

The Rt Hon Grant Schapps
Secretary of State for Defence
Ministry of Defence
Main Building
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By email:
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Dear Secretary of State

The late Gnr Jaysley Beck

You will by now have read the Service Inquiry report into the death of our daughter and sister, Jaysley Beck. Jaysley was just 19 years old when she died in December 2021 after experiencing what the Army has accepted was serious and sustained sexual harassment from her line manager as well as an alleged sexual assault that appears to have been dealt with very badly. We noted and appreciated your kind words to the family during your press interviews yesterday. We hope that you will take this letter in the spirit with which it is offered, which is that it is born of a genuine desire to see something constructive and good come out of our daughter's death.

Since the loss of our daughter, we have had to learn a great many new things very quickly about the military. One of the issues we have been very concerned to understand more about is the way in which the Army handles serious complaints. You will appreciate that we are particularly concerned about this issue, because it appears that our daughter, while being overwhelmed by sexual harassment from her boss, did not formally report it or complain about it. We also note the Service Inquiry's finding that there were a number of other women in Larkhill Garrison who described being subjected to unacceptable sexual behaviours, which were at times described as "vile" and "degrading". None of those women reported those incidents either. That suggests there is something seriously wrong with the complaints system because the people who you would want to use it, are not.

We have learned that for every single year that her office has been in existence, the independent Service Complaints Ombudsman for the Armed Forces has declared that the complaints system for service personnel is neither effective, efficient or fair. We also understand that problems with the complaints system was a consistent feature of the evidence that was presented to the House of Commons [Defence Committee Inquiry into Women in the Armed Forces](#) during 2021. Service women just do not think that the complaints system is capable of addressing the more sensitive, complex sexual harassment cases that they are more likely to need to bring, because they are women.

We also learned that in 2009, there had been a [review conducted into unacceptable behaviours](#) in the armed forces, led by Air Chief Marshal Sir Michael Wigston. The Wigston

