**The Army Operational Legacy Branch**

The Army Operational Legacy Branch (AOLB) is the Army’s focus for all operational legacy issues and has been established to lead Army activity in support of the operational legacy legal processes, and to support Army personnel and veterans involved in operational legacy matters.

The operational legacy process relates to investigations, inquests and enquiries arising from operations in Northern Ireland (Op BANNER), Iraq (Op TELIC) and Afghanistan (Op HERRICK), although currently Northern Ireland and Op BANNER sees the greatest demand for support as this forms part of wider efforts to address the legacy of ‘the Troubles’. This process has resulted in a series of Coroner led Inquests to establish the facts surrounding a number of incidents, and criminal investigations led by either the Police Service of Northern Ireland or other Home Office appointed Police Forces, but all of which involve veterans or serving members of the Armed Forces.

**Welfare support to veterans involved in the legacy process**

A fundamental role of the AOLB is to provide welfare support to those involved in the legacy process. For many veterans the first thing they know about an inquest or investigation is when they receive a letter from the Coroner or a phone call from the Directorate of Judicial Engagement Policy (DJEP) informing them that they are required to give witness testimony as part of the process. This will be unsettling, and so the AOLB has established a network of Veteran Visiting Officers (VVO) to provide direct support to the veterans involved. The VVOs are FTRS Captains with a wealth of experience; they have a background of service on operations and the expertise in providing welfare support that will enable them to assess the needs of each individual to ensure they receive the support they require.

The Veteran Visiting Officer will provide ‘End to End’ support to the veteran. This will include regular home visits and check ins to reassure the veteran as they progress through the legacy process, coordination of any broader welfare or administrative support they may require, but importantly they will remain alongside them throughout the process, including attendance in court if that is necessary. But this is a team effort and the VVO will work very closely with the Regimental Headquarters/Regimental Associations to ensure there is a strong network of pastoral support in place so that the longer term needs of the veteran are also captured and met.

Although the AOLB is the Army’s focus for operational legacy issues, personnel from the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force affected by operational legacy matters can also contact the AOLB who will assist where possible and where appropriate, provide details of the support available from their respective single Services.

If you have been contacted in relation to an operational legacy issue or are aware of someone who has and may need support, please contact the AOLB on the following means:

During normal working hours:

Telephone: 0300 1514039

Mobile: 07813 007392

Email: APSG-AOLB-Legacy-0mailbox@mod.gov.uk

Postal Address:

Army Operational Legacy Branch

Army Personnel Services Group

Ramillies Building

Army Headquarters

Monxton Road

Andover

SP11 8HJ

**Legal Support. The AOLB does not provide legal support or advice.** Free legal support is available to all serving personnel and veterans being investigated or prosecuted for allegations relating to legacy operations, however, this is coordinated and arranged through the Directorate of Judicial Engagement Policy (DJEP).