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ARMY SHAME I'm ashamed by horror details of Defences Forces report, bullies and abusers will be punished, says Chief of Staff

[Adam Higgins](#)

Published: 21:02 28 Mar 2022 Updated: 21:28 28 Mar 2022

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THE leader of Ireland's Defence Forces has said that he is "ashamed" after reading the report into sickening abuse that is taking place among our troops.

Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Sean Clancy said he did not know the true extent of the harassment and

[bullying](#) culture in our military until he started to probe claims by the Women of Honour group over a year ago.

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Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Sean Clancy has confessed that he is "ashamed" after reading the report into sickening abuse that is taking place among our troops

Credit: Collins Photo Agency



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Defence Minister Micheal Martin has promised to quickly set up a Statutory Inquiry Credit: Collins Photo Agency

Earlier this week, the IRG [report into the Defence Forces](#) shocked the country as incidents of horrific abuse, rape, bullying and harassment within our military were exposed.

Speaking at the commissioning ceremony for the latest group of cadets in [Dublin](#), Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Sean Clancy said he was shocked by the level of abuse detailed in the report.

He said: “I am ashamed. There is no question about that.”

“I think I share that shame and I feel for the good men and good women in Oglai gh na hEireann today who are all determined to see the change that is highlighted brought about.

“There is no question that there are those who brought about the inappropriate behaviours and behave in a manner that is not the same or meets the values that we all share today in the organisation.

“Good men and good women want to see this change and those who resist it or act in an inappropriate manner – they will be held to account and quite frankly they don’t belong in our organisation.”

The Chief of Staff told reporters that the culture of abuse and bullying is still happening in the military as he admitted that it is "an issue that exists today."

Pressed on whether he knew about the harassment exposed in the report during his long career in the [Defence Forces](#), the Chief of Staff said he only became aware of the true extent of the problem over the past year after the Women of Honour came forward.

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He told the Irish Sun: “I have had a long career in the Defence Forces and I’ve been very fortunate that I’ve always had a very positive experience personally and I think most of the people that I encounter have had positive experiences.

“There have been pockets throughout that time frame of course where I have seen action taken in a disciplinary whether it was right or wrong and the levels of it will remain to be seen in terms of judgement.

“But of course we are learning now more and more.

"As I have said I have spent the last year meeting on a repetitive basis in particular groups of individuals and people of this wonderful organisation who have spoken to me the truths of power.

“And it is through that I have learned the extent of issues that have existed and do exist in the organisation today.

“I took over the Chief of Staff over a year ago and it is throughout this last period that I have really learned the extent of the problem.

“The report has referred to the fact that most of this was suppressed, most of the reprisals that were there and the fear of reprisal and of course the very fear of reprisal is what prevented this coming to light in the first instance.”

Pressed on if he had been aware of abuse in the Defence Forces during his career, the Chief of Staff told the Irish Sun: “Throughout my career, I’m answering you honestly, other than the standard disciplinary impacts that you have in the workplace – those

standard types of practices – I would not have been aware of it.”

Defence Minister [Micheal Martin](#) has promised to quickly set up a [Statutory Inquiry to investigate](#) the shocking culture of bullying, abuse and harassment in the Defence Forces.

The [Government](#) got experts to carry out an independent review of the military after a group of retired female soldiers revealed [horrific experiences](#) of their time serving the country.

The staggering report, which was published yesterday, detailed the shocking abuse culture in the Defence Forces.

The report revealed how troops who were raped or sexually abused were told to bury their complaints – with none of the attacks reported to the [Gardai](#).

It also told how female recruits barricaded their sleeping quarters to prevent sex attacks and claimed that senior soldiers groom young recruits.

Women had their drinks spiked with drugs as part of attacks from colleagues in the military and hidden cameras were set up in shower rooms to take intimate images of female soldiers.

The report also revealed how soldiers were locked inside barrels containing dead animal carcasses as part of sickening punishments or hazing.

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The Women of Honour group said the military hierarchy and officials in the Department of Defence must be probed as part of the State inquiry.

They declared this investigation “has been required for some considerable time”, adding: “It is hoped that this commitment by Government to the establishment of a full statutory inquiry will start the process of healing for those persons who have suffered.”



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