

12 September 2024

# Reaffirming our standards

Women in Defence. PCS Defence Group Secretary, Howard Barr, on the slow progress to date.

The MOD's "Reaffirming our Standards" programme was initiated after more than 60 women went public about sexual harassment and sexism within the MOD in November 2023. In May this year our general secretary, Fran Heathcote, issued a statement alongside other trade unions, condemning the behaviour and calling for an independent enquiry.

The employer has rejected an independent enquiry and is attempting to resolve the issue internally. While our unions continue to engage with the department's Reaffirming our Standards programme, and despite some recent positive commitments to imbed trade union representatives within some aspects of the programme, we remain frustrated with the pace of progress. The employer has shared its thoughts on a resolution and is currently undertaking a series of sprints in an attempt to work through priorities.

The recent PCS survey to members indicated that over 80% told us that this was important to you, with the majority saying it was extremely important. We want members to be part of this process and become involved in a working group on the matter. We want your views on whether the proposals go far enough, will have a meaningful impact and if the MOD will be able to once and for all stamp out this problem. If you'd like to become involved, please contact us at [DSG@pcs.org.uk](mailto:DSG@pcs.org.uk) . We also have activist briefings that take places every 6-8 weeks where we update our activists and reps on the issues that we're currently working on, so if you're a PCS rep or advocate please attend these meetings when advertised.

If you or a colleague have been affected or have experienced any of the issues raised, you can also contact our defence group at [DSG@pcs.org.uk](mailto:DSG@pcs.org.uk)