

Key findings

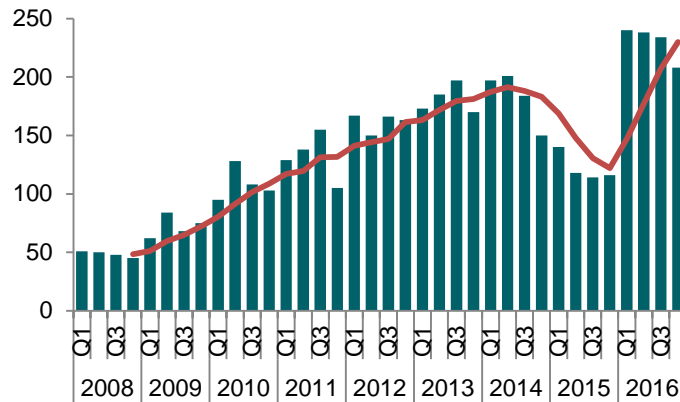
Referrals

- Contacts fell slightly but continued to be well above levels seen prior to transition to the SCO.
- Around 210 contacts received in Q4 2016, down 11% on the previous quarter but 80% up on the previous year (116).
- Around 95% of contacts were considered as potential SCO business – up on 2015 (~80%).
- Referrals requests fell by 35% compared to 2015, with 40 referrals made in Q4 2016 - a provisional total of 217 in 2016.
- Referrals account for 26% of potential SCO business. Around 40% of potential contacts are now passed to SCO investigators.

Investigations

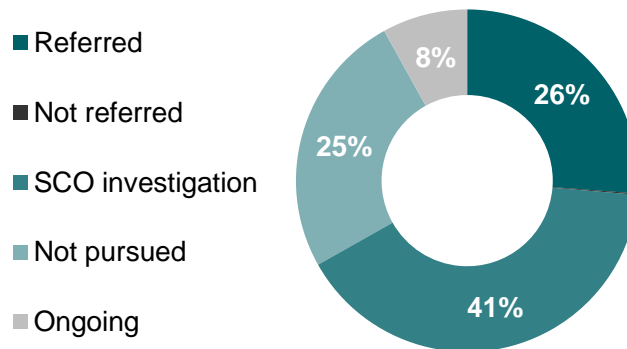
- Following transition in January 2016 the SCO has received 335 requests for investigation.
- Most requests relate to gateway decisions (34%) and undue delay of some sort (30%).

Fig 1.1: Quarterly contacts¹ received and average



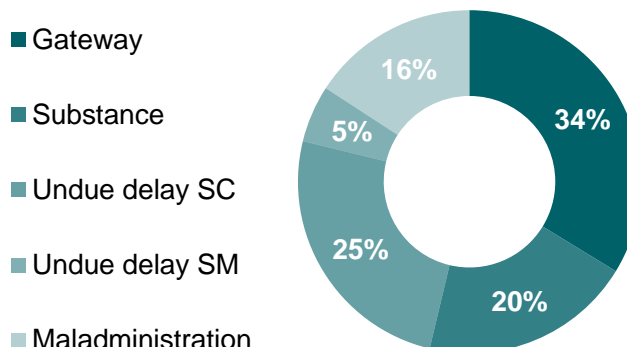
1) All contacts made to SCO including potential and non-potential Service complaints
2) Since January 2016 the SCO have recorded all telephone contacts made for the first time.

Fig 1.2: Breakdown of potential SCO business¹, 2016



1) Excludes contacts from members of the public or not relating to service matters.

Fig 1.3: Investigation requests by type, 2016



Background

The Service Complaints Ombudsman to the Armed Forces (SCO) provides an alternate point of contact for serving personnel to raise complaints about Service life with the chain of command. SCO also provides oversight of the SC process and reports to Parliament.

About

This factsheet presents key findings from the casework of the Office of the Service Complaints Ombudsman.

It supplements data released in the [SCO Annual Report](#)

Figures presented are **provisional** and as such are subject to later revision.

Issued by

Office of the Service Complaints Ombudsman,
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0207 877 3438

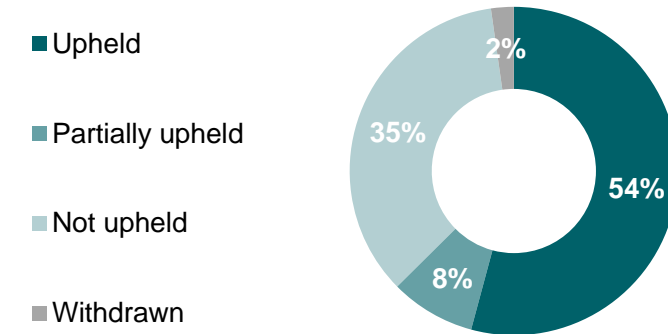
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- Where a decision has been made, 63% of requests have been accepted by the SCO (188 cases).
- Acceptance varies by request type – with lower acceptance seen in substance (4%) and maladministration (17%).
- Most investigations are upheld in favour of the complainant (54%)
- Around 80% of SCO investigations have been completed within SCO timeliness targets.

Red flag

- At end December 2016, 462 complaints were open beyond the 24 week target.
- 'Red flag' cases peaked in 2015 and have since fallen – down 33% on December 2015 (694).
- The proportion of 'historic' open cases has halved during 2016 – from 64% to 32%.
- 53% of 'red flag' cases have been open for more than 48 weeks – well below levels seen in 2015 (~70%).

Fig 1.4: Investigation outcomes¹, 2016



¹ Relates to cases which were initially accepted by the SCO and have subsequently reached an outcome at the time of data extraction.

Fig 1.5: Service complaints beyond 24-week target¹

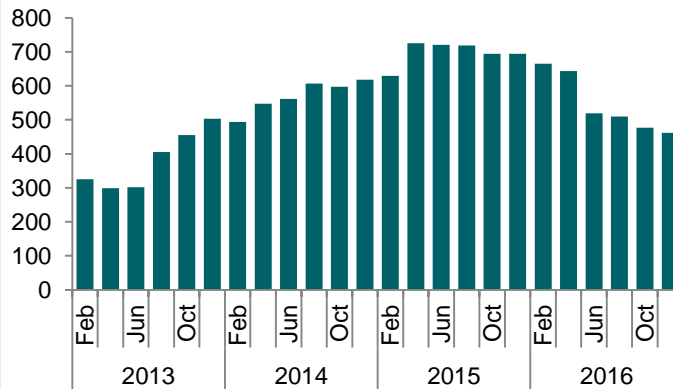
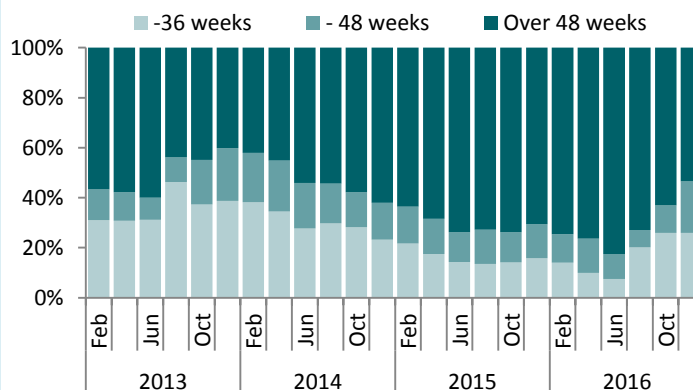


Fig 1.6: Distribution of red flag case duration and percentage point change on previous year¹



Contacts and referrals

Enquiries to the SCO are known as **contacts**. Contacts which are forwarded to the Services for resolution are known as **referrals**.

Red flag

From January 2013, Services were tasked by MOD to resolve 90% of cases within a 24-week timeline. 'Red flag' cases are those which have exceeded this target.

About the data

Caseload statistics are extracted from local SCO logs as at end **December 2016**.

Data on the 24-week target are provided by Services from MOD systems. The data is true as at end **December 2016**.

These statistics are produced in the spirit of the [Code of Practice for Official Statistics](#)

Feedback

We welcome input on all aspects of our statistics:

- [email us here](#)