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Dear Colleagues,

Defence Children Services (DCS) are experiencing significant gapping in key workforce areas due to ongoing challenges with CS recruitment restrictions. It is prudent to note the impact this may have on DCS' capacity to deliver provision to Service families.

Educational Advice & Guidance

The Education Advisory Team (UK) (EAT(UK)) provides all Service families (and other stakeholders) with advice and guidance related to children's education. The primary aim is to empower parents to make informed decisions about suitable education for their children. This advice ranges from generic guidance, to in-depth bespoke input from an Education Advisor - on a case-by-case basis.

Once a Service person has completed a Request for Support form from EAT(UK), it may take **up to 4 weeks** (during peak times) for a response from an Education Advisor. **We endeavour to triage cases which are time sensitive or related to safeguarding enquiries**.

Continuity of Education Allowance (CEA)

EAT(UK) provides initial considerations to Service Personnel on associated costs ahead of claiming CEA. Individual Serial Number (ISN) are issued as appropriate, enabling engagement with Unit HR to submit and process their CEA claims mandated in JSP 752.

During peak times, it can take **up to 6 weeks** for EAT(UK) to provide the relevant educational advice and issue an ISN. Service personnel cannot access an ISN more than two terms prior to their term in which they make their initial claim. All claimants should factor this timeline into their administrative processes.

Special Educational Needs Addition (SENA) to CEA

EAT(UK) receives and administers all applications for SENA to CEA. A Service person can apply for SENA if they are in receipt of a valid CEA Eligibility Certificate, meet the eligibility criteria set out in JSP 752, and are able to provide supporting SENA papers with their completed documentation prior to submission. All prospective claimants receive a full written response and notification of the panel date their claim will be considered. From initial processing, SENA applications will take **up to 9 weeks**.

EAT(UK) advise that families do not agree to additionally costed SEND provision prior to the outcome of their SENA application if they are reliant on the funding to pay the charges raised to them by the school as SENA funding cannot be backdated.

Casework for other MOD departments- PACCC and Pinnacle

Service Personnel may need to consult with EAT(UK) regarding casework as referenced within JSP 464 and JSP 752, for certain allowances or to apply to retain Service Family Accommodation.

EAT(UK) issue the following guidance to support Service families and their interaction with the team:

- Ensure the relevant guidance and policy has been read prior to emailing the team.
- For advice related to the administration of allowances, Service Personnel have initially engaged with their Unit HR and read the relevant policy prior to engaging with EAT(UK).
- Ensure all essential documentation is completed in full and submitted to the EAT(UK) for consideration prior to the date you require a response, adhering to the timescales detailed.

Hd DCS