

FUTURE RESERVES 2020
EXTERNAL SCRUTINY GROUP

2013 REPORT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. In 2012, in broadly accepting the recommendations of the Commission established by the Prime Minister to examine Reserves, the Secretary of State for Defence established an external scrutiny group to provide independent oversight of the Future Reserves 2020 (FR20) programme, requiring annual reports on the progress being achieved to deliver the necessary enhancements and changes. This, our first report, covers the period of that external scrutiny from September 2012 to 31 March 2013.
2. We have consulted extensively with the senior MOD leadership and the staffs responsible for delivering the programme but have had little opportunity to visit many units. Nevertheless, we believe that the programme, while challenging in many areas, is achievable and should lead to a better balanced ‘Whole Force’ more able to provide wider benefits to defence than hitherto. Nothing we have heard from the senior MOD leadership suggests differently. Moreover, we judge that the robust governance system now in place for the FR20 programme provides a sound basis on which to judge progress, effect necessary changes, track benefits and monitor resources.
3. That said, we strongly recommend that work is finalised on drafting a narrative which underpins almost all of the FR20 programme work. It needs to set out in simple terms what is now expected of a Reservist, the obligations this imposes and the benefits it realises (regardless of the fact that there will be some important differences to register between the three Services). This proposition is urgently needed not only to provide the basis of the ‘offer’ to potential recruits but equally importantly to spell out in clear and unambiguous terms what such service means to employers and families and also to the Regular forces which will be working more closely with Reservists and Reserve units in the future.
4. The amount of time which has elapsed between initiating the Commission’s work and beginning action on implementation has now placed additional pressure on delivery. Consequently we believe that added impetus is now needed to generate the requisite numbers of new recruits, while other measures might well need to be tempered simultaneously to improve the retention of seasoned and valuable reservists, whose assistance will be essential in bedding in the new generations. This will be critical in settling future structures and basing decisions. We also recommend that the Department and the Services consider a ‘loose fit’ approach to some of this work, not only to ensure that the Reserves are able to meet the full range of tasks envisaged by the commission (such as resilience and regeneration) but also to recognise that the nature of the Reserves is likely to evolve further while the programme is underway and in the years beyond.
5. All three of the Services face a similarly proportionate reservist manning challenge but the scale of the task is most acute within the Army. We are aware that there have been several teething problems in the early stages of ramping up recruiting and we will continue to look closely at these in our next report. We make a number of recommendations to improve inflow (mainly concerned with improving data assurance so as to have early evidence that the manning increases are set on the correct trajectory). Equally, we are concerned that, especially where the inflow pipeline improvements rely on additional established Regular support, the system is

examined and adjusted to meet Reservist requirements, not merely showered with additional resource doing the same things as before. We make similar observations on changing established norms for training as the Whole Force concept takes shape. We place potential officer recruiting as the highest priority for improved recruiting, particularly because of their future critical importance to a sustainable Reserve force

6. The provision of support, equipment and infrastructure needs also to be examined further and, if necessary, adjusted as experience grows. We make a number of points on infrastructure/basing and equipment scaling which we believe could have adverse and unintended consequences for Reservist strength, particularly in the Army Reserve, if not handled carefully and proactively. Again these are areas which we suggest that we should keep under close scrutiny in the next few years.

7. The timing of our report has not allowed us to comment particularly on the measures likely to be adopted following the recent consultation exercise. We have therefore not commented in detail on many aspects of relationships with reservists' employers and families. As this is clearly a major factor in FR20 delivery we would expect to concentrate on this facet of the programme within our next report. We do, though, stress the need to manage aspects of this work on a cross-Government basis, with other Departments and Authorities understanding that they also have a role to play, as was achieved with the Forces and Community Covenants. We are particularly concerned that this work also registers the importance of taking initiatives not just within Whitehall but also with the devolved administrations.

8. Our report then turns to a number of further observations. We suggest that there is still the potential to continue reducing the costs of the support overhead for the Reserves; indeed we are convinced that understanding the cost of the Reserves and maintaining a cost differential between Regulars and Reserves is an on-going requirement. We also consider that the full potential of the Commission's more radical recommendations still deserves more study; we are particularly keen to see a flexible approach being taken to Terms and Conditions of Service, which might then allow greater utilisation of niche skills through reach-back, where the non-deployable nature of some elements of Reservist work might permit less rigorous selection criteria.

9. Finally we make mention of risk. In our view the short-term and immediate risk is the challenge of gearing up Reserve manning sufficiently quickly. We believe the risk is well-understood and being addressed; however, some programme decisions still to be made (for example within the forthcoming White Paper) could escalate the risk and will need to be judged accordingly. Our view of long-term risk centres on the need for cultural change, such that there is a determination at every level to have the FR20 programme succeed – on the basis that the Reserves are genuinely integrated and not merely assimilated.

Robin Brims
Lieutenant General (Retired)

12 June 2013

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INTRODUCTION

1. This is the first report of the External Scrutiny group appointed by the Secretary of State for Defence to provide independent oversight of the Future Reserves 2020 programme. The group was constituted on 20 July 2012¹ under the leadership of Lieutenant General Brims and effectively formed up in September 2012, receiving its first formal briefing from a joint MOD and single Service team on 28 September 2012. This report therefore covers the 6 month period from then to 31 March 2013 (albeit our final two events strayed into April 13).

Background

2. The future of the Armed Forces' Reserves was initially considered within the Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) work initiated in May 2010. Following the SDSR report², on 19 October 2010 the Prime Minister announced a more detailed review by an independent commission into the Reserves to be led by General Sir Nicolas Houghton (Vice Chief of the Defence Staff) and supported by Julian Brazier MP and Lieutenant General Sir Graeme Lamb. The commission's report³ was issued on 18 July 2011; a digest of its recommendations is at Annex B. Following consideration of that report the Secretary of State made a statement to Parliament⁴ on 5 July 2012, accepting the "broad thrust" of the report; allocating additional funding of £1.8Bn to the programme; and detailing some of the specific recommendations that would be taken forward, key amongst which was the intention to increase the strength of the Reserve of all three Services as a more integrated element of a "Whole Force".

3. Within that statement the Secretary of State also announced a consultation exercise to be conducted in the autumn and winter of 2012/13, setting out more detailed proposals following which "*we will be able to make informed decisions early next year on terms and conditions of service, employer engagement, the Government's own commitments as an employer, and on any legislation necessary to underpin and support our vision for the Reserves*". The Green Paper⁵ was published on 9 November 2012 and consultation concluded on 18 January 2013 (which, together with consideration of the results, broadly covers the same period of this first report); although the Department has not yet made a formal response to the consultation, we have been involved in much of the work. Our understanding is that the results of the consultation Green Paper is now informing a White Paper due to be announced this summer.

¹ Convening letter and Terms of Reference: RF&C/FR20.5.5 dated 20 Jul 12. Attached at Annex A.

² Securing Britain in an Age of Uncertainty: Strategic Defence and Security Review, Cm 7948, 19 October 2010. (ID P002394077 10/10).

³ Future Reserves 2020: The Independent Commission to Review the United Kingdom's Reserve Forces, July 2011. (ID: P002442608 07/11)

⁴ http://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons-vote-office/July_2012/05-07-12/3.DEFENCE-Future-Reserves.PDF

⁵ Future Reserves 2020: Delivering the Nation's Security Together. A Consultation Paper, Cm 8475, November 2012. (ID: P002522791 11/12).

4. Throughout the period the Scrutiny Group has conducted a number of meetings and visits (detailed at Annex C), focussing mainly on understanding the views of the senior political and military leadership of the Department and the three Services. We have also visited a very limited number of Reservist units (at least one from each of the single Services), where possible accompanied by the relevant Headquarters staff responsible for FR20 delivery. Such a small sample of units inevitably provides very limited grounds for substantive observations but our intention has been more to establish a rudimentary baseline from which to judge subsequent change within the FR20 Programme, as well as gaining a rough sense of what change was already underway. Separately several members of the Scrutiny Group are also involved in other aspects of the FR20 Programme and more general change programmes underway within the MOD (indeed, both the Reserves Executive Committee and the FR20 Programme Board include representation by the secretary to this Scrutiny group); where appropriate we have therefore drawn on their knowledge and expertise to inform this report.

5. We do not intend to provide oversight or scrutiny on Special Forces reserves, as we believe that they sit outside our remit. We have also not looked at Defence Medical Services (DMS) Reserves thus far, largely because for most of the period plans for these Reserves have still been in preparation. **Therefore we intend to bring the Medical reserves more into our work next year, not least to reassure ourselves that a coherent approach is being maintained between DMS and the single Services⁶.**

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

6. Given the infancy of FR20 planning, we are concerned that this year we should not be making definitive judgements on achievement. Hence this report should, in most respects, be seen as a 'first impressions report'. Where we do make more substantive comment it largely relates to the introduction of essential new processes; to the identification of metrics necessary to make informed judgements in the early years of the programme; and to those areas in which we therefore intend to concentrate over the next two years to ensure that the vectors are being irrevocably and correctly set to achieve the declared goals.

Reserves Proposition

7. We are persuaded that what FR20 proposes is achievable. And, while not our role to judge the desirability of the programme, we are equally convinced that much within the programme enhances defence capability. That said we believe that a clear proposition for Reserves has yet to be clearly articulated and disseminated.

8. It is axiomatic that planning for FR20 should be developed on the basis of a common understanding of this proposition. However, in much of the work undertaken so far it is clear to us that this is still lacking. During the FR20 consultation and more recently we heard of considerable confusion amongst employers and commentators about the future purpose of Reserves, exacerbated by ambiguous and occasionally uninformed language, such as 'using Reserves more' (rather than 'using the Reserves differently'). Similarly, especially in development work for the TA, we have seen quite different approaches being taken to capability development with different interpretations between capability areas. And finally, but

⁶ Throughout this report text highlighted in bold indicates areas in which we intend to concentrate scrutiny in the forthcoming year(s); a summary of these points is at Annex F.

just as importantly, we are aware of nervousness within the RN and RAF that the proposition might be driven by TA requirements, which do not reflect the different ways in which the smaller two Services need to employ their reservists.

Notwithstanding any inter-Service differences it is vitally important that every Reservist should have a clear understanding of their operational roles(s) and degree of commitment, as this also forms the basis of transparent relationships with employers, families and colleagues.

9. It seems to us that this is an area which needs to be redressed urgently, to ensure that any ambiguity is eliminated and that plans are thus taken forward against a narrative which sets out an absolutely clear and common notion of what the Reserve is for and how it will be used, no matter that this may have several strands within it. We also urge that it is expressed in plain English, rather than military jargon, which is comprehensible to civilian employers and potential recruits.

Recommendation 1. (Link to the Commission's recommendations 3, 4 & 8)
As a matter of priority the Department should issue a plain-English narrative which sets out the Reserves proposition: a narrative which is commonly adopted across all the Services and, as a minimum, covers the purposes of the Reserves; the manner in which they are likely to be used; and individual levels of obligation.

Commitment and Governance

10. We are in no doubt that the Department is fully committed to the FR20 Programme; the Secretary of State and the Service Chiefs of Staff have all been open with us in explaining their vision and equally candid in identifying the short and long-term risks to the programme within their broader responsibilities for Future Force 2020 (the context derived from the SDSR, within which FR20 is set). An effective governance structure has been instituted within the Department, with clear lines of responsibility and accountability identified for policy and delivery work; programme funding and cost control is a prominent and routine facet of this work. At the outset it was evident that a considerable amount of work would be needed in this area and, on evidence to date⁷, it is clear that much has already been achieved.

11. Within the Front Line Commands, which bear most of the delivery responsibility, we are equally content that a similar level of commitment is being demonstrated and that their work is appropriately harmonised with MOD policy. The Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force moved quickly following the announcement of the Commission's report to create coherent and funded plans. The Army with its more extensive and arguably more complex challenge has also moved from a position, which in September we would have characterized as being no more than a concept for Army Reserves, to now having a comprehensive plan to achieve the necessary changes - now codified as Operation FORTIFY.

The Temporal Dimension

12. We are concerned at the amount of time it has already taken to initiate change. From the genesis of SDSR in May 2010, 3 years have now elapsed with some important policy announcements still awaited. While we understand the importance of ensuring the coherence of FR20 with other change programmes, we sense that the protracted time taken to announce some of the key policy changes is having a

⁷ Periodic FR20 Programme Board reporting and dashboards.

deleterious effect on the morale and commitment of Reserves who await these announcements.

13. Many current reservists will view their future commitment to the Reserves on the basis of whether their previous service, training, operational role, reservist centres and units remain relevant within Future Force 2020, while potential recruits will judge their future commitment on similar anticipated factors; it is clear that not being able to announce much of this - largely held back pending decisions on Regular forces - has had a direct bearing on achieving a growth in TA manpower. We are also aware that planning for the RN and RAF is to some extent forestalled pending decisions still to be made for the Army - for example, Regular Army and TA basing decisions which have a direct bearing on RNR/RMR and RAuxAF unit moves.

14. That said, FR20 is an eight-year programme and it needs to be managed with the temporal dimension as a key tenet in its delivery. Possibly for the reasons we identify in paragraphs 7-9, we detect that aspects of the programme have not been initiated within the phased approach recommended by the Commission. Some of this probably needs to be regarded as *force majeure*: the need to grow Reserve capability (as distinct from merely Reservist strength) more quickly than envisaged is clearly linked to the budget imperative which drove regular manpower draw-down. The Commission's clear recommendations on staging FR20 changes⁸ (in some quarters expressed as: stabilise; grow; transform) remains relevant in many - arguably most - aspects of the programme. We touch on this more below and especially in expectations of growing the size of trained manpower.

15. The extended period over which FR20 is to be delivered and the era beyond suggests strongly to us that the product must also anticipate environmental changes yet to be identified. At the heart of this lies the Commission's concern that the Reserves should be able to contribute to national resilience⁹: challenges and risks to UK security which would likely call on defence capability because they lie beyond the capacity or capability of other UK institutions to manage (or even which possibly called for further growth or regeneration). But the capacity of the Reserve should also take account of the strong possibility that their planned roles will evolve further - which in turn could well lead to future changes in structures and equipment. We deduce from this that, notwithstanding the need for clear attribution of the Reserves to roles and tasks, the structure and infrastructure within which they are managed should retain a degree of flexibility for subsequent evolution. This will not necessarily sit easily with efficiency targets (which tend to constrain loose-fit solutions) but should nevertheless be tested as much on the grounds of future effectiveness.

RESERVIST MANPOWER

Growth Targets

16. As the Commission and the Secretary of State identified at the outset of FR20, the long-term neglect of the Reserves progressively led to a significant decline in their strength (the actual numbers) compared to their authorised size (variously termed establishment or liability). The reduction to personnel inflow is by no means the only problem this posed. Similar neglect in training and development opportunities (exacerbated by the lack of clear operational roles), linked to an over-riding

⁸ Stage 1- Investment and Betterment; Stage 2 - Enabling the Future; Stage 3 - Realising the Potential.

⁹ FR20 Report: Investment and Betterment recommendations; paragraph 57; and wider recommendation 5 (Attribution).

imperative to concentrate resources mainly on Reservists being deployed on operations (most markedly in the TA), also led to the erosion of appropriately trained and committed/available Reservists within the remaining manpower. Hence, we do not underestimate the challenge that this now sets, in re-growing the size of the Reserves.

17. However, we note that throughout the post-war years the Reserves have consistently recruited to well above the current manpower targets; some 25 years ago the TA numbered 70,000 and as little as 7 years ago their numbers stood at just under 40,000. Any decline in numbers has always been as a consequence of policy or management decisions, such as imposing manning and recruiting caps, not as a consequence of recruiting potential. Moreover, there is good evidence to show that when the Reserves were better managed they routinely came close to their manning targets even in sustained periods of economic austerity, such as the early/mid 70s. Consequently we firmly believe that the basic manpower targets¹⁰ are viable. Moreover we are unconvinced by arguments to the contrary which suggest that the new nature of Reserve service and the employment climate militate against success - and our discussions with employers (see below) strongly reinforces our view.

Manpower Metrics

18. Clearly, increased manpower alone will not deliver the requisite capability and hence over time our concentration must increasingly turn to the associated training and development that will allow for genuine integration. Nevertheless, in the early years of FR20 the critical path to generating that capability rests heavily on significant growth in numbers. We make this point emphatically, because the Commission made clear that the litmus for success was the generation of Phase 2 trained reservists. It typically takes at least 2 years to train recruits to that level because of the constraints of their availability. Thus we firmly suggest that in the next two years, in support of a far higher priority being given to Reserve recruiting¹¹, the MOD must urgently introduce improved instrumentation to better measure numbers at lower levels of preparedness than Phase 2. We suggest that, at the least, the Services track and report on changes in 'expressions of interest'; attestations; and Phase 1; as well as Phase 2 trained strengths in order to demonstrate overall growth in numbers. **Clearly this is an area which we will continue to monitor closely over the coming years.**

**Recommendation 2. (Link to the Commission's recommendations 6 & 12)
FR20 manpower metrics should be more granular for the period to 2018 to demonstrate changes within the recruit inflow pipeline and should not concentrate solely on the achievement of Phase 2 trained Reservists.**

Manpower Information Systems

19. Tracking Reservist numbers has historically been more difficult than Regular numbers. The problem seems to be compounded by poor management information systems and over-reliance on Joint Personnel Administration (JPA), which has never been fully configured to support the Reserves' requirement. We note that as late as 31

¹⁰ Maritime Reserves - 3,100; Army Reserves - 30,000 plus 8,000 training margin; RAF Reserves - 1,800.

¹¹ And here we would also commend a more lateral approach which included regular service leavers, attracting ex-reserves back in, converting regular reserves into volunteer reserves, pro-active campaigns in University service units and incentives for 17 year old cadets to join the reserves,

March 2013 Reservist manning data was still only classified as "provisional" by DASA¹² and this must raise concerns on the effectiveness of the process. Moreover, what data is held still falls short of a comprehensive requirement to record such things as civilian skill sets and qualifications that could be invaluable in making more extensive and intelligent use of individual reservists. We are aware that data assurance appears to vary between the Services and that within the Army measures are being taken to improve data quality, albeit the quality assurance currently degrades with increasing aggregation. Manning numbers are sufficiently critical to FR20 success that investment is now needed urgently for improved information systems to have far greater assurance of manpower data and **improvements in MIS is another area which we believe we will need to monitor closely.**

**Recommendation 3. (Link to the Commission's recommendation 26)
Priority must be given to fund and introduce quickly an effective management information system which accurately captures Reservist numbers; states of training; preparedness; availability; attendance; and skill sets.**

Manpower – Leadership and Management

20. At unit and sub-unit locations the basics of leadership and man-management fall heavily upon the shoulders of commanders supported by relatively few permanent staff; these commanders are typically remote from their supporting garrisons and stations, and therefore have to be more self-reliant. We noted that in the recent past many of the permanent staff posts have been gapped and coupled with poor reserve officer recruiting this has left commanders struggling to manage administration by themselves. Measures being put in place to enhance Reserve units with additional permanent staff are therefore necessary and timely; it will be important to see this carried through by filling the posts with the right quality personnel. Important as these enhancements are, they will nevertheless need to be tempered to the extent that local commanders still need to retain command authority. Such authority is a pre-requisite to sustain their own commitment to the Reserves but – far more importantly – provides the role model for junior officer aspiration. In the same vein, a degree of balance needs to be struck between directed tasking from capability managers and the local commanders' requirements, to ensure that unit training needs and support activity are not overlooked in the drive for individual development. **We will examine this aspect of unit evolution in coming years.**

Recruiting

22. For the reasons mentioned above it is too early to judge whether the reinvigorated recruiting effort is having a positive effect. On the basis of data provided by the FR20 Programme Board (see Annex D) Reservist Phase 2-trained manpower numbers are at worst flat-lining or at best improving only marginally. This should neither surprise nor discourage. The reality of this early stage in the programme is that routine outflow of trained personnel will likely outstrip any growth in fully trained inflow (i.e. the 'graduation' of those recruits currently in training) and this situation is not likely to change materially for at least the first year of FR20.

23. What is not clear is whether expressions of interest are yet being converted to attestations in sufficient numbers, reinforcing our concern to gain better visibility of

¹² MOD Statistical release Published 16 May 2013, extract replicated in Annex D.

improvements in the recruiting pipeline mentioned in Recommendation 2. Neither is it clear whether those reservists currently on the untrained strength are being progressed with sufficient urgency and flexibility to move them expeditiously to achieve Phase 2.

24. Admittedly against a very small sample size, we were seized with concerns at unit level about the efficacy of the recruiting and training process for Reservists. All three Service units were concerned that national recruiting campaigns tended not to deliver enduring interest at unit level unless they were supplemented by a coordinated local campaign. As but one example, we heard that a centrally driven recruiting campaign for the Maritime Reserves achieved almost no expressions of interest in Birmingham until the local unit took an initiative to amend the poster campaign with details of their local unit, at which point they quickly received over 200 contacts. We also heard that much of the recruiting machinery is more tailored for individuals seeking Regular employment. A typical example cited the opening hours of Armed Forces Career Offices (AFCOs) which tended to open only during working hours (when Reservists would themselves be at work); an integrated approach to this problem would more ideally see the AFCOs opening, say Tuesday to Saturday from 1100 to 1900 (rather than the current 9-to-5 routine).

25. Anecdotally we have also picked up concerns about the application of common selection. We support the concept that all new recruits should meet common entry standards as a necessary step towards better integration. However, again it appears that the process was hurriedly introduced in an identical way to that for Regulars, without sufficient thought to how it might need to be adapted to conform with the life-style and working routines of an employed potential Reservist recruit. Moreover, we have also heard of recent ex-Regulars being rejected on medical grounds because they fail the recruit entry standard, despite having been demonstrably fit for continued Regular service.

26. Well-intentioned as these measures may have been, in some quarters there appears to have been an overzealous interpretation of what integration means and how it will be applied (in other words, Reservists being required to conform entirely to Regular norms, rather than norms being adjusted to accommodate both Regular and Reservist needs). We touch on this as a potentially unhealthy indicator again below, when we discuss cultural change. In the meantime we believe that the Services are aware of the initial 'teething problems' identified here and have been assured that changes are now being effected.

27. We were struck by the critical need to recruit new blood into the officer corps of all the Services' Reserves. This was stressed by the Commission and we strongly support their concern. It was clear that efforts were being stepped up in a number of areas, but finding sufficient numbers of potential officers is likely to remain a crucially important aspect of recruiting if the future Reserves are to regain the ability to be more self-sufficient and self-reliant. In the short term we were persuaded that to some extent this can and should be ameliorated by the temporary injection of Regular or Full Time Reserve Service (FTRS) 'substitution' to fill gapped posts. But the long-term health of the Reserves depends heavily on a strong volunteer Reserve officer backbone for sustainability and we judge this to be the highest priority in future recruiting effort.

28. **As we have received no empirical evidence on either the scale of the problems or the effectiveness of remedial action, these are all areas that we will**

want to look at in detail during the coming year. Similarly we are acutely conscious that responsibility for Army recruiting has been in the process of transferring to the Recruiting Partnership across this period. For this reason we have deliberately held back from commenting on other aspects of recruiting. **Given the pivotal importance of bringing in new blood to the Reserves early in the programme (and over a sustained period for the Army Reserve) we will want to examine the full spectrum of recruiting processes next year as well.**

Retention

29. For the reasons mentioned above, we believe that during the early period of the FR20 programme special effort will be needed to stem the outflow of established Reservists. Not only are these reservists needed to keep numbers up until an effective inflow is in place but, more importantly, many of them are essential in sustaining a critical mass for training at unit and sub-unit level. The Commission recognised this in many of their recommendations. We would go further. Improved retention will also in the longer term bring down the unit cost of a Reservist, as costly inflow can be throttled back once steady state has been reached.

30. At present, with so much interest and effort focussed on recruiting, many of the retention measures have concentrated on betterment which delivers quick wins on a generic basis. New personal equipment has been widely provided for the TA, to the same standard and scale and in the same timescales as for Regular personnel. Some equipment which would previously not been available to Reserve units has also been made available. And, in the case of the Army Reserve, a series of Overseas Training Exercises (OTX) has been mounted to improve the quality of training and morale; these OTX also provide a significant pointer to the potential utility of greater Reservist involvement in overseas capacity building and defence diplomacy tasks as the Adaptable Force Brigades develop. This has been very well received by Reservists as a signal that priorities are changing; anecdotally it has already gone a long way to reassuring many to stay who might otherwise have walked away.

31. To target retention measures better in future, we believe that more detailed analysis is now needed to address the causes of "churn" - the accepted levels of outflow. We sense that there is too easy an acceptance of traditional churn at certain points of service. For example it is well known that most outflow occurs during initial recruiting and selection. There are probably a multitude of legitimate reasons for this, but that should not excuse merely accepting the churn rates; efforts should be made to minimise the churn factors. Do protracted administration, repetitive training modules, excessive weekend travel and the like act as push factors to recruits? If so what measures could be taken to ameliorate them, such as a degree of retrospective administration, self-certification, more bespoke course construction, more structured (and better notified) training periods? In the long run this again could speed up the delivery of fully trained personnel, and reduce costs. For longer serving Reservists, who run the risk of disenchantment as they return to repetitive training modules, should there be a greater emphasis on different forms of personnel development which reignite their enthusiasm? And, with increasing focus on integration, churn affecting Regulars is also likely to impact on Reserves in ways that had not been relevant previously.

Recommendation 4.

More analysis is undertaken to determine the causes of 'manning churn', to inform how retention measures could be better targeted.

Training

32. Above all else, the quality and quantity of training lies at the heart of healthy recruiting and retention - a point made strongly to us at all levels. By contrast a poorly constructed training machine is inimical to delivering integrated and effective capability. Measures are already being taken to improve training across the board, but some of this necessarily awaits the wider changes in hand for the Regular forces - especially where training relies heavily on facilities, equipment or expertise being provided through a paired Regular Army unit which will not move to its new base and role for some years yet - or through new technology to aid distance learning.

33. It therefore seems sensible to us that improvements to training need to be staged, even if that means introducing some measures which will only have relatively short-lived utility. For example, where eventually specialist equipment will be held by the regular unit and shared with their Reservist unit in time, some facilities should be transferred to the Reserve unit to enable training until such time as the pairing is fully in place.

34. Similarly, considerable thought needs still to be given to how integrated training can take place. We were impressed by the way this already happens in the RAuxAF, where some units based at Brize Norton (which operates 24/7) are able to conduct on-the-job training to the extent that Reservists routinely supplement or substitute for Regulars on live equipments. However, for remote units different approaches are needed and again this is an area where the norms of training life will probably need to be challenged. **We will want to examine how this is being taken forward, if not next year then certainly for our 2015 report.**

35. We were also unclear how some Reserve units' training was to be directed and resourced (and by whom). In all of the Services we detected the potential for built-in tensions in this respect. In the Army Reserve, units are likely to be pulled in different directions depending on how they are subordinated between the Brigade and Divisional area - and this is likely to be particularly acutely felt as Headquarters transition into their new roles. A specific example was provided on our TA visit, where the unit role is to provide individual augmentees to Armoured Regiments in the Reaction Force Brigades; the assumed intention is to pair the Regiment with all three of their Regular counterpart units (all of which sit in different Brigades, albeit in the same Division). In the RN and the RAF we were made aware of several overlapping command responsibilities as well, which we would simplistically describe as introducing potential friction between those HQ responsible for directing outputs and those with responsibility for resource provision and support. At this stage in development it was also apparent that aspects of this also challenged the Reserve unit commanding officer to prioritise between pure capability development (that is, creating fully trained Reservists to fill deployed billets/posts in turn) and unit development (creating unit cohesion and the right recruiting and retention environment with supporting activity such as community engagement).

36. **Over the next two years we will need to understand how the chains of command are managing these apparent tensions. Thus we will expect to be able**

to engage with employing headquarters, not just those responsible for creating the capability.

Equipment

37. Closely related to the importance of training is the provision of appropriate equipment to support training. It is therefore highly likely that the provision of adequate scales of special-to-role equipment for Reserve units - or alternatively easy access to it for training - will become increasingly important. We detect an opening mindset that places the onus for this on the supporting, parent or paired unit (depending on Service). We are not yet convinced that this is a model that will work, especially in cases where the Regular unit is likely to deploy. Neither are we persuaded that Whole Fleet Management is capable of providing sufficient dedicated equipments (particularly fitted-for-role vehicles) under current arrangements.

38. Provision of such equipment for training under this arrangement needs to be addressed against a new paradigm. Reservists' time is precious. They cannot afford to fritter it away on garnering the right kit; they need to maximise time training on the kit. However, even under the most benevolent relationship, the bulk of the current onus falls on the Reserve unit to collect the kit, sign it over, equip it for the activity, drive it to the training location, use it, clean and restore it; and then sign it back again. On one training activity we visited, the time expended on collection and return of Land Rovers (used to simulate Armoured Fighting Vehicles) effectively removed about 15-20% of the training opportunity across a whole weekend. On the same exercise it was apparent that even some Phase 2 trained soldiers were seeing for the first time the primary vehicle which they were destined to operate on mobilisation.

39. If the training is to be meaningful in creating capability then it must be based on adequate access to the appropriate equipment. While much of this might well be managed by programmed activity with the paired or supporting Regular unit, it is inevitable that some training will always need to be conducted at the Reserve unit bases. Adequate provision needs to be made for this, with priority given to those units which are for good reasons located some distance from their Regular counterparts. Over time consideration needs also to be given to investment in low-tech simulators, for example by equipping basic vehicles with fighting and technical vehicle systems (such as weapons simulators, intercoms, communications, information systems, and battlefield applications) to allow procedural training without recourse to expensive support.

**Recommendation 5. (Link to the Commission's recommendations 2 & 21)
In parallel to development of support, pairing or parenting responsibilities,
further analysis is needed for scaling of equipment and vehicle holdings at
Reserve unit level, including the provision of low-tech simulation alternatives.**

Basing

40. We quickly became aware of a structural dichotomy between the conflicting aims of the Reserves connecting with the nation (Commission Recommendation 5 & 18) and interpretations of how to better integrate (Commission Recommendations 1 & 3). In the former there is a clear intent to continue to draw reservists from major population centres; in the latter there is an implied deduction that Reserve units, if not co-located with their Regular counterparts, should be located close to them.

41. Following the Secretary of State's announcement on Regular Army basing¹³ it is clear that our perception had substance, as most Regular Army units will be located some distance from the UK's major population centres.

42. The RN and RAF have clearly registered this issue. The RN have developed their basing proposals on fewer sites but concentrated on major population centres, while the RAF are well down the way of creating units in hitherto untapped urban areas (the North West, Northern Ireland and South Wales) rather than building up more on-base units.

43. By contrast our understanding of Army basing proposals suggests a less consistent approach between capability areas, which have taken at times noticeably different approaches. Technical capability areas which are planned to have larger Reserve components seem to have looked extensively at growth into those population centres associated with the core skills they need (REME linking with manufacturing and engineering; Intelligence linking to centres of information excellence). Combat support (Artillery and Engineers) appear to have placed more emphasis on co-location and proximity to paired regular units as the drivers, accepting that there might be a significant time penalty to generate the full capability as units adapt to their new roles. And Combat (Armour and Infantry) seem to be seeking a compromise which occasionally creates a tension between proximity to the paired Regular units while retaining access to their traditional Regimental heartlands. We are not suggesting that there is anything intrinsically wrong with this approach but we do detect some anomalies. Although the outcome of this work remains subject to further consideration and announcement we would hope that, before basing is settled, it takes a more strategic overview of the UK's ability to service Army Reserve manning while remaining sufficiently well positioned to react to resilience and community engagement roles.

44. At least four issues still need to be resolved here:

a. First, that the burden of finding Reserve manpower should fall proportionately across the UK. We are aware that, presumably in a desire to facilitate proximity, TA presence in several regions (notably the East and West Midlands) appears to have been significantly reduced at the expense of preserving/creating units in areas with far less capacity or tradition of recruiting Reservists.

b. Second, that - in the short term - reductions in the number of TA sub-units (necessary to create a viable 30,000 Army Reserve structure) should not result in 'self harm' (the loss of TA numbers by removing units from the Orbat which then leaves current Reservists with no reasonable alternative home under the new structure). We are concerned that more thought is needed to harmonise and sequence structural transformation of the Army Reserve with basing rationalisation, in a way that the maximum number of current Reservists can be retained in the early years of FR20.

c. Third, that the basing plan is fully harmonised with the time-scales for delivering complete capability. In other words, we believe that creation of some new Army Reserve units in 'green field locations' (that is, where there is

¹³ Secretary of State for Defence Announcement on the Army Basing Plan: Hansard 5 March 2013

no previous history of reservist units or units with the required specialisation) must be tested against time to delivery.

d. Fourth, that consideration be given to retaining or relocating a significant number of Reserve centres in locations where ex-regulars are likely to settle, thus making it easier for them to transfer to the Reserves.

**Recommendation 6. (Link to Commission recommendations 5, 6, 17, 18 & 23)
FR20 Army basing should take account of regional capacity to recruit, not just to facilitate proximity, and should also be phased to preserve initially current TA manpower until such time as alternative inflow is more fully developed.**

ENGAGING THE NATION(S)

45. The commission stressed the importance of the Reserves in connecting with the nation¹⁴. We judge this not just as vital to generate a communications medium for Defence into communities but also of critical importance in mobilising public support to nurture and sustain the Reserves. We have become aware of a number of nuances that will need to be addressed within the life of the FR20 programme. At this stage we point to two specific issues.

a. First, much of the support needed by the Reserves is likely to be found in local communities through arrangements provided under other Government Departments' or Local Authorities' responsibilities. It therefore seems sensible to examine the cross-government arrangements for Armed Forces Covenants (national and community) to ensure that they are sufficiently comprehensive to accommodate the full spectrum of Reservist interests. More specifically, we believe that many of the initiatives on employer support should be managed in concert with the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS), while aspirations to improve medical and dental support to Reservists should necessarily involve and are likely to be mainly delivered by the Department for Health/NHS.

b. Second, we are aware that much that can be arranged as cross-Whitehall initiatives to work in England will have little or no sway within Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland. This is not to say that the devolved Administrations are not playing their part; indeed, some of our research suggests that Scotland, for example, stands out as an exemplar for integrated welfare support to Service personnel which automatically reads across to Reservists. That said, the reality is that responsibility for much of the support required for Reservists has been devolved nationally and, with Defence remaining a central government responsibility, this could too easily lead to incoherence. Hence we believe that there is a strong case to consider this work in the context of four nations, not just one, and we touch on more detailed considerations below.

Employers

46. The Green Paper consultation was a welcome addition to the process of growing the size of the Reserves and better integrating them within a Whole Force

¹⁴ Commission Report: Paragraph 57e, Recommendation 18

concept. We understand that the Department has acknowledged that the consultation exercise was successful, in that they were satisfied both with the quantity and quality of the responses they received. We also understand that many of the responses have informed the work to develop a White Paper (although this report anticipates that announcement).

47. We will therefore defer much comment on the consultation until next year, once we have had the opportunity to examine in detail the outcome.

48. In the meantime our own engagement with employers reinforces our view that FR20 aspirations are viable in most key areas. Our engagements with large and the bigger medium employers suggest that the overall numbers required and the level of commitment expected is well within their tolerance of social responsibility programmes. Although most do not expect to have the cost to them fully offset by the benefits that they would receive, many are content that the likely changes under consideration could adequately compensate their commitments to the Reserves.

49. Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) have a more difficult situation. They are more concerned about being able to plan for absences of their Reservists and to accommodate the costs of doing so. As we wait for the outcome of the consultation we feel strongly that the Department needs to take a graduated approach to supporting employers and will also need to take account of the self-employed, those in education and the unemployed.

50. At the general level it will be important to improve the quality of information and advance warning to all employers. Traditionally the Services have resisted guarantees of promising this, largely because of the unpredictability of operations. But the SDSR and subsequent work on force generation persuades us that the Services can and should be more able to forecast reservist activity in a more timely and accurate way.

51. Additionally we are convinced that the Department and the Services should invest in creating more equal partnering with employers. There are many ways in which this could be achieved, all under consideration at present, and we will reserve comment until we see the Department's proposals. As that consideration goes on, we would urge that the Department takes a flexible approach to introducing new measures, such that the different types of employer are able to be dealt with according to their different needs. On a very specific point, we remain unconvinced that Treasury-led measures such as National Insurance relief for supportive employers should be so easily dismissed, given first the relatively small numbers of employers and, second, similar initiatives introduced for equally small constituencies in the most recent budget announcements. In the same vein we believe that there is some potential to engage with other Departments such as BIS, as mentioned in paragraph 45.

52. We also sense that the Department is aspiring to find the future Reservist predominantly through large employers (and the Commission's recommendation 13 advocates this to some extent). There is obvious advantage in this approach, especially in sharing objectives for the development of key personnel. However, the reality of today is that employers do not directly recruit Reservists (the actuality is that individual employees choose to join the Reserves and then manage their employers' expectations) and most current Reservists work for SMEs. Thus it will be important that employer relationships evolve to serve the full spectrum of employers,

rather than merely favour large employers, and that support measures are developed which allow selective application according to need.

53. We remain committed to the view that engagement with employers is a key step in increasing and sustaining Reservist numbers. Notwithstanding the aspiration to court a new breed of employers, the nub of the issue is engagement with line managers.

We will continue to test existing Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Associations' (RFCAs) linkages with employers to ensure that MOD's intent is better understood and is encouraging increased recruitment to the Reserves.

54. Commander Land Forces stressed that the Service Commands will need help getting these messages across to the communities from which the Armed Forces need assistance, as well as mobilising the resources of other Government Departments to deliver a more focussed level of support to service personnel and their families, not just Reservists. We strongly support his view. This is of sufficient importance to merit more formal tasking and resourcing and we believe it deserves consideration in any future review of the contribution the RFCAs could or should make.

Families' Welfare and Terms and Conditions of Service

55. In our view the Green paper objective to include consultation with families was well judged. **Again, we await the formal announcement of the consultation and will comment accordingly later.** In the meantime we are concerned that Reservists' families may well have inadvertently been encouraged to believe that there is a level of support already offered to Regulars' families that should also be available to them, when in truth much of this welfare support has either been transferred to local authorities (albeit highlighted within the Armed Forces Covenants) or is only enhanced through Service charities.

56. That said we are convinced that Reservists' families should have access to appropriate Service welfare provision. We are equally clear that this should be proportionate. Specifically the level of support should be conditional upon the level of Reservist commitment and upon need. We do not believe that the Department should be attempting to replicate exactly the nature of welfare support available on garrisons/stations, given the different circumstances in which Reservists live the majority of their lives. Moreover we believe that the nature of any additional welfare support should be tailored more precisely to Reservist family needs (rather than presuming that existing structures can automatically carry in Reservists' interests).

57. We are also concerned at the apparent willingness of the Department to accept other legislation for Reservists (for example by adopting new employment law) without fully considering whether derogation would be more appropriate. Specifically we wonder whether re-categorizing Reservists from casual labour to part-time labour is right? We fully understand the social stigma of being seen as casual labour within an integrated Whole Force, but the reality is that most Reservists rely mainly on other income streams, seeing Reserve service less as secondary employment and more as a private commitment or vocation. For many of them, if offered any additional benefits they would be happily received but not actively sought; all the Reservists we have spoken to would place fully resourced training well above the benefits of reclassified employment status. **Most importantly, we are concerned that the relatively low costs of retaining Reservists are not deliberately or inadvertently eroded, in order to regain a case for increasing Regular manpower at their expense; we will watch this over time.**

Further Initiatives

Support Arrangements

58. In our discussions we have noted that all three Services have been making very appropriate use of FR20 monies to appoint additional staff to lead and manage the growth and development of the Reserves. In many cases these posts are 'transitional' in nature, and will not be required in the longer-term, post-2020. In other cases the appointments are to fill gapped existing posts, or to provide enabling support for the larger and re-shaped organisation.

59. It appears to us that these latter appointments are crucial to the success of FR20, and that many are likely to remain essential in the longer term, post-2020. It is thus not too early for the single Services to consider how these likely enduring posts are to be funded beyond the end of the enhanced FR20 programme funding. We note that the Army has already identified the need to draw additional funds for the Reserves from core army funding as FR20 progresses, and beyond. The other Services may wish to consider similar arrangements.

60. We believe that the White Paper will direct that the RFCAs should now be reviewed, having last undertaken a comprehensive internal review in 2006. We welcome such a re-examination with specific focus on the RFCAs, rather than as an adjunct to reviews of their supported constituencies. We would encourage the review to look at the RFCAs as a means of reducing the support costs of the Reserves, perhaps by adopting a similar support philosophy to that which the RFCAs use for the Army Cadet Force (and as a means for rationalising support to other cadet forces). We also recommend that this review includes any proposed changes to the management of the Volunteer Estate to ensure a coherent outcome.

61. **As mentioned in paragraph 57 we will continue to look at the cost of the Reserves, especially where palliatives have been achieved by injecting expensive regular manpower to effect change.** The basis of the Commission's recommendation to grow the Reserves was their understanding that the Reserves remained cost effective; it will be important to ensure that the aggregate of measures to enhance the quality of the Reserve does not inadvertently change that presumption.

Reach-back and Niche Capabilities

62. We have a sense that the Commission was to some extent constrained by the need to promote the traditional role of Reserves, such that they were not able to examine the full potential that the Reserve could offer. Although they touched on some of this (Recommendations 22 & 23), they stopped short of making specific recommendations about alternative forms of Reserve service. We recommend that this work should now be introduced. We feel that Defence capabilities could be considerably enhanced by utilising reach-back through non-deployable reservists, recruited not because of their generic military utility but much more through harnessing their specific civilian/professional skills for military purpose (perhaps extrapolating on the way Defence recruits and uses some medical reservists).

63. RN and RAF warfare centres already recognise the value of reach-back to support operations. It is also highly likely that in future conflict much improved communications will allow many higher command and control (C2) nodes to no

longer need to forward deploy in future. Technically competent reservists, undertaking relevant analysis in their civilian jobs, would almost certainly deliver a better support product than serving personnel dragooned into the specialisation. When looking at high-value, low-availability niche capabilities reach-back to specialist Reservists seems a necessary next step. But to make it viable, it may well be necessary to review the entry standards, potential employment and rewards for those that this initiative could affect.

Recommendation 7. (Link to the Commission’s recommendations 8, 22 & 23) That work is initiated to look at the potential to employ Reserves with critical skills, where their employment was best served in a reach-back rather than deployed role; and that their Terms and Conditions of Service (TACOS) be examined for appropriate adjustment.

Cultural Change

64. At the centre of all this change lies a clear need for cultural change. Notwithstanding the absolute commitment of the senior political and military leadership to make FR20 happen, we detected a widely held view at the middle management level that FR20 (and by inference Future Force 2020) will not (or perhaps more accurately should not) work. Much of this flies in the face of personal experience. Many individuals returning from current operations had experienced reserve integration working successfully, often so well that it was to an undetectable degree, yet conceptually many regular personnel still harboured reservations to the point of prejudice about the future utility of Reserves.

65. It is clear to us that more work is needed to inform and direct the junior command levels that FR20 is a reality. Alongside the short-term challenge of quickly raising reservist numbers, we place cultural change as the main impediment (risk, if you will) to achieving successful completion of the FR20 programme. The necessary cultural change must be addressed on the basis that Reserves are being healthily integrated, not just assimilated, with an objective approach to changing the norms of both Regular and Reserve life.

Recommendation 8. (Link to the Commission’s report, Annex C, paragraph 8.) That senior military and political leadership initiate a comprehensive information campaign with the Services’ middle management to address the cultural change necessary to secure FR20, drawing on the narrative we recommend above.

List of Annexes:

- A. External Scrutiny TORs.**
- B. Digest of Commission recommendations.**
- C. External scrutiny group programme.**
- D. FR20 Programme Board manpower data as at 31 March 2013.**
- E. Summary of key scrutiny group key findings and recommendations.**
- F. Summary of main areas for study in the forthcoming year(s).**
- G. External Scrutiny Group Members**

FR20 IMPLEMENTATION EXTERNAL SCRUTINY – COUNCIL RESERVE FORCES AND CADETS SCRUTINY TEAM TERMS OF REFERENCE

INTRODUCTION

1. The FR20 Report¹⁵ was commissioned by the Prime Minister in October 2010 in recognition of the relative decline and neglect of Reserve Forces. The Independent Commission concluded that the state of some elements of the Reserve was so fragile that resources and action were required immediately to arrest their decline; also, it sought to promote a wider vision to be realised over several years.

PURPOSE

2. The Commission identified¹⁶ a requirement for an annual report on the overall health of the Reserve Forces. It recommended that the Council of Reserve Forces and Cadets Associations (CRFCA) was best placed to meet this requirement given its existing provision by (non-discretionary) statute to provide independent advice to the Defence Council and Ministers on Reserve Matters.

ROLE

3. The CRFCA External Scrutiny Team is to report to the Secretary of State for Defence on implementation of the Future Reserves 2020 (FR20) Programme and provide independent assurance to Parliament.

MEMBERSHIP

4. Lt Gen (Retd) Robin Brims CB CBE DSO is appointed to chair the CRFCA External Scrutiny Team to provide external assurance on the implementation of the FR20 Programme.

5. Membership of the External Scrutiny Team should comprise no more than six, to be decided by the Chair after consultation with the MOD through VCDS. It should provide representation from the three single Services, appropriate Regular and Reserve experience and independent expertise. Whilst its composition may change over the course of the five years, the External Scrutiny Team must retain the expertise that enables the Chair to perform his duties effectively.

SCOPE

6. The External Scrutiny Team's work is to be set in the context of the ability of the Reserves to deliver capability required by Defence, and is to assess:

¹⁵ Future Reserves 2020: The Independent External Scrutiny Team to Review the United Kingdom's Reserve Forces. July 2011.

¹⁶ Para 104 (p. 43)

- a. Progress against delivery of the FR20 Mandate¹⁷

And in the context of the Recommendations of the FR20 Report:

- b. The condition of the Reserves.

BASELINE AND METRICS

7. 1 April 12 is to be taken as the baseline date from which progress will be assessed, and anniversaries of this date thereafter, to baseline their findings.
8. The FR20 Programme Management Office (PMO) will undertake coordinating activity with the single Services to ensure that the External Scrutiny Team has the assistance it requires to enable them to assess trends based on monthly manning and demographic information (such as age). Metrics to be routinely monitored are to be agreed in consultation with the MOD but may include:
 - a. Outflow rate and return of service;
 - b. Fit for Employment; Fit for Role; Fit for Deployment;
 - c. Percentage achieving bounty;
 - d. Gapping levels of Regular, Reserve, FTRS and Civilian Permanent Staff who support the Reserve community.

ASSESSMENT

9. The External Scrutiny Team's report should assess the state of the programme including:
 - a. Progress against the Plan and milestones;
 - b. Risk management and corporate governance;
 - c. Definition of benefits and progress in delivering them;
 - d. Communication with key stakeholders;
 - e. Effectiveness of application of resources under the Programme.

10. CRFCA will be involved in the development of the Plan through the Reserves Coordination Group and the FR20 Programme Board.

ACCESS

11. The FR20 PMO will assist in facilitating access to serving military personnel, sites and furnishing additional data as required.

¹⁷ DCDS Pers/RFC/FR20/5/09 dated 5 Jun 12.

DIGEST OF FR20 COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

“In the context of our major conclusions, the following recommendations are made:

- **Stabilisation and Betterment.** Resources are needed immediately to arrest the severe decline in the state of the Reserves. Included in this is the need for a revised Proposition which provides the challenge and reward that makes Reserve service worthwhile and sustainable. This will require enhancements to individual, collective and command training. It will also require increased command opportunities, in peacetime and on operations. The Reserve will require new roles, more viable structures and better mechanisms to integrate with the Regular component. We estimate that a betterment package, when coupled with the need to abate other savings measures against Reserves, will cost £590M over four years.
- **Revised Roles.** The National Security Council should examine the breadth of roles which Reservists undertake. We recommend that Reservists should play a greater part in Homeland Security (for example maritime coastal protection) and UK Resilience. We are not advocating a third force, rather that Reserves should have a more formal role in support of specific security tasks and their local civil communities. More widely, specialist tasks should expand, specifically in areas such as cyber, stabilisation and medical roles in humanitarian crises. Beyond individual operational augmentation, Reserves should be able to meet some operational tasks as formed sub-units and units. And our Reserves must form the framework around which military regeneration can be effected.
- **Enablement.** The availability of a larger and more usable Reserve has to be guaranteed. Such a guarantee has to be underpinned by legislative changes which permit greater ease of mobilisation, better employee protection and greater recognition of employers, perhaps through a nationally endorsed Kitemark. We should exploit the potential for innovative partnerships between Defence, Education and Industry to optimise the sharing and development of human talent. And we need modern administrative systems for enlistment, processing and transfer between the Regular forces and the Reserves.
- **Adjusting the Regular: Reserve Balance.** Defence should adopt a Whole Force Concept which optimises the most cost-effective balance of Regular, Reserve, Contractor and Civilian manpower. Within this, the Reserve element should proportionately increase. By 2015, the trained strength of the Reserves should be:
 - Royal Navy Reserves/Royal Marine Reserves 3,100;
 - Territorial Army 30,000 and
 - Royal Auxiliary Air Force 1,800.

Thereafter the size of the Reservist component should increase further to maximise the cost effectiveness of having a larger Reserve component within the Whole Force. The Commission’s view is that, in the future, the trained strength of the Army – Regular and Reserve – should be about 120,000.

- **Force Generation.** In order to improve the efficiency of Force Generation, the Reserve estate should be rationalised in a way that is sensitive to maintaining geographically dispersed local links whilst providing access to training. Once we have rebuilt the officer and non commissioned officer structures, and in the context of more effective Regular:Reserve twinning, the requirements for Regular Permanent Training Staff should be reviewed. And the overall Force Generation ratio within the TA should be optimised so that, if required, a 1:8 ratio of mobilised to non-mobilised Reservists could be sustained.
- **Governance.** A revised governance structure for the Reserve is recommended to: first, oversee the implementation of recommendations arising from this Review; second, to provide an independent mechanism to report to the Ministry of Defence and Parliament on the state of the Reserves; and third, to help ensure the appropriate influence of certain Reserve appointments.

The Commission believes that, if these recommendations are carried through, then the overall capability, utility and resilience of our Armed Forces will be enhanced, in a way that meets the security, financial and societal challenges of the day, and in a way that maintains continuity with historic British practice.”

FR20 DETAILED RECOMMENDATIONS

Serial	Commission Recommendations	Ref.
1	Whole Force Concept (WFC) Adoption. The Ministry of Defence must now direct and implement the adoption of the WFC. Implementation will require optimisation of the Regular, Reservist, civil servant and contractor mix, balanced against operational risk and affordability.	Para 53
2	Resources. Additional resources are required immediately to stabilise and then improve the state of the Reserves, (including the reprieve of previous measures).	Para 99
3	Revised Proposition. We recommend a reformulation of the Proposition to embrace opportunities for leadership and command, as follows: “Defence will offer the challenge and reward which attracts people to volunteer, and undertakes to train and support them throughout their Service, including when mobilised and recuperating; it must offer greater opportunity, for command and leadership, in order to fully satisfy the volunteer ethos.”	Para 58
4	Roles. The National Security Council should examine the proposed Reserves’ roles and consider a shift in the Regular:Reserve balance (within a more integrated Whole Force structure), given the national security implications of both.	Para 94
5	Attribution. All Reserve force elements must be attributed to specific roles which should include: specialist tasks, contribution to deployed and contingent operations, UK Resilience and Homeland Security, regeneration, Connecting with the Nation.	Para 57
6	Increased Manning Levels. The size of the Reserves must be increased so that their trained strength matches Defence’s requirement, making them viable entities, better able to sustain Defence outputs. By 2015, Reservist trained strength should be: RNR/RMR 3,100; TA 30,000 and RAuxAF 1,800.	Para 65
7	Governance. Governance is required to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • first, oversee the implementation of the Commission’s recommendations; • second, provide an independent mechanism to report to the Ministry of Defence and Parliament on the state of the Reserves; • third to help ensure the appropriate influence of certain Reserve appointments. The appointment mechanism for the four most senior Reservist officers – Assistant Chief of Defence Staff (Reserves and Cadets) and the 3 single Service Reservist Heads – needs to be reviewed in accordance with the changes for Senior Appointments announced in Defence Reform. 	Para 105
8	Legislative Change. Legislative changes are required to enable better use of Reservists in support of Defence outputs at home and abroad, whilst protecting Reservists’ and Employers’ interests.	Para 68

9	Employer Recognition. Formal recognition of Reservists employers (such as a 'Kitemark') is required, to include Government Departments and local authorities who employ Reservists. Employers should be encouraged to consider military volunteering as an important element of the social action plans.	Para 68
10	SDSR 2015 Preparation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Regular:Reserve balance should be addressed in SDSR 2015 in order that the optimum Whole Force balance can be realised thereafter. • The post-2015 Regular Reserve balance within total Army should be about 120,000 trained personnel in order to achieve the necessary resilience required in the Whole Force. 	Para 80
11	Formed Sub-Units. Commit to returning formed sub-units to 'the fight', and continue to use units in more permissive environments entailing a return to collective training at unit and sub-unit level: TA and RMR, plus some opportunities in RNR and RAuxAF.	Para 57b
12	Recruiting, Marketing and Training. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restore funding for recruiting and marketing to enable the Investment and Betterment measures to be implemented. • In the short-term, reinvigorate the Reservist recruiting and training pipeline to halt the decline and rebuild numbers. • For the longer term, determine the strategy to enable the Recruiting Partnering Project to fully support Reservist recruiting. • Make rapid changes to existing administrative processes and regulations to make it more attractive for ex-Regulars to join the TA. 	Para 70
13	Partnership Recruitment and Training. That the Ministry of Defence engages with large Employers of Reservists and Defence Industry under the Defence Career Partnering initiative to establish pilot programmes to deliver 'Partnership for Talent' as soon as possible. This will form a key part of the recruiting drive for Reservists required as part of Stage 1 of FR20 implementation.	Para 62
14	TA & RMR Primacy. Restore TA primacy for unit commands and introduce it for RMR; (it still exists in RNR).	Para 77
15	Career Management. Appoint a 1* TA deputy Military Secretary to take charge of advice to the MS on TA career management matters and oversee TA primacy and review TA appraisal reporting procedures.	Para 77
16	Rebuild Officer and Soldier Training. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow Officer Cadets who are not students to join University Officer Training Corps (UOTC), as a temporary measure, until the full UOTC Study recommendations have been implemented. • Introduce special to arm training for Reservists aligned to university summer vacation/post-graduation breaks, and summer holidays for those officers and soldiers not in further/higher education. 	Para 72
17	Critical Mass. Increase the Reservist sub-unit size to produce greater critical mass for training, disbanding some poorly recruited national units to release liability.	Para 64b
18	Connecting with the Nation (CWN). Allocate the Reserves a more	Para

	formalised role in connecting Defence with society and the Nation at large.	57e
19	Manpower Costs. Develop a transparent manpower (Regular, Reserve, Civilian and Contractor) cost comparison model as one of the factors to help planners achieve an optimal Whole Force manpower balance.	Para 101
20	UK Resilience Funding. That the Ministry of Defence core budget contains funds to cover the cost of 5,000 Reservists being used for 5 days per annum.	Para 57c
21	E-Training. Deliver improved individual training and education via the internet, simulation and synthetic environments.	Para 72
22	Civilian Skills Database. Continue to develop a data capture process to enable recording of civilian skills.	Para 57a(2)
23	Enhancing Defence Technological Advantage. Work with key partners to establish accredited development schemes to enhance Defence technological advantage, similar to Israel's Talpiot programme.	Para 57a(3)
24	Employer Feedback. Give employers greater feedback on what their Reservist employees have completed during training, describing any competencies and skills gained.	Para 68
25	Volunteer Reserve (VR) Decorations. Consideration is given to the reinstatement of Volunteer Reserve decorations (ie Reserve Decoration (RNR/RMR), Territorial Decoration and Air Efficiency medal) for long service and efficiency, recognising the different sacrifices made by Reservists.	Para 59
26	MIS. We recommend that resource is put into a more effective Management Information System to underpin the Whole Force, which will allow planners rapidly and easily to understand the impacts of assigning people on different types of Terms and Conditions of Service to any given post.	Para 86

EXTERNAL SCRUTINY PROGRAMME

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| 17 Sep 13 | All Party Parliamentary Group on Reserves meeting |
| 28 Sep 12 | Preliminary briefing from MOD and single Service Staff |
| 16 Oct 12 | FR20 Programme Board |
| 8 Nov 12 | Green Paper launch |
| 29 Nov 12 | Meeting with Vice Chief of Defence Staff |
| 17 Dec 12 | Meeting with Chief of the Air Staff |
| 18 Dec 12 | Reserves Executive Committee |
| 11 Jan 13 | Meeting with Secretary of State for Defence |
| 15 Jan 13 | FR20 Families Welfare workshop |
| 17 Jan 13 | FR20 Reserves Healthcare Conference |
| 29 Jan 13 | FR20 Programme Board |
| 30 Jan 13 | FR20 Welfare Policy development meeting |
| 12 Feb 13 | Cabinet Office Implementation Unit meeting |
| 12 Feb 13 | Meeting with Chief of the General Staff |
| 19 Feb 13 | FR20 Welfare Policy finalisation meeting |
| 28 Feb 13 | Meeting with Deputy Chief of Defence Staff Personnel & Training |
| 28 Feb 13 | Working dinner with City employers (hosted by Standard Chartered) |
| 11 Mar 13 | NEAB working dinner |
| 12 Mar 13 | Visit to HMS Forward, Birmingham |
| 13 Mar 13 | Meeting with Chief of the Naval Staff |
| 14 Mar 13 | FR20 Programme Board |
| 17 Mar 13 | Visit to RAF Brize Norton (RAuxAF Sqns) |
| 8 Apr 13 | Meeting with CLF and briefing from HQ Army senior staff |
| 20 Apr 13 | Visit to Royal Wessex Yeomanry, on exercise on SPTA |

FR20 PROGRAMME BOARD MANPOWER DATA AS AT 31 MARCH 2013

Extract from the Defence Statistics Report published on 16 May 2013

Table 9 - Strength of the volunteer reserve forces¹

	2012 1 Apr	2012 1 Jul	2012 1 Oct	2013 1 Jan	2013 1 Apr
ALL SERVICES	29 380 ^{rpe}	29 490 ^{rpe}	29 090 ^{rp}	28 910 ^{rp}	28 670 ^p
Trained	22 210 ^{rpe}	21 980 ^{rpe}	22 040 ^{rpe}	22 000 ^{rpe}	22 050 ^p
Untrained	7 170 ^{rpe}	7 500 ^{rpe}	7 050 ^{rpe}	6 910 ^{rpe}	6 630 ^p
MARITIME RESERVE FORCES^{2, 3, 4}	2 570 ^{pe}	2 540 ^{pe}	2 570 ^p	2 620 ^{rp}	2 620 ^p
Trained	1 830 ^{pe}	1 800 ^{pe}	1 800 ^p	1 780 ^p	1 770 ^p
Untrained	740 ^{pe}	740 ^{pe}	770 ^p	840 ^{rp}	850 ^p
TERRITORIAL ARMY (Group A)^{5, 6, 7}	25 460 ^{rp}	25 580 ^{rp}	25 160 ^{rp}	24 930 ^{rp}	24 690 ^p
Trained	19 410 ^{rp}	19 160 ^{rp}	19 220 ^{rp}	19 200 ^{rp}	19 230 ^p
Untrained	6 050 ^{rp}	6 420 ^{rp}	5 940 ^{rp}	5 730 ^{rp}	5 460 ^p
ROYAL AUXILIARY AIR FORCE^{8, 9}	1 360 ^{rp}	1 370 ^{rp}	1 350 ^{rp}	1 350 ^{rp}	1 370 ^p
Trained	970 ^{rpe}	1 020 ^{rpe}	1 010 ^{rpe}	1 010 ^{rpe}	1 040 ^p
Untrained	390 ^{rpe}	350 ^{rpe}	340 ^{rpe}	340 ^{rpe}	320 ^p

Source: Defence Statistics (Tri-Service)

1. Members of the Volunteer Reserve forces currently serving on Full Time Reserve Service (FTRS) contracts are included in Tables 2, 3a, 3b and 3bi. FTRS personnel drawn from the Territorial Army and Royal Auxiliary Air Force are excluded from this table, FTRS personnel drawn from the volunteer Maritime Reserve Forces are included in this table. Territorial Army (Gp A) and Maritime Reserve figures include personnel on Additional Duties Commitment (ADC) contracts, whereas Royal Auxiliary Air Force figures do not. The Ministry of Defence is currently reviewing definitions and methodology for these populations and it is expected that data for the different Services will be made consistent before the July 2013 QPR. Until then all Volunteer Reserve figures are currently marked as provisional.

2. Maritime Reserve Forces comprise the Royal Naval Reserve and the Royal Marine Reserve, including mobilised reservists, High Readiness Reserves (HRR) and those serving on FTRS and ADC contracts.

3. April 2012 and July 2012 figures for the Maritime Reserve Forces are estimates. Maritime Reserves data for April 2012 were produced using single Service legacy systems and the source data were not retained for statistical purposes. Maritime Reserves data were migrated on to the Joint Personnel Administration system in early 2012 and the first outputs produced for July 2012, however the JPA source data were not retained for statistical purposes until the latter part of 2012 and therefore figures prior to October 2012 cannot be replicated or verified. DS considers these the best currently available strength estimates, and it is unlikely that there are any data available which would allow us to re-estimate the figures prior to October 2012. Figures for October 2012 onwards remain provisional whilst MOD reviews and agrees the population definitions.

4. The January figures for the Maritime Reserve have been revised. As the data source for all Maritime Reserve figures is now JPA, any figures previously obtained from single Service systems have been updated where possible.

5. Territorial Army (Group A) includes Volunteer Reserves, Mobilised TA, HRR, those serving on ADCs and those in the

OTC who are support and training staff who are Group A. It excludes FTRS and those members of the Territorial Army not available for certain specific tasks as defined in the Reserve Forces Act 1996, including Non-Regular Permanent Staff (NRPS). Personnel in Territorial Army Groups B and C have varying call-out liabilities and are utilised in different ways, and the classification of trained or untrained is not available for those Groups.

6. Territorial Army (Group A) figures will not match the 'Army Volunteer Reserves' figures as published in the DS publication TSP7. This is due to differences in the categorisation of personnel within the Army Volunteer Reserve population. TSP7 is currently undergoing review and it is expected that from the April 2013 edition (provisionally scheduled for release in June 2013), categorisations will align.

7. Territorial Army (Group A) figures have been revised. Defence Statistics has reviewed the methodology for deriving the population and training status of these personnel. The totals will not match any figures previously released into the public domain for TA Group A.

8. Royal Auxiliary Air Force figures include mobilised reservists and HRR, and exclude personnel on FTRS and ADC contracts.

9. Figures for the Royal Auxiliary Air Force have been revised. Previously, all figures were obtained from the RAF F214 system whereas revised figures are compiled from a combination of JPA and F214. Trained and untrained status has not previously been available on JPA, therefore these figures are estimates based on the F214 system. Following the completion of work to improve data quality on JPA, from April 2013 onwards, all figures will be derived from JPA.

• **Symbols and Conventions**

Symbols

	discontinuity in time series
*	not applicable
..	not available
p	provisional
r	revised
rp	revised but still provisional
e	estimate
–	zero or rounded to zero

Italic figures are used for percentages and other rates, except where otherwise indicated.

DIGEST OF EXTERNAL SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1. (Link to the Commission's recommendations 3, 4 & 8).
As a matter of priority the Department should issue a plain-English narrative which sets out the Reserves proposition: a narrative which is commonly adopted across all the Services and, as a minimum, covers the purposes of the Reserves; the manner in which they are likely to be used; and individual levels of obligation. (Paragraphs 6-9)

Recommendation 2. (Link to the Commission's recommendations 6 & 12).
FR20 manpower metrics should be more granular for the period to 2018 to demonstrate changes within the recruit inflow pipeline and should not concentrate solely on the achievement of Phase-2-trained Reservists. (Paragraph 18)

Recommendation 3. (Link to the Commission's recommendation 26)
Priority must be given to fund and introduce quickly an effective management information system which accurately captures Reservists numbers; states of training, preparedness; availability; attendance; and skill sets. (Paragraph 19)

Recommendation 4.
More analysis is undertaken to determine the causes of 'manning churn', to better inform how retention measures could be better targeted. (Paragraph 31)

Recommendation 5. (Link to the Commission's recommendations 2 & 21)
In parallel to development of pairing/parenting responsibilities, further analysis is needed for scaling of equipment and vehicle holdings at Reserve unit level, including the provision of low-tech simulation alternatives. (Paragraphs 37-39)

Recommendation 6. (Link to the Commission's recommendations 5, 6, 17, 18 & 23)
FR20 Army basing should take account of regional capacity to recruit, not just to facilitate proximity, and should also be phased to initially preserve current TA manpower until such time as alternative inflow is more fully developed.
(Paragraph 44)

Recommendation 7. (Link to the Commission's recommendations 8, 22 & 23)
That work is initiated to look at the potential to employ Reserves with critical skills, where their employment was best served in a reach-back rather than deployed role; and that their TACOS be examined for appropriate adjustment. (Paragraph 62-63)

Recommendation 8. (Link to the Commission's report, Annex C, paragraph 8.)
That senior military and political leadership initiate a comprehensive information campaign with the Services' middle management to address the cultural change necessary to secure FR20, drawing on the narrative we recommend above.
(Paragraphs 64-65)

DIGEST OF EXTERNAL SCRUTINY AREAS FOR FURTHER WORK

1. To bring DMS Reserves into scope for scrutiny, to ensure coherence with single Service plans. (5)
2. Manpower metrics. (19)
3. Manpower MIS. (20)
4. Unit and sub-unit leadership and management. (21)
5. The recruiting & training pipelines and process effectiveness. (28)
6. Development of integrated training and (where relevant) pairing mechanisms. (34)
7. Harmonisation of training directives and resources. (36)
8. Enhanced measures for engaging with employers (47)
9. Improved relationships with employers. (53)
10. Families' welfare. (55)
11. Terms and Conditions of Service. (57)
12. Cost of Reserves. (56 & 61)

EXTERNAL SCRUTINY GROUP MEMBERSHIP

Chairman:

Lieutenant General (Retd) R V Brims CB CBE DSO DL

Members:

Major General (Retd) S J Lalor CB TD

Captain I M Robinson OBE RD RNR

Colonel T S Richmond (Retd) MBE TD DL FCA

C N Donnelly CMG TD BA

Secretary:

Air Vice-Marshal (Retd) P D Luker CB OBE AFC DL