



Ministry  
of Defence

# UK Regular Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey Results 2018



Annual

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United Kingdom

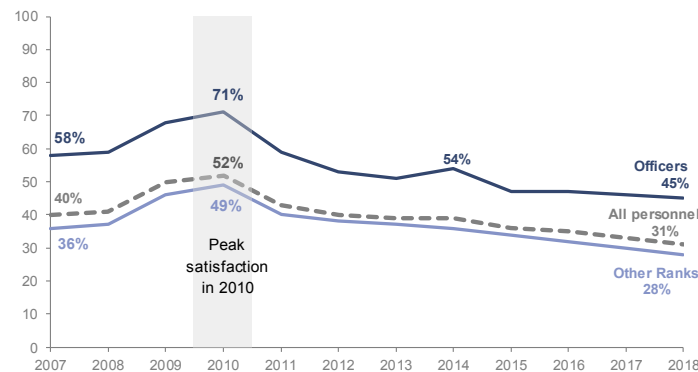
This statistical release provides results from the Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey (AFCAS) 2018, along with results from previous years.

Statistics from AFCAS are used by both internal Ministry of Defence (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.

## Two in five personnel are satisfied with Service life in general

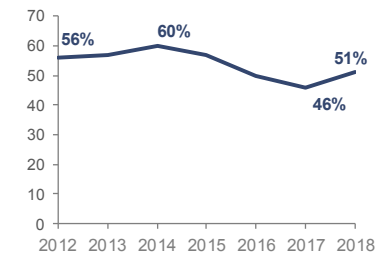
- 35% are dissatisfied with Service life in general, unchanged from 2017.
- 2018 has seen further decreases in high self, Unit and Service morale.
- Royal Marines have continued to see large decreases in morale in 2018.
- Three-quarters of personnel are proud to be in their Service, unchanged from 2017. 41% would recommend joining the Service to others.

## Satisfaction with pay has been decreasing since 2010



## Satisfaction with Service accommodation is largely unchanged since 2017

However, satisfaction with the overall standard of Service Family Accommodation (SFA) has improved since 2017 but remains below the level seen in 2014.



Overall levels of satisfaction with Single Living Accommodation and other aspects of SFA remain unchanged since last year.

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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.gov.uk](mailto:DefStrat-Stat-WDS-Pubs@mod.gov.uk)

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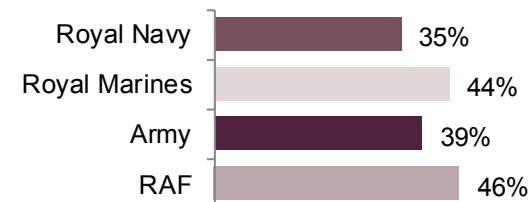
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## About these statistics

The 2018 Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey (AFCAS) was distributed to a sample of 27,333 trained UK Regular Armed Forces personnel between September 2017 and February 2018 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.

### Response Rates:

Overall, 11,069 responses were received, representing a response rate of 40%.



Reference tables and questionnaires for AFCAS 2018 are published as separate documents and can be found on the AFCAS webpage - <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/armed-forces-continuous-attitude-survey-2018>

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 are not 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.

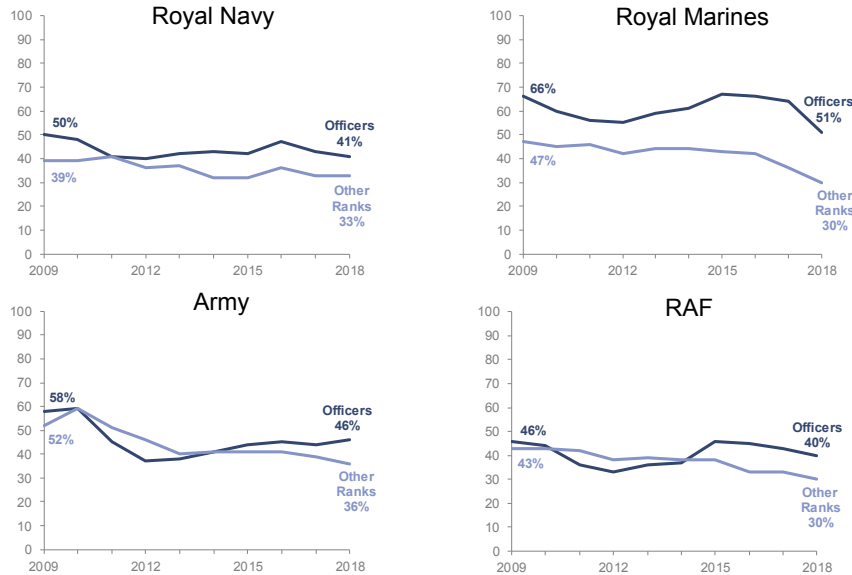
Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

# Section 1 - Morale, Commitment and Engagement

Section 1 covers how personnel perceive their self, Unit and Service morale, and satisfaction with topics including aspects of the job, Service ethos, commitment and engagement.

## The proportion of personnel reporting high self morale continues to fall

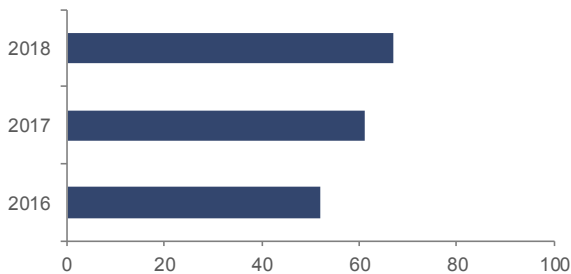
% reporting high self morale, 2009-2018



This fall in high self morale since 2009 is evident across all the Services and across both Officers and Other Ranks.

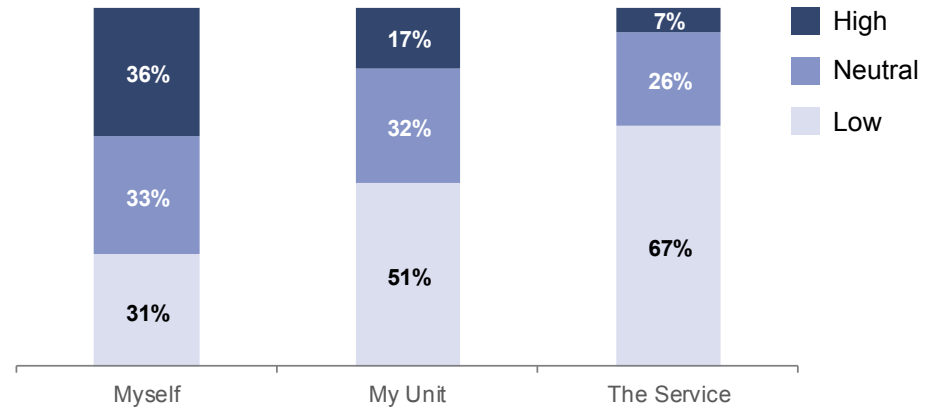
## Two-thirds (67%) of personnel perceive the morale of their Service as low, a higher proportion than last year

% reporting low Service morale



The change in the proportion of personnel perceiving Service morale as low has largely been driven by changes in the Royal Marines (increasing by 20 percentage points since 2017), but also in the Army and RAF (both increasing six percentage points). *More information on the changes in morale observed amongst Royal Marines can be found on page 3.*

## Overall levels of morale in 2018



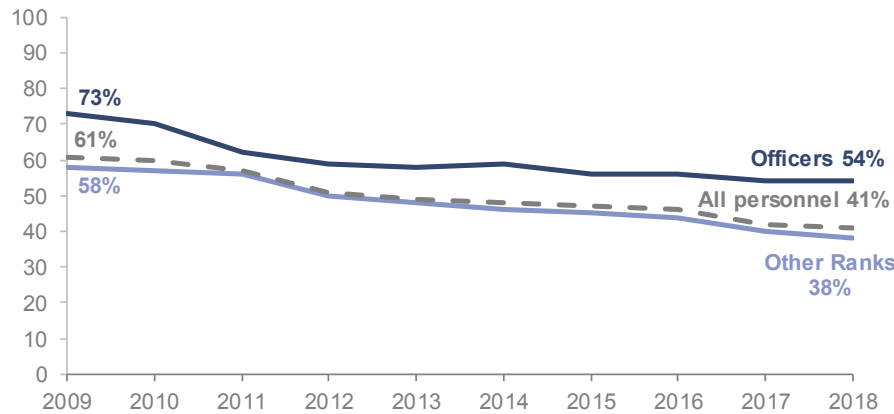
Personnel tend to rate their self morale higher than their Service morale. AFCAS consistently shows, year-on-year, that the proportion of personnel reporting high morale decreases the further the proximity from the individual.

**55%** are satisfied with their job in general.  
24% are dissatisfied.

**47%** are satisfied with the sense of achievement they get from their work.  
32% are dissatisfied.

**Satisfaction with Service life in general has decreased since the peak of 61% in 2009 for both Officers and Other Ranks**

% satisfied with Service life in general



Royal Marine Officers continue to be the most satisfied with Service life in general in 2018, despite a ten percentage point fall in satisfaction since 2017.

**Almost nine in ten (88%) personnel agree that their family is proud of them serving in the Armed Forces**



However, only a quarter (24%) of Service personnel agree that their family benefits from being a Service family.

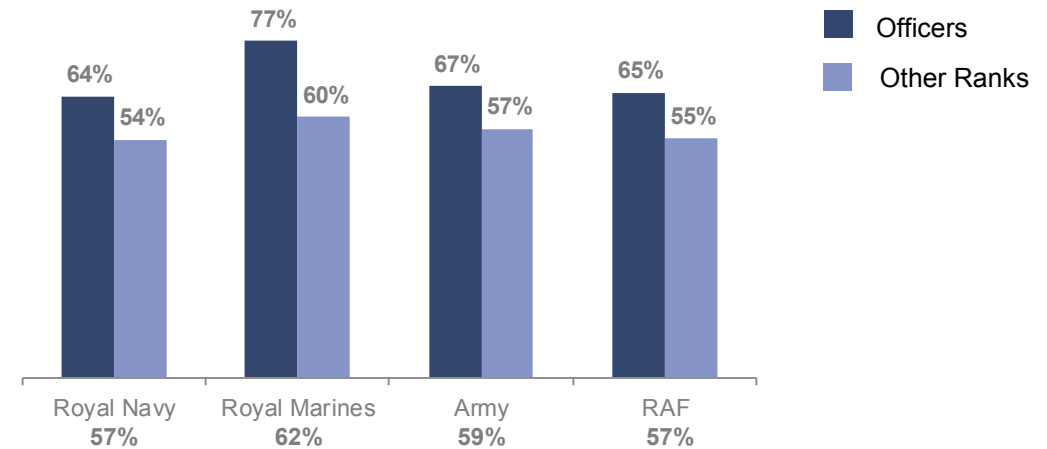
**Four in ten (41%) personnel would recommend joining the Services to others**

However, fewer RAF and Royal Marine personnel would recommend joining the Services to others compared to 2017.

Officers (56%) are more likely to recommend joining than Other Ranks (38%).

**The overall Engagement Index is 58%, a similar level to 2017**

Engagement Index by Service and Rank



Officers (66%) remain more engaged than Other Ranks (56%).

Despite the changes in satisfaction observed amongst the Royal Marines this year, this Service continued to score higher in engagement than the other Services. The Royal Navy and RAF have the lowest Engagement Index.

The Engagement Index, or score, is calculated using the same method as that used in the Civil Service People Survey<sup>1</sup>, using the following questions:

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

- B7.3** I am proud to be in the [Service]. [A031]
- B7.5** I would recommend joining the [Service] to others. [A033]
- B7.6** I feel a strong personal attachment to the [Service]. [A331]
- B7.8** The [Service] inspires me to do the best in my job. [A332]
- B7.9** The [Service] motivates me to help it achieve its objectives. [A333]

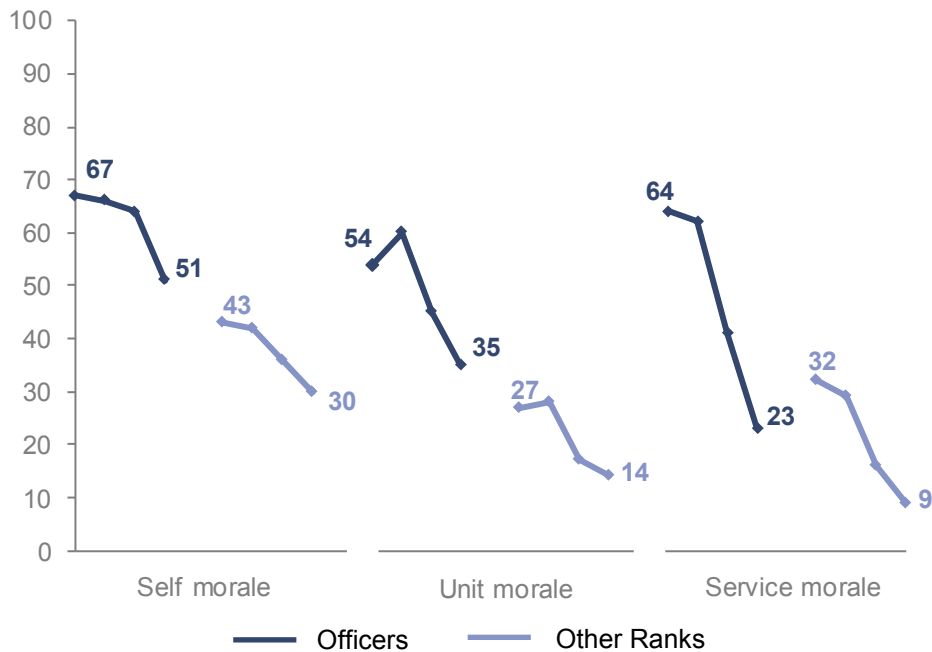
<sup>1</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/662516/Civil\\_Service\\_People\\_Survey\\_2017\\_Technical\\_Guide\\_1\\_.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/662516/Civil_Service_People_Survey_2017_Technical_Guide_1_.pdf)

**The Royal Marines continue to see large decreases in morale and satisfaction with Service life in general this year**

*This section highlights some of the changes in morale and Service life observed amongst Royal Marines.*

**Since 2016, the proportions of both Royal Marine Officers and Other Ranks rating self, Unit and Service morale as high have reduced considerably**

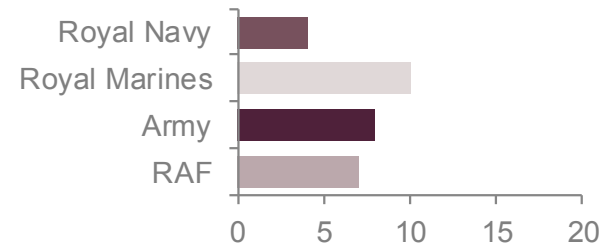
% of Royal Marines rating types of morale as high, 2015-2018



In the last two years, the proportion of Royal Marine Officers who rate Service morale as high has more than halved (from 62% in 2016 to 23% in 2018). Similarly, the proportion of Royal Marine Other Ranks who rate Service morale as high has decreased by 20 percentage points since 2016 to 9%.

**Despite a decrease in the proportion of Royal Marines who rate Service morale as high, this Service has the largest proportion rating morale as high overall (10%)**

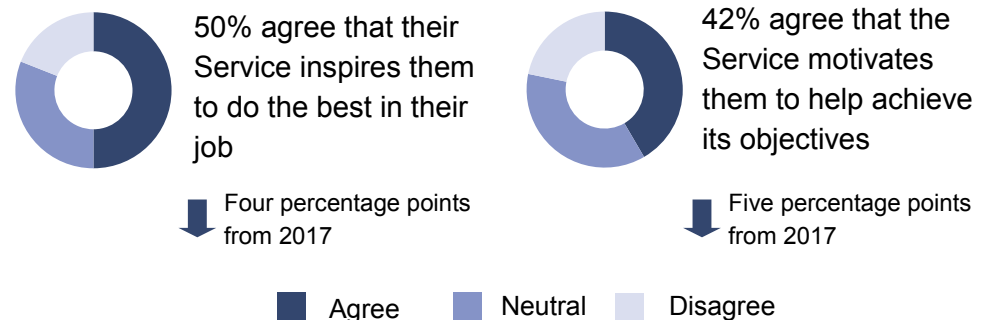
% rating Service morale as high



**For Royal Marines, satisfaction with Service life in general continues to fall with less than two in five (38%) being satisfied in 2018; two in five are dissatisfied**

Almost two-thirds (63%) of Royal Marine Officers are satisfied with Service life in general, a decrease of ten percentage points since 2017. Satisfaction amongst Royal Marine Other Ranks has also fallen (from 40% in 2017 to 35%).

**Fewer Royal Marine Other Ranks agree that their Service motivates them to achieve its objectives and inspires them to do the best at their job compared to 2017**



## Section 2 - Work and Line Management

Section 2 focuses on Service personnel's own work, their equipment, line management and teamwork.

### Attitudes to work remain largely unchanged compared to a year ago

However, the proportion of Royal Marine Other Ranks who agree that their superiors do not interfere excessively in their work activities has risen from 46% in 2017 to 50% in 2018, following a decrease from 2016 to 2017.

### Opinions about immediate superiors remain unchanged compared to a year ago

Three-quarters agree that their immediate superiors support them in their job.



Over two-thirds agree that their immediate superiors set a positive example.

Over two-thirds agree that they are encouraged to develop their skills.



Over two-thirds agree that their immediate superior understands and represents their interests.

■ Agree ■ Neutral ■ Disagree

**69%** agree that their immediate superior is supportive over work/life balance issues.

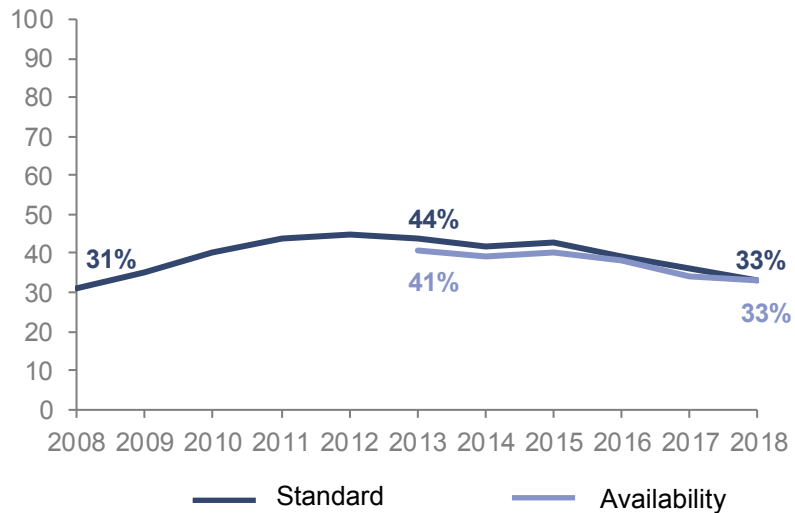
### Attitudes towards team members remain highly positive

**82%** agree that they have confidence in themselves as a team.

**78%** agree that their team know exactly what their responsibilities are, and that their team can be relied upon to help when things get difficult in their job.

### Satisfaction with the standard of major equipment continues to decline in 2018; satisfaction with availability remains at the low levels seen in 2017

% satisfied with the standard and availability of major equipment



Officers and Other Ranks have similar levels of satisfaction with both the standard and availability of major equipment.

### Satisfaction with personal equipment has remained unchanged since last year

**53%** are satisfied with the standard of personal equipment.

**44%** are satisfied with the availability of personal equipment.

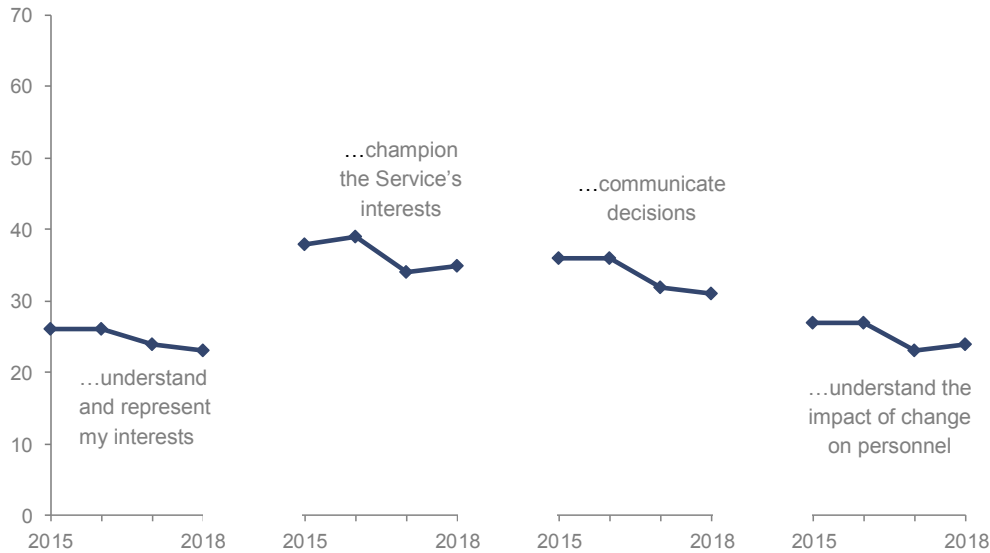
Officers are more satisfied than Other Ranks with both the standard and availability of personal equipment.

# Section 3 - Leadership and Managing Change

Section 3 focuses on the views of personnel about their senior leaders, and about how change is managed.

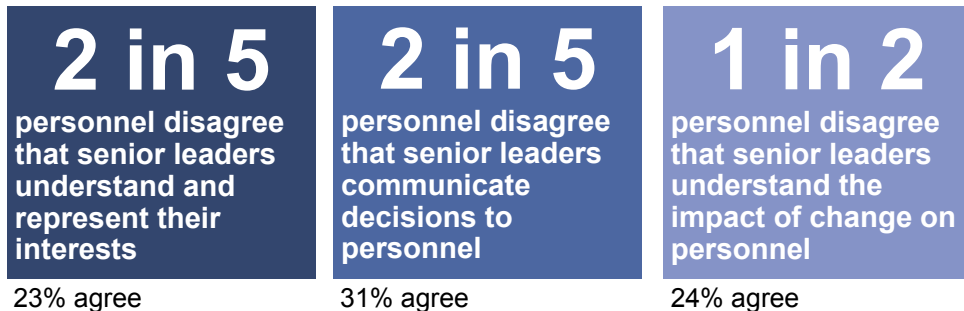
## Attitudes towards senior leaders are less positive than those reported in 2016

% agree that their senior leaders...

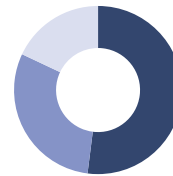


Officers are more positive about their senior leaders than Other Ranks.

## Overall in 2018...

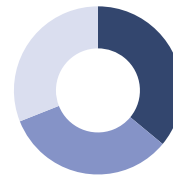


## Since 2015, fewer personnel agree that change is managed well



Over half (52%) agree that change is managed well in their immediate working team.

Four percentage points from 2015



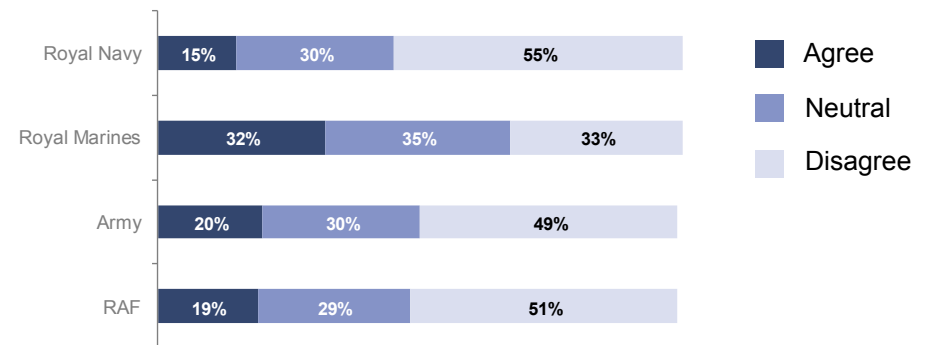
36% agree that change is managed well in their Unit/Establishment.

Four percentage points from 2015

Legend: Agree (Dark Blue), Neutral (Medium Blue), Disagree (Light Blue)

## Royal Marines are the most positive about how well change is managed in their Service; Royal Navy are the least positive

% agree/disagree that change is managed well in their Service



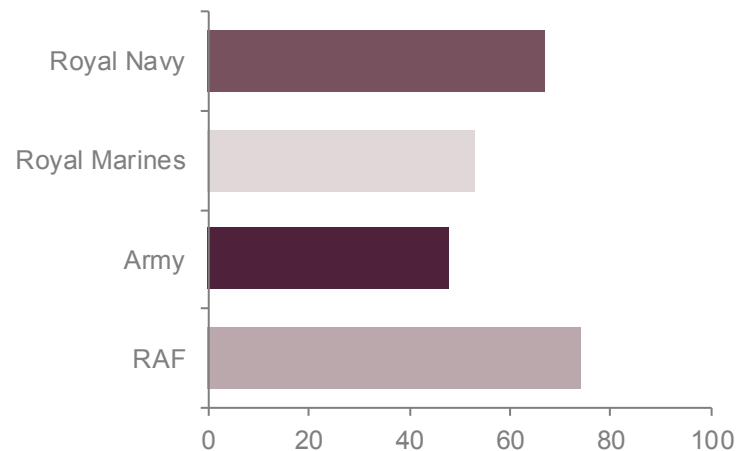
Despite being more positive than the other Services, the Royal Marines are considerably less positive about how well change is managed in their Service compared to 2015, down from 45% to 32% this year.

## Section 4 - Working with Others

Section 4 focuses on working relationships with Reserves, MOD Civil Servants and contractors. The Defence Reform Review of 2011 called for the closer integration of Regulars, Reserves, Civil Servants and contractors to ensure that Defence is supported by a sustainable, effective force<sup>1</sup>.

**Over half (58%) of personnel<sup>2</sup> report the Armed Forces Reserves are well-integrated, an increase from 53% in 2017**

% reporting the Armed Forces Reserves are well-integrated



RAF personnel are most likely to report that the Armed Forces Reserves are well-integrated (74%), followed by the Royal Navy (67%). However, the Army have seen an increase of five percentage points in the proportion of personnel agreeing that Reserves are well-integrated since 2017 (from 43% to 48% this year).

**67%** rate the Armed Forces Reserves as professional.

**65%** rate the contribution of Armed Forces Reserves as valuable.

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/210470/Cm8655-web\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/210470/Cm8655-web_FINAL.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Of those who have had working contact with Armed Forces Reserves (53% in 2018).

**More than half (59%) of personnel have had working contact with MOD Civil Servants, an increase of six percentage points since 2015**

Of those who have had working contact with MOD Civil Servants (59%):

**76%** rate the contribution of MOD Civil Servants as valuable.

**75%** rate MOD Civil Servants as professional.

**66%** rate MOD Civil Servants as well-integrated.

**Over half (54%) of personnel have had working contact with MOD contractors**

Contact with MOD contractors varies between the Services with Royal Marines having the least working contact (38%) followed by Army (49%), compared with much higher levels of working contact for the Royal Navy (60%) and RAF (67%).

Royal Marines rated the professionalism, value of contribution and integration of MOD contractors lower than each of the other Services.

Following a drop over the last two years, the proportion of Army Officers who rate MOD contractors as professional has returned to the level seen in 2015.

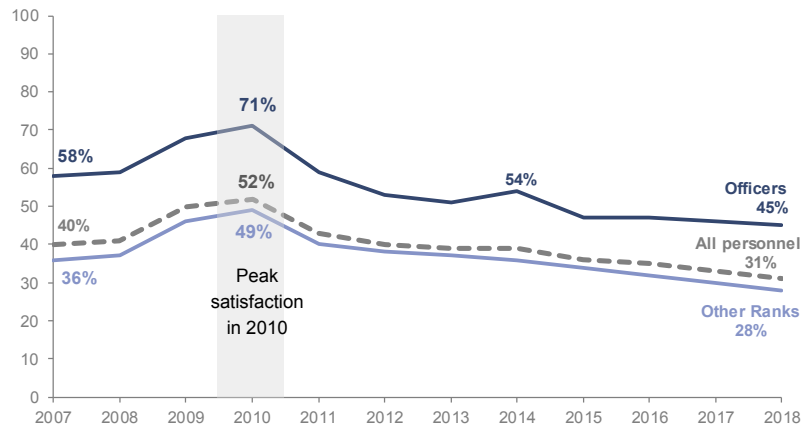


## Section 5 - Allowances, Pay and JPA

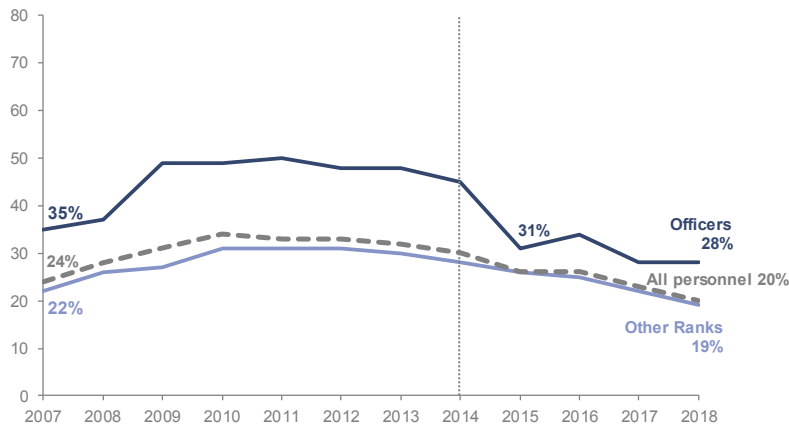
Section 5 covers the attitudes of Service personnel towards their pay, pension and allowances, as well as satisfaction with access to the Joint Personnel Administration System (JPA).

### Satisfaction with basic rate of pay and Recruitment and Retention Pay (RRP) are both at the lowest recorded levels, with Officers more satisfied than Other Ranks

% satisfied with their basic rate of pay



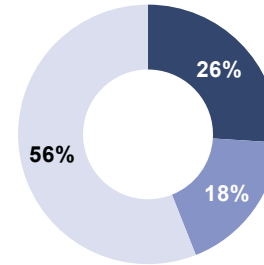
% satisfied with their RRP



#### Data Quality Note

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

### Over half (56%) of personnel disagree that the X-Factor is enough compensation



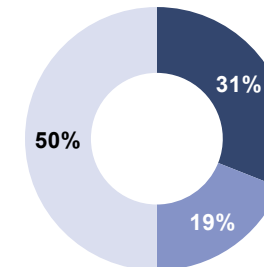
Just over a quarter (26%) agree that the X-factor in their salary is enough compensation for Service lifestyle, working conditions and expectations.

Officers (39%) agree more than Other Ranks (24%). Royal Marines are the Service least likely to agree (19%).

Agree Neutral Disagree

**X-Factor:** Additional payment to Armed Forces personnel to compensate for differences in lifestyle, working conditions and expectations compared to civilian equivalents.

### Around a third of personnel agree that the pay and benefits they receive are fair for the work they do



The proportion of personnel who agree has fallen four percentage points since 2015, which may be due, in part, to the introduction of a new pay structure system in 2016.

Agree Neutral Disagree

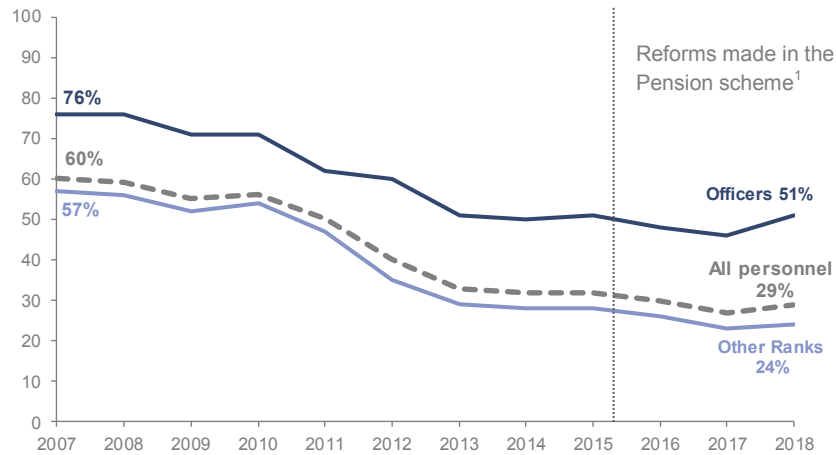
In April 2016, the MOD introduced Pay 16, the new structure for Armed Forces pay which may have influenced the views of personnel regarding their pay and benefits. Details on Armed Forces pay and allowances are available in the Armed Forces Pay Review Body 46<sup>th</sup> report<sup>1,2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/armed-forces-pay-reform-explained>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/armed-forces-pay-review-body-forty-sixth-report-2017>

**Although satisfaction with pension benefits has been reducing consistently since 2007, it has increased slightly over the last year**

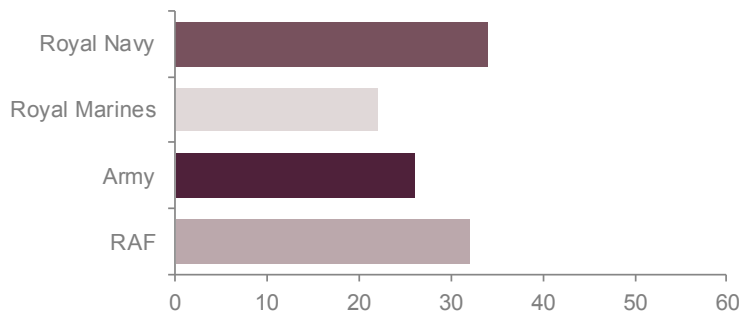
% satisfied with their pension benefits



Changes in overall satisfaction with pension benefits since 2017 are largely driven by Army Officers. Satisfaction for Army Officers has increased by ten percentage points from 40% to 50% in 2018.

**Royal Marines are the least satisfied with their pension benefits compared to the other Services**

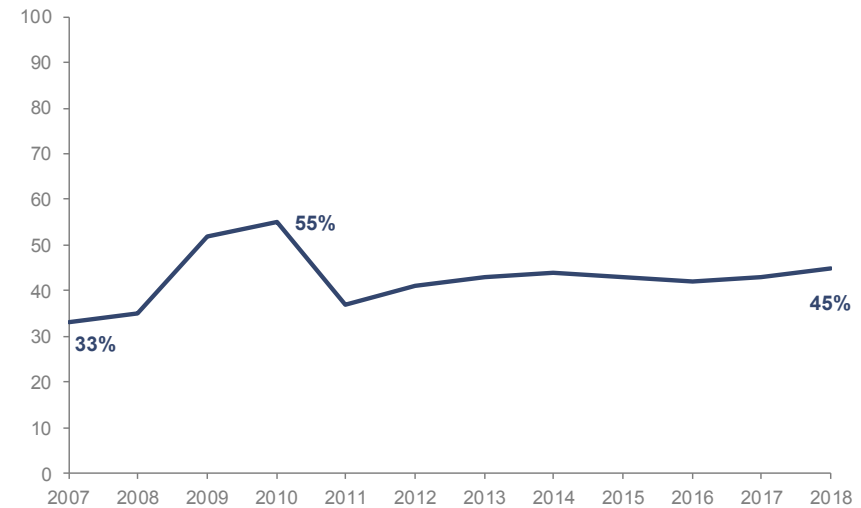
% satisfied with their pension benefits



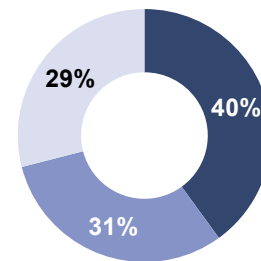
<sup>1</sup>In April 2015, the MOD introduced the new Armed Forces Pension Scheme: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/armed-forces-pension-scheme-2015>

**Since 2011, satisfaction with allowances has been following an increasing trend, but has not risen to the peak observed in 2010**

% satisfied with their allowances



Officers and Other Ranks have similar levels of satisfaction with their allowances, however Officers are more satisfied compared to last year, up four percentage points since 2017.



**Two in five personnel are satisfied with the information about pay and allowances**

Whilst this is consistent with 2017 overall, the RAF have seen a reduction in satisfaction since last year (from 41% to 37% in 2018); the other Services remain unchanged.

■ Agree ■ Neutral ■ Disagree

**Three-quarters (74%) of personnel are satisfied with their ability to access JPA**

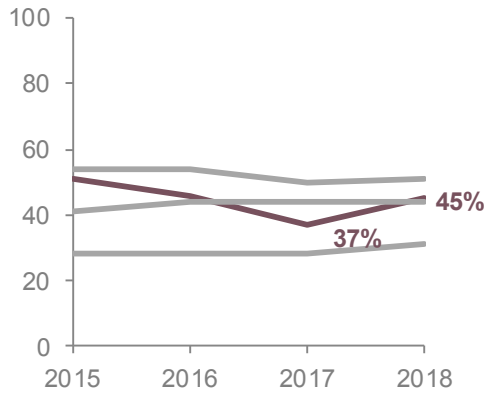
This is a decrease of six percentage points since 2017 which may be due, in part, to the introduction of a new IT system.

## Section 6 - Deployment

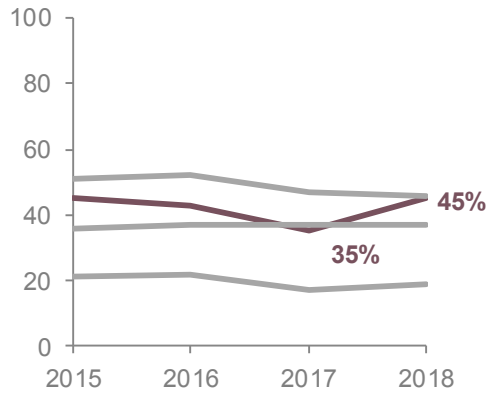
Section 6 covers respondents' satisfaction with various aspects of their operational deployments. The section focuses only on those who have been deployed at any time since 1 January 2015.

### Satisfaction with various aspects of deployment has increased this year for Royal Marines, following a dip in 2017

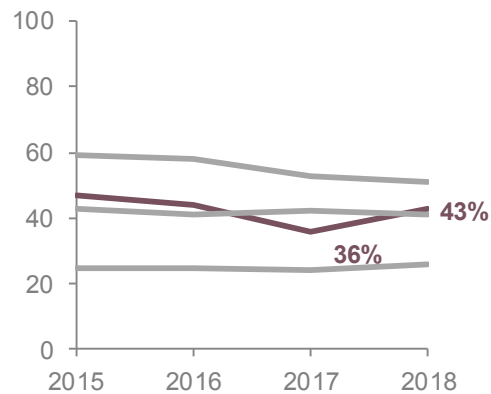
% satisfied with welfare support on return from deployment



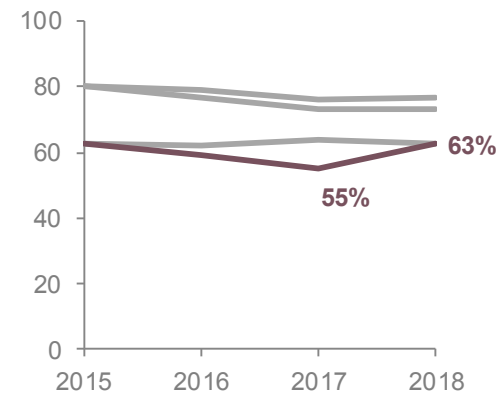
% satisfied with Post Operational Stress Management



% satisfied with decompression and post operational tour support



% satisfied with assigned operational role

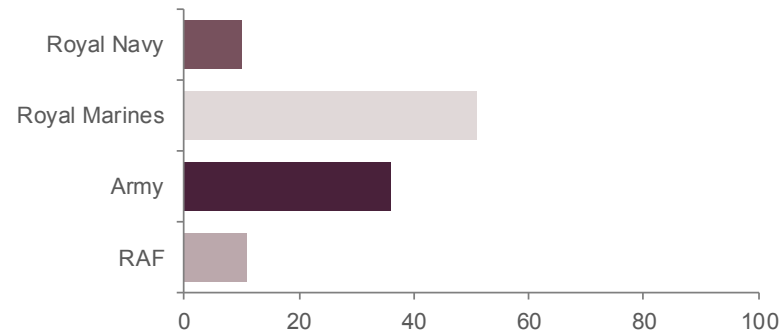


— Royal Marines

— Other Services

### Half (51%) of Royal Marines state that the frequency of their operational deployments are not often enough, a considerably higher proportion than the other Services

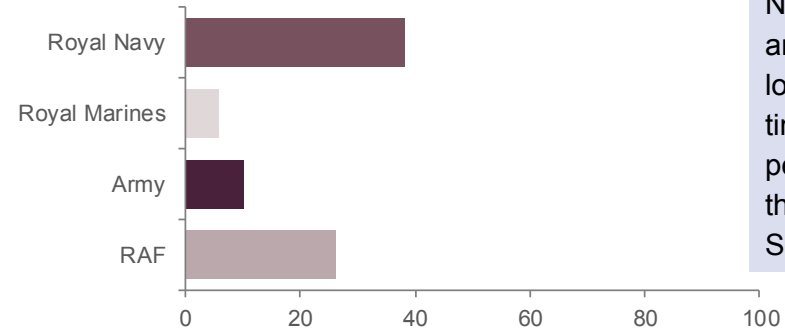
% reporting the frequency of deployments is not often enough



Since 2017, the proportion of Royal Marines reporting their operational deployments are not often enough has increased by 17 percentage points.

### Nearly four in ten (38%) Royal Navy personnel report that the length of their operational deployments are too long, more than any of the other Services

% reporting the length of deployments is too long

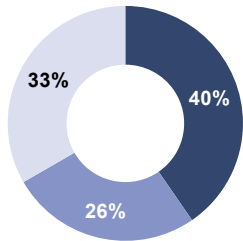


In general, Royal Navy personnel are deployed for longer periods of time than personnel from the other Services.

## Section 7 - Training, Development and Career

Section 7 looks at respondents' satisfaction with various aspects of their career, training and development, including questions about the promotion system, career management and opportunities for development.

### Overall satisfaction with career management has remained stable since this question was introduced in 2015

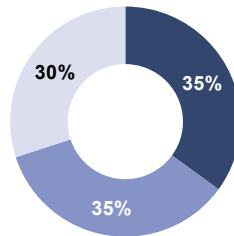


Four in ten personnel are satisfied with the way their career is managed.

A third are dissatisfied.

Over a third (35%) of personnel are satisfied with the career management service.

30% are dissatisfied.



■ Satisfied ■ Neutral ■ Dissatisfied

Officers are more satisfied with the way their career is managed compared to last year, largely driven by the Army who have seen a six percentage point increase in satisfaction.

RAF are the least satisfied with the way their career is managed (34%) and the career management service provided (28%). Following large decreases in 2017, satisfaction with career management amongst Royal Marines remains unchanged.

Overall satisfaction with the involvement personnel have in decisions that affect their career remains consistent with 2017. Following a drop in 2017, Royal Marines have seen an increase in satisfaction with this aspect of their career (from 41% to 45%), returning to the level seen in 2016.

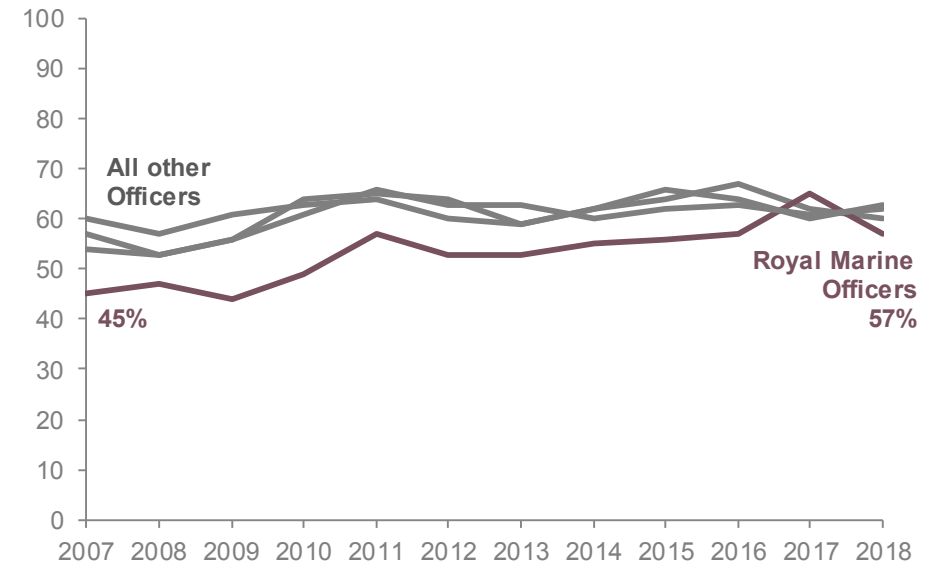
### Over half of personnel (57%) are satisfied that they are doing the job for which they were trained

**86%** agree that they have the knowledge, skills and experience to do their job.

**71%** agree that their knowledge, skills and experience are being used.

### Satisfaction amongst Royal Marine Officers that they are doing the job they were trained for has returned to levels seen in 2016, following an increase last year

% of Royal Marine Officers satisfied that they are doing the job they trained for

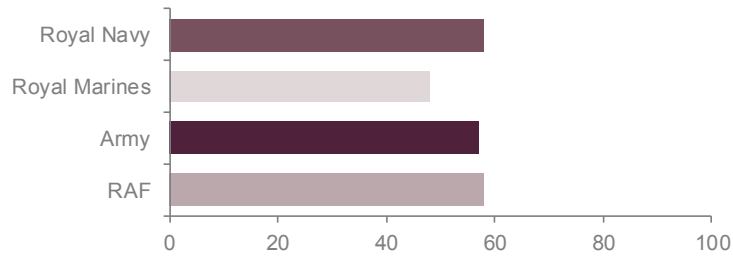


**Over half of personnel are satisfied with the opportunities for professional (57%) and personal development (55%), unchanged from last year**

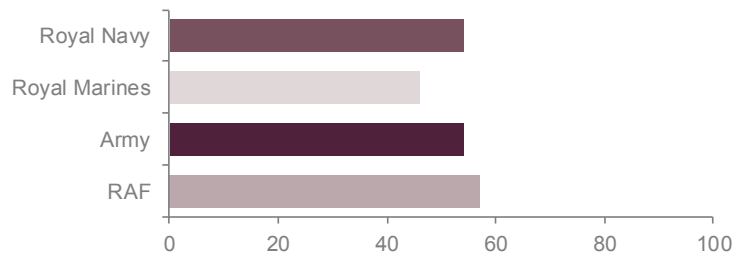
However, at least one in five are dissatisfied with their opportunities for professional and personal development (20% and 22% respectively).

**Royal Marines are the least satisfied with opportunities for professional and personal development in 2018**

% satisfied with the opportunities for professional development



% satisfied with the opportunities for personal development

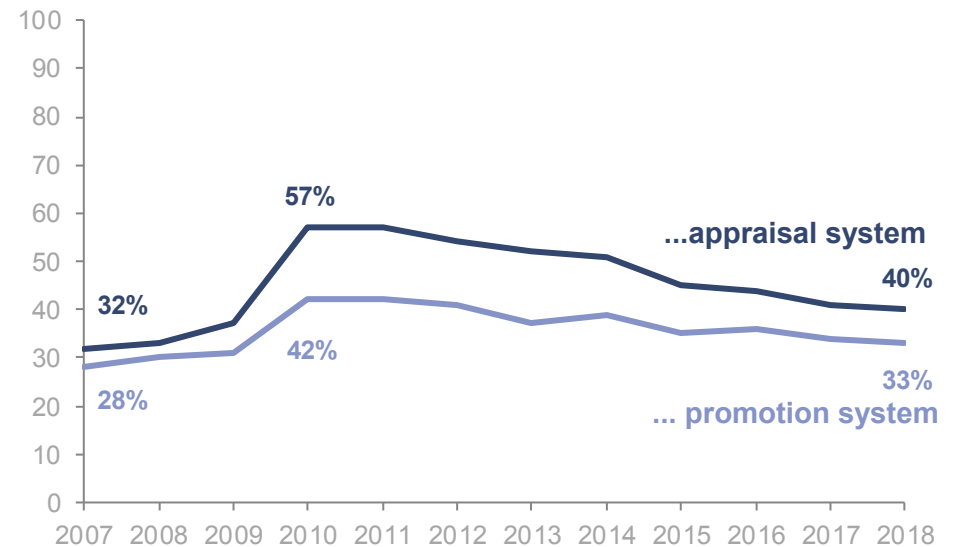


Since 2015 the Royal Marines have seen large decreases in levels of satisfaction with opportunities for professional and personal development (both falling by seven percentage points).

Satisfaction with opportunities for personal development has also decreased amongst RAF personnel, falling by five percentage points since 2015.

**Satisfaction with the fairness of appraisal and promotion systems has been decreasing since the peak in 2010**

% satisfied with the fairness of the...



The proportions of personnel satisfied with the promotion and appraisal systems have fallen by nine and 16 percentage points respectively since 2010. However, current levels of satisfaction remain slightly higher than those reported in 2007.

The decline in satisfaction is evident across all Services and for Officers and Other Ranks. Since 2010 the largest decline in satisfaction with the appraisal system is amongst Royal Navy Officers (decreasing from 74% to 52% this year).

In 2018, Officers continue to be more satisfied with the fairness of the appraisal and promotion systems than Other Ranks.

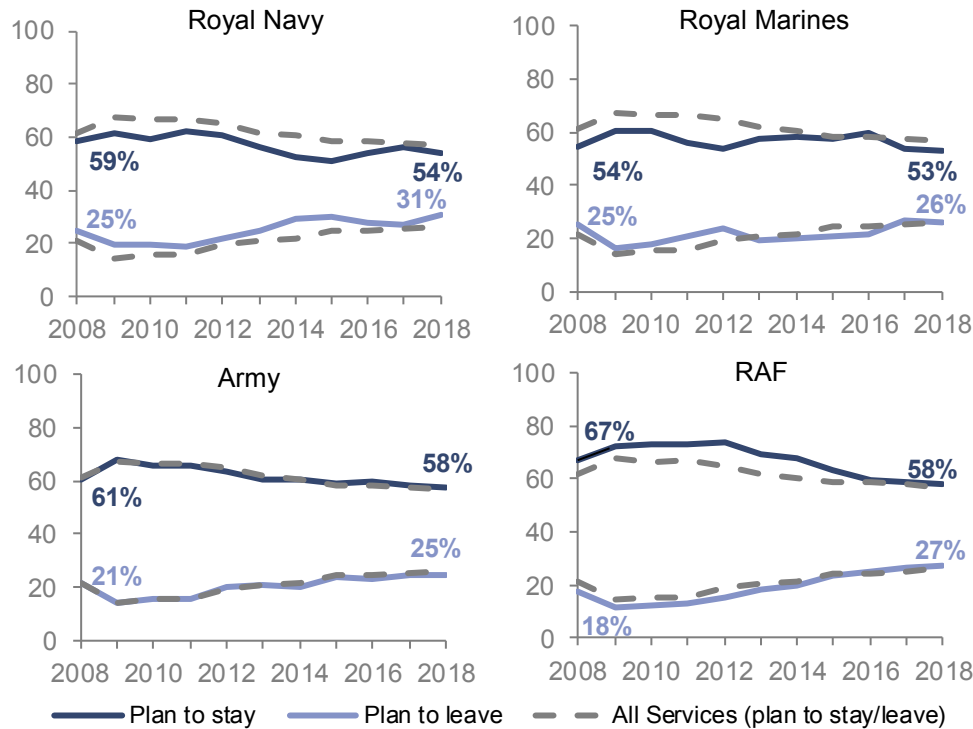
Largely driven by Other Ranks, the RAF are least satisfied with the fairness of the appraisal (28%) and promotion (22%) systems, when compared to other Services.

## Section 8 - Future Plans

Section 8 focuses on personnel's plans to leave the Services, whether they would join the Volunteer Reserves, and what influences their intention to stay or leave.

**Over half (57%) of personnel say that they plan to stay in their Service for as long as they can or until the end of their current engagement/commission**

% plan to stay/leave



A quarter (26%) of personnel say they intend to leave before the end of their current engagement or commission, which includes 8% intending to leave as soon as they can and 4% who have already put in their notice to leave.

These figures are largely unchanged since 2017, except for the RAF where the proportion who say they want to stay serving for as long as they can has fallen from 27% to 24%.

**Two in five (42%) personnel have very or quite actively searched for a job outside the Service in the last 12 months, a similar proportion as in 2017**

Other Ranks (15%) are more likely to have very actively searched for a job outside the Services in the last 12 months compared to Officers (9%).

There has been an increase in the proportion of Royal Marine Other Ranks who say they have actively searched for a job outside the Service in the last 12 months from 36% in 2016 to 46% in 2018.

Under the Future Force 2020 programme, 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.

**Just under one in five (18%) would consider joining the Reserves full-time and over a quarter (28%) part-time**

These figures are unchanged since 2012 (full-time) and 2016 (part-time).

Officers are more likely to consider joining both full-time (23%) and part-time (41%) than Other Ranks (17% and 25% respectively).

RAF Officers are most likely to consider joining the Volunteer Reserves full-time (29%) compared to Officers in the other Services.

### Data Quality Note

"Don't know" responses have been excluded from the charts.

## Job security continues to be the top factor influencing intentions to stay



### Data Quality Note

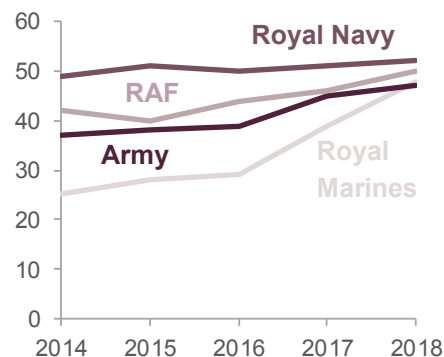
“Has no effect on intention to stay or leave” responses have been excluded from the chart.

The proportion citing opportunities outside the Service as influencing their intention to stay has more than halved since 2012 (from 34% to just 16% this year).

Since 2016, the proportion of personnel citing financial incentives as a factor influencing their intention to stay has increased by four percentage points.

## Almost half (48%) of personnel cite Service morale as increasing their intention to leave

% citing Service morale as increasing their intention to leave



The proportion of personnel citing Service morale as influencing their intention to leave has steadily increased since 2015, with the other Services aligning more now with the Royal Navy.

Since 2014, the proportion of Royal Marines citing Service morale as increasing their intention to leave has almost doubled (from 25% to 48% in 2018).

Nearly two-thirds of personnel state that having the opportunity to work part-time (65%) or have reduced separated Service (64%) have no effect on their intention to stay or leave.

## Although the order of priority differs, the top reasons for leaving the Services are the same for Officers and Other Ranks

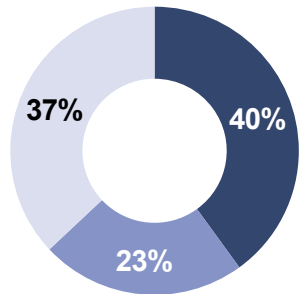
Of those who have put their notice in to leave (4%), the most cited reasons for leaving are:

All personnel	%	Officers	%	Other Ranks	%
Impact of Service life on family and personal life	55	Impact of Service life on family and personal life	66	Impact of Service life on family and personal life	51
Amount of pay	35	Opportunities outside the Service	37	Amount of pay	38
Opportunities outside the Service	34	My morale	28	Current job satisfaction	34
Current job satisfaction	33	Current job satisfaction	27	My morale	34
My morale	32	Amount of pay	24	Opportunities outside the Service	33

## Section 9 - Work/Life Balance

Section 9 looks at the work/life balance of respondents, their satisfaction with their workload, whether or not they are satisfied with the amount of leave allowance they have, and the reasons for not being able to take leave.

### Two in five personnel agree that they are able to maintain a balance between personal and working life

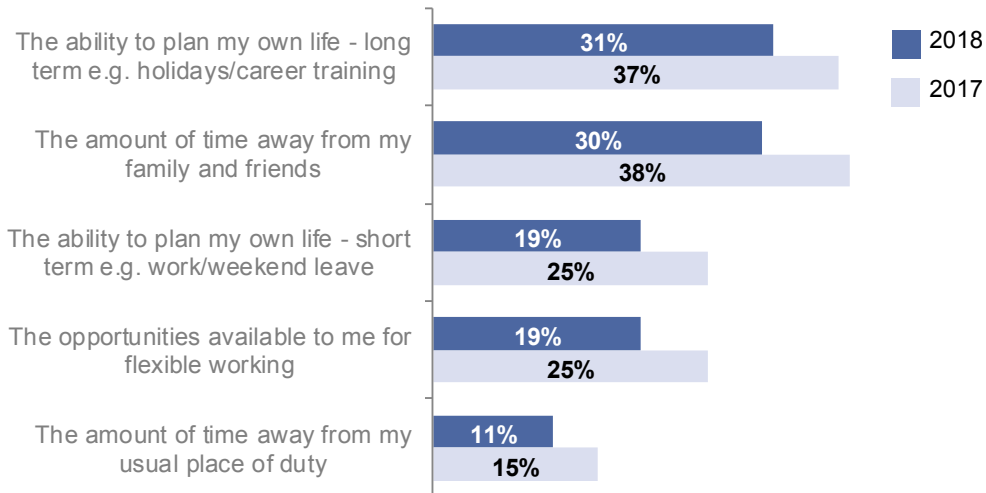


Overall, this proportion is unchanged since 2016. However there has been an increase of seven percentage points this since last year in the proportion of Army Officers who agree that they are able to maintain a balance between their personal and working life (49%).

■ Agree ■ Neutral ■ Disagree

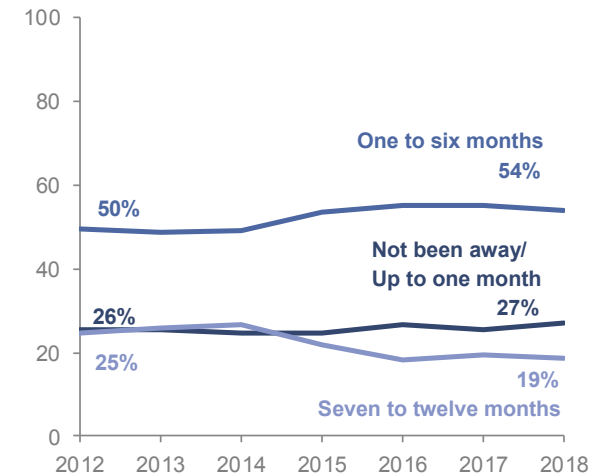
### Army Officers are less negative about aspects of work/life balance compared to 2017

% Army Officers dissatisfied with various aspects of work/life balance



### The amount of time personnel spent away from their families and friends in the last year remains unchanged since 2016

% time spent away from families in the last year for Service reasons



The proportion of personnel stating they spent seven to twelve months apart fell between 2014 and 2016 but has remained stable since.

Overall, 30% of personnel are satisfied with the amount of time spent away from their family and friends; 39% are dissatisfied.

### Personnel are more indifferent about the opportunities available for flexible working in 2018

Over a third (34%) of personnel feel neutral about the opportunities available to them for flexible working, an increase of six percentage points in the last year, largely driven by the Army and the RAF.

Overall satisfaction with opportunities available to personnel for flexible working is 37%, unchanged since 2017.

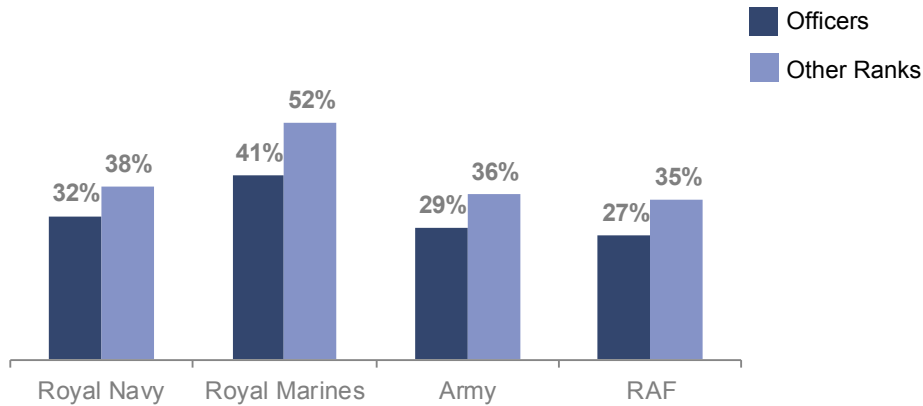
The Armed Forces (Flexible Working) Bill has become law and will come in to effect in 2019.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-plans-for-military-flexible-working-become-law>



**Over a third of personnel used all of their leave in the last year (36%)\*, with Other Ranks more likely than Officers to have used it all**

% used all of their annual leave allowance in the last year

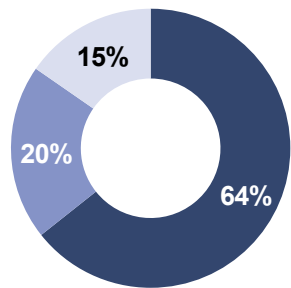


Royal Marines Other Ranks are most likely to have used all of their leave.

**Data Quality Note\***

This proportion has been derived from those who did not tick an option for the reason they did not use all of their leave.

**Nearly two-thirds of personnel are satisfied with the amount of leave they were able to take in the last 12 months**



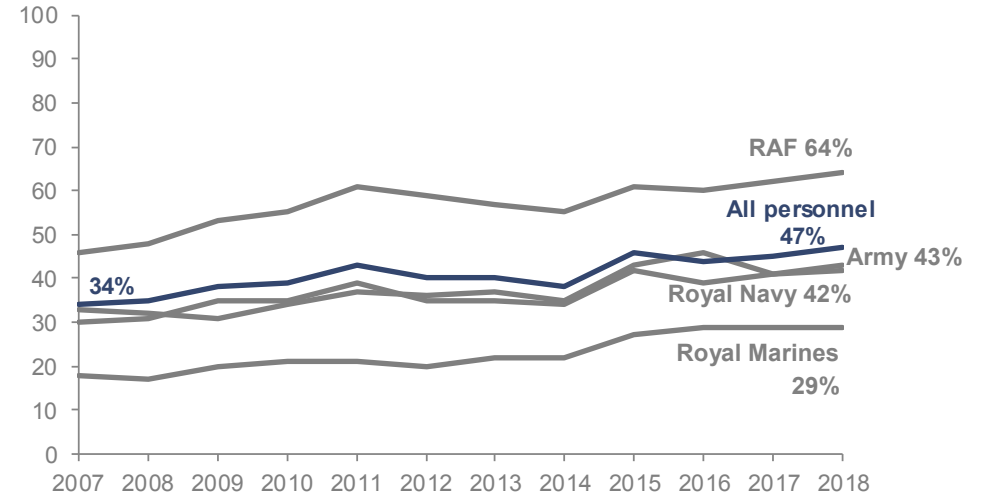
Satisfaction has risen by four percentage points for Other Ranks in the last year, mainly driven by the Royal Marines and the Army.

RAF personnel are the most satisfied with the amount of leave they were able to take in the last 12 months (74%), as well as with their overall leave allowance (81%) compared to the other Services.

■ Satisfied ■ Neutral ■ Dissatisfied

**Satisfaction with opportunities to take leave when personnel want to has been following an increasing trend across the Services since 2007**

% satisfied with opportunities to take leave when they want to



Since 2007, this increase in satisfaction has also been observed amongst Officers (up 11 percentage points) and Other Ranks overall (up 13 percentage points).

RAF personnel are the most satisfied with the opportunity to take leave when they want to, compared to the other Services.

**'Workload' continues to be the main reason for personnel not using all their leave (50%)**

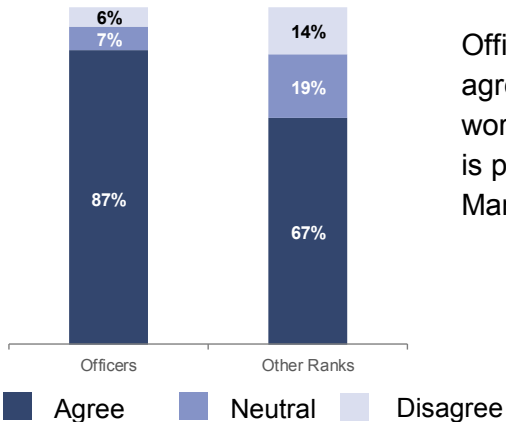
The proportion of personnel selecting 'wanting to carry days over to the next year' as the reason for not using all their leave has increased from 27% in 2016 to 30% this year. This change has largely been driven by RAF and Royal Marine personnel.

Other Ranks (33%) are more likely to have selected they wanted to carry over their leave than Officers (21%).

## 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.

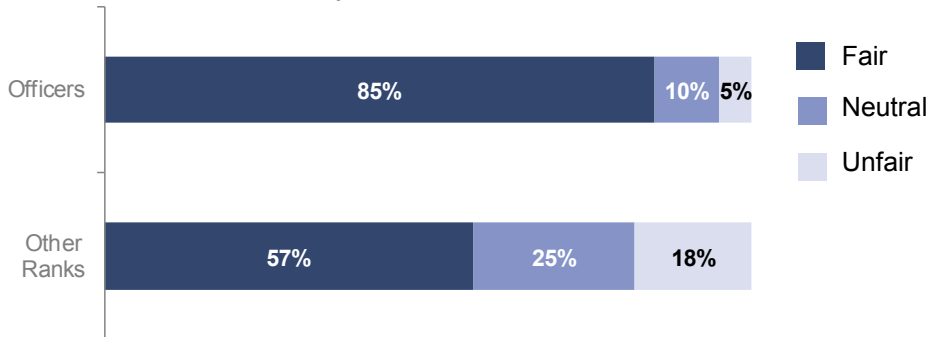
### The majority of personnel (71%) agree that they are treated fairly at work



Officers (87%) are more likely to agree that they are treated fairly at work than Other Ranks (67%). This is particularly the case for the Royal Marines and the Army.

### Officers (85%) are more likely than Other Ranks (57%) to feel the discipline system is fair

Views on the discipline system



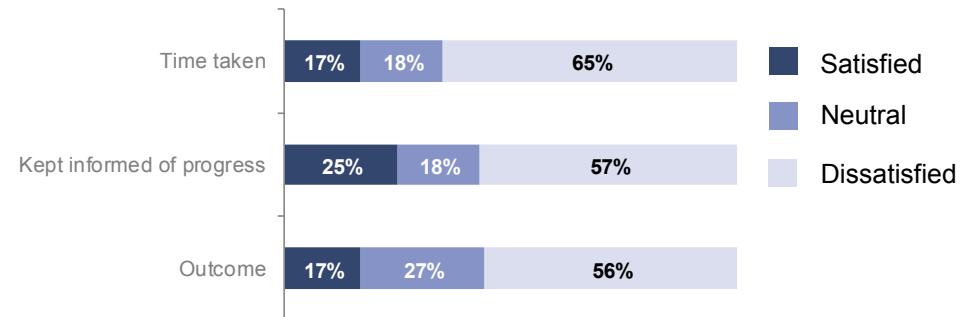
The proportion of Royal Marines (68%) who believe that the discipline system is fair has increased compared to 2017 (63%); the other Services remain unchanged since last year. Army personnel (58%) are less likely to believe the discipline system is fair than the other Services.

### The proportion of personnel reporting that they have been subject to bullying, discrimination or harassment in the last 12 months remains unchanged at just over one in ten (12%)

The Royal Marines report the lowest levels at 6%.

### Of those who experienced bullying discrimination and/or harassment only 6% made a formal written complaint

Views on aspects of the formal written complaint process



The top three reasons why personnel experiencing bullying, discrimination and/or harassment did **not** make a formal written complaint are:

1. Not believing anything would be done if a complaint was made (63%)
2. Belief that it might adversely affect their career (50%)
3. Not wanting to go through the complaints procedure (30%)

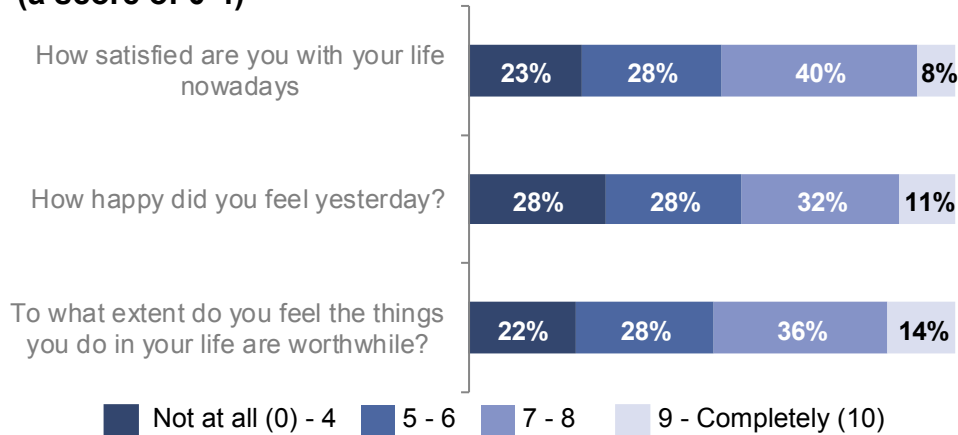


88% of Officers and 66% of Other Ranks are at least aware to some extent how the Service Complaints Ombudsman can help them with a complaint about bullying, discrimination or harassment.

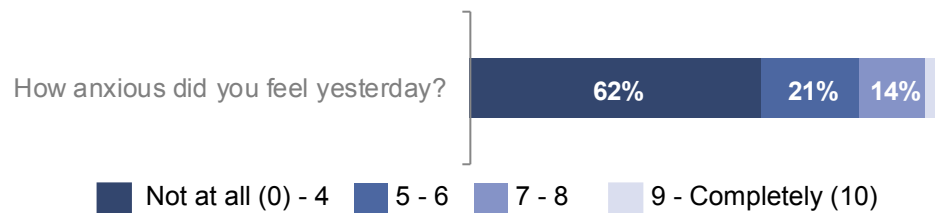
## Section 11 - Health, Fitness and Welfare

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

### At least one in five personnel rate their life satisfaction, happiness and how worthwhile the things they do in life as low (a score of 0-4)



### Three in five (62%) personnel rate their anxiety as low (0-4)



There are little differences in well-being scores between the Services, however Officers are more likely than Other Ranks to rate their life satisfaction, happiness and how worthwhile the things they do in life as high (score of 7 or above). This reflects the higher proportion of Officers who are satisfied with Service life in general compared to Other Ranks.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/bulletins/measuringnationalwellbeing/october2016toseptember2017>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/methodologies/personalwellbeingintheukqmi>

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) collects data on well-being for the general population in their Annual Population Survey. Average scores are released in their Measuring National Well-being report<sup>1</sup>. Definitions of well-being e.g. high or low are based on those used by the ONS<sup>2</sup>.

The demographic make-up of the Armed Forces is different to the general population: Armed Forces personnel are predominantly male and aged between 18 and 55. Armed Forces well-being scores are therefore not directly comparable to the general population. However, national well-being scores provide some context to these findings. For UK males<sup>3</sup> the average anxiety score is 3 (medium); for the other three well-being questions, the average national scores range between 7.5 and 8 (high). The average anxiety score for male Service personnel is 3 (medium) and for the other three well-being questions, the average score is 6 (medium).

*Note: an anxiety score of 0 is equal to not feeling anxious; a score of 10 is equal to feeling completely anxious.*

### Fitness

**73%** are satisfied with the Service sport, exercise and fitness facilities in general.

**66%** are satisfied with the opportunities to undertake fitness activities.

**44%** are satisfied with the opportunities to take part in Adventure training.

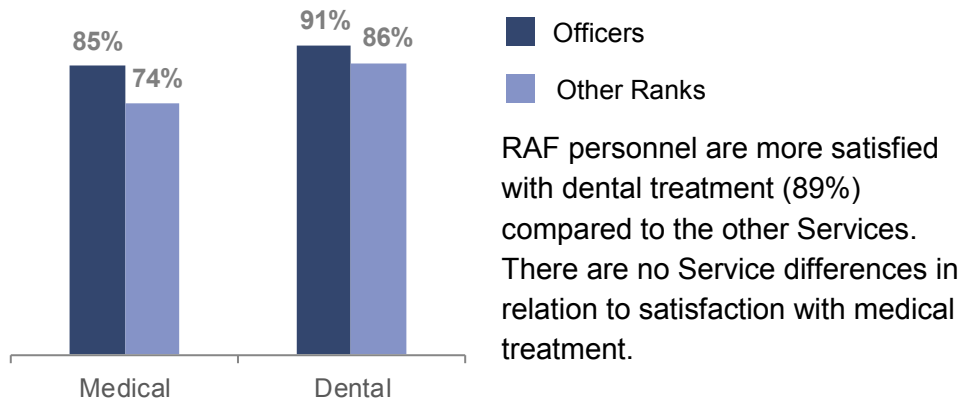
<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/datasets/personalwellbeingestimatesbyageandsex>

### Satisfaction with medical and dental care remains high in 2018

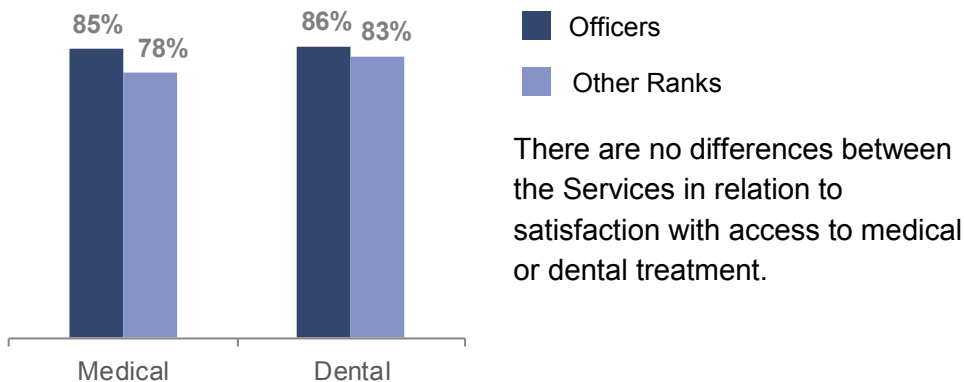
The majority of personnel are satisfied with medical care in terms of access and treatment, as well as access to dental treatment which is unchanged since these questions were introduced (80%, 76% and 83% respectively). Satisfaction with dental treatment remains unchanged since 2010 (87%).

### Officers are more satisfied than Other Ranks in terms of access and treatment for both medical and dental care

% satisfied with the treatment



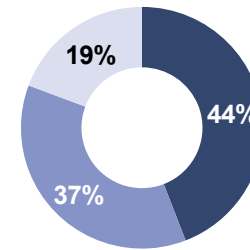
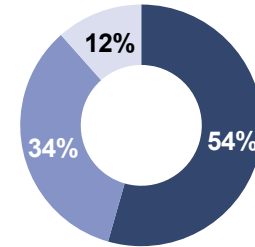
% satisfied with access to the treatment



### The proportions of personnel satisfied with welfare support provided by their Service for themselves (54%) and their families (44%) remain unchanged since 2015

Satisfaction with...

...the welfare support provided to me

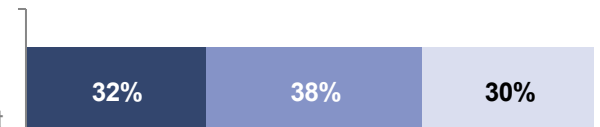


...the welfare support provided for my family

Legend: Satisfied (Dark Blue), Neutral (Light Blue), Dissatisfied (Very Light Blue)

### Three in ten (30%) personnel are dissatisfied with the welfare support their spouse/partner gets when they are absent; a similar proportion (32%) are satisfied

Satisfaction with the support my spouse/partner gets from the Service when I am absent



Legend: Satisfied (Dark Blue), Neutral (Light Blue), Dissatisfied (Very Light Blue)

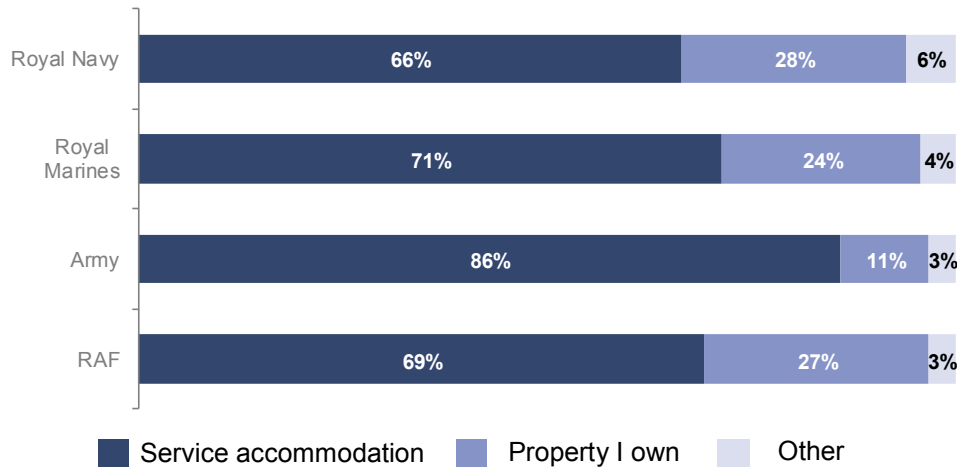
Royal Navy personnel are the least satisfied with the support their partner gets from their Service when they are absent (22%) compared to the other Services (RAF: 31%; Royal Marines: 34% and Army: 35%).

## 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 facilities.

### Three quarters of personnel (78%) live in Service accommodation<sup>1</sup> during the working week

% accommodation type



Two in five (40%) personnel live in Single Living Accommodation (SLA) and a third (32%) live in Service Family Accommodation (SFA) during the working week. The Army have the largest proportion living in Service accommodation.

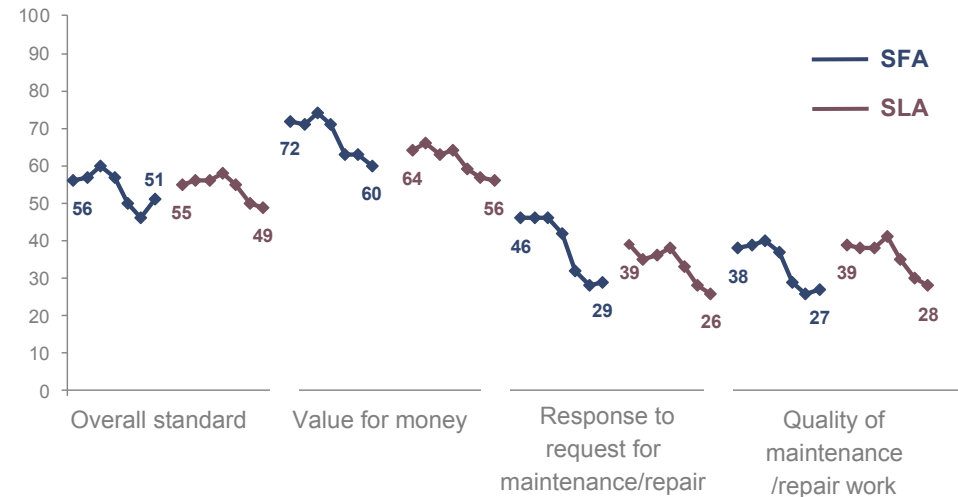
Officers are more likely to live in SFA (36%) compared to Other Ranks (31%) and less likely to live in SLA (Officers 24%; Other Ranks 43%).

The proportion of Royal Marine Other Ranks living in their own property (23%) has increased by three percentage points, coinciding with an increase in the number of Royal Marine Other Ranks owning their own property (58%), up four percentage points since 2017.

<sup>1</sup> Service accommodation refers to SFA, SLA, Substitute SFA, Substitute SLA, on board ship or submarine.

### Following large decreases since 2015, satisfaction with the overall standard of Service accommodation remains consistent with 2017

% satisfied with different aspects of SFA and SLA, 2012-2018



Following a gradual increase in satisfaction since the beginning of AFCAS, satisfaction with the overall standard of Service accommodation is at a similar level to 2017, with half (51%) reporting that they are satisfied. Royal Marine Other Ranks are the least satisfied, at 38%.

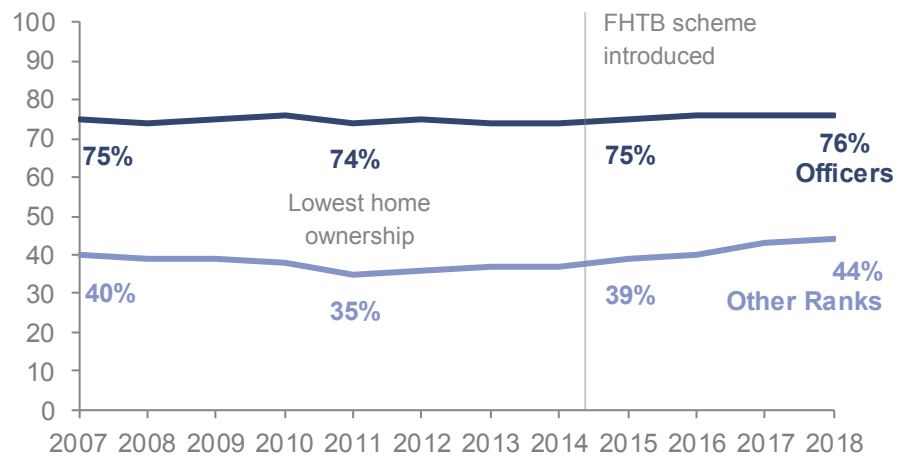
Satisfaction with the overall standard of SFA has increased by five percentage points since 2017 (to 51%), mainly driven by RAF Other Ranks. However, satisfaction with the overall standard of SFA still remains below the peak seen in 2014 (60%).

Royal Marine Other Ranks are more dissatisfied with various aspects of SLA compared with 2017: value for money (by five percentage points), response time for maintenance (by nine percentage points) and quality of maintenance (by eight percentage points).

## Half of personnel own their own home in 2018, with Officers (76%) more likely to own their own home than Other Ranks (44%)

Since 2015 (the year after the introduction of Forces Help to Buy (FHTB)) the proportion of Other Ranks owning their own home has increased by five percentage points. There has been no change for Officers over the same period. As at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018, 84% of FHTB payments were made to Other Ranks.

% owning their own home



The proportion of Army Other Ranks who used the FHTB scheme in the last year is 7%, an increase of two percentage points since 2017.

**Forces Help to Buy** In April 2014, the MOD introduced the Forces Help to Buy scheme, under the New Employment Model programme. The scheme offers advances of salary to Service personnel for the purpose of buying a home.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/forces-help-to-buy-scheme-quarterly-statistics-201718>

**Future Accommodation Model** Following the 2015 Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR), the MOD is exploring how it can provide Armed Forces personnel with more choice of housing and meet their aspirations for home ownership.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/future-accommodation-model-what-you-need-to-know>

## The most common reason why personnel do not own their own home is that they cannot afford to buy a suitable home, at 64%<sup>1</sup>



Affordability was the top reason across all Services and for both Officers and Other Ranks.

Other Ranks (64%) are more likely to have selected affordability when compared to Officers (55%).

Almost half (47%) of personnel owning a home are satisfied with the opportunity to live there whilst a third (34%) are dissatisfied. This is consistent across Officers and Other Ranks, except for the RAF.

## There has been a steady decrease in satisfaction with the standard of catering services provided by contractors on unit since 2015 from 33% to 28%

Officers (42%) continue to be more satisfied than Other Ranks (25%). Since 2017 a higher proportion of Royal Navy and RAF Officers are dissatisfied with the standard of catering services (from 20% and 32% to 26% and 40% this year, respectively).

## The proportion of Other Ranks that never use Service-provided catering facilities for drinking/socialising in the bar has increased four percentage points over the last two years

Similarly, the proportion of Other Ranks that never use the catering facilities for eating in the evening has also risen, by five percentage points since 2016.

Amongst Other Ranks, the proportion selecting price (65%) and value for money (74%) as important factors when considering where to eat has risen since 2017 (up four and three percentage points respectively).

<sup>1</sup> Of those personnel who do not own their own home (50% in 2018).

## Section 13 - Family Life and Being Part of Society

Section 13 covers a number of questions relating to respondents' personal lives, such as their marital status and childcare situation. This section also captures the perceptions of Service personnel of their involvement in, and relative advantage or disadvantage when compared to, wider society.

### Family life of Service personnel

**53%** are married and a further **21%** are in long-term relationships.

**45%** of spouses/partners are in full-time employment.

**22%** of spouses/partners are in part-time employment.

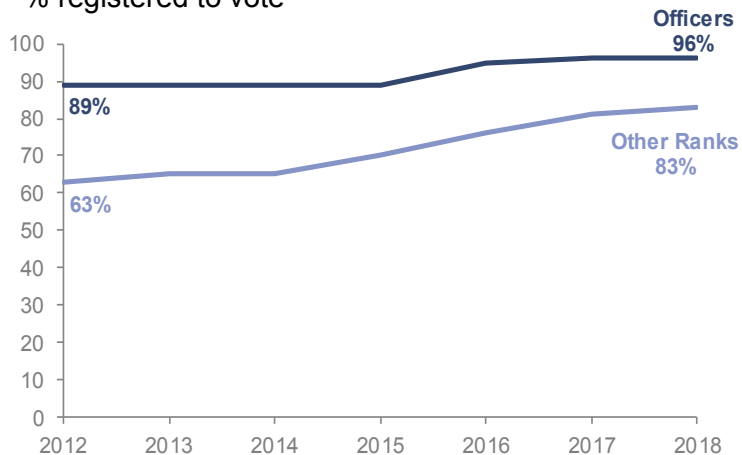
**52%** have children they support financially.

**47%** of those who require childcare are satisfied with locally provided facilities.

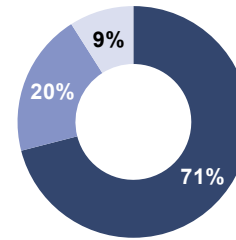
### The proportion of Service personnel registered to vote is consistent with last year (86%)

Since 2016 an increase of six percentage points has been observed, mainly driven by Other Ranks (RAF, Army and Royal Marines).

% registered to vote

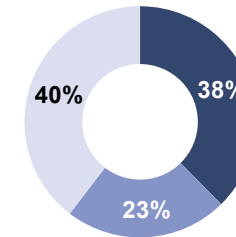


As well as the EU Referendum in 2016, the MOD has been taking a number of steps annually, with assistance from the Electoral Commission, to inform Service personnel of the arrangements for electoral registration, which may have influenced recent results.



**The majority (71%) of personnel feel they offer an important service to the country**

This is two percentage points less than in 2017, a change driven by Other Ranks.



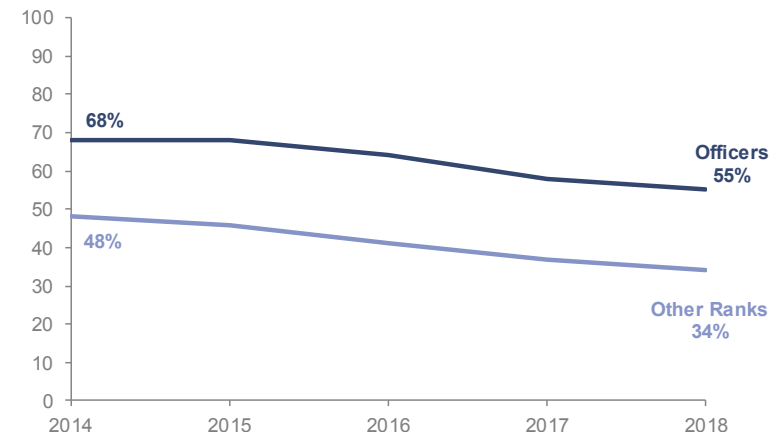
**Around two in five (38%) agree that they are valued by society at large**

Officers (55%) agree more than Other Ranks (34%).

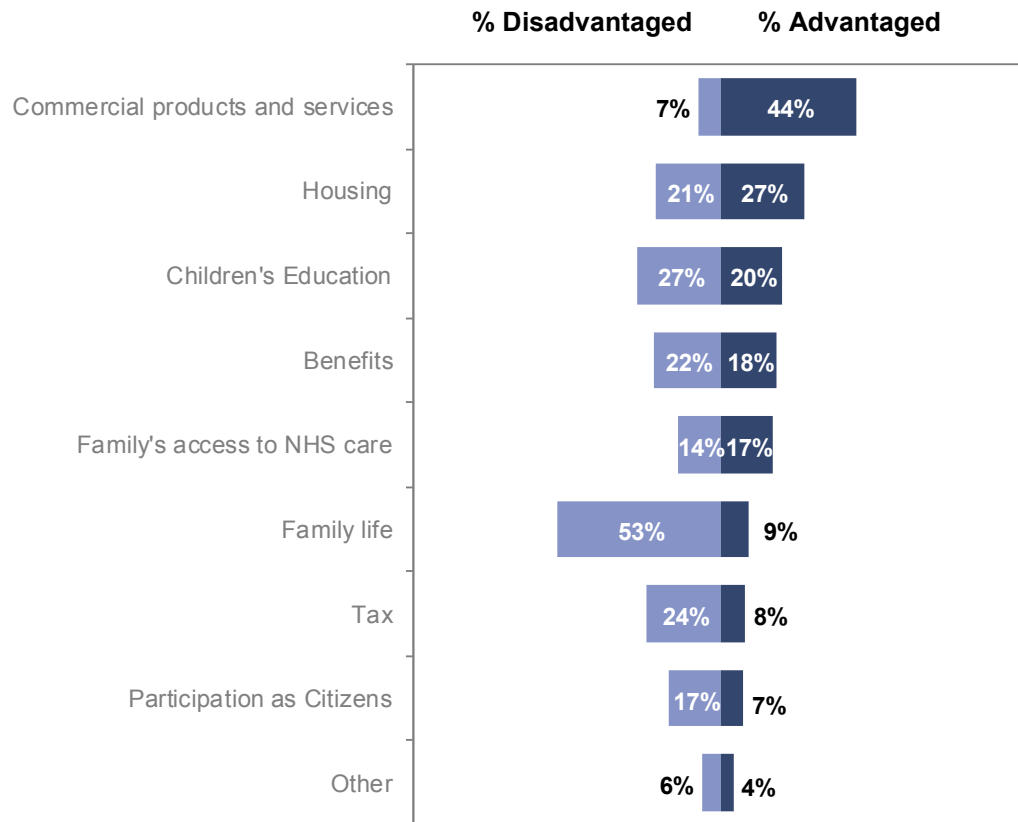
■ Agree ■ Neutral ■ Disagree

### Every year since 2014 fewer Service personnel agree that members of the Armed Forces are valued by society at large

% agree that members of the Armed Forces are valued by society



**The proportions of personnel feeling advantaged or disadvantaged compared to the general public has remained consistent with 2017 in all areas except family life**



Less than one in ten (9%) personnel now feel advantaged about family life (down from 11% in 2017). Following a decrease last year, the proportion of Royal Marine Other Ranks who feel advantaged about their family's access to NHS care compared to the general public has continued to fall, from 12% to 10% in 2018.

**Data Quality Note**

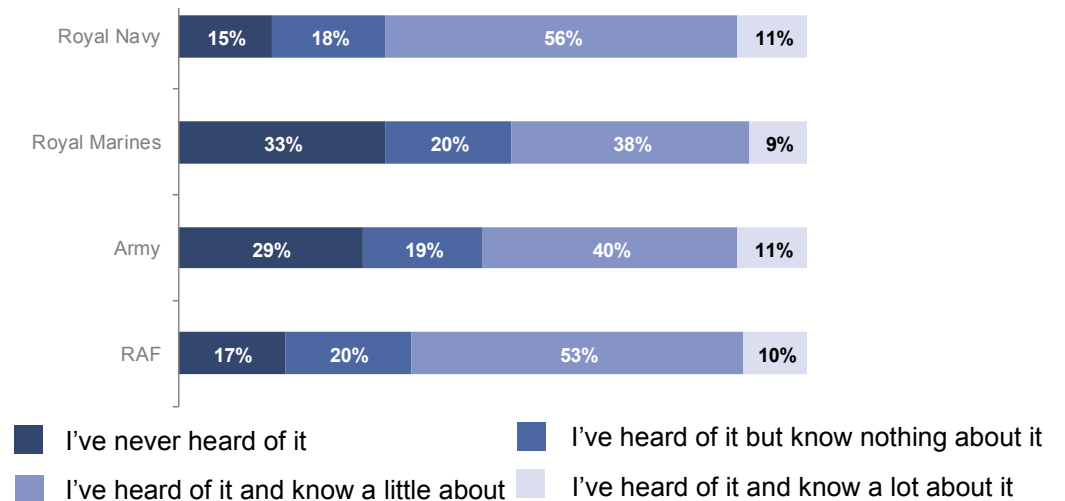
"Neutral" and "Don't know / N/A" responses have been excluded from the chart.

**The Armed Forces Covenant** 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 nation in a number of areas.

[www.armedforcescovenant.gov.uk](http://www.armedforcescovenant.gov.uk)

**The majority of personnel (76%) have at least heard of the Armed Forces Covenant, an increase of four percentage points since 2013**

**Awareness of the Armed Forces Covenant**



Royal Navy and RAF personnel are most likely to have at least heard of the Armed Forces Covenant (85% and 83% respectively) compared to the Army and Royal Marines (71% and 67% respectively).

Officers are more likely to have at least heard of the Armed Forces Covenant (99%) compared to Other Ranks (70%).



## 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.

Since 2015 there has been a decline in the proportion of personnel who agree that effective action has been taken on the results of AFCAS, and that leaders will take action on the results of AFCAS

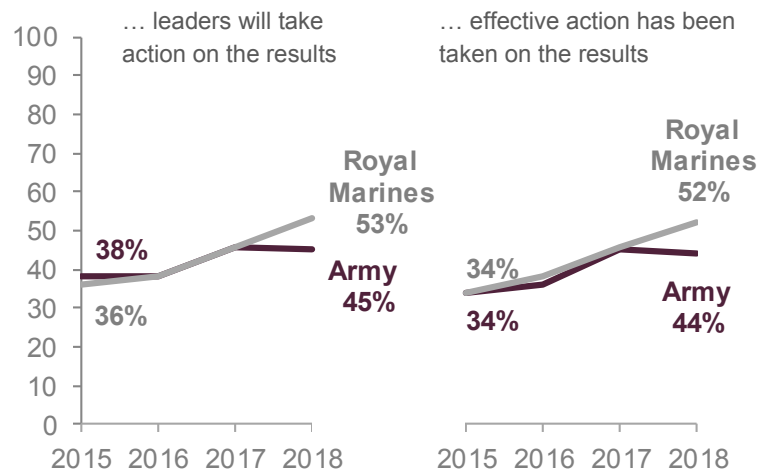
**16%** agree that effective action has been taken on the results of AFCAS.

**20%** believe that leaders in their Service will take action on the results.

Officers are more likely than Other Ranks to agree with these statements.

**Changes are largely driven by higher proportions of Royal Marine and Army personnel disagreeing with these statements**

% of Royal Marine and Army personnel who disagree that...

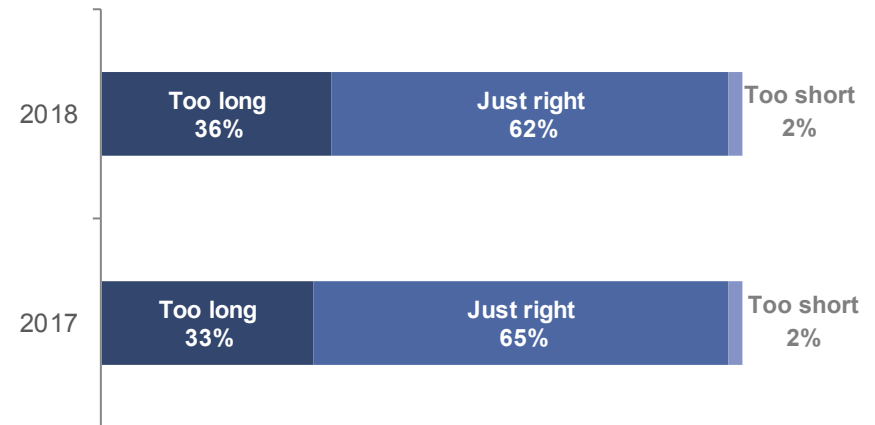


In 2018 the survey achieved an overall response rate of 40%, a four percentage point decrease since 2017

Over a third of personnel think the survey length is too long (36%), an increase of three percentage points since last year

However, the majority (62%) think the survey length is just right.

% views on survey length



The proportion of Royal Marine personnel who say that the survey length is about right has increased five percentage points from 2017 to 53%.

**Nearly two-thirds (64%) of personnel reported that they completed the survey in 30 minutes or less**

# Key questions

The following charts highlight the key questions for each section of the AFCAS report. The key questions are presented by Service in the charts with an overall tri-Service figure provided for comparison. Overall differences from last year (2017) are presented, along with the differences from 2013 for a longer time-series comparison.

A positive change value represents an increase from a previous time period, a negative value represents a decrease.

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

## Key Questions - Morale, Commitment and Engagement

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2017	% Change from 2013
B2.1	How satisfied are you with Service life in general? Positive= % satisfied		41	↔	-8
B2.2	How would you rate your level of morale? Positive= % high		36	-2	-4
B2.3	How would you rate the level of morale of your Unit? Positive= % high		17	-2	↔
B2.4	How would you rate the level of morale of your Service as a whole? Positive= % high		7	-2	-5
B2.5	How satisfied are you with your job in general? Positive= % satisfied		55	↔	-3
B7.3	I am proud to be in the Service Positive= % agree		74	↔	-7
B7.4	I am valued by the Service Positive= % agree		32	↔	+4
B7.5	I would recommend joining the Service to others Positive= % agree		41	↔	↔

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

## Key Questions - Work and Line Management

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2017	% Change from 2013
B2.11	I am given sufficient authority to make decisions Positive= % agree		60	↔	N/A
B3.1	The standard of personal equipment/kit I have to do my job Positive= % satisfied		53	↔	↔
B3.3	The standard of major equipment I have to do my job Positive= % satisfied		33	-3	-11
B5.2	My immediate superior supports me in my job Positive= % agree		75	↔	+4
B5.3	My immediate superior sets a positive example Positive= % agree		69	↔	↔
B5.5	My immediate superior is supportive over work/life balance issues Positive= % agree		69	↔	+6
B5.12	I am satisfied with the leadership provided by my immediate supervisor Positive= % satisfied		67	↔	N/A

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

## Key Questions - Leadership and Managing Change

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2017	% Change from 2013
B6.1	Senior leaders of the Service understand and represent my interests Positive= % agree		23	↔	-3
B6.6	I have confidence in the leadership of the Service Positive= % agree		29	↔	N/A
B9.3	Change is managed well in the Service Positive= % agree		20	↔	-8

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

## Key Questions - Working with Others

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2017	% Change from 2013
B8.7	How do you rate the contribution of the Reserves? Positive= % valuable		65	↔	N/A
B8.8	How well-integrated into the Service are the Reserves? Positive= % well-integrated		58	+4	N/A
B8.9	How do you rate the professionalism of the Reserves? Positive= % professional		67	↔	N/A

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

## Key Questions - Allowances, Pay and JPA

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2017	% Change from 2013
B1.1	The X-Factor in my salary is enough Positive= % agree		26	↔	↔
B1.2	The pay and benefits I receive are fair for the work I do Positive= % agree		31	↔	N/A
B1.4	My rate of basic pay Positive= % satisfied		31	-2	-8
B1.8	My Recruitment and Retention Pay (RRP) Positive= % satisfied		20	-2	-12
B1.5	My pension benefits Positive= % satisfied		29	+2	-4

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

## Key Questions - Deployment

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2017	% Change from 2013
B10.4	Deployment notice in current/last deployment Positive= % satisfied	<p>Bar chart showing satisfaction with deployment notice. RN: ~55%, RM: ~48%, Army: ~65%, RAF: ~70%.</p>	65	↔	N/A
B10.5	Pre-operational/deployment training for current/last deployment Positive= % satisfied	<p>Bar chart showing satisfaction with pre-operational/deployment training. RN: ~55%, RM: ~48%, Army: ~65%, RAF: ~65%.</p>	63	↔	N/A
B10.9	Welfare support I received when I returned from operational deployment Positive= % satisfied	<p>Bar chart showing satisfaction with welfare support received when returning from deployment. RN: ~30%, RM: ~45%, Army: ~50%, RAF: ~45%.</p>	45	↔	N/A
B10.10	The welfare support that my family received when I returned from deployment Positive= % satisfied	<p>Bar chart showing satisfaction with welfare support for family when returning from deployment. RN: ~25%, RM: ~35%, Army: ~40%, RAF: ~35%.</p>	36	↔	N/A
B10.18	The frequency of my operational deployments Positive= % about right	<p>Bar chart showing satisfaction with the frequency of operational deployments. RN: ~55%, RM: ~45%, Army: ~55%, RAF: ~60%.</p>	58	↔	N/A
B10.19	The length of my operational deployments Positive= % about right	<p>Bar chart showing satisfaction with the length of operational deployments. RN: ~55%, RM: ~75%, Army: ~80%, RAF: ~70%.</p>	72	↔	N/A

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

## Key Questions - Training, Development and Career

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2017	% Change from 2013
<b>B4.2</b>	Career management service provided Positive= % satisfied		<b>35</b>	↔	↔
<b>B4.3</b>	I have the knowledge, skills and experience to do my job Positive= % agree		<b>86</b>	↔	-2
<b>B4.4</b>	My knowledge, skills and experience are being used Positive= % agree		<b>71</b>	↔	↔
<b>B4.7</b>	The notice I received for my current/last assignment Positive= % satisfied		<b>68</b>	↔	↔
<b>B4.10</b>	The fairness of the promotion system Positive= % satisfied		<b>33</b>	↔	-4
<b>B4.11</b>	My opportunities for promotion Positive= % satisfied		<b>40</b>	↔	↔
<b>B11.4</b>	The extent to which I am doing the job for which I was trained Positive= % satisfied		<b>57</b>	↔	↔

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

## Key Questions - Future Plans

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2017	% Change from 2013
B12.1	What are your plans for the future? To stay serving as long as I can	<p>Positive= % ticked</p>	30	-2	-7
B12.1	What are your plans for the future? To stay serving to the end of current engagement/commission	<p>Positive= % ticked</p>	27	↔	+2
B12.3	How actively have you searched for a job outside the Service in the last 12 months?	<p>Positive = % very or quite actively</p>	42	↔	N/A
B12.6	When you leave the Service, would you consider joining the Volunteer Reserve Forces? Full-time	<p>Positive= % ticked</p>	18	↔	↔
B12.7	When you leave the Service, would you consider joining the Volunteer Reserve Forces? Part-time	<p>Positive= % ticked</p>	28	↔	+4

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

## Key Questions - Work/Life Balance

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2017	% Change from 2013
B3.5	How would you rate your workload over the last 12 months?	<p>Positive= % about right</p>	47	↔	↔
B14.9	I am able to maintain a balance between my personal and working life	<p>Positive= % agree</p>	40	↔	N/A
B15.2	The opportunity to take leave when I want to	<p>Positive = % satisfied</p>	47	↔	+7
B15.3	The amount of leave I was able to take in the last 12 months	<p>Positive= % satisfied</p>	64	+4	+7

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found



## Key Questions - Fairness at Work

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2017	% Change from 2013
B13.1	I am treated fairly at work Positive= % agree		71	↔	N/A
B13.2	The Service discipline system is fair Positive= % fair		62	↔	-4
B13.3	Do you believe you have been subject to bullying, discrimination or harassment in the last 12 months? Positive= % ticked yes		12	↔	N/A
B13.4	Do you believe you have been subject to <b>bullying</b> in the last 12 months? Positive= % ticked yes		6	↔	N/A
B13.5	Do you believe you have been subject to <b>discrimination</b> in the last 12 months? Positive= % ticked yes		8	↔	N/A
B13.6	Do you believe you have been subject to <b>harassment</b> in the last 12 months? Positive= % ticked yes		4	↔	N/A

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

## Key Questions - Health, Fitness and Welfare

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2017	% Change from 2013
<b>B16.1</b>	Being able to access the medical care when I needed it Positive= % satisfied		<b>80</b>	↔	↔
<b>B16.2</b>	The medical treatment Positive= % satisfied		<b>76</b>	↔	N/A
<b>B16.4</b>	The dental treatment Positive= % satisfied		<b>87</b>	↔	↔
<b>B17.1</b>	Service sport, exercise and fitness facilities in general Positive= % satisfied		<b>73</b>	↔	-4
<b>B17.2</b>	My opportunities to undertake fitness activities (e.g. to meet fitness standards) Positive= % satisfied		<b>66</b>	↔	↔
<b>B18.1</b>	The welfare support provided by the Service for me Positive= % satisfied		<b>54</b>	↔	+4
<b>B18.2</b>	The welfare support provided by the Service for my family Positive= % satisfied		<b>44</b>	↔	+5
<b>B18.3</b>	The support my spouse/partner gets from the Service when I am absent Positive= % satisfied		<b>32</b>	↔	↔

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

## Key Questions - Accommodation and Catering

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2017	% Change from 2013
<b>B19.6</b>	The overall standard of Service Accommodation Positive= % satisfied		<b>51</b>	↔	-6
<b>B19.38</b>	The opportunity to live in my own home (For home owners only) Positive= % satisfied		<b>47</b>	↔	+4
<b>B19.39</b>	The allowances for living in my own home (For home owners only) Positive= % satisfied		<b>29</b>	↔	+7
<b>B19.44</b>	Have you used a Government Affordable Housing Scheme in the last year to buy or rent? Positive= % used		<b>2</b>	↔	N/A
<b>B20.15</b>	The availability of food during the week on my unit e.g. opening hours Positive= % satisfied		<b>50</b>	↔	N/A
<b>B20.17</b>	The standard of service from catering contractors on my unit Positive= % satisfied		<b>28</b>	↔	N/A

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

## Key Questions - Family Life and Being Part of Society

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2017	% Change from 2013
B21.1	I am married / in a Civil partnership Positive = % ticked	<p>Bar chart for B21.1: RN (53%), RM (42%), Army (50%), RAF (58%).</p>	53	↔	↔
B21.3	I have children that I support financially Positive = % ticked	<p>Bar chart for B21.3: RN (48%), RM (45%), Army (50%), RAF (55%).</p>	52	↔	↔
B21.9	I am satisfied with the locally provided childcare facilities Positive = % ticked	<p>Bar chart for B21.9: RN (50%), RM (45%), Army (40%), RAF (55%).</p>	47	↔	N/A
B22.1	I am currently registered to vote Positive = % ticked	<p>Bar chart for B22.1: RN (90%), RM (85%), Army (80%), RAF (90%).</p>	86	↔	+16
B22.4	I have heard of the Armed Forces Covenant Positive = % heard of	<p>Bar chart for B22.4: RN (85%), RM (65%), Army (70%), RAF (80%).</p>	76	↔	+4
B22.14	I offer an important service to the country Positive = % agree	<p>Bar chart for B22.14: RN (70%), RM (65%), Army (70%), RAF (70%).</p>	71	-2	↔
B22.15	Members of the Armed Forces are valued by society at large Positive = % agree	<p>Bar chart for B22.15: RN (35%), RM (35%), Army (40%), RAF (40%).</p>	38	-3	-13

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

## Key Questions - Taking Action

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2017	% Change from 2013
B24.2	I think effective action has been taken in the Service on the results of AFCAS Positive = % agree	<p>Bar chart for B24.2: RN (15%), RM (15%), Army (15%), RAF (15%).</p>	16	↔	N/A
B24.3	This survey is about right Positive = % about right	<p>Bar chart for B24.3: RN (65%), RM (55%), Army (60%), RAF (65%).</p>	62	-3	+10

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

# Methodology

## 1. Target population

The target population for AFCAS 2018 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 (JPA) system.

## 2. The survey

AFCAS is distributed both electronically and in paper format. Data collection ran from September 2017 to February 2018, 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 JPA system. Personally identifiable data are only available to a small group of professional researchers working on analysis and report production.

## 3. The sample and respondents

The total AFCAS 2018 sample consisted of 27,333 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 60%, margins of error around the estimates for Royal Marine Officers may be greater than 3%, due to the relatively small number of respondents in this group.

11,069 responses were used in the AFCAS 2018 analysis, giving an overall response rate of 40%. The table below contains detailed information on the number of questionnaires issued and received along with corresponding response rates.

60% of responses were received electronically and 40% were paper responses.

**Table A1: Response rates by Service and Rank group**

		Sample size	Surveys returned	2018 response rate	2017 response rate
<b>Royal Navy</b>	Officers	1529	924	60%	62%
	Ratings	6010	1704	28%	34%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>7539</b>	<b>2628</b>	<b>35%</b>	39%
<b>Royal Marines</b>	Officers	568	319	56%	61%
	Marines	4414	1864	42%	56%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>4982</b>	<b>2183</b>	<b>44%</b>	57%
<b>Army</b>	Officers	1706	1086	64%	62%
	Soldiers	6539	2133	33%	34%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>8245</b>	<b>3219</b>	<b>39%</b>	39%
<b>Royal Air Force</b>	Officers	1608	944	59%	61%
	Airmen	4959	2095	42%	45%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>6567</b>	<b>3039</b>	<b>46%</b>	49%
<b>All Services</b>	Officers	5411	3273	60%	61%
	Ranks	21922	7796	36%	41%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>27333</b>	<b>11069</b>	<b>40%</b>	45%

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 2018 analysis**

Weighting Class	Weighting Applied
RN_OF-7+	1.60
RN_OF-4 to 6	5.28
RN_OF-3	5.32
RN_OF-1 to 2	5.88
RN_OR-8 to 9	6.30
RN_OR-7	6.65
RN_OR-6	8.86
RN_OR-3 to 4	11.02
RN_OR-2	15.26

Weighting Class	Weighting Applied
RM_OF-4+	2.20
RM_OF-3	2.20
RM_OF-1 to 2	2.58
RM_OR-8 to 9	2.01
RM_OR-7	2.42
RM_OR-6	2.46
RM_OR-3 to 4	3.30
RM_OR-2	3.79

Weighting Class	Weighting Applied
Army_OF-7+	2.31
Army_OF-4 to 6	11.04
Army_OF-3	10.42
Army_OF-1 to 2	12.34
Army_OR-8 to 9	15.19
Army_OR-7	17.60
Army_OR-6	20.32
Army_OR-4	28.83
Army_OR-3	44.04
Army_OR-2	60.83

Weighting Class	Weighting Applied
RAF_OF-7+	1.80
RAF_OF-4 to 6	6.88
RAF_OF-3	6.26
RAF_OF-1 to 2	7.95
RAF_OR-7-9	7.47
RAF_OR-6	9.22
RAF_OR-3 to 4	11.22
RAF_OR-1 to 2	17.35

## 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 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.

Questionnaire Section	Table Numbers
01 Your Pay	B1.1 - B1.9
02 Your Work	B2.1 - B2.18
03 Resources and Workload	B3.1 - B3.7
04 Your Line Management	B4.1 - B4.21
05 Senior Leadership	B5.1 - B5.18
06 Commitment	B6.1 - B6.6
07 Working with Others	B7.1 - B7.14
08 Change	B8.1 - B8.17
09 Your Deployment	B9.1 - B9.3
10 Your Career	B10.1 - B10.19
11 Training and Development	B11.1 - B11.7
12 Your Future Plans	B12.1 - B12.41
13 Fairness at Work	B13.1 - B13.43
14 Your Work/Life Balance	B14.1 - B14.12
15 Your Leave	B15.1 - B15.10
16 Your Health and Wellbeing	B16.1 - B16.8a
17 Fitness, Sport and Adventure Training	B17.1 - B17.4
18 Welfare	B18.1 - B18.18
19 Your Accommodation	B19.1 - B19.45
20 Catering, Retail and Leisure	B20.1 - B20.17
21 Your Family Life	B21.1 - B21.12
22 Being Part of Society	B22.1 - B22.15
23 Your Background	B23.1 - B23.7
23 Taking Action and Your Comments	B24.1 - B24.4

## Glossary

Armed Forces Compensation Scheme	Compensation available to those who become injured or ill as a result of their service in the Armed Forces	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
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	HIVE	Service information hub which assists personnel in a wide variety of topics affecting their everyday Service and personal life
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	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
Assisting Officer	Appointed to provide help and support to personnel either considering or having made a formal written complaint about discrimination, harassment or bullying	Marines	RM personnel of NATO ranks OR1 to OR9
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	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
Catering Retail and Leisure (CRL)	Provision of on-site facilities for dining, shopping and recreation by commercial partners	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
Commission	Officer's period of employment usually under contractual terms	Missing value(s)	Refers to the situation where a respondent has not submitted an answer or a valid answer to a question
Core Meal	Meal supplied that should conform to certain cost and nutritional standards within core hours	MOD	Ministry of Defence
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	Morale	A measure of commitment and willingness to the ethos of a Service
DIN	Defence Instructions and Notices	N/A	Not applicable
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	NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
Engagement	Period of employment usually under contractual terms	Naval Service	Comprises the Royal Navy (including the Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service) and the Royal Marines combined.
Ethos	The nature, aims and objectives of a Service	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
Flexible working	Agreed variation in starting and finishing working hours normally designed to meet work/home life balance	OF	Officer of NATO rank designation ranking from '1' lowest to '10' highest
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	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 Ombudsman	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 Families 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"> <li>Phase 1 Training includes all new entry training to provide basic military skills.</li> <li>Phase 2 Training includes initial individual specialisation, sub-specialisation and technical training following Phase 1 training prior to joining the trained strength</li> </ul>
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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### Contact Us

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