

Afghanistan Response Route

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The Afghanistan Response Route (ARR) was established by the previous government and became operational in April 2024, and was discontinued on 4 July 2025.

Individuals and their immediate family members who have received an invitation letter to relocate to the UK under the ARR will continue to the UK although the route is now discontinued. This was publicly announced on 15 July 2025: Oral Statement on Afghan data breach.

The ARR Policy Statement was published below on 31 October 2025. Over the coming weeks, we will be contacting ARR Eligible Principals, via bespoke electronic letters, to clarify that the invitation letters they have previously received were offer letters issued under the ARR policy and provide further information and guidance on what that means for them and their families.

The ARR was created by the previous government in response to a data incident that occurred in February 2022 ("the data incident"). It provided for certain individuals to be considered for eligibility for relocation to the UK. The ARR also enabled eligible principals to apply for their immediate and additional family members to relocate to the UK.

The eligibility criteria were established by the last government. To be found eligible for the ARR, individuals had to be impacted by the data incident; be categorised as at highest risk of targeting by the Taliban, as a result; be located in a high risk country; and not have previously been found eligible under either the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP), the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) or any other route which provides 'settled status' (i.e. Indefinite Leave to Enter (ILE) or Remain (ILR)) in the UK. Eligible individuals were sent invitation letters to be relocated to the UK from the Ministry of Defence (MOD) prior to the discontinuation of the route.

In early 2025, the Government commissioned an independent review of the policy response to the data incident by retired senior civil servant and ex-Deputy Chief of Defence Intelligence, Paul Rimmer. This review acknowledged "that there was uncertainty in any judgements but concluded that it was now highly unlikely that merely being on the dataset would be grounds for targeting".

As a result, on 4 July 2025, the Government decided to discontinue the ARR. The MOD ceased issuing new invitation letters and the route is not open to applications. The MOD will honour the relocation of those individuals, and their eligible immediate family members, who had already received an invitation letter to relocate subject to UK entry clearance checks. All individuals relocated under the ARR undergo strict security checks, including national security checks, before being able to enter the UK.

The ARR is a discretionary policy and those who are relocated under the ARR will receive ILE or ILR in the UK with no restriction to rights to benefits and services. They will be able to apply for British citizenship after five years in the UK under existing rules, subject to payment of the relevant fee.

The Secretary of State for Defence announced the Afghan Resettlement Programme (ARP) on 18 December 2024 which brought together the existing Afghan resettlement schemes into a single, efficient pipeline in spring 2025. The resettlement offer provided to ARR eligible individuals in the UK is included under the ARP and it is the same under the ACRS and ARAP.

ARAP closed to new applications on 1 July 2025. Also on 1 July 2025, UK Government confirmed there will be no further pathways, nor will accept any further referrals, to the ACRS. Further

information can be found here: Afghan Resettlement Programme.

The operation of the ARR does not reflect any obligation, nor imply any commitment, to assist those who worked for or with the UK Government in any other countries or theatres of operation, past, present or future, nor to take any particular action in response to any other data incident.

The Home Office has not changed its wider immigration rules and policies as a result of this data incident. Applications will be assessed in the usual way. An individual being on the dataset will not in itself be a reason to grant an application. Decision makers will consider the application in line with the Immigration Rules and accompanying guidance on a case-by-case basis.

The UK Government understand that sometimes your contact details or circumstances may change. If you need to update your details, please contact us with your full name, ARAP reference number and date of birth.

If, after receiving an offer of eligibility, you stop responding to communications from the Ministry of Defence prior to your relocation to the UK, we will continue to make efforts to contact you for 12 months. If we do not receive a response within this time your offer of relocation will be withdrawn, meaning that the MOD will no longer make an application for entry clearance or settlement to the Home Office on your behalf and you will no longer be able to secure entry clearance into the UK under ARR.

The UK Government intends to complete all relocation activity under the ARP by the end of this Parliament.

Translation

Afghanistan Response Route - Dari and Pashto translations (ODT, 20.3 KB)

ARR Policy Statement

The ARR Policy Statement sets out the context in which the ARR was established and outlines the eligibility criteria, which applied to those who were judged to be at highest risk due to the data incident, and which will continue to be applied to decide the eligibility of immediate and additional family members:

ARR Policy Statement

PDF, 437 KB, 27 pages

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