



Ministry
of Defence

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
FLOOR 5, ZONE B, MAIN BUILDING
WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

Telephone 020 7218 9000 (Switchboard)

RT HON DR ANDREW MURRISON MP
PARLIAMENTARY UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE AND MINISTER
FOR DEFENCE PEOPLE AND FAMILIES

File Ref 13252

21 March 2024

Dear Tobias,

Thank you for your Written Parliamentary Questions (UIN 13252) of 6 February 2024, requesting the following information:

- To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what steps he is taking to help prevent service personnel from leaving the armed forces after reporting sexual harassment.
13252

You will recall that I responded on 15 February 2024 to advise that it would take time to collate the requested information. I have now received advice from my officials to address your question.

Sexual assault or harassment has no place in the Armed Forces, and we are committed to stamping it out whilst fully supporting those that report it. We have done a great deal of work to raise awareness of sexual offending, reporting mechanisms and implications to ensure that Service personnel know that they will be believed and that we will act upon any allegation of an offence.

All allegations are taken extremely seriously and investigated by the service police. We have set up an independent Defence Serious Crime Unit and strengthened our ability to discharge from service anyone who has committed an offence. We have also created a Victim Witness Care Unit placing victims and witnesses at the heart of the investigative process and providing a truly end-to-end service for victims of crime, from initial contact through to court and beyond.

The MOD is working towards meaningful and enduring change for all its Defence people. Defence is committed to creating an environment for all, standing together as a community and challenging unacceptable behaviour when it occurs.

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

Yours sincerely,

RT HON DR ANDREW MURRISON MP

Rt Hon Tobias Ellwood MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA