



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
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WHITEHALL LONDON SW1A 2HB

MINISTER FOR VETERANS AND PEOPLE

23 January 2025

I have recently been made aware of the Regulation 28 Report regarding the former Sergeant James Colin Day that you sent to the then Defence Secretary, Grant Shapps on 7 February 2024. First and foremost, and most importantly, my thoughts and sympathy go out to Mr Day's family. Every person lost early is a tragedy, and their loss is felt across the whole Armed Forces and Veterans community.

In the specific case of Mr Day, I am concerned that the Ministry of Defence (MOD) were not considered an Interested Person at the inquest. This means your Regulation 28 Report may be based on an incomplete understanding of Mr Day's medical history and the support that was provided to him by the MOD. I have asked the Head of the Defence Inquests Unit (DIU) to provide you separately with the details of the support Mr Day did receive.

The wellbeing of our Service community is of paramount importance and there are already a range of measures in place to support those with mental health issues. Between June 2018, when Mr Day first presented with mental health symptoms, to when he was medically discharged in October 2020, Mr Day received significant and consistent medical input from the Defence Medical Services (DMS), including mental healthcare, occupational health, and primary medical care. While I am aware a diagnosis of PTSD was made when Mr Day was an inpatient at a civilian hospital in Germany, it is important to note that the DMS could not confirm this diagnosis. I understand that the primary focus for the DMS was to address Mr Day's alcohol

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dependency which was an essential requirement before clinicians could seek to make any assessment of PTSD. Following Mr Day's discharge from the Army in late 2020, continuity of care was provided by the Defence Transition Services and Veterans Welfare Services, together with the NHS.

Considering this, and the suite of mental health services that do exist for the Armed Forces community, I do not feel there is an immediate need to change MOD policies in response to your Regulation 28 Report. However, that is not to assume everything is perfect, and I am committed to improving the overall level of support given to both Service Personnel and Veterans. I can assure you, and Mr Day's family, that if there are any significant improvements that can be identified, steps will be taken to implement them.

Despite my conclusion, I thank you for raising these important questions. This type of challenge is essential to ensure that this government provides the support our Armed Forces need. As ever, my thoughts remain with Mr Day's family and all his friends and colleagues who continue to feel his loss so acutely.

Yours sincerely,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature and name of the official. Below it is a smaller black rectangular redaction box, likely covering a title or contact information.

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