



Ministry
of Defence

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
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THE RT HON BARONESS GOLDIE DL
MINISTER OF STATE IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS

MSU/4/8/2/3/ap

5 February 2021

Dear Johnny,

During the Second Reading of the Overseas Operations (Service Personnel and Veterans) Bill on 20 January 2021, you asked what veterans thought about the measures and whether there was general support from our veterans.

As you may be aware, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) undertook a 12-week public consultation in 2019 on proposed legal protections measures for Service personnel and veterans who served in operations outside the UK. The consultation set out three main proposals: a statutory presumption against prosecution (after 10 years); a new partial defence to murder; and a 10-year time limit on civil litigation claims for personal injury/death.

There were over 4,200 responses to the consultation, with 2,261 (54%) respondents identifying as either a veteran or a relative of a veteran. They were the largest group (of individuals) who responded to the consultation, followed by 1488 (35%) respondents who identified as a current serving member of the Armed Forces (or a relative of a serving member). Veterans and the Service community were also represented through responses from organisations and Regimental Associations.

In response to the question as to whether change was needed to afford Armed Forces personnel and veterans greater protection from the threat of prosecution for alleged historical offences committed on operations outside the UK, 89% of the respondents were supportive. The majority of responses to the other questions in the consultation were also supportive. Further details can be found in the MOD's Analysis and Response to the public consultation, which was published on 17 September 2020.

Analysis of the responses helped to inform the measures that have been taken forward in this Bill.

I am placing a copy of this letter in the Library of the House.

*Yours sincerely,
Annabel Su Gocie*

BARONESS GOLDIE DL

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