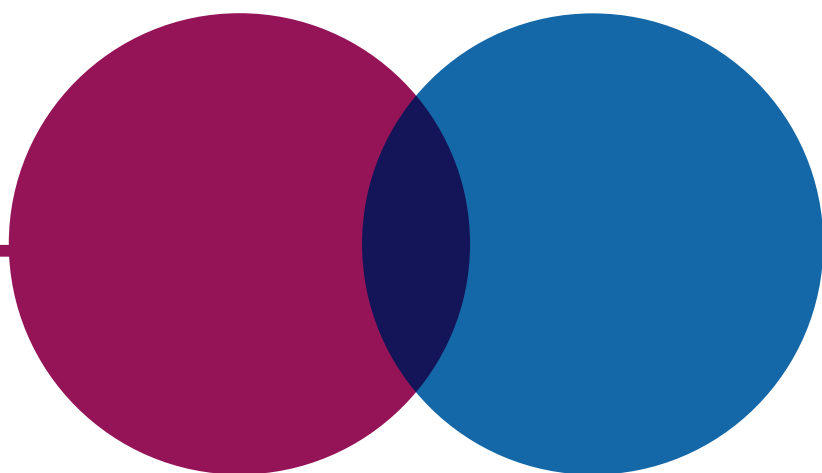




National Audit Office



REPORT

The Afghanistan Response Route

A report by the National Audit Office

SESSION 2024-25
3 SEPTEMBER 2025
HC 1288

Key facts

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| 7,355 | around £850mn | unknown |
| estimated number of people eligible for resettlement in the UK through the Afghanistan Response Route (ARR) as a direct result of the data breach, as at July 2025 | the Ministry of Defence's (MoD's) estimate of the historic and future costs to government of resettling people in the UK through the ARR as a direct result of the data breach | the potential cost of future compensation claims against the MoD as a result of the data breach |

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| 18,700 | number of principal applicants to the Afghanistan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) and the previous 'Ex-gratia scheme', whose details were included in the data breach |
| 1,531 | number of principal applicants offered resettlement through the ARR as a direct result of the data breach |
| 3,185 | number of principal applicants, in addition to those offered resettlement through the ARR, whose details were included in the data breach and who were offered resettlement in the UK but who would already have been eligible for this for other reasons |
| Up to 27,278 | estimated total number of people, including principals and family members, affected by the data breach who will be resettled in the UK (under both the ARR and ARAP schemes) |

What this report is about

1 This is a factual report about the Afghanistan Response Route (ARR) scheme, which the Ministry of Defence (MoD) set up to mitigate the security risks arising from a data protection breach and the unauthorised disclosure of personal information which occurred in February 2022.

2 We have prepared this report for the Public Accounts Committee to support its scrutiny of the MoD. It describes:

- the key events and decisions which led to the creation and public disclosure of the ARR scheme;
- the number of individuals who have been and are expected to be resettled through the ARR scheme; and
- the associated costs which the MoD has already incurred, and the future costs which it expects to incur.

3 This report does not seek to evaluate the MoD's management of or spending on the ARR scheme. We carried out our fieldwork in July and August 2025, following the disclosure of the ARR scheme when the High Court super-injunction relating to it was lifted on 15 July 2025. We focused on establishing the facts of the ARR scheme. We did not assess the evidence which led to the super-injunction being issued, maintained and then lifted or any other aspects of the legal process.

4 The MoD, the Home Office and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government are responsible for delivering different parts of the government's Afghanistan resettlement schemes. This report focuses on the MoD and its role in relation to the ARR. We have reviewed financial information on the costs of the scheme, but we have not audited this information. We did not look at the other Afghanistan resettlement schemes for which the government is responsible. We plan to assess the government's Afghanistan resettlement schemes overall, including their costs, in a separate report for Parliament, to be published in Spring 2026.