



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

16 November 2021

Dear Tom,

During the debate in Grand Committee on the Armed Forces Bill 2021 on Wednesday 27 October, you asked if I could write to you on two issues that you raised in the debate. You also wrote to me on 3 November.

First, you asked about the number of murder, manslaughter and rape cases there were in the service justice system last year. There were no murder or manslaughter cases and eight rape cases (trials of defendants) in 2020. In the rape trials, two of the defendants were found guilty and six were found not guilty. It is worth remembering 2020 was an exceptional year on account of the pandemic.

You also asked about the calibre of the judiciary dealing with these cases at the Court Martial. Judge Advocates hearing murder, manslaughter and rape cases in the Court Martial have the same training and requirement for ticketing as judges hearing those cases in the Crown Court. Tickets are allocated based on the Judge Advocate General's judgement that a particular Judge Advocate has the appropriate training, experience and ability to try the case in question. Circuit Judges nominated by or on behalf of the Lord Chief Justice to sit as a Judge Advocate under clause 3 of the Bill will be similarly ticketed. The Judge Advocate General and all Judge Advocates sit in the Crown Court for up to 60 sitting days a year and are as qualified, capable and as well trained as civilian judges sitting in the Crown Court.

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

Yours sincerely,

Annabel

BARONESS GOLDIE DL

The Lord Morris of Aberavon
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