

Veterans minister calls on ex-service personnel not to join war in Ukraine

Press release

Veterans Minister Leo Docherty has written to military charities to seek their support in ensuring that veterans do not travel to Ukraine.



Veterans Minister Leo Docherty has called on veterans not to travel to Ukraine and instead turn their efforts to helping the Ukrainian people from the UK, through charity and volunteering.

Minister Docherty has written to military charities to seek their support in ensuring that veterans direct strong feelings of support for Ukraine to charitable activities, rather than travelling to join the conflict.

In the letter, the minister also outlines support available for veterans whose mental health may be adversely affected by the war.

Minister for Defence People and Veterans Leo Docherty said:

We know that Russia's illegal invasion has rightly brought out strong feelings of support for the Ukrainian people.

Veterans always step up in times of need, but they must channel their skills, experience and passion into legal routes of support for Ukraine and not engage in the conflict.

There are many ways that we all can support the people of Ukraine, including through donating money to charity.

Since the start of the war, there have been reports of former service personnel from a number of countries, including the UK, travelling to Ukraine to fight.

In the letter, the Minister outlines that the government does not support

volunteers going to fight in Ukraine and that individuals who do so will put themselves at significant risk by entering into a conflict area.

The Minister also offers to support charities through the Office for Veterans' Affairs and the Ministry of Defence should they become aware of veterans looking to travel to Ukraine.

Veterans who find their health and wellbeing affected by the war can also seek specialist support from health services, such as NHS Op Courage in England, and the Veterans' Gateway.

The government advises against all travel to Ukraine.

Published 11 March 2022