

## Application for an investigation into undue delay

Please complete this application form if you want the Service Complaints Ombudsman for the Armed Forces (SCOAF) to investigate undue delay in the handling of a Service Complaint or Service Matter.

### When can SCOAF investigate?

You can only ask the Service Complaints Ombudsman for the Armed Forces (SCOAF) to investigate undue delay when:

- you believe there has been undue delay in the handling of a Service Complaint you have made;

**OR**

- you believe there has been undue delay in the handling of a Service Matter you have raised;

**AND**

- the Service Complaint or Service Matter is still open.

### What is undue delay?

There is no legal definition of undue delay, but in general terms it means that the time taken to process your complaint has been unreasonable, unwarranted, excessive or unjust.

### What is the difference between a Service Complaint and a Service Matter?

A **Service Matter** is any concern raised with the Service that could, potentially, be a Service Complaint.

This could mean you have made an informal complaint or submitted an Annex F/ statement of complaint, but an admissibility decision has not yet been made.

Once an admissibility decision has been made, the matters that have been 'admitted' are a **Service Complaint**.



The Ombudsman **cannot** investigate undue delay if your Service Complaint has been closed or is not ongoing.


If your Service Complaint has been finally determined, but you think there was undue delay in the handling of it, you can make an application for a maladministration investigation. For more information, see our substance and maladministration investigations [factsheet](#).

If you need any further information, or help to complete this form, please telephone **0300 369 0689** or email [contact@scoaf.org.uk](mailto:contact@scoaf.org.uk)

## Application for an investigation into undue delay



### Section 1 – Your personal details

Please complete all fields in this section.

About you			
Title (Mr, Mrs, Mx, Rank)			
First name			
Surname			
Gender		OR Prefer not to answer <input type="checkbox"/>	
Address			
Email			
Phone		Select: Select:	
How would you prefer to be contacted?		Email <input type="checkbox"/> Phone (Mobile) <input type="checkbox"/> Phone (Home) <input type="checkbox"/> Phone (Work) <input type="checkbox"/> Phone (Other) <input type="checkbox"/> Post <input type="checkbox"/>	
Service Number			Rank
Please tick which Service you are, or were, in			
Royal Navy <input type="checkbox"/> Royal Marines <input type="checkbox"/> Army <input type="checkbox"/> RAF <input type="checkbox"/>			
Are you, or were you previously, a Regular or a Reservist?			
Regular <input type="checkbox"/> Reservist <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to answer <input type="checkbox"/>			
Are you currently serving? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> - if no, what was your:			
Date of discharge: and rank on discharge: ?			
Your unit and location details			
 It doesn't matter if you have changed unit since you made your original Service Complaint, please provide the details of your <b>current</b> unit.			
➤ If you are no longer serving, please provide the details of your last unit.			





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<b>Are there any restrictions on when or how we contact you?</b>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
	<p>It is 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.</p> <p><b>Please note:</b> If we are unable to contact you, we might have to close your case on our system.</p>		
<b>Do you need any reasonable adjustments?</b>		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
	<p>Please ask if you need us to make any changes to the way we do things because of a disability or long-term health condition, such as giving you information in plain language or a different format, or contacting you at specific times or in a certain way.</p> <p>You can find more information about reasonable adjustment on our <a href="#">website</a>.</p>		
<p><b>If yes, please let us know what we can do.</b></p>			

## Section 2 – Details of the undue delay

Please complete all fields in this section

Details of the complaint	
	<p><b>What type of complaint is it?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ <b>Service Complaint</b> <input type="checkbox"/></li><li>➤ <b>Service Matter</b> <input type="checkbox"/></li></ul> <p>(see the notes on the cover page for an explanation about what a Service Matter is.)</p>
<b>Who is dealing with your complaint?</b>	
	<p>We need to know who to contact to start our investigation. Please provide the contact details (name and email address) for the person handling your complaint.</p>
<b>What have you done to try and resolve the delay?</b>	
	<p>It is important that you take ownership of your complaint.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Have you raised your concerns with the person handling your complaint?</li><li>➤ Have you spoken to your Assisting Officer? If not, why? If yes, when and what happened following that conversation?</li></ul>
<b>Why do you think there has been delay and why do you think it is undue?</b>	
	<p>Please:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Include all relevant dates.</li><li>➤ Note that just because something has taken longer than it should have, does not mean there has been undue delay.</li></ul>

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<b>How has the delay affected you?</b>	
	<p>You need to explain how the undue delay set out above impacted you and any injustice you have suffered because of it. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Have you missed out on something that you can never get back?</li><li>➤ Has your wellbeing been impacted?</li></ul>

### Section 3 - 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](mailto:privacy@scoaf.org.uk).



#### Where can I get further information?


For more information about what we do with your personal information please read our [privacy policy](#).

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### Section 4 - 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 Ministry of Defence email account.


I give consent for SCOAF to investigate my allegation of undue delay in the handling of my Service Complaint or Service Matter	<input type="checkbox"/>		
I understand that SCOAF may decide that my application can't be accepted	<input type="checkbox"/>		
I understand that SCOAF must keep a record of the personal information that I provide	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<div> <b>Please note</b> that SCOAF may also:</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• ask the Service for information about your complaint</li><li>• use anonymised information about your application in its Annual Report</li><li>• report any concerns for your safety or the safety of others, to the appropriate people</li></ul>			
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 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"/>		
I <b>select response</b> give consent for the Service to release any relevant medical information contained within my complaint file to SCOAF for the purpose of considering my application or conducting an investigation into the alleged undue delay. <b>Please note:</b> if you do not give consent, we may not be able to process your application			
<b>Signature</b>		<b>Date</b>	

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## Application for an investigation into undue delay

### 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 or when we can contact you	<input type="checkbox"/>
➤ ticked all the boxes in Section 4 - Consent	<input type="checkbox"/>
➤ signed and dated your form	<input type="checkbox"/>
➤ attached your Annex F form or statement of complaint	<input type="checkbox"/>
➤ attached copies of the following documents, if you have them: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the initial admissibility decision</li><li>• the Decision Body decision letter</li><li>• your Annex G form or appeal application</li><li>• the appeal admissibility decision (including the Annex A, if applicable)</li></ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
 <b>Please note</b> that our Contact Mailbox cannot accept emails that are over <b>10MB</b> in size. If the documents you need to send us are large, please consider sending them to us one at a time to ensure your application is received.	



## Application for an investigation into undue delay

### How long will the process take?

Time frame	Process
2 working days	We will <b>acknowledge your application</b> within 2 working days of receiving it. If you have not received an acknowledgement after that time, please email <a href="mailto:contact@scoaf.org.uk">contact@scoaf.org.uk</a> .
17 working days	Once your application has been allocated to an investigator, we <b>aim to provide you with a final decision</b> within 17 working days.

### How to submit your form

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



[contact@scoaf.org.uk](mailto:contact@scoaf.org.uk)



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

### Points to note



- Only **attach the relevant documents** to your application. Do not send any other documents through with your application. **Any additional documents received will be destroyed without being acknowledged.**
- Our **Contact Mailbox cannot accept emails** that are over **10MB** in size. If the documents you need to send us are large, please consider sending them to us one at a time to ensure your application is received.

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## Application for an investigation into undue delay

- If you are **posting your application** to us, please obtain proof of posting or use Royal Mail recorded delivery.
- Any **items signed for as delivered** to us are not signed for by our office but staff at the post office. There is a delay between the date items are received and signed for at the PO Box, and the date they reach our office.

### Further information and contact details



#### SCOAF

You can contact us at:

☎ 0300 369 0689 - Our enquiry line is open Monday-Friday 09:00-16:30

✉ [contact@scoaf.org.uk](mailto:contact@scoaf.org.uk)

🌐 [www.scoaf.org.uk](http://www.scoaf.org.uk)

@ SCOAF\_UK

If you would like help with making an application for an investigation into undue delay, please contact us or visit the relevant page on our [website](#).

#### Services

##### Royal Navy

General enquiries: ✉ [NAVYLEGAL-CASEWORKMAILBOX@mod.gov.uk](mailto:NAVYLEGAL-CASEWORKMAILBOX@mod.gov.uk)

Central Admissibility Team (CAT) for admissibility queries:

✉ [NAVYPEOPLE-SCLSUBMITCOMPLAINT@mod.gov.uk](mailto:NAVYPEOPLE-SCLSUBMITCOMPLAINT@mod.gov.uk)

##### Army

General enquiries: ✉ [APSG-ArmySCSec-Enquiries@mod.gov.uk](mailto:APSG-ArmySCSec-Enquiries@mod.gov.uk)

CAT (for admissibility queries): ✉ [APSG-ArmySCSec-Group@mod.gov.uk](mailto:APSG-ArmySCSec-Group@mod.gov.uk)

##### RAF

General enquiries: ✉ [Air-COSPers-PolSCTGpMlbox@mod.gov.uk](mailto:Air-COSPers-PolSCTGpMlbox@mod.gov.uk)

CAT (for admissibility queries):

✉ [Air-COSPers-PolSCT-CentAdmisCell@mod.gov.uk](mailto:Air-COSPers-PolSCT-CentAdmisCell@mod.gov.uk)