tri-Service Maladministration investigations and 64% of Substance investigations were triaged out (i.e. didn't receive a determination).

Timeliness rates for SCOAF Investigations

- In Q4 2024, 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)

Number of 'red flag' cases

- At end of Q4 2024, the three Services had 196 'red flag' complaints open – a 42% increase on 12 months previously (138 complaints in Q4 2023).
- The Royal Navy reported a 26% increase from 12 months ago (from 47 cases to 59 cases), while the Army reported a 4% decrease (from 81 cases to 78 cases) and the RAF reported a 490% increase (from 10 to 59 cases).

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

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

- 20% of 'red flag' cases had been open for more than double the target period (48 weeks).
- On average (median), cases had spent 10 weeks beyond the 24 week target.
- The average (median) time a red flag case has spent beyond this target is 15 weeks for the Royal Navy, 11 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 42% for the Royal Navy (from 26 weeks to 15 weeks), while the Army reported a 45% a decrease (from 20 weeks to 11 weeks) and the RAF reported no change (from 6 weeks to 6 weeks).

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.

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

Service Complaints Ombudsman for the Armed Forces.

Press enquiries

07734 233091

Public enquiries

0207 877 3450

About the data

SCOAF caseload data was extracted from the SCOAF casework system as at 31st December 2024.

Data on the tri Service 'red flag' cases was extracted from SCIO as at 31st December 2024.