Landmark military hearing loss claims judgment is a major win for UK Armed Forces veterans

Friday 24 April, 2026

Sentinel Legal welcomes a landmark High Court judgment bringing clarity to military noise hearing loss claims and the rights of UK Armed Forces veterans,

Sentinel Legal has welcomed a High Court judgment that is expected to bring greater clarity to military hearing loss claims involving UK Armed Forces veterans.

The judgment in Abbott and Others v Ministry of Defence [2026] EWHC 941 (KB), Case No. QB-2021-002484, was handed down by Mr Justice Garnham in the High Court of Justice, King's Bench Division.

The case considered claims for noise induced hearing loss, also known as NIHL, brought by former members of His Majesty's Armed Forces. According to the judgment, many thousands of other military NIHL cases were awaiting the Court's decision.

Sentinel Legal said the judgment is an important moment for veterans who have suffered hearing loss and tinnitus after serving their country. The firm said the decision provides much-needed clarity for those who have been injured during military service and are now seeking proper assessment and support.

Military service can involve exposure to weapons fire, explosions, aircraft, armoured vehicles and other high noise environments. According to the judgment, military noise exposure can include weapons, explosives, vehicles, engineering work, maintenance work and other military activities.

According to the judgment, the Court concluded that the traditional CLB method, commonly used in industrial hearing loss cases, is not generally suitable for military cases. The Court preferred a military-specific approach to diagnosis known as rM-NIHL.

The judgment also considered how hearing loss should be quantified, how military audiograms should be treated, how tinnitus claims should be approached, and when the cost of private hearing aids may be recoverable.

Sentinel Legal said it has spoken to hundreds of veterans who have described the serious impact that hearing loss and tinnitus can have on their lives. Some veterans have described struggling with depression, substance misuse and social isolation after leaving service, while others have explained that simple everyday situations, such as having a conversation in a pub, restaurant or busy public place, can become extremely difficult. The firm said many veterans avoid busy environments altogether through fear of embarrassment, frustration or being unable to follow conversations.

Sam Ward, Director of Sentinel Legal, said:

"Today's judgment is a major moment for UK troops and veterans."

"For many former service personnel, hearing loss and tinnitus are not minor issues. They can affect conversations at home, family life, work, confidence and day to day independence."

"Sentinel Legal has spoken to hundreds of veterans who have described the devastating impact these injuries can have. We have heard from veterans who say their hearing loss and tinnitus have contributed to depression, substance misuse and social isolation."

"Simple things many people take for granted, like having a conversation in a pub, restaurant or busy place, can become almost impossible. Many veterans then avoid those environments altogether because they are embarrassed, frustrated or worried they will not be able to follow what is being said."

"These are men and women who put on the uniform, served this country and, in many cases, now live with injuries that affect them every single day."

"The Court has now provided important guidance on how military hearing loss claims should be assessed. In our view, that clarity matters because military noise exposure is different from ordinary workplace noise."

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“Veterans who have served this country deserve a fair assessment of the injuries they have suffered. They deserve to know that if, God forbid, they are injured during their military career, they can be looked after.”

Sam Ward added:

“This is a much-needed win for our troops and veterans."

“At a time when support for our Armed Forces must never be taken for granted, this judgment is a welcome moment of clarity."

“Sentinel Legal will be doing everything it can to help veterans, both new and old. These men and women served our country, many at enormous personal cost, and we thank them for their service.”

Sentinel Legal said it is now reviewing the judgment and will apply the Court’s guidance to its military NIHL Matrix claims work. Each claim will continue to be assessed on its own evidence.

The Sentinel Foundation

Alongside its legal work, Sentinel Legal has established The Sentinel Foundation. Sentinel Legal will donate a portion of its fees from each successful claim to the Foundation to support injured veterans of the UK Armed Forces.

The Foundation has been created to help veterans beyond the courtroom, including support for those affected by PTSD, traumatic brain injury, addiction and homelessness. Its mission is to help injured service personnel access treatment, practical support and long-term rehabilitation.

Sam Ward said:

“Legal claims are only one part of the solution. Many veterans need support long after their case ends. That is why we have set up The Sentinel Foundation.

“A portion of Sentinel Legal’s fees from each successful claim will be donated to the Foundation so that we can continue helping injured veterans access treatment, support and stability.

“This is about continuing the mission outside the courtroom. If someone has been hurt serving this country, we believe they should be supported long after the legal process has finished.”

www.sentinellegal.co.uk

Further information about The Sentinel Foundation is available at:

www.thesentinelfoundation.com

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Notes to editors

Case name: Abbott and Others v Ministry of Defence
Neutral citation: [2026] EWHC 941 (KB)
Case number: QB-2021-002484
Court: High Court of Justice, King’s Bench Division
Date of judgment: 24 April 2026
Judge: Mr Justice Garnham

The sealed order records judgment for Christopher Lambie in the total sum of £121,193.02 and judgment for Jack Craggs in the total sum of £15,865.85, subject to the terms set out in the order.

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