



This statistical release provides results from the Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey (AFCAS) 2015, along with results from previous years.

Statistics from AFCAS are used by both internal MOD teams and external bodies to inform the development of policy and measure the impact of decisions affecting personnel, including major programmes such as the Armed Forces Covenant and New Employment Model.

Key Points and Trends

Overall satisfaction and morale

- Around half (47%) of Service personnel are satisfied with Service life in general. The level of satisfaction has stabilised in the last two years, however it remains below that observed in previous years. The number of personnel stating that they are dissatisfied with Service life, however, has risen to 32%, up from 27% in 2014.
- There has been an increase in the morale of Officers since 2014, with 45% now rating their morale as high, compared to 41% in 2014. The morale of Other Ranks is unchanged since 2014, standing at 39%.
- There has been a fall in the number of personnel reporting that they are proud to be in their Service, from 81% in 2014 to 77% in 2015. However, more personnel feel valued by their Service, increasing by six percentage points to 35% in 2015. There has been a similar increase, from 41% to 47%, in the number who would recommend others to join.

Retention

- In 2015, job security was the top retention factor, followed by dental and healthcare provision, pension and opportunities for sport.
- Among those who have put in their notice, the impact of Service life on family and personal life remains the top reason for leaving the Armed Forces, followed by opportunities outside the Armed Forces.

Perception of the Reserve forces

- Around two thirds of personnel rate the Reserve forces as valuable, and around the same proportion rate them as professional. However, willingness among Armed Forces Regulars to join the Reserve forces remains low, with 24% of personnel indicating that they would consider joining the Reserves on a part-time basis, after leaving Regular Service.

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Background quality report: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/armed-forces-continuous-attitude-survey-index>

Would you like to be added to our **contact list**, so that we can inform you about updates to these statistics and consult you if we are thinking of making changes? You can subscribe to updates by emailing DefStrat-Stat-WDS-Pubs@mod.uk

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Reference tables and questionnaires for AFCAS 2015 are published as separate documents and can be found on the AFCAS webpage here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/armed-forces-continuous-attitude-survey-index>

Introduction

The 2015 Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey was distributed to a sample of 26,740 trained UK Regular Armed Forces personnel between October 2014 and February 2015, using both online and paper questionnaires. Participants were chosen using stratified simple random sampling, designed to ensure sufficient responses from each Service and from each rank group within each Service, whilst minimising respondent burden.

Overall, 11,877 responses were received, representing a response rate of 44%. This was a fall of 4 percentage points from the 2014 and 2013 surveys.

AFCAS 2015 was distributed at a time of significant change for the MOD, including the end of operations in Afghanistan and the continuation of high-level change programmes such as Future Force 2020 and the New Employment Model.

Results from AFCAS, along with those from companion surveys of Armed Forces families (FAMCAS) and Reservist personnel (RESCAS), are used by the single Services, central MOD teams and certain external organisations to inform the development of policy and measure the impact of decisions affecting personnel. For example, the Armed Forces Pay Review Body recently used AFCAS findings on satisfaction with Service accommodation to justify refusing proposed increases to accommodation charges.

Please see the Background Quality Report for full details of survey methodology, analysis, and data quality considerations.

Note: throughout the report, where statistical significance tests are applied, they are carried out at the 99% confidence level. This is at a fairly stringent level and means that there should be less than a 1% (1 in 100) chance that differences observed in AFCAS results aren't representative of the Armed Forces as a whole. This reduces the likelihood of wrongly concluding that there has been an actual change based on the survey results, which only cover a sample of the Armed Forces.

A National Statistics publication

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods; and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

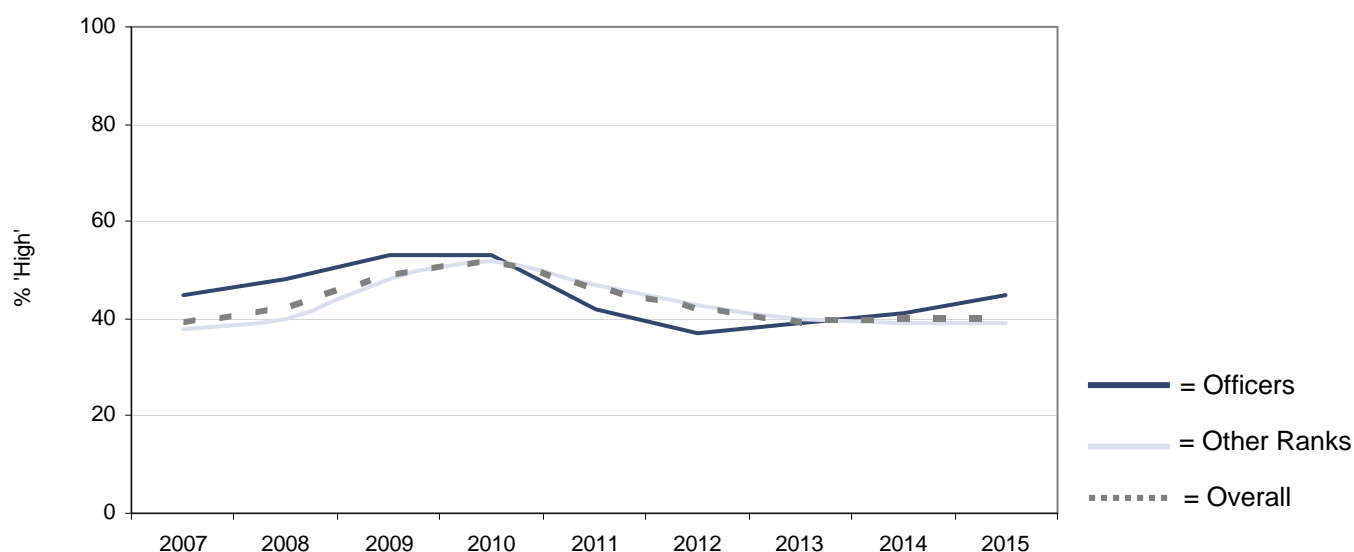
Section 1 - Morale, commitment and engagement

Section 1 covers satisfaction with a number of topics including morale, aspects of the job, Service ethos, commitment and engagement.

Morale (self, unit and Service)

As a whole, the morale of Service personnel has not changed since 2014, however the percentage of Officers reporting morale as high has increased by four percentage points to 45%. This is partly due to a rise in high reported morale in RAF Officers (to 46%), despite the RAF being under requirement by 2,050 personnel¹. The levels of Officers and Other Ranks reporting high morale across time is shown in Chart 1.1.

Chart 1.1 - Level of own morale



Overall, perceptions of unit morale have remained unchanged since 2014. However, following the pattern of own morale, the percentage of Officers reporting unit morale as high has increased by five percentage points to 29%, with unit morale of RAF Officers also increasing by five percentage points to 26%.

Perceptions of Service morale differ greatly between Services, which is demonstrated in Chart 1.2. On the whole, there has been no increase in the proportion of individuals rating Service morale as high. However, the proportion of those rating morale as 'low' has decreased by four percentage points for the Army (to 46%) and by six percentage points in the RAF (to 49%), with an increase in personnel selecting 'neutral' (38%, 40%). The Royal Navy is the only Service where the proportion of personnel reporting low Service morale has increased since 2014, increasing by seven percentage points to 67% in 2015.

Satisfaction with Service life

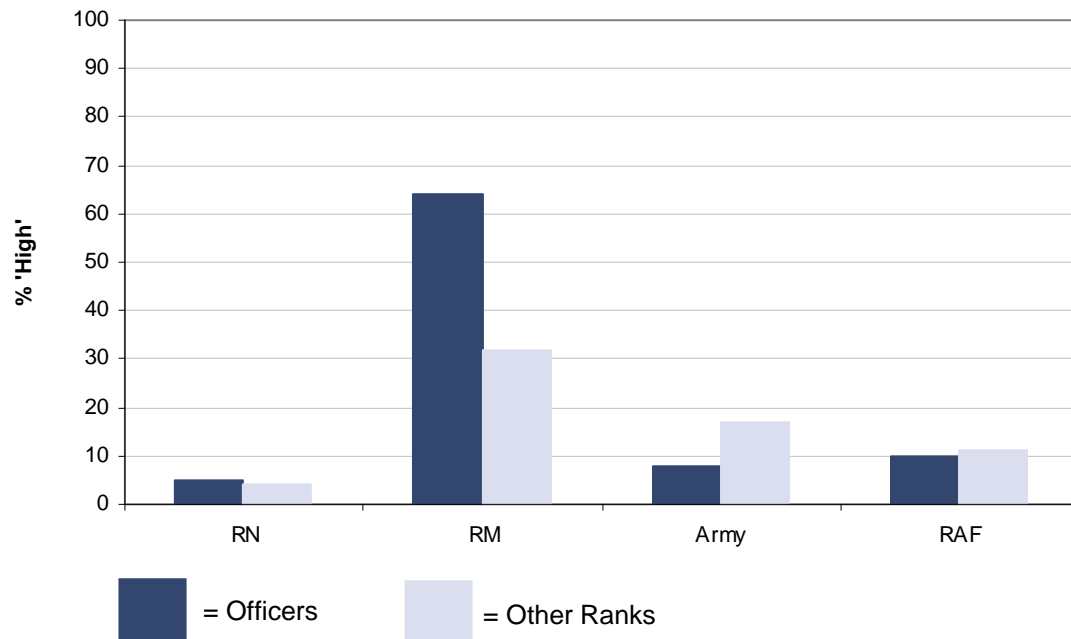
Overall, satisfaction has decreased by ten percentage points since 2011, but remains unchanged since 2014 at 47%. In 2015, Officers are more satisfied than Other Ranks (56%, 45%). RM Officers are the most satisfied (77%), whereas RN Other Ranks are the least (36%).

Job satisfaction

56% of personnel overall are satisfied with their job in general. This is a decrease of eight percentage points since 2011. Job satisfaction has increased for Officers since 2014 by four percentage points to 69%, with significant increases for RN and RAF Officers (70%, 70%).

¹ RAF Full Time Trained Strength requirement at 1 April 2015.

Chart 1.2 - Level of Service morale



Key Figures - Morale & Satisfaction

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2014	% Change from 2011
B2.2	How would you rate the level of morale of... Myself?	<p>Positive = % High</p>	40	↔	-6
B2.3	How would you rate the level of morale of... My Unit?	<p>Positive = % High</p>	21	↔	-6
B2.4	How would you rate the level of morale of... The Service as a whole?	<p>Positive = % High</p>	14	↔	-4
B2.1	How satisfied are you with Service life in general?	<p>Positive = % Satisfied</p>	47	↔	-10
B2.5	How satisfied are you with the following aspects of your current job? My job in general.	<p>Positive = % Satisfied</p>	56	↔	-8

↔ indicates no significant change has been found

Service pride

Although 77% of personnel are proud to be in their Service, this figure has decreased by four percentage points since 2014. This is driven by a decrease within the Other Ranks, which has dropped by five percentage points to 74%. Army Other Ranks have had the greatest reduction in pride since 2014, with a decrease of seven percentage points to 74%.

Data Quality Note

Prior to 2015 this question was 'I feel proud to be in the Service', changed to 'I am proud to be in the Service'.

Value by the Service

The proportion of personnel agreeing that they are valued by the Service has increased by six percentage points since 2014 to 35%. This is the highest level for the Service within the last 5 years. Officers feel more valued than Other Ranks (40%, 34%), but both groups have seen a rise in agreement that they are valued. For the RN, RM and RAF, agreement that they are valued is the highest since the AFCAS time series began in 2007.

Data Quality Note

Prior to 2015 this question was 'I feel valued by the Service', changed to 'I am valued by the Service'.

Recommend others to join

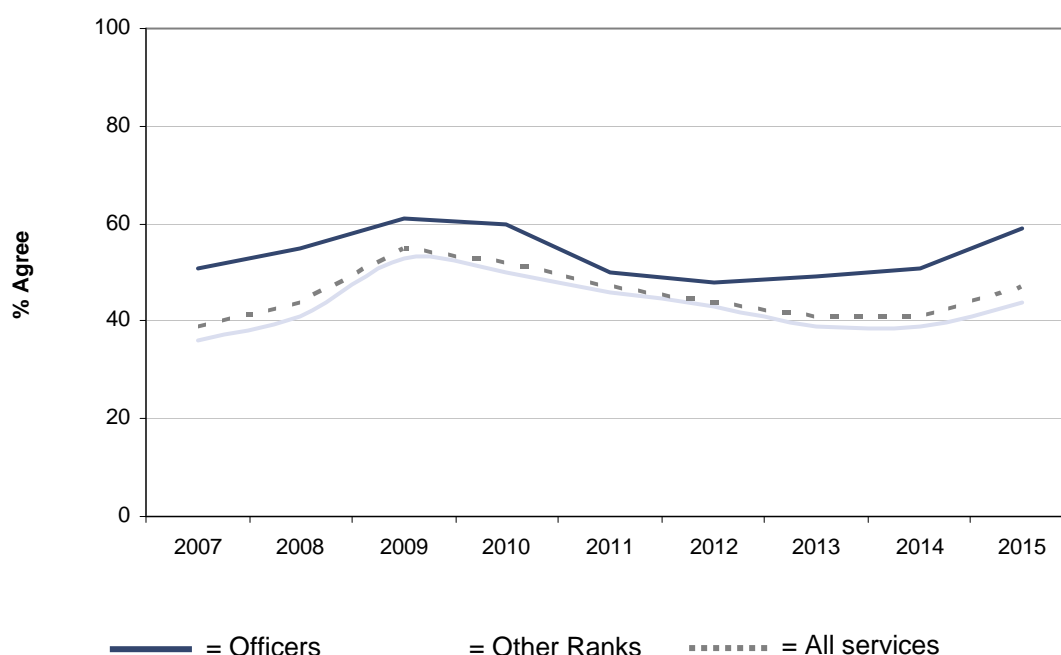
After a dip in agreement after 2011, the proportion of personnel who would recommend others to join their Service has risen to 47%. In 2015, Officers are more likely than Other Ranks to recommend others to join (59%, 44%). Chart 1.3 shows the differences between Officers and Other Ranks in recommendations to join the Service across time.

Data Quality Note

Prior to 2010 this question included "... e.g. friends and family."

The Army has seen the largest rise in agreement since 2014 of eight percentage points (48%). At 2015, RM agreement remains the highest of the Services (57%), whereas RN agreement remains the lowest since 2008 (37%).

Chart 1.3 - Would recommend others to join



Key Figures—Commitment

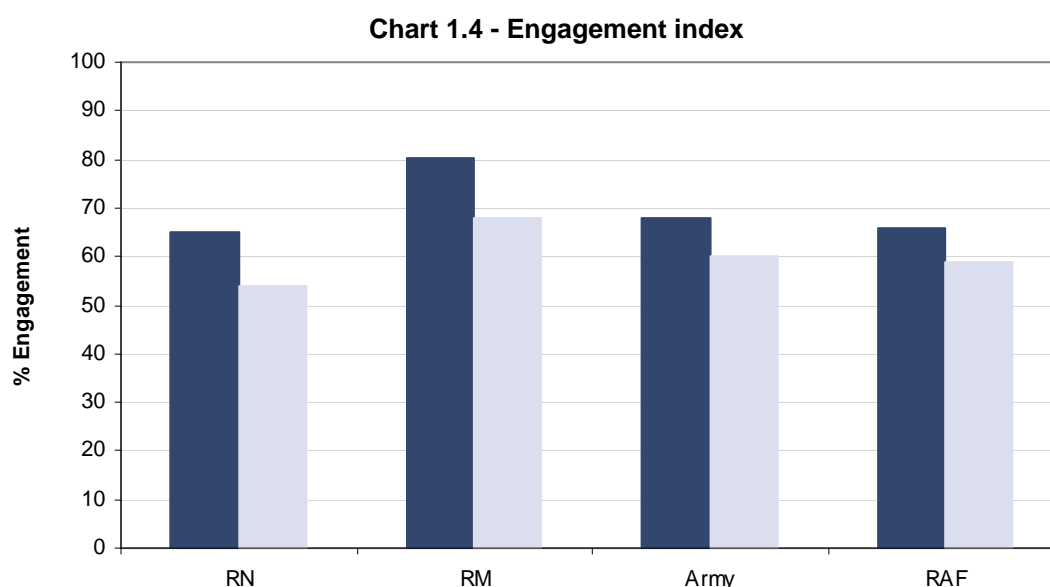
Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2014	% Change from 2011
B6.3	How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following? I am proud to be in the Service.		77	-4	-6
B6.4	How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following? I am valued by the Service.		35	+6	↔
B6.5	How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following? I would recommend joining the Service to others.		47	+6	↔

Positive = % Agree

↔ indicates no significant change has been found

Engagement index

The overall engagement index is 61%. At 67%, the overall engagement of Officers is eight percentage points higher than that of Other Ranks (59%). The RM overall has a higher engagement score than the other Services. With an engagement index of 80%, RM Officers are more engaged than Officers from the remaining Services. RM Other Ranks have an engagement score of 68%, which is higher than that of Other Ranks in the RN and RAF.



Data Quality Note

The engagement index is made up of responses to questions referenced B6.3, B6.5, B6.6, B6.8 and B6.9¹

It was calculated using the same method as that used in the Civil Service People Survey²

¹ How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following?

B6.3 I am proud to be in the [Service]. [A031]

B6.5 I would recommend joining the [Service] to others. [A033]

B6.6 I feel a strong personal attachment to the [Service]. [A331]

B6.8 The [Service] inspires me to do the best in my job. [A332]

B6.9 The [Service] motivates me to help it achieve its objectives. [A333]

= Officers

= Other Ranks

² [Civil Service People Survey 2014 Technical Guide](#)

Section 2 – Line Management and Work

Section 2 covers respondents' views regarding several aspects of working in their Service, with a focus on teamwork and how supportive their immediate superiors or supervisors are.

Leadership of immediate supervisors

In 2015, the majority of Service personnel report that they are satisfied with their immediate supervisor, with around two thirds agreeing that they are satisfied with the leadership they provide.

This is consistent across the Services, although Officers are more positive (71%) than Other Ranks (65%) as shown in Chart 2.1.

Data Quality Note

This question was not asked prior to 2015, therefore a time series comparison is not possible.

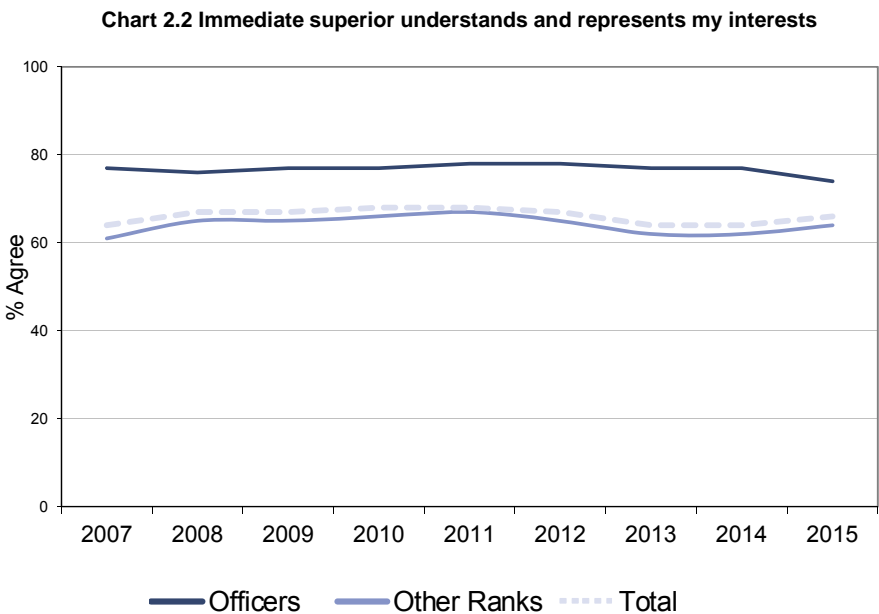


Satisfaction with immediate superiors

Opinions regarding immediate superiors are largely unchanged since 2014, although scores have fluctuated slightly in previous years. 67% of respondents agree that their immediate superior sets a good example, compared to 72% in 2011.

Personnel appear more positive about their immediate superior being supportive over work/life balance issues this year (66%) compared to 2014 (63%).

Officers are generally more positive about their immediate superiors than Other Ranks as illustrated in Chart 2.2.



Key Questions—Line management

Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2014	% Change from 2011
B4.1	My immediate superior understands and represents my interests	<p>Positive - % Agree</p>	66	↔	-2
B4.2	My immediate superior supports me in my job	<p>Positive - % Agree</p>	73	↔	↔
B4.3	My immediate superior sets a positive example	<p>Positive - % Agree</p>	67	↔	-5
B4.4	My immediate superior encourages me to improve my skills	<p>Positive - % Agree</p>	66	↔	↔
B4.5	My immediate superior is supportive over work/life balance issues	<p>Positive = % Agree</p>	66	3	↔
B4.12	I am satisfied with the leadership provided by my immediate supervisor	<p>Positive - % Agree</p>	66	N/A	N/A

↔ Indicates no significant change has been found

Section 3 – Leadership and Managing Change

Section 3 seeks the views of personnel regarding senior leaders of their Service as well as their opinions on the management of change at different levels.

Senior Leadership

In 2015, Service personnel appear to be less positive about senior leadership in their Service than they are about their immediate superiors, with around a quarter (26%) agreeing that their senior leaders understand and represent their interests.

This varies across the Services, as can be seen in Chart 3.1, with the Royal Marines the most positive (37%) and the RAF the least positive (18%). Officers are more positive than Other Ranks when asked whether their senior leaders understand and represent their interests (32%, 24%).

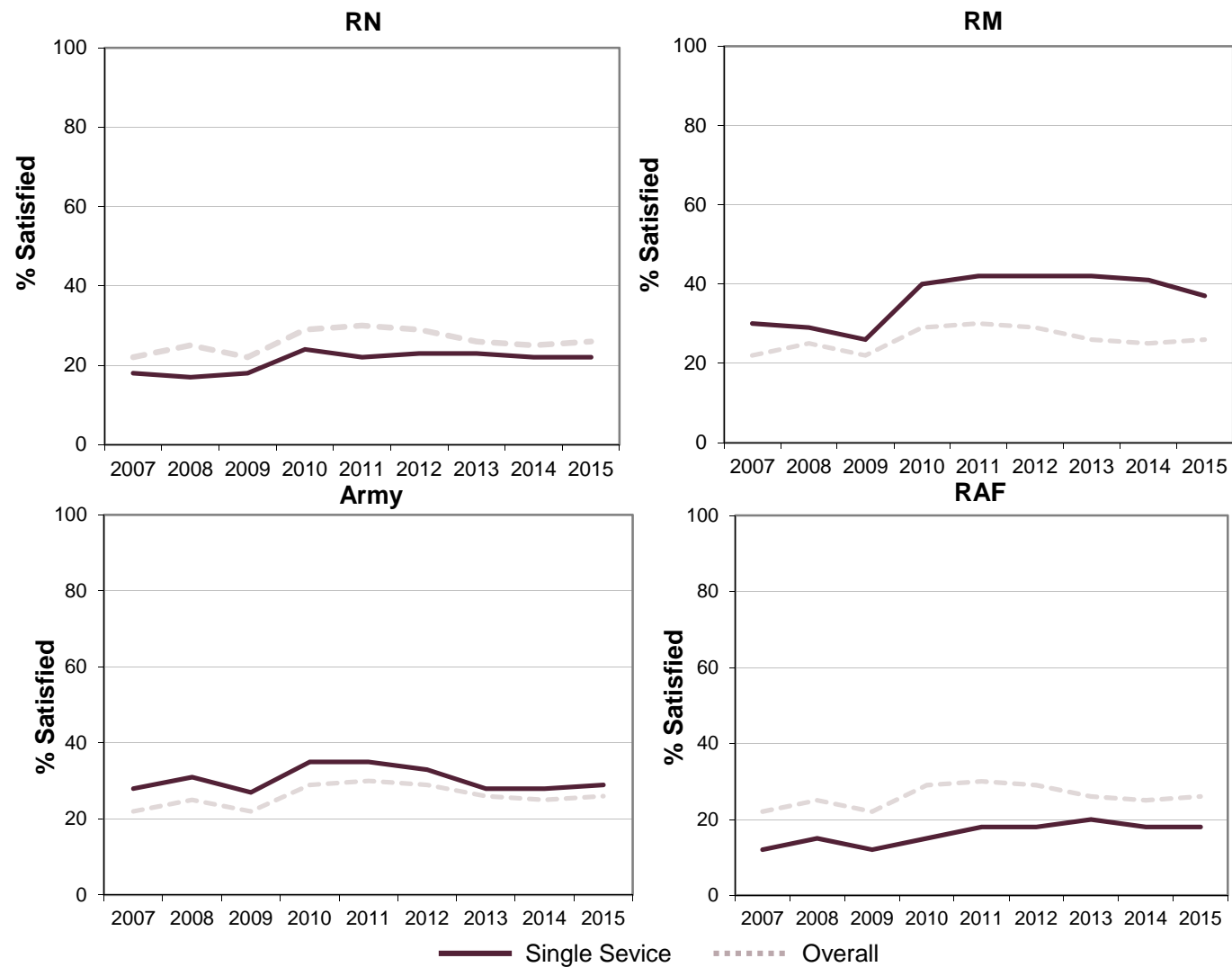
These scores have decreased since 2011 but are generally unchanged from 2014. Officer scores (32%) were five percentage points lower than in 2014 (37%).

Data Quality Note

‘Don’t know’ responses are excluded from this analysis.

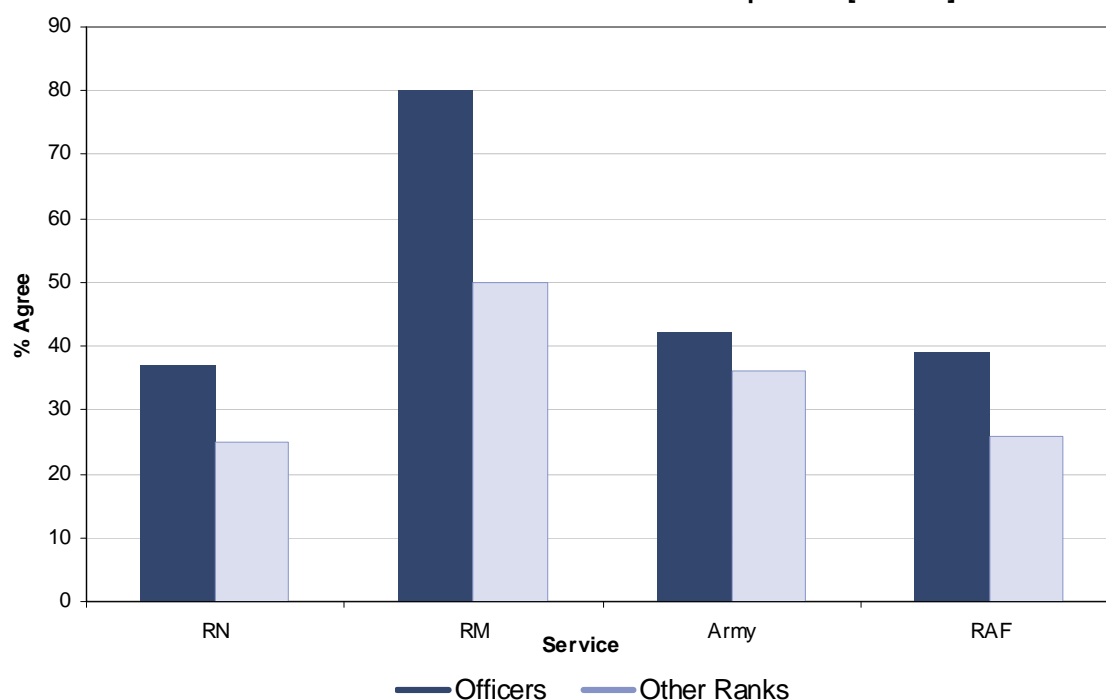
Service leadership confidence was added as a question in 2015 so a time series comparison is not possible. Questions B8.1 and B8.3 were added in 2011 and question B8.1 in 2013.

Chart 3.1 - Senior leaders understand and represent my interests



Over a third (35%) of respondents are confident about the leadership of their Service. Officers are more positive (41%) than Other Ranks (33%) and Royal Marines are the most positive Service (54%). The Royal Navy were the least positive about this aspect (28%). These differences are shown in Chart 3.2.

Chart 3.2 - I have confidence in the leadership of the [Service]



Key Questions - leadership and managing change

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2014	% Change from 2011
B5.1	Senior Officers understand and represent my interests		26	↔	-4
Positive - % Agree					
B5.6	I have confidence in the leadership of the Service		35	N/A	N/A
Positive - % Agree					
B8.1	Change is managed well in my immediate working team		56	-4	-10
Positive - % Agree					
B8.2	Change is managed well in my Unit/ Establishment		40	↔	N/A
Positive - % Agree					
B8.3	Change is managed well in the Service		26	-2	-3
Positive - % Agree					

↔ indicates no significant change has been found

Section 4 – Working with Others

Section 4 focuses on those who have had experience of working with the Reserves over the last two years, covering views on the professionalism, integration and contribution of Reserves personnel.

Professionalism of Reserves

In 2015, almost two thirds (63%) of personnel rate the Reserves as professional. RAF Officers are the most likely group to state that Reserves are professional (87%), whereas Army Other Ranks are the least likely (52%).

Integration of Reserves

Just over half of personnel state that Reserves are well integrated (52%), with Other Ranks more likely to agree than Officers (53%, 47%). The range of agreement varies across Officers in particular, with 70% of RM Officers thinking Reserves are well integrated, compared to just 34% of Army Officers.

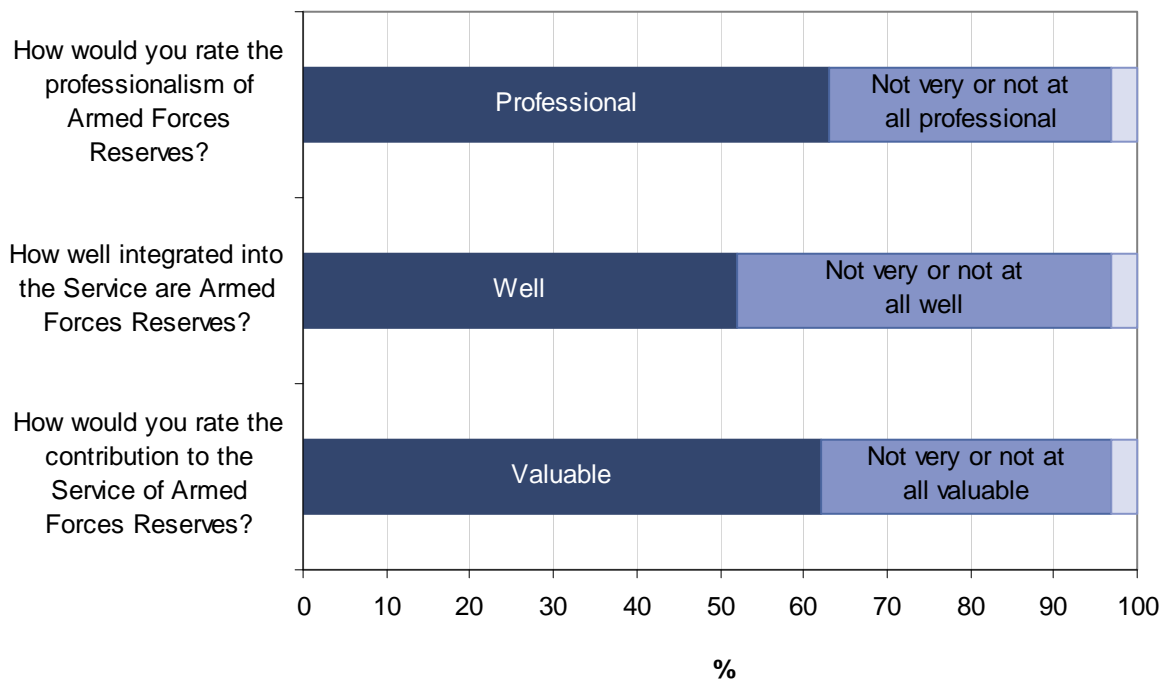
Contribution of Reserves

62% of personnel rate the contribution of Reserves as valuable, with Officers more likely to agree than Other Ranks (67%, 61%). The most positive ratings are from RAF Officers, with 84% rating the contribution of reservists as valuable. RM Other Ranks, however, are the least likely to score Reserve contributions as valuable (54%).

Data Quality Note

Similar Reserves questions were asked prior to 2015, however the structure of this section was changed and the results are not considered comparable over time.

Chart 4.1 - Attitudes towards Reserves



= Don't know

Key Questions - opinions of the Reserves

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2014	% Change from 2011								
B7.9	In your experience, how would you rate the contribution to the [Service] of Armed Forces Reserves?	<table><tr><td>RN</td><td>65</td></tr><tr><td>RM</td><td>55</td></tr><tr><td>Army</td><td>55</td></tr><tr><td>RAF</td><td>75</td></tr></table>	RN	65	RM	55	Army	55	RAF	75	62	N/A	N/A
RN	65												
RM	55												
Army	55												
RAF	75												
Positive = % valuable													
B7.12	In your experience, how well integrated into the [Service] are Armed Forces Reserves?	<table><tr><td>RN</td><td>60</td></tr><tr><td>RM</td><td>55</td></tr><tr><td>Army</td><td>45</td></tr><tr><td>RAF</td><td>65</td></tr></table>	RN	60	RM	55	Army	45	RAF	65	52	N/A	N/A
RN	60												
RM	55												
Army	45												
RAF	65												
Positive = % well													
B7.15	In your experience, how would you rate the professionalism of Armed Forces Reserves?	<table><tr><td>RN</td><td>75</td></tr><tr><td>RM</td><td>60</td></tr><tr><td>Army</td><td>55</td></tr><tr><td>RAF</td><td>80</td></tr></table>	RN	75	RM	60	Army	55	RAF	80	63	N/A	N/A
RN	75												
RM	60												
Army	55												
RAF	80												
Positive = % professional													

Section 5 – Allowances, Pay and JPA

Section 5 asks a number of questions on the attitudes of Service personnel towards their pay, pension and allowances, as well as satisfaction with access to the Joint Personnel Administration System (JPA). JPA was introduced in 2006/2007 to deal with matters of pay, leave and other personal administration tasks.

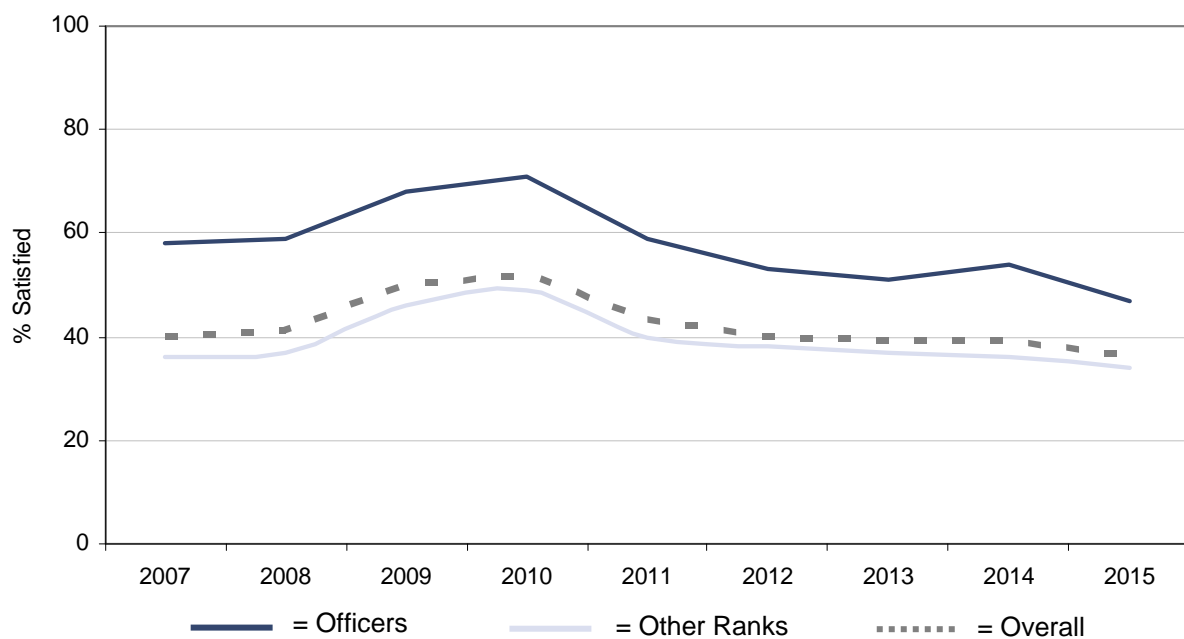
Satisfaction with pay and benefits

Overall, 35% of Service personnel agree that pay and benefits are fair for the work done. Officers are more likely than Other Ranks to agree. In 2015, RAF Officers had the highest level of agreement (45%), whereas RM Other Ranks had the lowest (23%).

Basic Pay

Since 2014, Officer satisfaction with basic pay has dropped by seven percentage points to 47%. This has resulted in overall satisfaction with pay decreasing by three percentage points to 36%. Officers are consistently more satisfied with basic pay than Other Ranks (47%, 34%) which is reflected in Chart 5.1. The decline in satisfaction with basic pay since 2010 may be influenced by ongoing public sector pay restraint, which has seen Armed Forces pay increase more slowly than in earlier years. Details on Armed Forces pay and allowances are available in the Armed Forces Pay Review Body 44th report¹.

Chart 5.1 - Satisfaction with rate of Basic Pay (inc X Factor)



There are differences in satisfaction with basic pay between Services. The RAF is the most satisfied (39%), and the RM is the least satisfied (24%). The Army is the only Service to have no significant reduction in satisfaction with basic pay between 2014 and 2015.

Recruitment and Retention Pay (RRP)

Satisfaction with RRP is higher in Officers than Other Ranks. Officer satisfaction has dropped by 14 percentage points since 2014 to 31%, whereas satisfaction amongst Other Ranks remains unchanged.

Data Quality Note

Caution is advised when comparing 2015 results for RRP to previous years. Until 2014, RRP was called 'Specialist pay'.

1. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/411838/46869_Cm_9025_Armed_Forces_Pay_accessible.pdf

X Factor

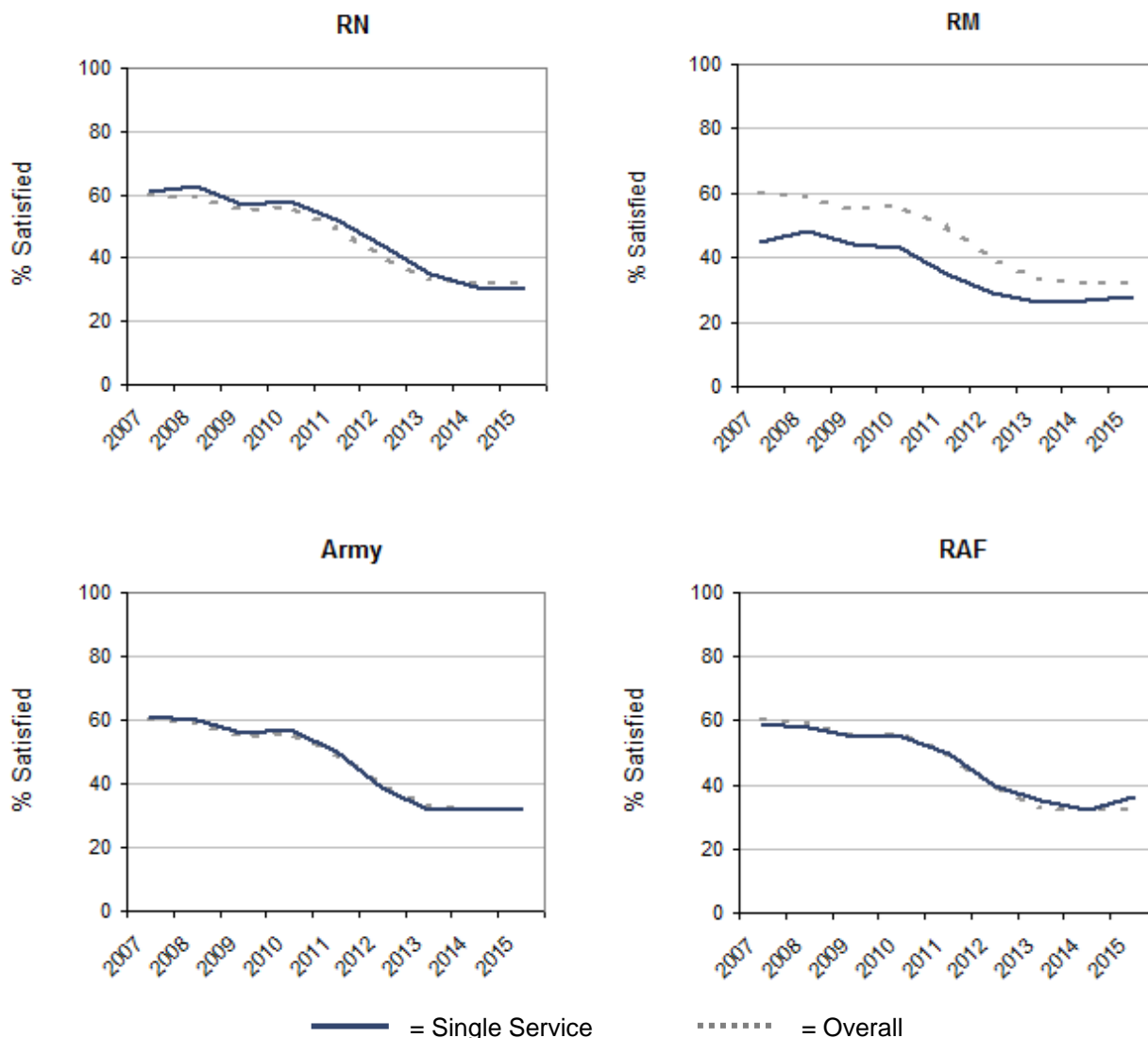
The X factor is an extra percentage added to pay in order to compensate for the differences in lifestyle, working conditions and expectations when compared to civilians. Less than a third (27%) of Service personnel agree that the level of compensation is enough, which has not changed significantly since 2014. RAF Officers are the most likely to agree (38% agree), but Royal Navy Other Ranks are the most likely to disagree (64% disagree) that the X factor is enough compensation.

Satisfaction with pension benefits

Satisfaction with pension benefits has dropped 18 percentage points since 2011, but has stabilised in the past two years. Satisfaction with pension benefits remains unchanged in all Services since 2014, apart from the RAF. The percentage of those satisfied within the RAF has increased by four percentage points to 36%. Officer satisfaction is 23 percentage points higher than the satisfaction of Other Ranks (51%, 28%).

The decline in satisfaction with pensions over time may be due to uncertainty surrounding the introduction of the Armed Forces Pension Scheme 2015. Details of the 2015 scheme were published in October 2014¹, which may explain the more recent stabilisation in levels of satisfaction. The multiple plots in Chart 5.2 show how satisfaction with pensions has changed for each Service over time.

Chart 5.2 - Satisfaction with pension benefits



1. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/afps-2015-what-you-need-to-know/armed-forces-pension-scheme-2015-guidance>

Key Questions - pay and benefits

Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2014	% Change from 2011
B1.1	The X-Factor in my salary is enough compensation for Service lifestyle, working conditions and expectations.	<p>Positive = % agree</p>	27	↔	-2
B1.2	The pay and benefits I receive are fair for the work I do.	<p>Positive = % agree</p>	35	N/A	N/A
B1.3	My rate of basic pay (basic pay includes X-Factor, but excludes RRP and any allowances).	<p>Positive = % satisfied</p>	36	-3	-7
B1.4	My Recruitment and Retention Pay (RRP)	<p>Positive = % satisfied</p>	26	-4	-7
B1.6	My pension benefits.	<p>Positive = % satisfied ↔ indicates no significant change</p>	32	↔	-18

Section 6 – Deployment

Section 6 covers respondents' satisfaction with various aspects of their operational deployments. The section focuses only on those who have been deployed at any time since 1 January 2012.

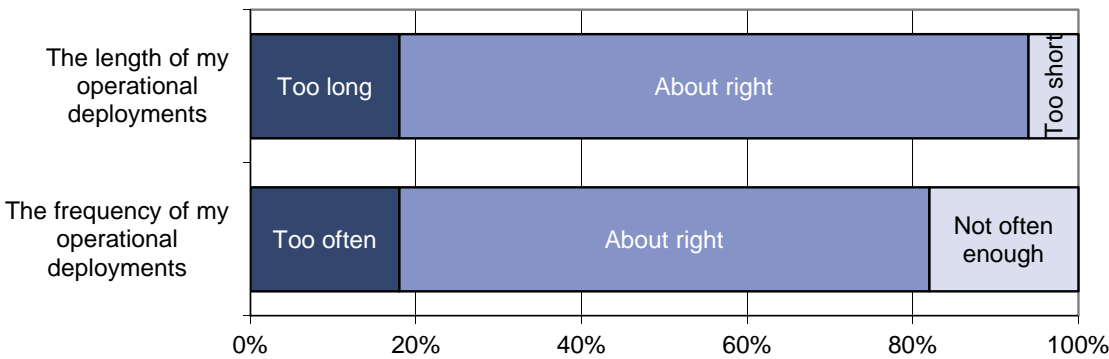
The majority of personnel in all Services are satisfied with frequency and length of their operational deployments. RN personnel, however, are much more likely than any other Service to state that deployments were too frequent or too long, especially the Other Ranks. 43% of RN Other Ranks state that their deployments are too frequent and 41% state that they are too long.

Overall, Army personnel are more satisfied with pre-operational training than those in any other Service. The Royal Navy and Royal Marines are the least satisfied.

Data Quality Note

Similar questions on deployment were asked in previous AFCAS surveys, however a question used to filter the results was removed for the 2015 survey. Therefore, the results are not comparable over time.

Chart 6.1 - Satisfaction with aspects of Deployment



Welfare support

Royal Navy personnel are least happy with the welfare support they receive on return from deployment, with more personnel stating that they were dissatisfied (34%) than satisfied (28%). Army personnel are the most satisfied overall.

Royal Navy personnel are also least happy with the support for their family upon return from deployment, with more personnel stating that they were dissatisfied (35%) than satisfied (25%).

Key Questions—deployment

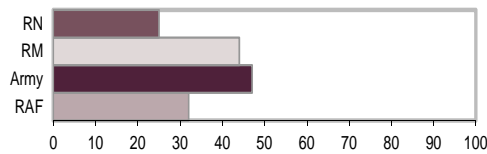
Table Ref Question			Overall % Positive	% Change from 2014	% Change from 2011
B9.4	Satisfaction with deployment notice		69	N/A	N/A
	Positive = % satisfied				
B9.5	Satisfaction with pre-operational / deployment training		68	N/A	N/A
	Positive = % satisfied				
B9.9	Satisfaction with welfare support received upon return from operational deployment		46	N/A	N/A
	Positive = % satisfied				

Key Questions—deployment (continued)

Table
Ref Question

B9.10	Satisfaction with welfare support for family upon return from operational deployment
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Positive = % satisfied

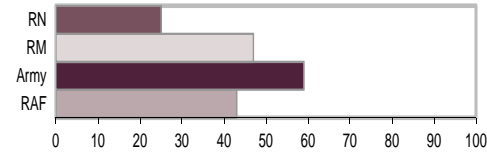


Overall % Positive	% Change from 2014	% Change from 2011
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39	N/A	N/A
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B9.11	Satisfaction with decompression and post operational tour support
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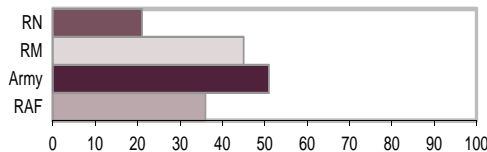
Positive = % satisfied



49	N/A	N/A
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B9.12	Satisfaction with Post Operational Stress Management
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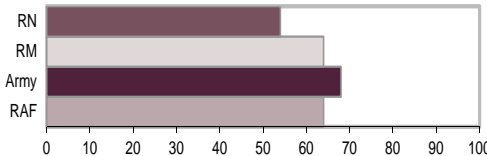
Positive = % satisfied



43	N/A	N/A
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B9.18	Satisfaction with frequency of operational deployments
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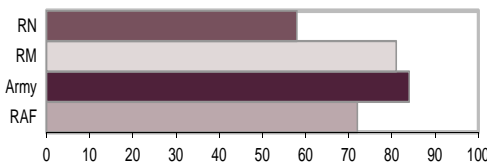
Positive = % stating frequency is 'about right'



64	N/A	N/A
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B9.19	Satisfaction with length of operational deployments
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Positive = % stating length is 'about right'



76	N/A	N/A
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Section 7 – Training, Development and Career

Section 7 covers respondents' satisfaction with various aspects of their career, training and development, including questions about the promotion system, career management, and the notice received before the last assignment.

Since 2014, the RAF and Royal Marines have shown a decline in the proportion of personnel satisfied with the opportunities for promotion. The overall proportion of personnel satisfied with the fairness of the promotion system has also reduced to 35%, the lowest level since 2009. The RAF continues to be the least satisfied with both the opportunities for promotion (29%) and the fairness of the promotion system (24%). Overall there is a greater proportion of Officers satisfied with the fairness of the promotion system and the career management provider compared with Other Ranks across all Services. A higher proportion of Officers also agree that their knowledge, skills and experience are being used in their current job.

Chart 7.1 - Percentage of Officers and Other Ranks satisfied with the Career Management Service

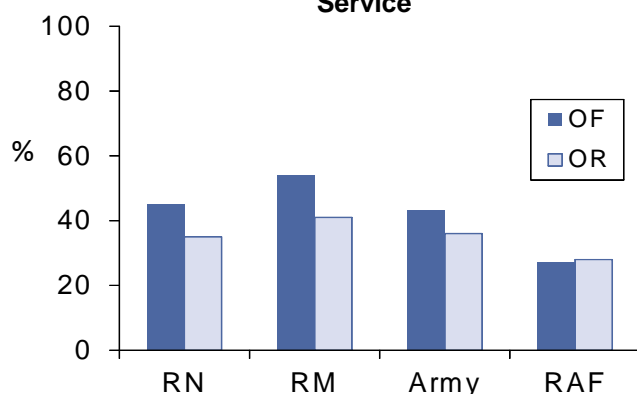
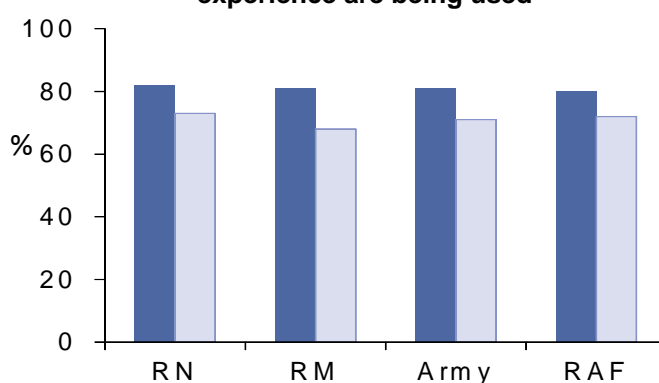
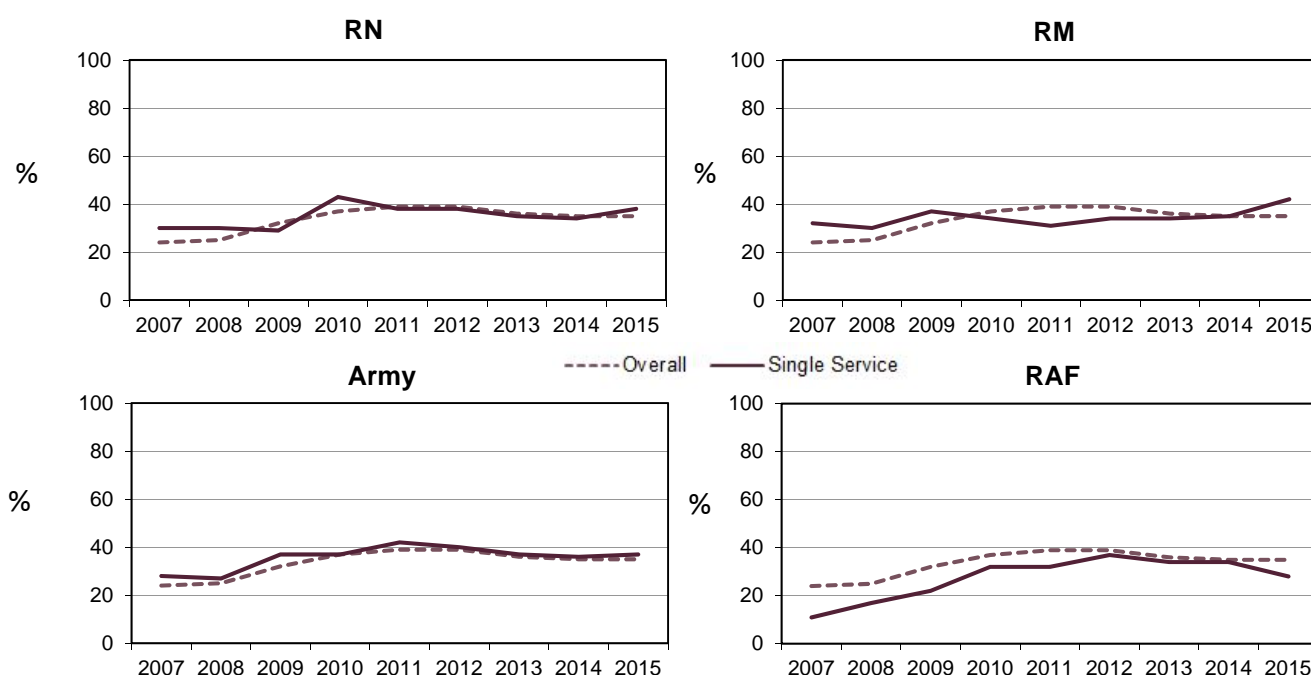


Chart 7.2 - Percentage of Officers and Other Ranks who agree that their knowledge, skill and experience are being used



The Royal Navy and Royal Marines have both shown increases in the proportion of personnel satisfied with their career management provider compared with 2014, while the RAF showed a decrease. The RM has the highest proportion of satisfied personnel, and the highest proportion observed in their Service since 2007. The RAF continues to have the lowest proportion satisfied, which is the lowest level of satisfaction observed since 2009.

Chart 7.3 - Percentage of personnel satisfied with the Career Management Service



A high proportion of Personnel across the Services agree that they have the knowledge, skills and experience to do their job (87%) which remains unchanged since 2011 when the question was first asked. The RAF continues to have the highest proportion who agree (90%).

The RAF also continues to have the highest proportion of personnel agreeing that they are doing the job for which they were trained (64%), and the highest proportion satisfied with the notice they received for their current/ last posting (79%). This is the highest level of satisfaction with posting notice seen in any of the Services since the question was first asked in 2007. Following a drop in satisfaction in 2013 and 2014, the overall satisfaction with the amount of posting notice has returned to 69%.

Key Questions - Training, Development and Career

Table Ref	Question		% Positive	% Change from 2014	% Change from 2011
B10.2	Career management service	<p>Positive= % satisfied</p>	35	↔	- 4
B10.10	Fairness of the promotion system	<p>Positive= % satisfied</p>	35	- 4	- 7
B10.11	Opportunities for promotion	<p>Positive= % satisfied</p>	41	↔	↔
B11.4	Doing the job for which I was trained	<p>Positive= % satisfied</p>	59	↔	- 3
B10.7	Notice I received for my current/ last assignment	<p>Positive= % satisfied</p>	69	+ 4	↔
B10.4	My knowledge, skill and experience are being used	<p>Positive= % agree</p>	73	↔	↔
B10.3	I have the knowledge, skill and experience to do my job	<p>Positive= % agree</p>	87	↔	↔

↔ Indicates no significant change

Section 8 - Future plans

Section 8 seeks the views of personnel about how long they plan to stay serving and their future plans, including whether they would consider joining the Reserves. There is also a question asking what factors influence decisions to either stay or leave the Service.

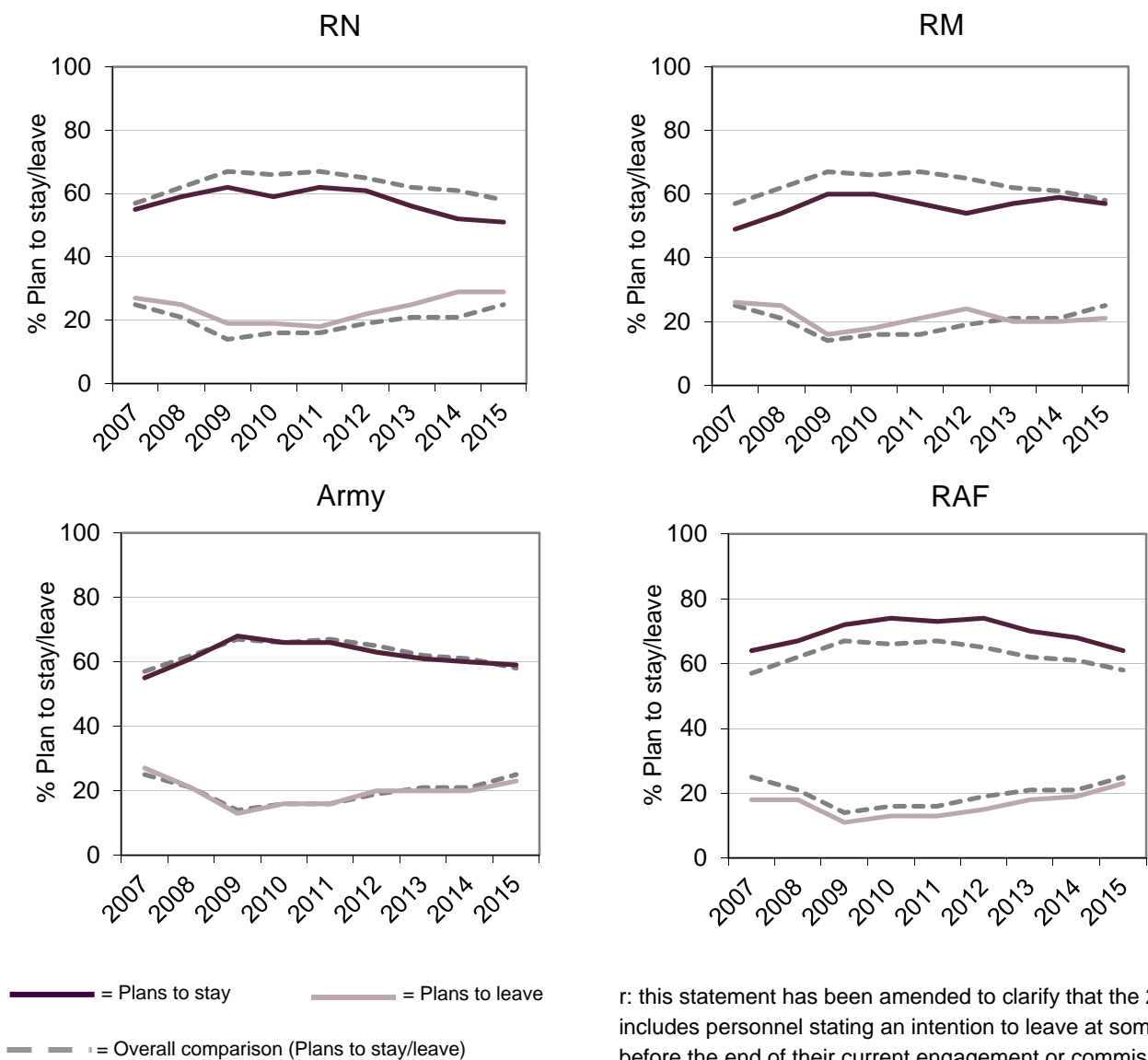
Future plans

When taken together, the majority of personnel continue to indicate that they intend to stay in the Service until the end of their contract/commission or for as long as they can (58%). However, the proportion of personnel who plan to stay serving for as long as they can has decreased by seven percentage points since 2011 to 34%. There are Service and rank differences regarding future plans, with 64% of RM Officers intending to stay in the Services, versus only 50% of RN Other Ranks.

In total, 25% of personnel state that they plan to leave before the end of their current engagement or commission, or as soon as they can, or have put in notice to leave¹. When taken together, the proportion of personnel who plan to leave or have put notice in to leave has increased by nine percentage points since 2011. Chart 8.1 shows how plans to stay and to leave have changed for each Service over the time series.

Data Quality Note
'Don't know' responses have been excluded from comparison in Chart 8.1.

Chart 8.1 - Future Plans



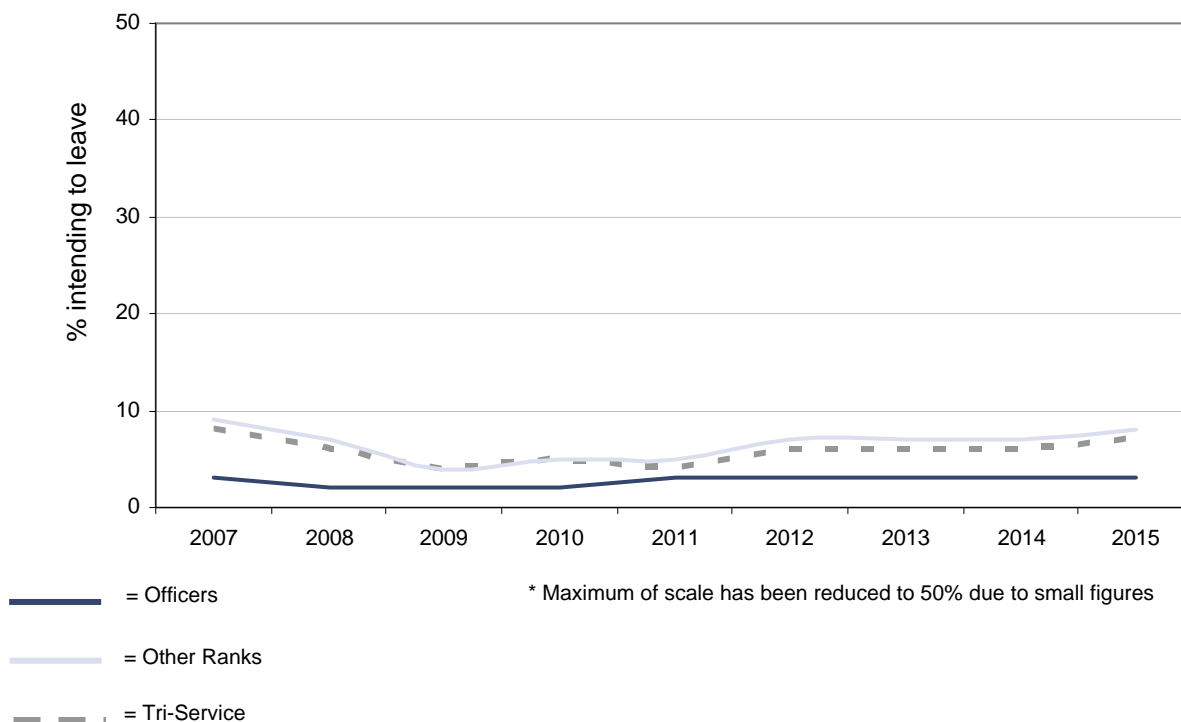
r: this statement has been amended to clarify that the 25% includes personnel stating an intention to leave at some point before the end of their current engagement or commission.

Personnel planning to leave as soon as possible

Chart 8.2 shows the percentage of personnel who wish to leave the Service as soon as possible across time. Overall, levels of this intention has not changed since 2011.

Throughout the time series, a greater percentage of Other Ranks than Officers have stated this intention. At 2015, 3% of Officers, and 8% of Other Ranks wish to leave as soon as they can. The percentage overall is low, remaining below the peak level of 8% in 2007.

Chart 8.2 - Intention to leave the Service as soon as possible



Key Questions - future plans

Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2014	% Change from 2011
B12.1	What are your plans for the future? - To stay serving as long as I can		34	↔	-7
B12.1	What are your plans for the future? - To stay serving to the end of my current engagement/commission		24	↔	↔

Positive = % plans to stay

↔ indicates no significant change has been found

Active job search

When personnel were asked how actively they searched for a job in the last 12 months, 39% overall stated that they had searched very or quite actively, and 61% searched not very actively or not at all. RN Other Ranks were the most likely to actively search for a job (42%), whereas RM Officers were the least likely (30%).

Joining the Reserves

Under the Future Force 2020 programme¹, the MOD has introduced financial incentives for Regular personnel to join the Reserve Forces on completion of their Regular service. AFCAS includes questions on whether personnel would consider joining the Reserves on a full-time or part-time basis. Overall, 17% of personnel would consider joining the full-time Reserves. This figure has remained consistent since 2012, when the question was first asked within AFCAS.

Since 2014, the proportion of personnel in all Services who would **not** join full-time has increased by seven percentage points to 60%. The proportion who would not join the part-time Reserves has increased by six percentage points to 52%. In 2015, there is a greater proportion of personnel who would join the Reserves part-time than full-time (24%, 17%).

Data Quality Note

The time series for questions on joining the Reserves began in 2012 for RN, RM and Army, and in 2010 for RAF.

Key Questions - job search and reserves

Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2014	% Change from 2011
B12.2	How actively have you searched for a job outside the Service in the last 12 months?		39	N/A	N/A
	Positive = Quite/very actively				
B12.4	When you leave the Service, would you consider joining the Volunteer Reserve Forces? Full-time.		17	↔	N/A
	Positive = % 'Yes'				
B12.5	When you leave the Service, would you consider joining the Volunteer Reserve Forces? Part-time.		24	↔	N/A
	Positive = % 'Yes'				
	↔ indicates no significant change has been found				

1. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/210470/Cm8655-web_FINAL.pdf

Factors increasing intentions to leave

Impact of Service life on family and personal life continues to be the main factor increasing intention to leave overall. The proportion of personnel citing this factor has not significantly changed since 2014, but has risen by eight percentage points to 61% since 2011. Opportunities outside the service is now the second most popular factor increasing intentions to leave, cited by 52% of personnel. This proportion has risen by eight percentage points since 2014, and 21 percentage points since 2011.

Opportunities for sport has risen in the ranks as a factor increasing intentions to stay (47%), removing mental health provision from the top five factors at 38%. Chart 8.6 (overleaf) shows all factors with overall scores for intentions to stay/leave.

Data Quality Note

A number of factors presented as options in previous years were removed for 2015. The removed options were typically selected by a very small number of respondents, so the change is not believed to affect these results.

Table 8.3 - Top five factors increasing intentions to stay

Position Change since 2014	2015	%	2014	%
Up	Job security	69	Dental provision	66
Down	Dental provision	67	Job security	65
No change	Healthcare provision	66	Healthcare provision	65
No change	Pension	51	Pension	53
Up	Opportunities for sport	47	Mental health provision	45

Table 8.4 - Top five factors increasing intentions to leave

Position Change since 2014	2015	%	2014	%
No change	Impact of Service life on family and personal life	61	Impact of Service life on family and personal life	59
Up	Opportunities outside the Service	52	Spouses/partner's career	48
Down	Spouses/partner's career	43	Opportunities outside the Service	44
Up	My morale	41	Service morale	39
Down	Service morale	40	My morale	38

Personnel who have put in their notice to leave

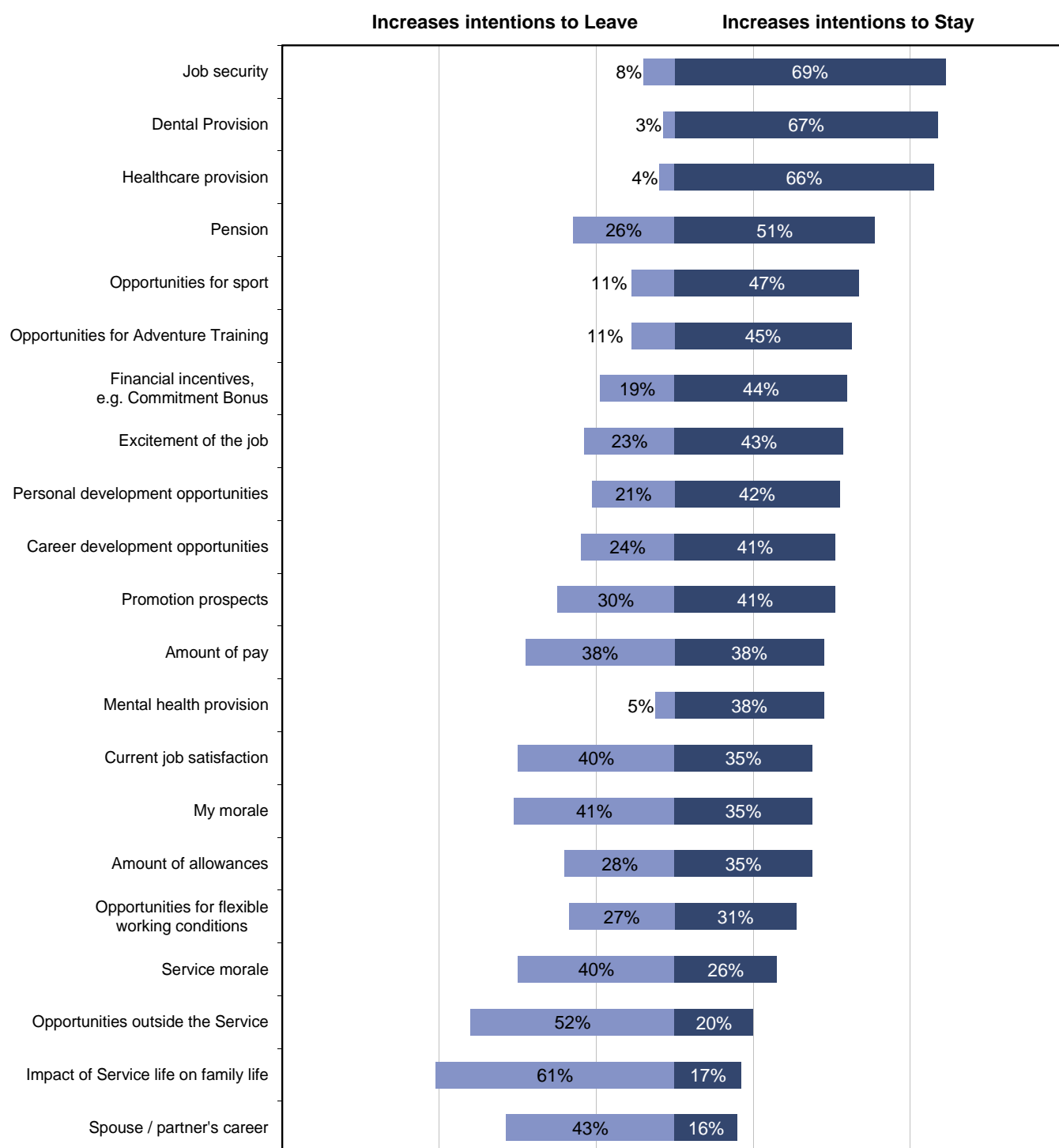
Of those individuals who have already put in notice to leave, 'Impact of Service life on family and personal life' is the top reason for leaving cited in all Services, with 62% of personnel selecting this overall. Table 8.6 shows the top factors influencing decision to leave in Officers, Other Ranks and overall.

Overall, a greater proportion of Officers than Other Ranks cite 'Opportunities outside the Service' as a reason for leaving (44%, 36%). For Officers, 'Promotion prospects' is included within the top five reasons for leaving, pushing 'Amount of pay' out of the top five. 'Amount of Pay' is included within the top five reasons for the Other Ranks (29%).

Table 8.5 - Top five factors influencing decision to leave

Tri-Service	%	Officers	%	Other Ranks	%
Impact of Service life on family and personal life	62	Impact of Service life on family and personal life	66	Impact of Service life on family and personal life	61
Opportunities outside the Service	38	Opportunities outside the Service	44	Current job satisfaction	38
Current job satisfaction	35	My morale	29	Opportunities outside the Service	36
My morale	33	Promotion prospects	26	My morale	34
Amount of pay	27	Current job satisfaction	25	Amount of pay	29

Chart 8.6 - Factors affecting intentions to Stay or Leave



Section 9 – Work-Life Balance

Section 9 asks a number of views about satisfaction with leave allowance and explores reasons behind respondents not taking all of it. Questions are also asked about their home life.

Time spent away from family for Service reasons

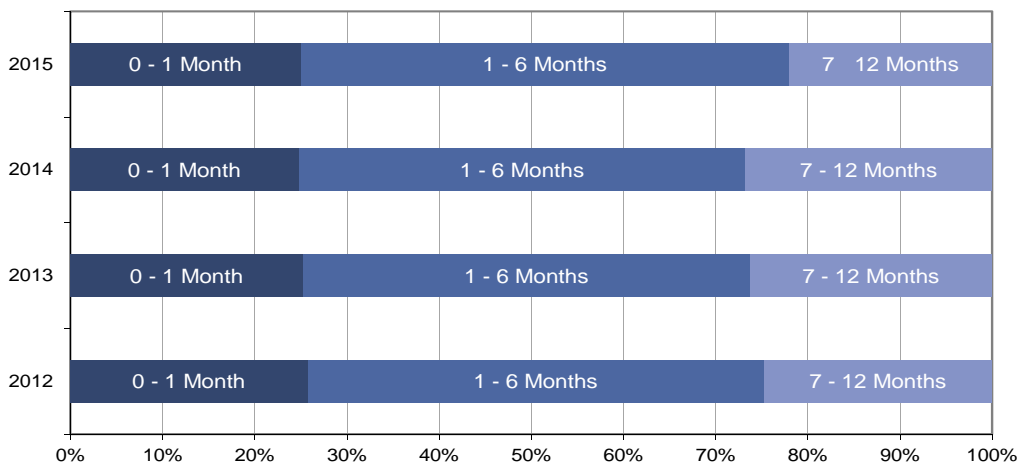
Results show that personnel spent less time away from family for Service reasons in 2015 than in 2014, which is likely be linked to the withdrawal from Afghanistan during 2014. 22% spent between 7 and 12 months away in the last twelve months compared to 27% in 2014. Officers are less likely to have spent between 7 and 12 months away (18%) than Other Ranks (22%).

Since the inclusion of this question in 2012 responses have remained largely constant until this year, as can be seen in Chart 9.1.

Data Quality Note

This question was introduced in 2012. 'N/A' responses are excluded from the analysis

Chart 9.1 - Time spent away from family for Service reasons



Workload

The percentage of respondents that rate their workload as too high (47%) has remained largely unchanged since 2014 (46%), although it has risen since 2011 (41%). Officers are more likely to respond that their workload is too high (60%) than Other Ranks (44%).

Work - Life Balance

43% of respondents agree that they are able to maintain a balance between their personal and working life. The RAF are the most positive about this aspect, with 49% agreeing compared to 41% for the other three Services.

Leave

The amount of respondents who had taken all their leave is quite low (37%), particularly amongst RAF personnel (26%). The top 5 stated reasons for not taking all leave are as follows:

Reason	% of respondents
Workload	69
Undermanning	67
Courses/training	66
Carry over to next year	51
Operational tour	47

Since 2011, the satisfaction of Service personnel with the opportunity to take leave at a time of their choosing has been gradually decreasing. This year, however, satisfaction has increased to 46%, up from 38% in 2014.

Data Quality Note

This question was introduced in 2015. 'N/A' responses are excluded from the analysis

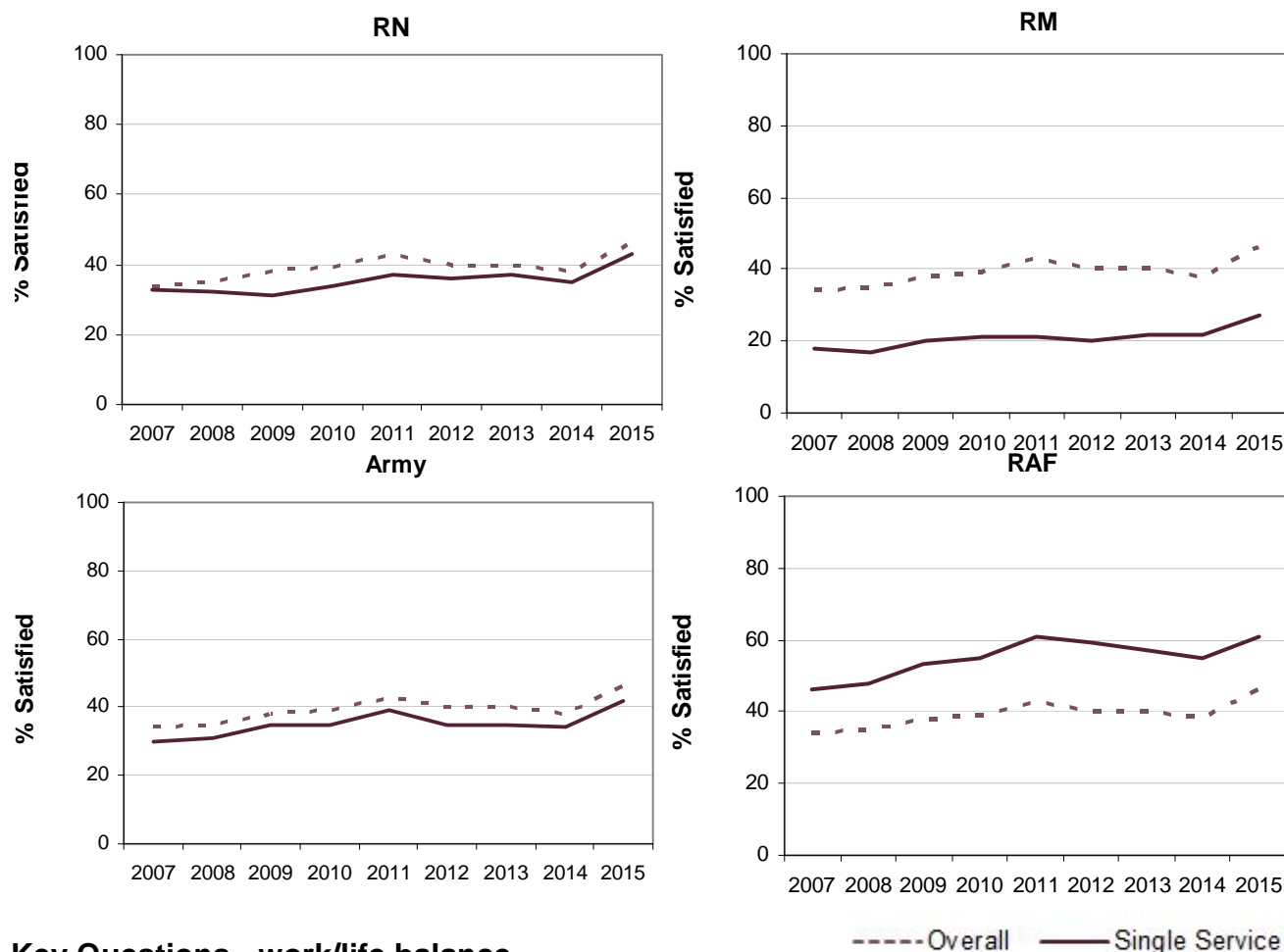
Data Quality Note

The percentage of respondents who have taken all their leave is estimated, as it is not possible to distinguish between those respondents that have taken all their leave and non-responses.

This increase has occurred across all Services and ranks, although RAF personnel have consistently remained the most satisfied with the Royal Marines the least satisfied - as shown in Chart 9.2.

62% of respondents were satisfied with the amount of leave they were able to take in the last 12 months. RAF (71%) were the most satisfied and the Royal Marines were the least satisfied (53%).

Chart 9.2 - Satisfaction with opportunity to take leave



Key Questions - work/life balance

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2014	% Change from 2011
B3.5	I rate my workload over the past 12 months as too high		47	↔	6
B14.10	I am able to maintain a balance between my personal and working life		43	N/A	N/A
B15.2	I am satisfied with the opportunity to take leave when I want to		46	8	3
B15.3	I am satisfied with the amount of leave I was able to take in the past 12 months		62	8	↔

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

Section 10 – Fairness at Work

Section 10 covers the views of personnel on fair treatment in their Service, whether they feel they have been subjected to bullying, discrimination or harassment, and their knowledge and experience of Service complaints.

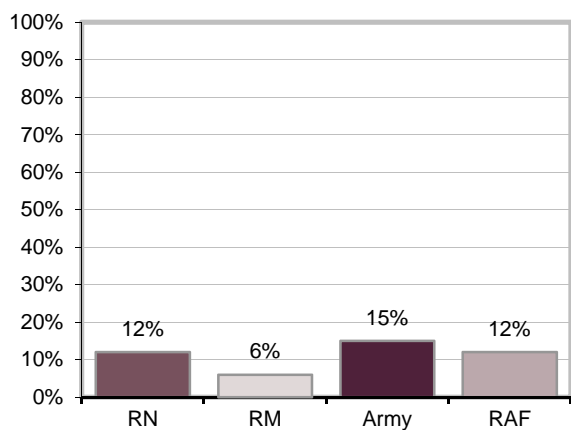
A new question on whether respondents feel they are treated fairly at work was introduced in 2015. The majority of personnel in all Services responded that they believe they are treated fairly. However, Officers are more likely to agree they are treated fairly at work (88%) than Other Ranks (69%).

Views on the Service discipline system are largely stable over time, with Officers more likely than Other Ranks to believe it is fair. Following a dip in satisfaction in 2014, the Royal Marines Other Ranks have returned to their previous level and remain the most likely of all Other Ranks to state that the system is fair (74%).

Bullying, Discrimination and Harassment

The majority (87%) of Armed Forces personnel report that they have not been subject to bullying, discrimination or harassment in the last 12 months. Similar levels are reported in each Service, with the exception of the Royal Marines who are less likely to report being subject to bullying, discrimination or harassment. 5% of RM Officers and 6% of Other Ranks report experiencing any of these.

Chart 10.1 - Percentage of personnel subject to bullying, discrimination or harassment



Data Quality Note

Similar questions on bullying, discrimination and harassment were asked in previous AFCAS surveys; however changes to the question structure means 2015 responses are not comparable with previous findings. The changes were made in order to align questions with the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty. Changes include the introduction of direct questions on experiences of bullying, discrimination and harassment as separate options, and the alteration of the response options for specifying the reasons for these.

Key Questions - fairness at work

Table Ref Question			Overall % Positive	% Change from 2014	% Change from 2011
B13.1	I am treated fairly at work		72	N/A	N/A
	Positive = % agree				
B13.2	The Service discipline system is fair/neutral/unfair		67	↔	-3
	Positive = % fair				

AFCAS 2015 25

Key Questions - bullying, discrimination and harassment

Table
Ref Question

B13.3	Do you believe you have been subject to bullying, discrimination or harassment in the last 12 months? % ticking either bullying, discrimination or harassment	<table><tr><td>RN</td><td>12</td></tr><tr><td>RM</td><td>6</td></tr><tr><td>Army</td><td>15</td></tr><tr><td>RAF</td><td>12</td></tr></table>	RN	12	RM	6	Army	15	RAF	12	13	N/A	N/A
RN	12												
RM	6												
Army	15												
RAF	12												
B13.4	Do you believe you have been subject to bullying in the last 12 months? % ticked	<table><tr><td>RN</td><td>6</td></tr><tr><td>RM</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Army</td><td>8</td></tr><tr><td>RAF</td><td>5</td></tr></table>	RN	6	RM	3	Army	8	RAF	5	7	N/A	N/A
RN	6												
RM	3												
Army	8												
RAF	5												
B13.5	Do you believe you have been subject to discrimination in the last 12 months? % ticked	<table><tr><td>RN</td><td>7</td></tr><tr><td>RM</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>Army</td><td>10</td></tr><tr><td>RAF</td><td>7</td></tr></table>	RN	7	RM	3	Army	10	RAF	7	8	N/A	N/A
RN	7												
RM	3												
Army	10												
RAF	7												
B13.6	Do you believe you have been subject to harassment in the last 12 months? % ticked	<table><tr><td>RN</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>RM</td><td>2</td></tr><tr><td>Army</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>RAF</td><td>2</td></tr></table>	RN	4	RM	2	Army	4	RAF	2	4	N/A	N/A
RN	4												
RM	2												
Army	4												
RAF	2												
B13.43	Do you know how the Service Complaints Commissioner can help with a bullying, discrimination or harassment complaint? % fully aware	<table><tr><td>RN</td><td>28</td></tr><tr><td>RM</td><td>28</td></tr><tr><td>Army</td><td>32</td></tr><tr><td>RAF</td><td>25</td></tr></table>	RN	28	RM	28	Army	32	RAF	25	28	+4	+3
RN	28												
RM	28												
Army	32												
RAF	25												
B13.43	Do you know how the Service Complaints Commissioner can help with a bullying, discrimination or harassment complaint? % have not heard of SCC	<table><tr><td>RN</td><td>13</td></tr><tr><td>RM</td><td>13</td></tr><tr><td>Army</td><td>13</td></tr><tr><td>RAF</td><td>13</td></tr></table>	RN	13	RM	13	Army	13	RAF	13	13	↔	↔
RN	13												
RM	13												
Army	13												
RAF	13												

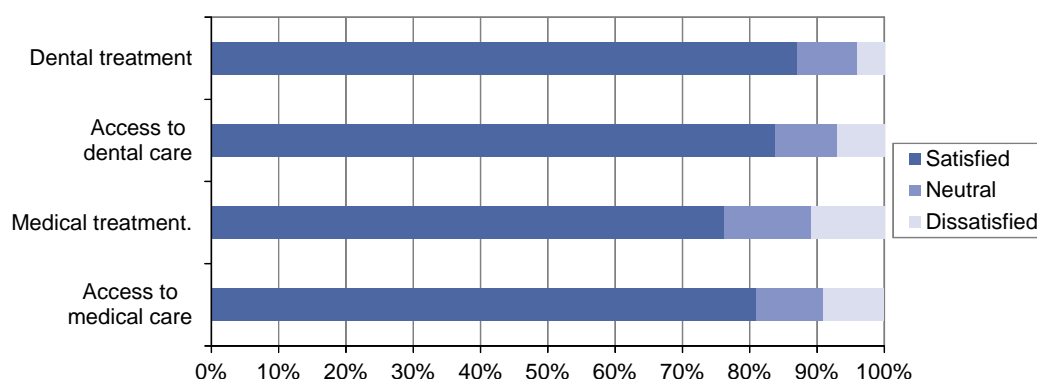
↔ means no significant change between years has been found.

Section 11 – Health, Fitness and Welfare

Section 11 covers respondents' satisfaction with various aspects of the health, fitness and welfare services, including questions on medical treatment, fitness facilities and welfare support for personnel and their families.

There continues to be a high proportion of personnel satisfied with the standard and access to medical and dental care. A greater proportion of Officers state that they are satisfied with medical treatment, dental treatment, and access to medical care, when compared with Other Ranks across the Services.

Chart 11.1 - Percentage of personnel satisfied with healthcare services



There has been an overall increase in the proportion of personnel satisfied with the welfare support provided for themselves (54%) and their families (45%), the highest levels since first asked in 2012, and counter to the downward trends seen up until 2014. The Royal Navy has shown the largest increase in the proportion of personnel satisfied with their own welfare support (eight percentage points), though despite this, continue to be the least satisfied of all the Services (47%). Overall, there is a greater proportion of Officers satisfied with their own welfare support compared with Other Ranks. The Royal Marines has the highest proportion of respondents satisfied with family welfare support of all the Services (52%).

Continuing the upward trend, the proportion of personnel satisfied with the welfare support their spouse/partner receives while they are absent has increased to the highest level since first asked in 2007 (34%). The Royal Navy continues to have the lowest proportion satisfied (24%), despite a 5 percentage point increase since 2014.

Key Questions - Welfare

Table Ref	Question		% Positive	% Change from 2014	% Change from 2011
B18.1	The welfare support provided for me		54	+ 5	N/A
B18.2	The welfare support provided for my family		45	+ 7	N/A
B18.3	The support my spouse/partner gets when I am absent		34	+ 5	+ 11

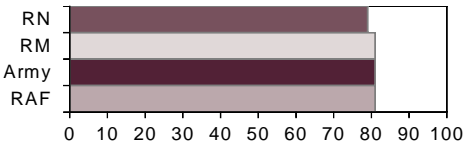
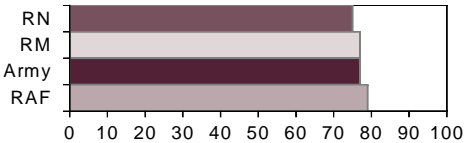
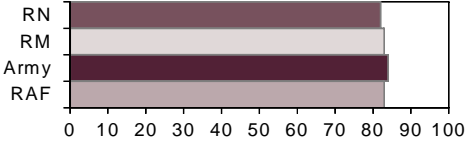
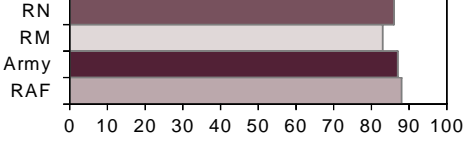
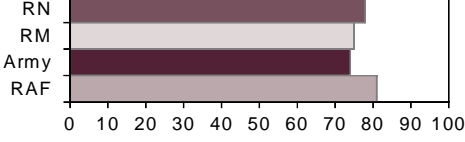
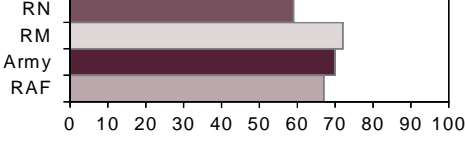
↔ Indicates no significant change has been found

The proportion of the Royal Marines satisfied with access to medical treatment has increased to match the Army and RAF levels (81%), the highest proportion seen in the Royal Marines since first asked in 2010. The proportion of the Royal Marines satisfied with dental treatment has also increased since 2014, though this continues to be the lowest of all the Services (83%).

Three quarters of personnel are satisfied with the standard of sport, exercise and fitness facilities, and this is unchanged overall, except for the RM which has seen a three percentage point decrease in satisfaction since 2014. Overall, there is a higher proportion of Officers satisfied with sport, exercise and fitness facilities than Other Ranks.

The proportion of personnel satisfied with the opportunities to undertake fitness activities remains at 68%, unchanged since 2009 apart from a brief drop to 64% in 2013. The proportion of personnel satisfied in the Army and Royal Marines has increased since 2014, with the Royal Marines now at the highest rate of satisfaction seen in their Service since first asked in 2009 (72%). The Royal Navy continues to have the lowest proportion satisfied (59%). A greater proportion of Officers are dissatisfied with the opportunities for fitness activities, when compared with Other Ranks (21%, 16%).

Key questions - Health and Fitness

Table Ref	Question		% Positive	% Change from 2014	% Change from 2011
B16.1	Access to medical care	 <p>Positive= % satisfied</p>	81	↔	↔
B16.2	Medical treatment	 <p>Positive= % satisfied</p>	77	N/A	N/A
B16.3	Access to dental care	 <p>Positive= % satisfied</p>	83	N/A	N/A
B16.4	Dental treatment	 <p>Positive= % satisfied</p>	87	↔	↔
B17.1	Standard of sport, exercise and fitness facilities	 <p>Positive= % satisfied</p>	76	↔	↔
B17.2	Opportunities to undertake fitness activities	 <p>Positive= % agree</p>	68	↔	↔

↔ Indicates no significant change has been found

Section 12 – Accommodation and Catering

Section 12 covers respondents' satisfaction with various aspects of their accommodation and catering, including questions about home ownership, where personnel live during the week, and the standard of catering.

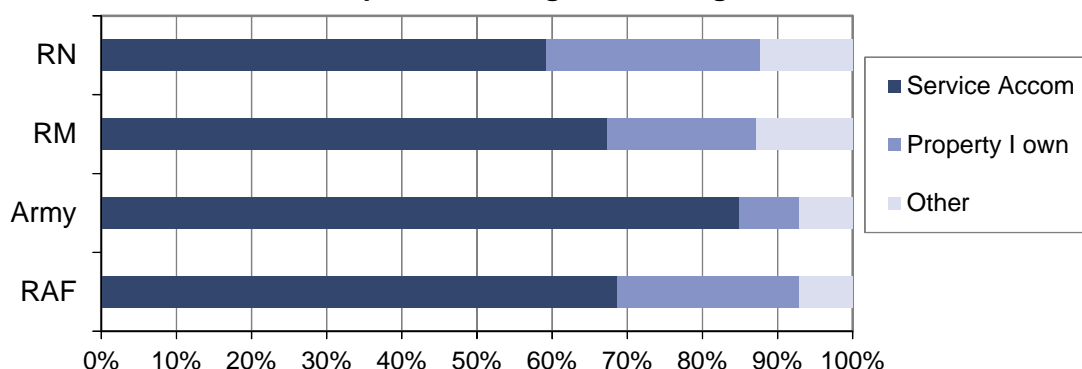
Accommodation

In 2015, the majority of personnel live in Service accommodation during the week (76%). The Army has the lowest proportion of personnel who live in their own home during the week (8%) and the Royal Navy has the highest at 28%.

A greater proportion of Officers, when compared with Other Ranks, are satisfied with the standard of their accommodation (64%, 57%), and the standard of the catering service. The Royal Marines have the lowest proportion of personnel satisfied with the standard of accommodation (50%) and catering service (27%).

Since 2014, there has been a four percentage point increase in the proportion of homeowners who are satisfied with the opportunity to live in their own home (to 44%), counter to the downward trend since first asked in 2010. 28% of homeowners are satisfied with the allowances provided for living in their own home, which, following a flat trend since the question was first asked in 2010, has increased by six percentage points in the past year.

Chart 12.1 - Proportion of personnel who live in each kind of accommodation at present during the working week



Key

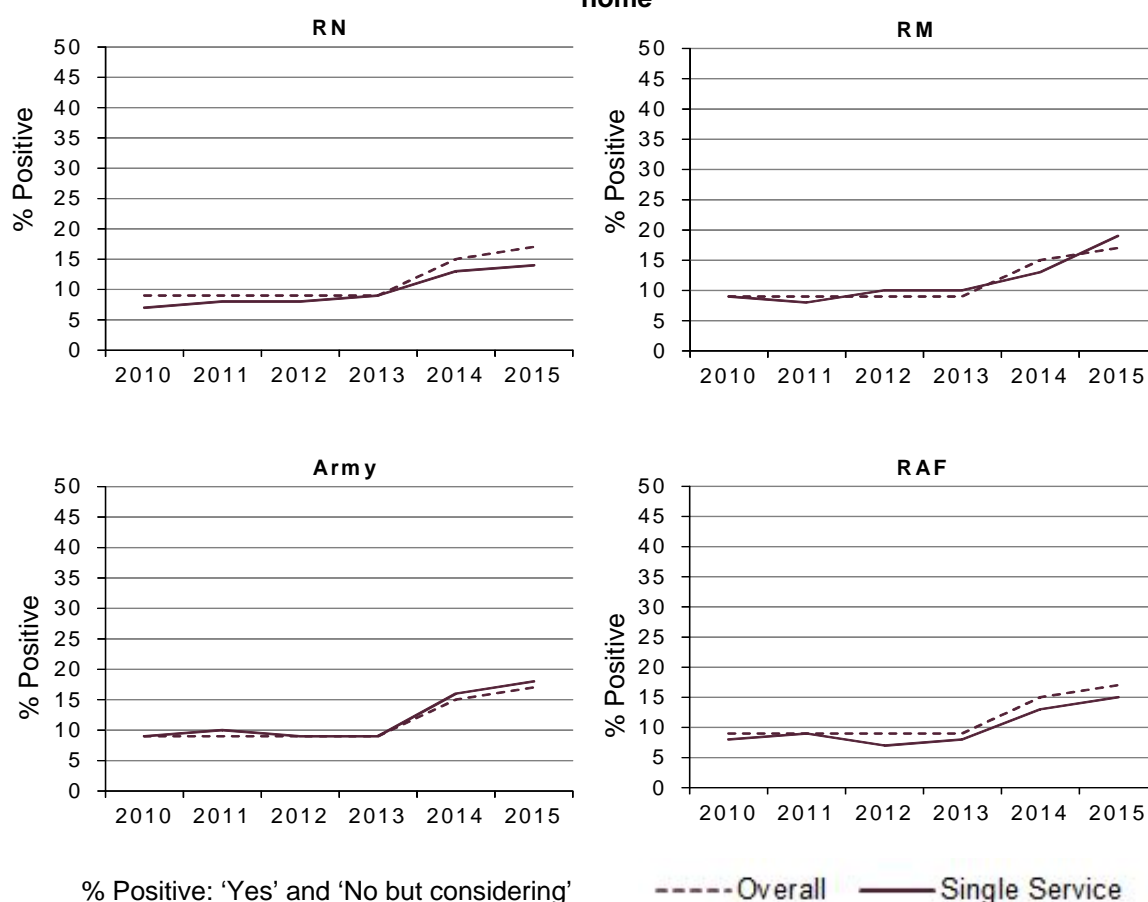
Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2014	% Change from 2011
B19.6	Overall Standard of accommodation		58	↔	↔
	Positive= % satisfied				
B20.15	Standard of catering service		33	N/A	N/A
	Positive= % satisfied				
B20.17	Availability of food during the week		52	N/A	N/A
	Positive= % satisfied				
B19.28	Opportunity to live in own home		44	+ 4	- 3
	Positive= % homeowners				
B19.29	Allowances for living in own home		28	+ 6	+ 8
	Positive= % homeowners satisfied				

↔ Indicates no significant change has been found

Housing

In April 2014, the MOD introduced the Forces Help to Buy (FHTB) scheme, under the New Employment Model programme. The scheme offers loans to Service personnel for the purpose of buying a home¹. The overall proportion of personnel who have used an Affordable Housing Scheme in the last year to buy or rent their home has increased to 3%, the highest proportion since first asked in 2010, which is likely to be the result of FHTB. The Royal Marines has the largest proportion (6%). The proportion of Other Ranks who have used a Government Housing Scheme (4%) is twice that of Officers. The Army has the largest proportion of personnel who have 'not heard of' using such schemes (17%). The proportion of personnel who have not used a scheme, but are considering, has doubled to 14% since the question was first asked in 2010.

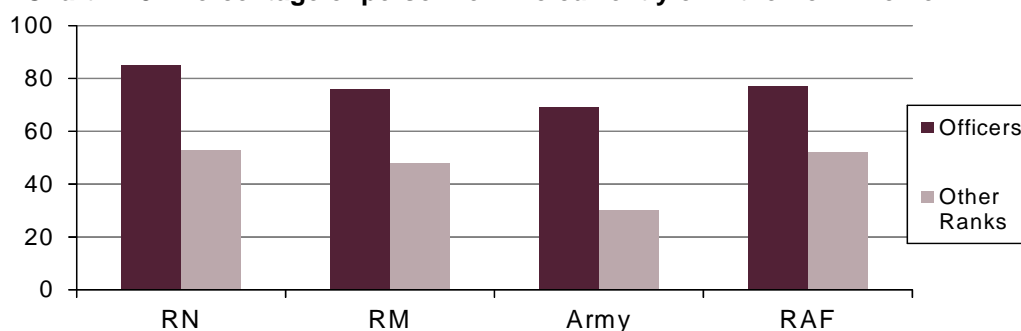
Chart 12.2 - Percentage of personnel who have used a Government Affordable Housing Scheme in the last year to buy or rent their home



* Maximum of scale has been reduced to 50% due to small figures

The overall proportion of personnel who own their own home remains unchanged since first asked in 2007 (45%), except for the drop seen in 2011 (41%) and 2012 (42%). The proportion is higher for Officers (75%) than for Other Ranks (39%).

Chart 12.3 - Percentage of personnel who currently own their own home



1. <https://www.gov.uk/forces-help-to-buy>

Section 13 – Family Life and Being Part of Society

Section 13 asks a number of questions relating to respondents' personal lives, such as their marital status and childcare situation. This section also measures Service personnel's involvement in society and whether they feel advantaged or disadvantaged as a Service person compared to a member of the general public. This is particularly relevant in relation to the Armed Forces Covenant.

Marital status and children

Just over half of Service personnel (51%) report that they are married or in a Civil partnership and the same proportion state that they have children that they support financially. This is largely unchanged from 2014.

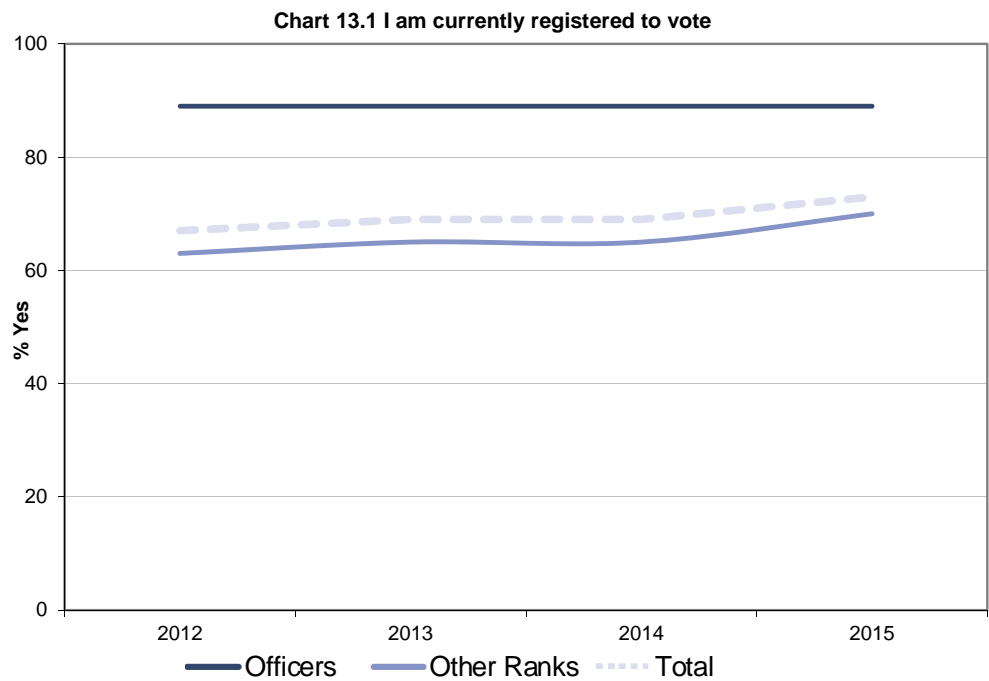
Of those respondents that require childcare, 43% are satisfied with the locally provided childcare facilities. There is a larger proportion of satisfied respondents amongst Officers (53%) than Other Ranks (40%).

Data Quality Note

The childcare facilities question was introduced in 2015 and excludes 'N/A' responses from the analysis.

Voting and the Armed Forces Covenant

73% of respondents report that they are registered to vote, which is an increase from 2014 (69%). This increase is largely due to an increase in the proportion of Other Ranks that are registered to vote, which has increased to 70% from 65% in 2014. Officers have a much higher proportion of registered voters (89%) which has remained constant since 2012 when this question was first included. This sudden increase in Other Ranks registered to vote, as can be seen in Chart 13.1, is likely due to the General Election in 2015. The MOD also launched Service Voters Registration Roadshows in March 2015 which may have resulted in an increase in the number of registered voters.



The Armed Forces Covenant, announced by the Government in May 2011, sets out how Armed Forces personnel and their families can expect to be treated by the Government and the rest of the country in a number of areas. It sets out, for example, that personnel can expect the same access to and standard of healthcare as any other UK citizen.

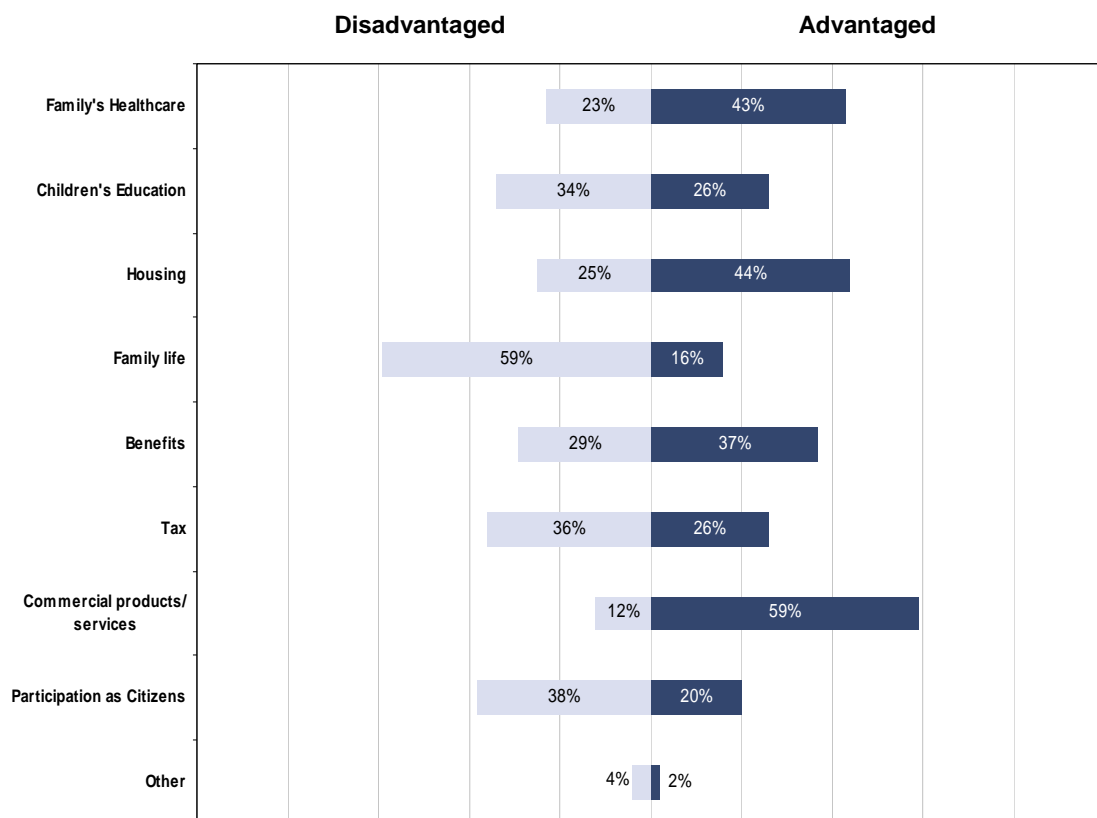
Almost half of respondents do not know anything about the Armed Forces Covenant, similar to the 2014 response. Officers are more likely to know something about the Covenant, with only 11% indicating that they know nothing about it compared to 58% of Other Ranks.

Advantage or Disadvantage when compared to the general public

Chart 13.2 indicates the percentage of respondents who consider various aspects of being a Service person to be either an advantage or disadvantage compared to being a member of the general public.

The area that respondents feel they are most disadvantaged in is 'Family life' with 59% indicating that they feel disadvantaged. The area in which Service personnel feel that they are most at an advantage in is 'Commercial products and services', with 59% indicating that they feel advantaged.

Chart 13.2 - Advantage or Disadvantage of being a Service person when compared to the general public



Data Quality Note

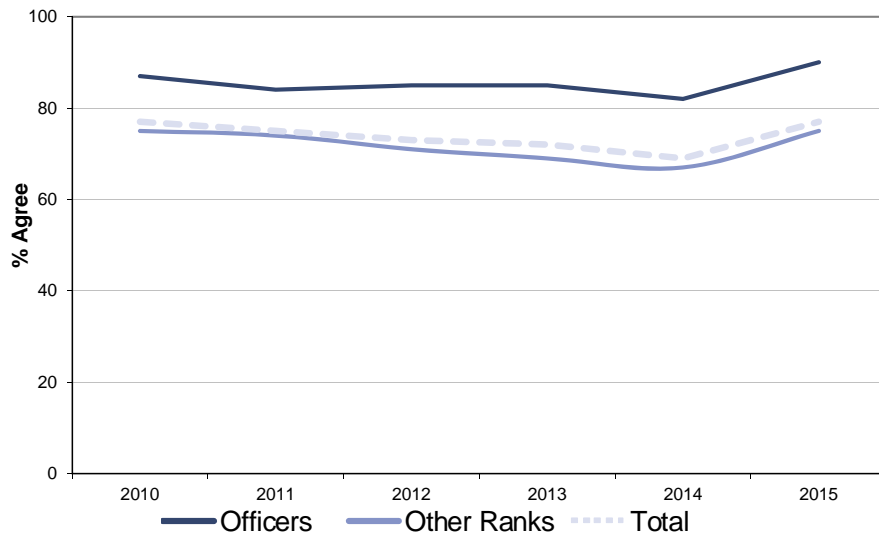
The questionnaire presented only two response options for each area: advantaged or disadvantaged. There were no options to indicate feeling neither advantaged nor disadvantaged, or both, or 'don't know/not applicable'. Approximately one third of respondents did not tick any options in this section. The estimates represent the proportion of all respondents ticking either advantaged or disadvantaged for each area. No assumptions can be made about why the remaining respondents did not tick any particular option.

Importance

77% of respondents agree that they offered an important service to the country. This is an increase in positive responses from 2014 (69%). Responses are more positive amongst Officers (90%) than Other Ranks (75%), as can be seen in Chart 13.3.

Despite this, only half of respondents feel valued by society at large. Again Officers (68%) are more positive about this than Other Ranks (46%).

Chart 13.3 I offer an important service to the country



Key Questions - family life and awareness of Covenant

Ref	Question		Overall % ticked	% Change from 2014	% Change from 2011
B21.1	I am married/ in a Civil partnership	<p>Ticked = % Yes</p>	51	↔	2
B21.3	I have children that I support financially	<p>Ticked = % Yes</p>	51	↔	↔
B21.9	I am satisfied with the locally provided child-care facilities	<p>Ticked = % Satisfied</p>	43	N/A	N/A
B22.1	I am currently registered to vote	<p>Ticked = % Yes</p>	73	4	N/A
B22.4	I know nothing about the Armed Forces Covenant	<p>Ticked = % Know nothing</p>	49	↔	N/A
B22.23	I offer an important service to the country	<p>Ticked = % Agree</p>	77	8	↔
B22.24	Armed Forces Members are valued by society at large	<p>Ticked = % Agree</p>	50	↔	N/A

↔ indicates no significant change

Section 14 – Taking action

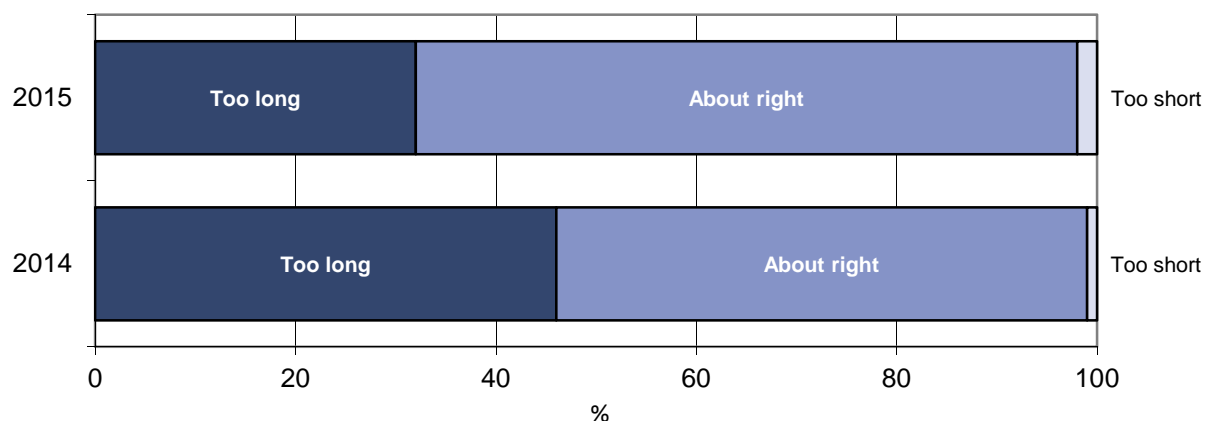
Section 14 covers beliefs on whether action has been taken on the results of AFCAS, and asks whether personnel feel the survey is of the right length.

In 2014, a major review of AFCAS resulted in a shorter survey more relevant to the current priorities of the MOD. It was hoped that this would result in less burden on respondents and boost response rates. In 2015, the AFCAS survey achieved an overall response rate of 44%, a drop of four percentage points. Respondents are asked whether they think effective action has been taken on the results of AFCAS, and only one in five agree that it has. The Royal Marines Officers are by far the most likely to agree that effective action has been taken (42%).

The 2015 AFCAS survey was reduced in length by almost a third. Accordingly, there has been a large decrease in the proportion of personnel stating that it is too long, from 46% to 32%. Around two thirds of personnel believe that the survey's length is about right.

More than 70% of personnel report that they completed the survey in under half an hour, although Other Ranks are more likely than Officers to take longer than 30 minutes.

Chart 14.1 - Views on survey length



Key Questions - taking action and survey length

Table					
Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2014	% Change from 2011
B23.2	I think effective action has been taken on the results of AFCAS		21	N/A	N/A
		Positive = % agree			
B23.3	This survey is too long / about right / too short?		66	+13	+3
		Positive = % stating it is about right			

Methodology

1. Target Population

The target population for AFCAS 2015 was trained UK Regular Armed Forces personnel including Gurkhas, excluding Special Forces and those deployed or attending training courses at the time the survey sample was drawn from the Joint Personnel Administration system.

2. The survey

AFCAS is distributed both electronically and in paper format. Data collection ran from October 2014 to February 2015, a relatively long period which allows time for receiving paper responses from personnel serving overseas.

The survey is confidential rather than anonymous. An individual's unique Service number is used both to control access to the survey and allow responses to be linked to demographic data held on the Joint Personnel Administration system. Personally identifiable data are only available to a small group of civilian researchers working on analysis and report production.

3. The sample and respondents

The total AFCAS 2015 sample consisted of 26,729 personnel. AFCAS questionnaires were issued to Service personnel selected under a (disproportionate) stratified simple random sampling process.

Samples were designed to provide sufficient responses to yield estimates with a margin of error of plus or minus 3% for the main comparison groups of Officer/Rank and Service. A census of all Royal Marines was employed due to the small size of the Service. Despite a relatively high response rate of 63%, margins of error around the estimates for RM Officers may be greater than 3%, due to the relatively small number of respondents in this group.

11,877 responses were used in the AFCAS 2015 analysis, giving an overall response rate of 44%. The table below contains detailed information on the number of questionnaires issued and received along with corresponding response rates.

Table A1: Response rates by Service and rank group

		Sample size	Surveys returned	2015 response rate	2014 response rate
Royal Navy	Officers	1 504	906	60%	65%
	Ratings	4 435	1 764	40%	47%
	Total	5 939	2 670	45%	51%
Royal Marines	Officers	515	323	63%	80%
	Marines	4 059	2 419	60%	69%
	Total	4 574	2 742	60%	70%
Army	Officers	1 804	1 042	58%	61%
	Soldiers	7 948	2 269	29%	30%
	Total	9 752	3 311	34%	35%
Royal Air Force	Officers	1 736	1 026	59%	59%
	Airmen	4 739	2 128	45%	46%
	Total	6 475	3 154	49%	50%
All Services	Officers	5 559	3 297	59%	63%
	Ranks	21 181	8 580	41%	44%
	Total	26 740	11 877	44%	48%

Note that percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole % for ease of interpretation.

4. Weighting methodology and non-response

Due to the sample design and the differences in prevalence of non-response between the Service and rank strata, the distribution of characteristics amongst the AFCAS respondents did not reflect the distribution in the whole Armed Forces population. Response rates tend to vary by rank, therefore responses are weighted by rank in order to correct for the bias caused by over or under-representation.

The weights were calculated simply by:

$$\frac{\text{Population size within weighting class (p)}}{\text{Number of responses within weighting class (r)}}$$

Weighting in this way assumes missing data are missing at random (MAR) only within weighting classes. This means we assume that within a single weighting class the views of non-respondents do not differ (on average) to the views of respondents.

Table A2: Weightings used for AFCAS 2015 analysis

Weighting Class	Weighting Applied	Weighting Class	Weighting Applied	Weighting Class	Weighting Applied	Weighting Class	Weighting Applied
RN_OF-7+	2.43	RM_OF-4+	2.35	Army_OF-7+	2.36	RAF_OF-7+	2.00
RN_OF-4-6	5.55	RM_OF-3	2.22	Army_OF-4-6	10.25	RAF_OF-4-6	6.49
RN_OF-3	5.63	RM_OF-1&2	2.35	Army_OF-3	10.48	RAF_OF-3	6.73
RN_OF-1&2	6.24	RM_OR-8-9	1.67	Army_OF-1&2	14.72	RAF_OF-1&2	7.42
RN_OR-8-9	5.59	RM_OR-7	2.05	Army_OR-8-9	13.28	RAF_OR-7-9	7.31
RN_OR-7	6.63	RM_OR-6	2.18	Army_OR-7	16.24	RAF_OR-6	9.02
RN_OR-6	7.41	RM_OR-3-4	2.84	Army_OR-6	19.71	RAF_OR-3&4	12.57
RN_OR-4	12.79	RM_OR-2	2.85	Army_OR-4	28.60	RAF_OR-2	19.27
RN_OR-2	15.36			Army_OR-3	41.74		
				Army_OR-2	82.45		

5. Analysis and statistical tests

Attitudinal questions in the questionnaires have generally been regrouped to assist in analysing results and to aid interpretation. For example, questions asked at a 5-point level (e.g. Strongly agree – Agree – Neither Agree nor Disagree – Disagree – Strongly Disagree) have been regrouped to a 3-point level (e.g. (Agree – Neutral – Disagree)).

Missing values, where respondents have not provided a response/valid response, have not been included in the analysis. In addition, some questions are filtered to exclude invalid responses. As a result the unweighted counts (or 'n') will vary from question to question and these are shown within the reference tables published alongside this report on the AFCAS webpage here

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/armed-forces-continuous-attitude-survey-index>

Unless otherwise specified, 'don't know' and 'not applicable' responses are ignored and percentages are based only on the numbers of respondents who chose the remaining item response options.

Where applicable, Z tests at a 1% alpha level were used to test whether observed estimates were significantly different to estimates from previous surveys. A statistically significant difference means that there is enough evidence that the change observed is unlikely to be due to chance variation (less than a 1% probability that the difference is the result of chance alone).

6. Format of the reference tables (published separately to the report on the AFCAS webpage here <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/armed-forces-continuous-attitude-survey-index>)

Each reference table refers to a question asked in the survey and includes estimates of the proportion of the population by category. Tables are arranged generally in the order in which they were asked in the questionnaires, which is not the same as the order of the sections in the Main Report. An index is available in within the Excel tables. Each table is broken down by Service and also by Rank Group with the Total column referring to the Officers and Other Ranks results combined.

Glossary

Armed Forces Compensation Scheme	Compensation available to those who become injured or ill as a result of their service in the Armed Forces
Armed Forces Covenant	The Armed Forces Covenant defines the principles for ensuring that Armed Forces personnel are not disadvantaged in their access to public and commercial services as a result of their service. It also sets out that in some cases special treatment may be appropriate, for example for those that have given the most, such as the injured and the bereaved.
Armed Forces Pay Review Body	Provides independent advice to the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Defence on the pay and charges for members of the Naval, Military and Air Forces of the Crown.
Assisting Officer	Appointed to provide help and support to personnel either considering or having made a formal written complaint about discrimination, harassment or bullying
Bullying	May be characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, and abuse of or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipients
Catering Retail and Leisure (CRL)	Provision of on-site facilities for dining, shopping and recreation by commercial partners
Commission	Officer's period of employment usually under contractual terms
Core Meal	Meal supplied that should conform to certain cost and nutritional standards within core hours
Defence Board	The highest committee in the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and is responsible for the full range of Defence business, other than the conduct of operations.
DIN	Defence Instructions and Notices
Discrimination	can occur when a person is treated less favourably because of race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, gender reassignment, age or disability. Discrimination can also occur where a policy or practice which applies to everyone unreasonably disadvantages a person on the basis of the characteristics mentioned above.
Engagement	Period of employment usually under contractual terms
Ethos	The nature, aims and objectives of a Service
Flexible working	Agreed variation in starting and finishing working hours normally designed to meet work/home life balance
Government Affordable Housing Scheme	Schemes providing financial assistance for those who are unable to afford to buy or rent a home; includes Forces Help to Buy
Harassment	includes unwanted conduct which is related to the characteristics mentioned above and is intended to or has the effect of violating another's dignity or creating a hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.
HIVE	Service information hub which assists personnel in a wide variety of topics affecting their everyday Service and personal life
JPA	Joint Personnel Administration - JPA is the system used by the Armed Forces to deal with matters of pay, leave and other personal administrative tasks
Marines	RM personnel of NATO ranks OR1 to OR9
Ministry of Defence Research Ethics Committee (MODREC)	Ensures that all research involving human participants undertaken, funded or sponsored by the MOD meets nationally and internationally accepted ethical standards
Missing at Random (MAR)	Statistical theory that states that those who did not respond to a question do not differ from those who did respond
Missing value(s)	Refers to the situation where a respondent has not submitted an answer or a valid answer to a question
MOD	Ministry of Defence
Morale	A measure of commitment and willingness to the ethos of a Service
N/A	Not applicable
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation

Naval Service	Comprises the Royal Navy (including the Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service) and the Royal Marines combined.
Non-response	Refers either to a person who although sampled and sent a questionnaire did not reply or to a respondent who did not reply to a question
OF	Officer of NATO rank designation ranking from '1' lowest to '10' highest
Officer(s)	All regular trained officers of NATO ranks OF1 to OF10
Operational commitment and stretch	Refers to the situation where operational deployment requires the use of materiel and personnel in extended circumstances beyond the level they are resourced and structured to sustain in the long-term
Operational/Deployment Welfare Package	Measures taken to support the morale of Service personnel by making the fullest possible provision for their emotional and physical wellbeing whilst on operational deployment
OR	Other Ranks of NATO rank designation ranking from 'OR1' lowest to 'OR9' highest
Other Rank(s)	Other Ranks are members of the Royal Marines, Army and Royal Air Force who are not Officers. The equivalent group in the Royal Navy is known as "Ratings".
Pay As You Dine (PAYD)	Enables personnel to pay for meals when they want them rather than pay a fixed daily charge
Post Operational Leave (POL)	Leave granted in addition to annual leave for personnel returning from operational deployment and who are not entitled to Seagoers' Leave (Army uses Post Operational Tour Leave (POTL))
RAF	Royal Air Force
Recruitment and retention pay (RRP) - formerly Specialist Pay	Discretionary payment received in addition to basic pay by specific groups within the Armed Forces to assist with specific recruitment or retention requirements
Retail Meal	Meals supplied by the contractor in addition to Core Meals
RM	Royal Marines
RN	Royal Navy
Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR)	In the context of the Services, refers to a Review of what needed to be done to restructure and rescale the size of the Armed Forces to meet future Defence requirements of the UK's national security.
Seagoers' Leave (SGL)	Leave granted in addition to annual leave for personnel employed in a seagoing unit
Service Accommodation	Any type of accommodation that includes 'SFA', 'SSFA', 'SLA', 'SSLA' and 'Onboard a ship or submarine'
Service Complaints Commissioner	Oversees the Service Complaints system and also acts as an alternative point of contact for Service Complaints including ensuring that Service Complaints are dealt with efficiently, effectively and fairly
Service Complaints Procedure	Available to those who believe they have been the subject of unlawful or unfair treatment in the Service
Service(s)	Royal Navy, Royal Marines, Army and RAF
SFA	Service Family Accommodation
SLA	Single Living Accommodation
SNCO	Senior Non-Commissioned Officer (NATO ranks OR6 to OR9)
Soldiers	Army personnel of NATO ranks OR1 to OR9
Special Educational Need (SEN)	Children who have needs or disabilities that affect their ability to learn
SSFA	Substitute Service Family Accommodation
SSLA	Substitute Single Living Accommodation
Standard Error	A measure derived using weighting factors from the sample proportion and unweighted count in a sampling distribution and used as a benchmark in order to ascertain a range of values within which the true population proportion could lie
Statistically significant	Refers to the result of a statistical test in which there is evidence of a change in proportions between years

Statistical tests	Refers to those tests which are carried out to see if any evidence exists for a change in response proportions from one year to another
Trained strength	Trained Strength comprises military personnel who have completed Phase 1 and 2 training. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 1 Training includes all new entry training to provide basic military skills. • Phase 2 Training includes initial individual specialisation, sub-specialisation and technical training following Phase 1 training prior to joining the trained strength.
Unit	A sub-organisation of the Service in which personnel are employed
Unweighted count	Refers to the actual number who provided a valid response to a question in the survey
Weighting (factors)	Refers to factors that are applied to the respondent data set by Service and rank group in order to make respondent Service rank groups representative of their population equivalents
Weighting class	Refers to those members of a specific rank group to whom a weighting factor is applied
X-Factor	Additional payment to Armed Forces personnel to compensate for differences in lifestyle, working conditions and expectations compared to civilian equivalents
z test	Statistical test based on a standardised distribution which allows comparison between years for populations of different sizes

Further Information

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