From the Chair

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8 February 2018

Ombudsman remit in respect of the Government Actuary’s Department (GAD)

The written information provided by GAD to employees of AEA Technology at the time of its privatisation in 1996 helped reassure many of them that it was safe to move across from the UK Atomic Energy Agency (UK AEA) public service pension scheme into the private-sector AEA Technology defined benefit scheme, on the grounds that the latter scheme was no less favourable.

The AEA Technology Scheme entered Pension Protection Fund assessment in 2012 and subsequently transferred into the PPF in July 2016.

Many AEA Technology pensioners have suffered financial detriment and feel that the GAD information misled them as to the potential adverse ramifications of the transfer.

I understand that neither the Pensions Ombudsman nor the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman (PHSO) have within their remit to investigate maladministration in respect of information of this type provided by GAD.

In the light of the above, and with a view to the forthcoming Defined Benefit White Paper, will the Government consider bringing forward measures to expand the scope of the Pensions Ombudsman or PHSO to cover information provided by GAD to individuals in respect of their pension rights?

Best wishes,

Rt Hon Frank Field MP
Chair