



Ministry
of Defence

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

Our ref: MC2023/01813e

8th , March 2023

Dear Jean,

Thank you for the important questions and issues you raised to the Home Office during the Afghanistan Resettlement Debate. For ease of reference, the question you raised can be found below:

"My Lords, at the end of December there were an estimated 150 Afghan interpreters still in Afghanistan, eligible but unprocessed under either the ACRS or ARAP. Given that many of them would already have been eligible under the previous ex-gratia scheme or the intimidation policy designed primarily for interpreters, can the Minister commit to fast-tracking these cases for a group of individuals to whom the UK owes an incalculable debt of gratitude, and who remain extremely vulnerable to Taliban threats and violence?"

As the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy (ARAP) scheme is administered by the Ministry of Defence, I have been asked to provide a response.

I would like to start by reiterating that we owe a debt of gratitude to all Afghan nationals who risked their lives working alongside the UK Armed Forces in support of our mission in Afghanistan. I hope you will find it reassuring to know that we have relocated over 12,100 at-risk Afghans under the ARAP scheme so far.

We continue to receive applications to the scheme and are working at pace to reach eligibility decisions on all applications as quickly as we can. We are actively processing and issuing more decisions per month than we are receiving new applications. However, the length of time it takes to process an application can vary due to a number of factors, including case complexity, conducting checks with relevant Other Government Departments and our reliance upon applicants responding to casework queries in a timely manner.

The Baroness Coussins FCIL
House of Lords
London
SW1A 0PW

I note your request to fast track a number of cases, and it may be helpful if I explain that only in exceptional circumstances, HMG may expedite applications. This will generally (but not exclusively) be where ARAP caseworkers become aware that there is credible evidence that one or more of the following grounds apply: there is an unusually high and imminent threat to life; the applicant requires immediate life-saving medical treatment for a medical condition unavailable in their current location; there are implications for diplomatic and international relations; or there are implications for national security.

Should any of the individuals to whom you refer have evidence they wish to submit in support of this, they may do via the casework team; ARAP-Casework@mod.gov.uk, who will consider the expedition requests.

Lastly, in the absence of specific details I am unable to provide an update regarding the individuals for whom you advocate. If you are able to provide the ARAP reference numbers or the email addresses used to submit the respective applications, my officials will be able to investigate further.

I am copying this to Lord Murray of Blidworth.

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

Yours sincerely,
Annabel.

BARONESS GOLDIE DL