



# UK Regular Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey Results 2019



Annual

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United Kingdom

This statistical release provides results from the Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey (AFCAS) 2019, along with results from previous years.

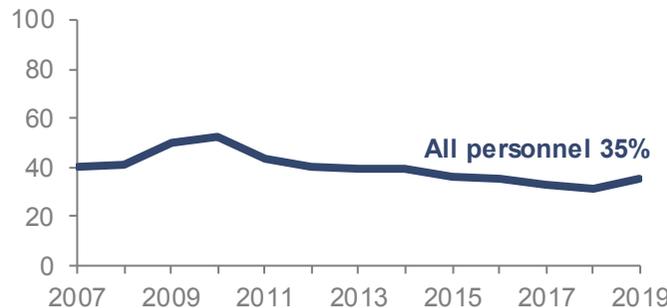
Statistics from AFCAS are used by both internal Ministry of Defence (MOD) teams and external bodies to inform the development of policy and measure the impact of decisions affecting personnel, including major programmes such as the Armed Forces Covenant.

## Satisfaction with Service life and levels of morale have increased this year

- Satisfaction with Service life has increased to 46% (from 41% in 2018) but remains below peak satisfaction reported in 2009 (61%).
- 2019 has also seen increases in high self, Unit and Service morale, returning to 2016 levels (2017 for Service morale).
- More personnel feel valued by their Service this year, up four percentage points since 2018 to 35%.
- Three-quarters of personnel are proud to be in their Service, unchanged since 2015.

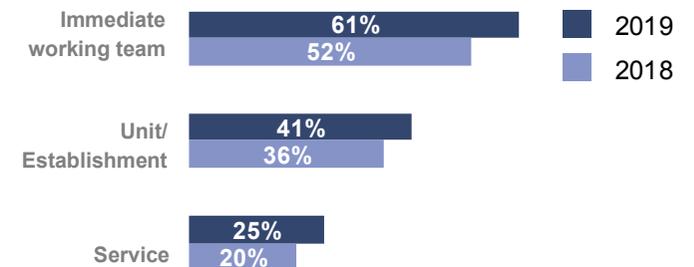
## Satisfaction with pay has increased to 35% this year

Over a third of personnel are satisfied with their pay in 2019, an increase of five percentage points since last year. However, this is still well below peak satisfaction reported in 2010 (52%).



## Service personnel are more positive about how change is managed in 2019

The proportions of personnel who agree that change is managed well in their immediate working team, Unit/Establishment and Service have increased since 2018.



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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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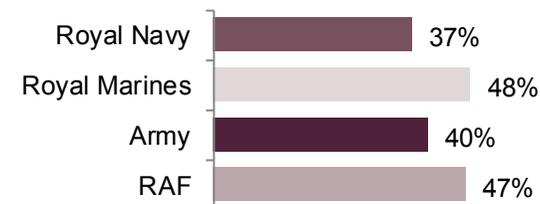
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## About these statistics

The 2019 Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey (AFCAS) was distributed to a sample of 28,814 trained UK Regular Armed Forces personnel between September 2018 and February 2019 using both online and paper questionnaires. Participants were chosen using (disproportionate) 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, 12,102 responses were received, representing a response rate of 42%.



Reference tables and questionnaires for AFCAS 2019 are published as separate documents and can be found on the AFCAS webpage - <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/armed-forces-continuous-attitude-survey-2019>

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 designated these statistics as National Statistics on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2013, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Statistics.

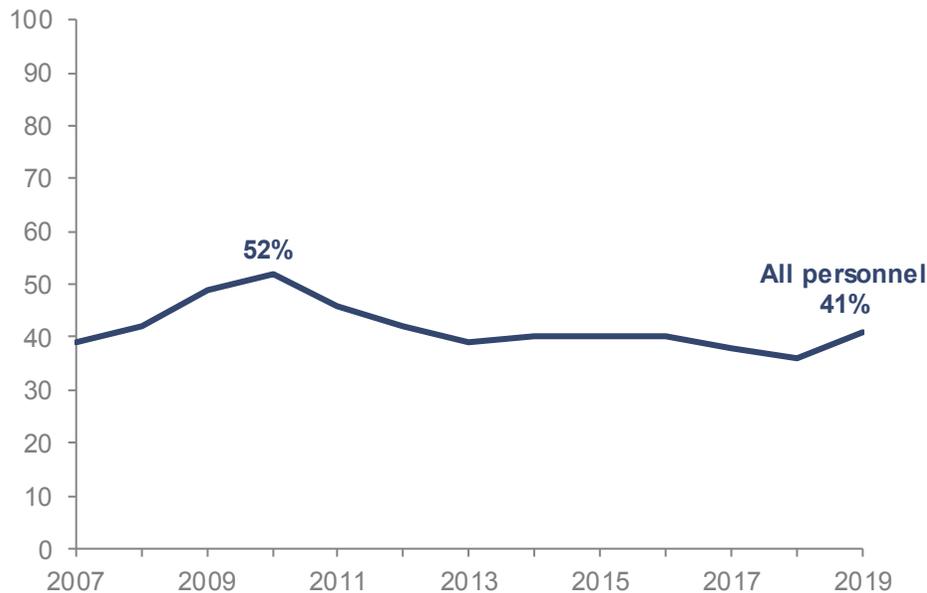
Further details about how this report has been developed since its confirmation as National Statistics, such as changes to the report format, can be found in the Background Quality Report.

# 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 their job, Service ethos, commitment and engagement.

**The proportion of Service personnel reporting high self morale has increased this year to just over four in ten (41%), returning to levels previously seen in 2016**

% reporting high self morale



The overall increase to high self morale is largely driven by Army and Royal Navy personnel, up by six and five percentage points to 40% and 44% respectively. However, high self morale still remains below the peak seen in 2010.

**Royal Marines are more likely to rate their self morale as low (34%)**

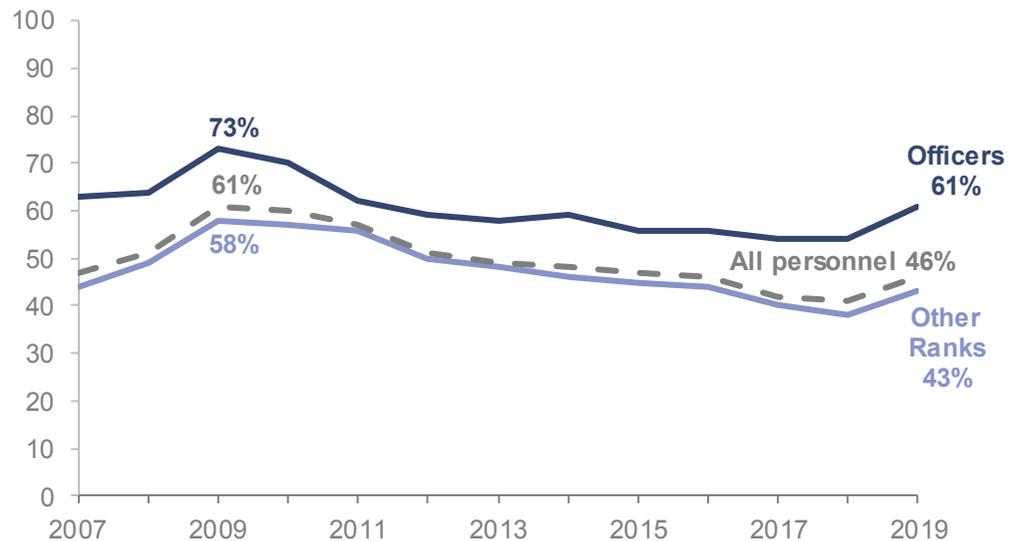
This is unchanged since 2018 and remains at the highest reported for the Royal Marines since this question was first asked in 2007.

**Just over two in ten (22%) personnel rate their Unit morale as high whilst just under one in ten (9%) report high Service morale**

High Unit and Service morale have increased this year, returning to levels reported in 2016 and 2017 respectively. Whilst these proportions are considerably lower than high self morale (41%), AFCAS consistently shows year-on-year that self morale is rated higher than Unit or Service morale.

**Satisfaction with Service life in general has improved this year for Officers and Other Ranks, but remains well below the peak levels seen in 2009**

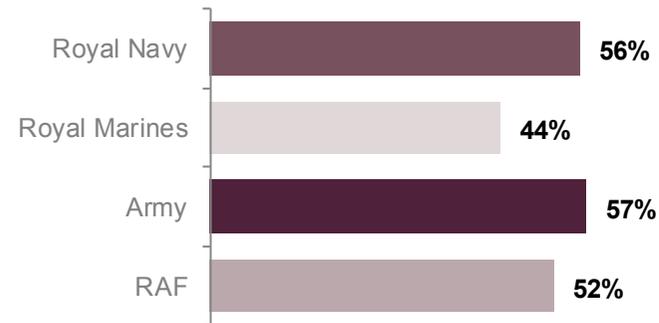
% satisfied with Service life in general



As with the changes to high self morale, the increase in satisfaction with Service life is largely driven by Royal Navy and Army personnel.

**Royal Marines remain the least satisfied with several aspects of their job compared to the other Services**

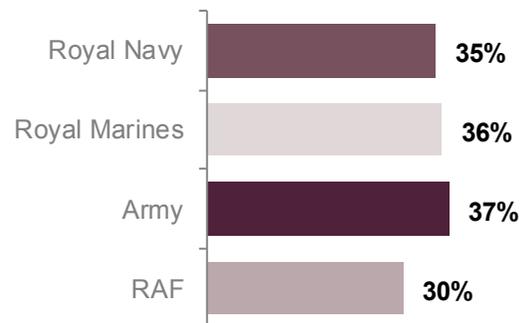
% satisfied with the challenge in their job



Royal Marines are also least satisfied with their job in general, the sense of achievement they get and the amount of variety in their work.

**Over a third (35%) of personnel feel valued by their Service, with the RAF least likely to feel valued**

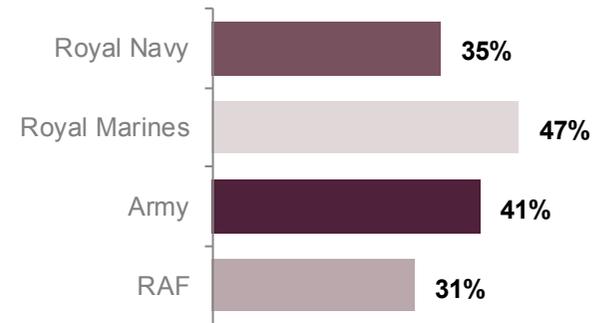
% agree that they feel valued by their Service



Whilst the proportion of Royal Marines who feel valued is similar to the Royal Navy and the Army in 2019, this has fallen from 48% to 36% since 2015.

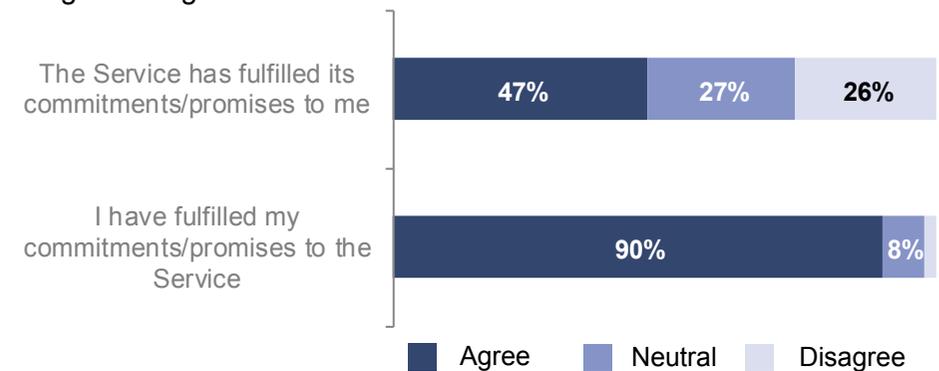
**RAF personnel are also least likely to agree that their Service motivates them to achieve its objectives; Royal Marines are most likely to agree**

% agree that their Service motivates to help achieve its objectives



**The proportion of personnel who believe their Service has fulfilled its commitments to them has increased by three percentage points since 2018 to 47%**

% agree/disagree



However the proportion who believe the Service has fulfilled its commitments is well below the proportion of personnel who agree that they have fulfilled their commitments/promises to their Service (90%).

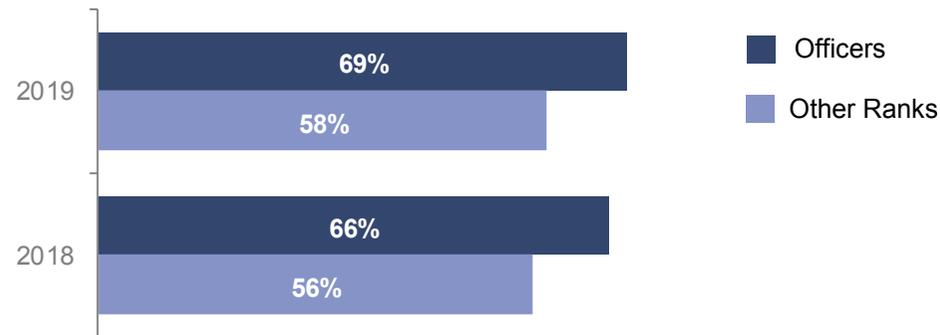
Three-quarters of personnel feel proud to be in their Service.

## The Engagement Index for Service personnel is 60%, a return to the 2016 level following a slight drop over the last two years

The increase in the overall Engagement Index since last year is reflected across the Services and for Officers and Other Ranks, except for Royal Marine Officers.

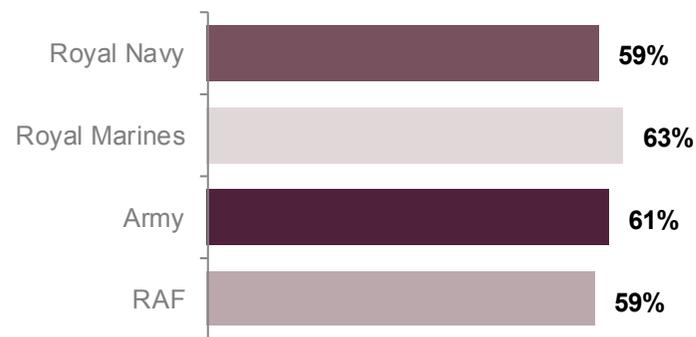
### Officers continue to be more engaged than Other Ranks in 2019

Engagement Index



### Despite lower levels of morale, Royal Marines personnel continue to score the highest Engagement Index compared to the other Services

Engagement Index



### Civilian personnel comparison

In the latest Civil Service People Survey (2018), MOD Civilians also had an Engagement Index of 60%.

### Engagement Index

The Engagement Index 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]*

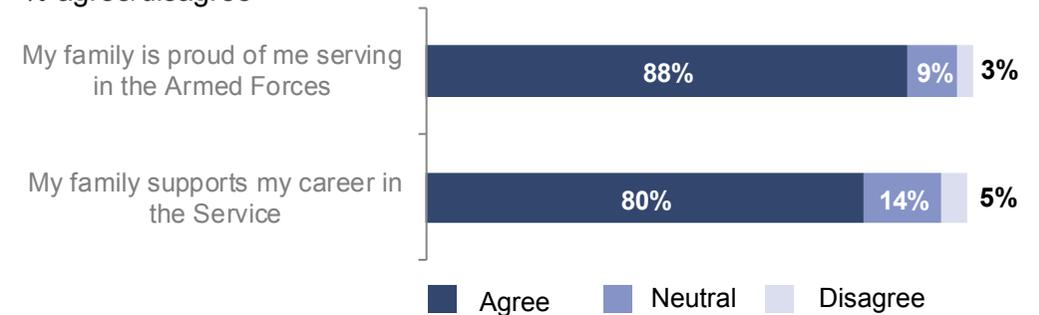
*B7.8 The [Service] inspires me to do the best in my job. [A332]*

*B7.9 The [Service] motivates me to help it achieve its objectives. [A333]*

<sup>1</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/764326/Civil\\_Service\\_People\\_Survey\\_2018\\_-\\_Full\\_Technical\\_Guide.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/764326/Civil_Service_People_Survey_2018_-_Full_Technical_Guide.pdf)

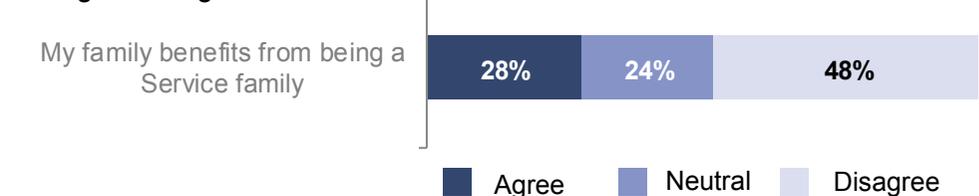
### Whilst the majority of personnel report that their family are proud, and supportive of their Armed Forces career...

% agree/disagree



### ...less than a third agree that their family benefits from being a Service family

% agree/disagree



The proportion of personnel who agree that their family benefits from being a Service family has increased since last year from 24% to 28%, largely driven <sup>3</sup> by Army Other Ranks.

## Section 2 - Work and Line Management

Section 2 focuses on the work of Service personnel, their equipment, line management and teamwork.

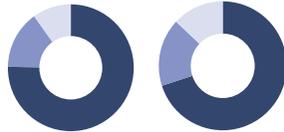
**Just under four in ten (39%) agree that people do not automatically look for someone to blame when things go wrong, an increase of three percentage points since 2018**

This change is largely driven by Army personnel.

Other attitudes to work, such as whether personnel are given a choice in how they do their work or feel encouraged to find new ways of working remain largely unchanged since last year.

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

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



Seven in ten agree that their immediate superiors set a positive example.

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



Just under seven in ten agree that their immediate superior understands and represents their interests.

■ Agree ■ Neutral ■ Disagree

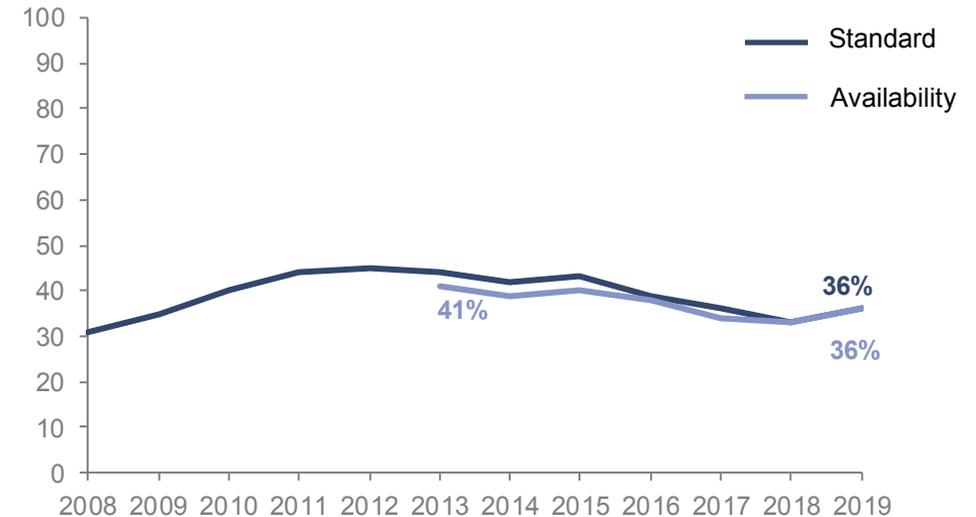
**Attitudes towards team members remain highly positive**

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

**78%** agree that the people in their team can be relied upon to help when things get difficult in the job.

**Satisfaction with the standard and availability of major equipment has increased this year following a slight drop in 2018**

% satisfied with the standard and availability of major equipment



These increases are largely driven by Royal Navy personnel.

**Satisfaction with personal equipment has also increased since 2018**

**57%** are satisfied with the standard of personal equipment  
 ↑ Four percentage points from 2018

**49%** are satisfied with the availability of personal equipment  
 ↑ Five percentage points from 2018

These changes are largely driven by Army and Royal Navy personnel.

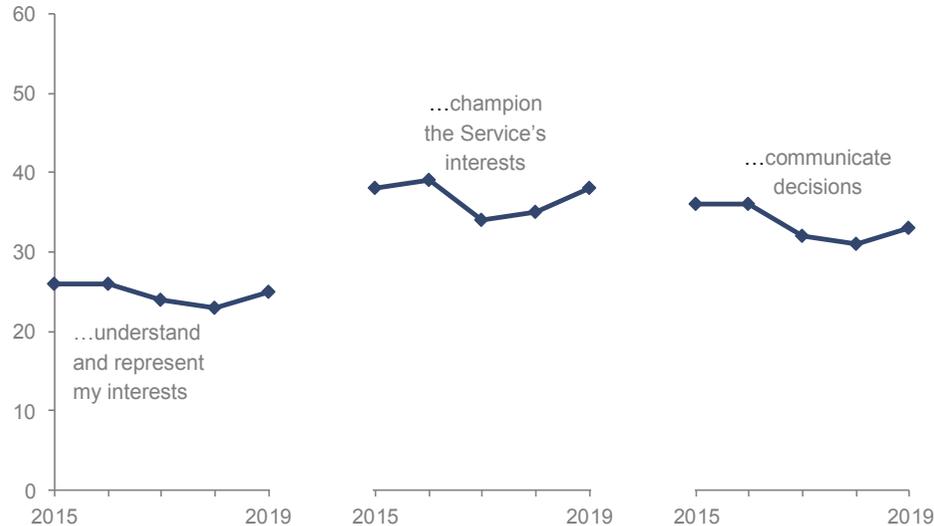
Royal Marines remain the least satisfied with both the standard and availability of major and personal equipment.

## 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 generally more positive than those reported in 2018

% agree that their senior leaders...



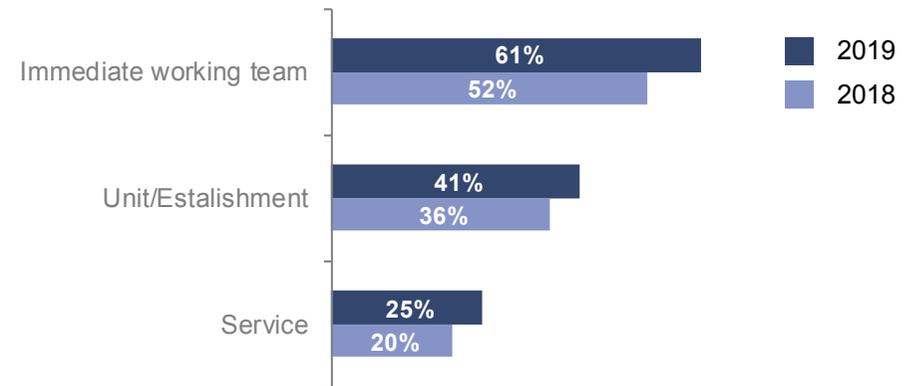
Officers in particular are more positive this year compared to 2018. For example, the proportion who agree that their senior leaders understand and represent their interests has increased from 28% to 33%.

### However, many personnel still have negative perceptions about senior leaders



### Officers and Other Ranks across the Services are more positive about how change is managed compared to 2018

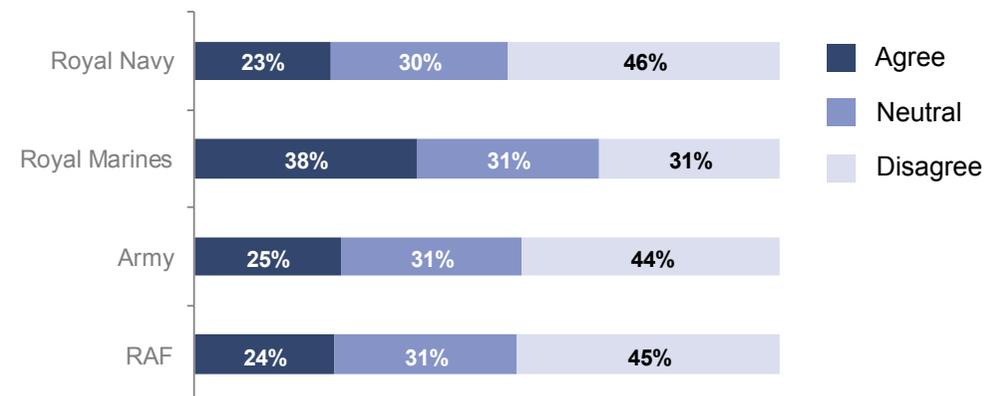
% agree that change is managed well in their...



The 2019 levels reported for Unit/Establishment and Service are a return to those previously reported in 2016. For immediate working team, this is the highest level of agreement reported since 2014.

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

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



## Section 4 - Working with Others

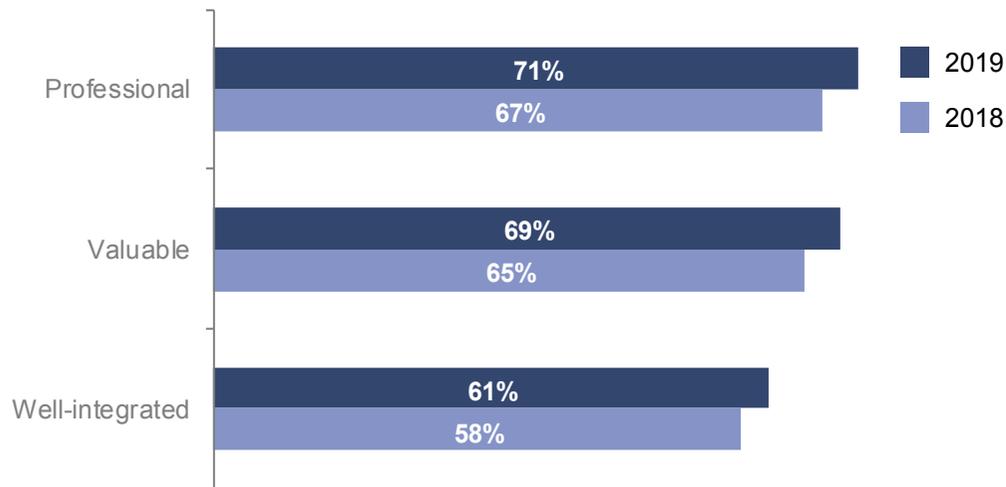
Section 4 focuses on working relationships with Reserves, MOD Civil Servants and contractors. The Defence Reform Review of 2011 called for the closer integration of Regulars, Reserves, Civil Servants and contractors to ensure that Defence is supported by a sustainable, effective force<sup>1</sup>.

### Half of personnel have had working contact with Armed Forces Reserves, unchanged since this question was introduced in 2015

RAF personnel remain the most likely to have worked with the Reserves (62%); Royal Marines are the least likely (37%). Officers are more likely to have worked with Reserves (71%) than Other Ranks (46%).

### Opinions about Armed Forces Reserves are more positive compared to 2018

Views on Armed Forces Reserves<sup>1</sup>



The change in how valuable the Reserves are viewed this year is largely driven by the Royal Navy and Royal Marines.

RAF personnel remain the most likely to rate the contribution of the Armed Forces Reserves as professional (86%), valuable (80%) and well-integrated (76%) compared to the other Services.

<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 (50% in 2019).

### More than half (58%) of personnel have had working contact with MOD civil servants, unchanged since 2016

Of those who have had working contact with MOD Civil Servants:

**78%** rate the contribution of MOD civil servants as valuable.

**76%** rate MOD civil servants as professional.

**68%** rate MOD civil servants as well-integrated.

Officers are more likely to have working contact with MOD civil servants (82%) compared to Other Ranks (53%).

### Over half (53%) of personnel have had working contact with MOD contractors, unchanged since 2018

Contact with MOD contractors varies between the Services. Royal Marines have the least working contact (40%) followed by the Army (45%), compared with much higher levels of working contact for the Royal Navy (61%) and RAF (67%).

Since 2017, there has been an increase in the proportion of personnel who rate MOD contractors as professional by three percentage points (from 58% to 61% in 2019), however this is still lower than the level reported in 2015 (65%).

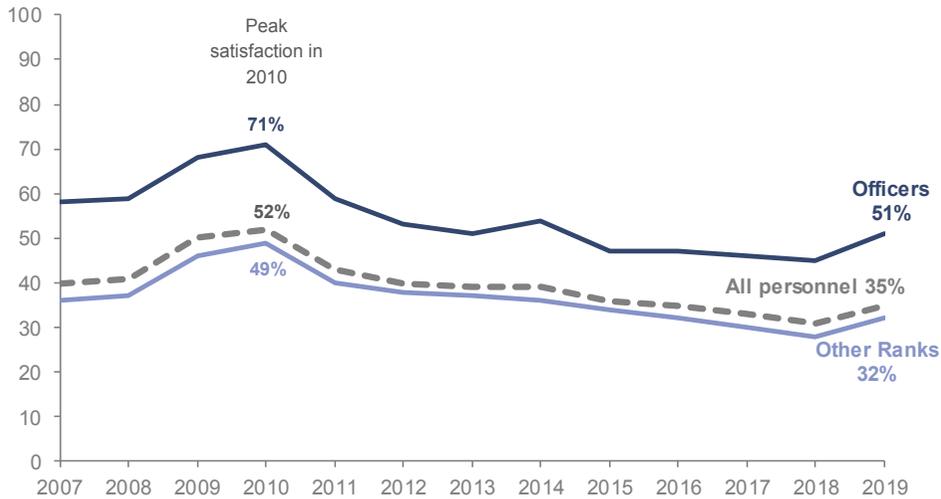
Royal Marines rated the professionalism, value of contribution and integration of MOD contractors lower than each of the other Services.

## Section 5 - Allowances, Pay and JPA

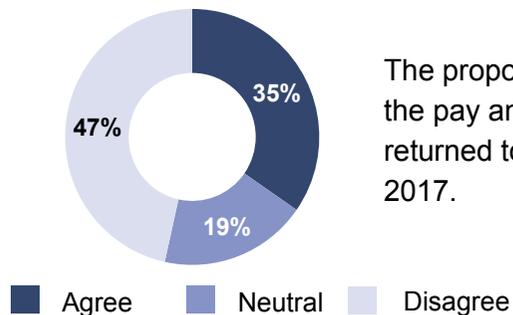
Section 5 covers the attitudes of Service personnel towards their pay, pension and allowances, as well as satisfaction with access to the Joint Personnel Administration System (JPA).

### Despite an increase in satisfaction with the rate of basic pay in 2019, levels remain well below those reported in 2010

% satisfied with basic rate of pay



### A third (35%) of personnel agree that the pay and benefits they receive are fair for the work they do



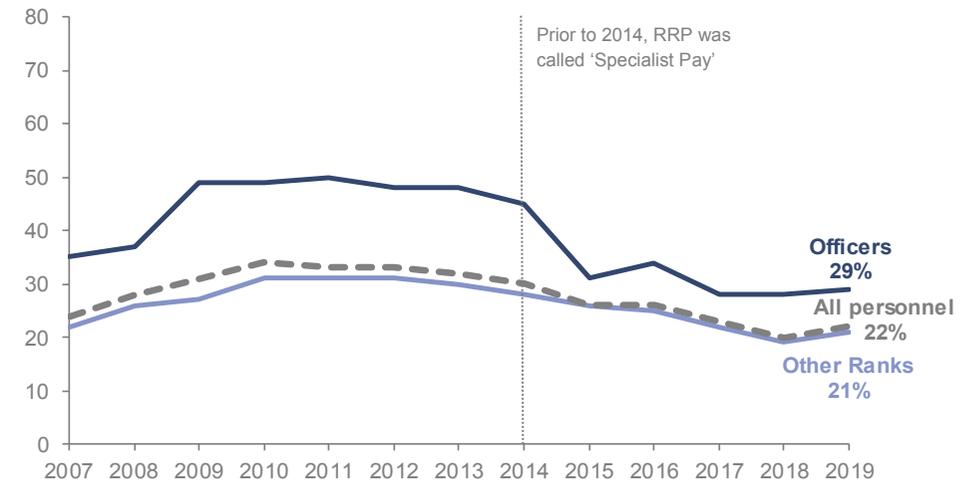
The proportion of personnel who agree that the pay and benefits they receive are fair has returned to 2016 levels following a drop in 2017.

In October 2018, the MOD announced a pay rise for all personnel following a recommendation by the Armed Forces' Pay Review Body (AFPRB) which may have influenced the views of personnel regarding their pay and benefits. Details on Armed Forces pay and allowances are available in the AFPRB's 47<sup>th</sup> report<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/armed-forces-pay-review-body-forty-seventh-report-2018>

### Satisfaction with Recruitment and Retention Pay (RRP) remains low

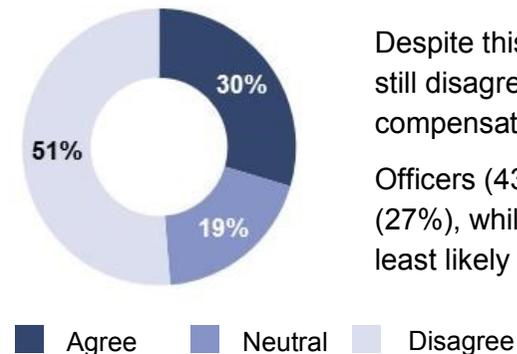
% satisfied with RRP



#### Data Quality Note

Caution is advised when comparing the latest results for RRP prior to 2014.

### Three in ten personnel agree that the X-Factor is enough compensation, an increase of three percentage points since 2018



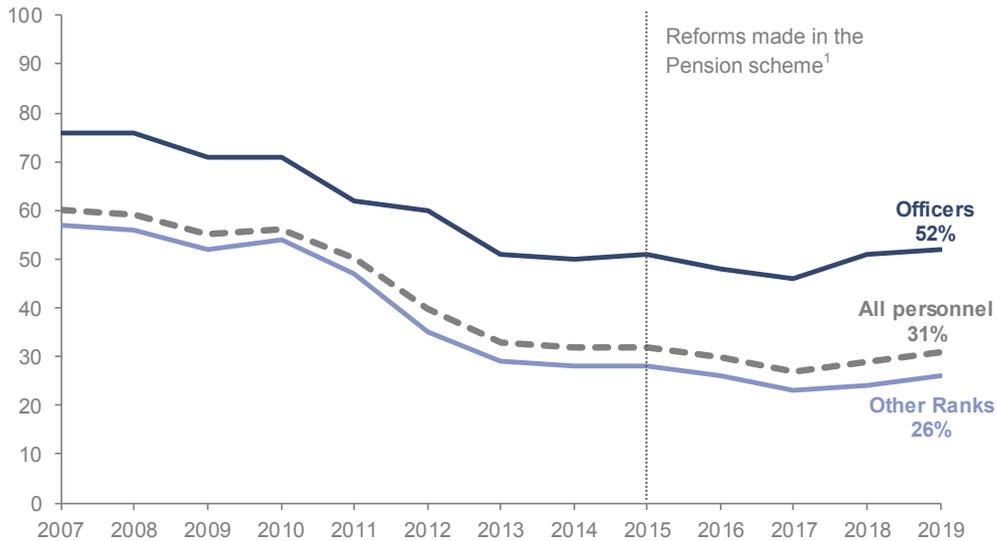
Despite this increase, half (51%) of personnel still disagree that the X-Factor is not enough compensation for Service lifestyle.

Officers (43%) agree more than Other Ranks (27%), whilst Royal Marine Other Ranks are least likely to agree (19%).

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

### Three in ten personnel are satisfied with their pension benefits, unchanged since last year but still well below peak satisfaction in 2007

% satisfied with their pension benefits

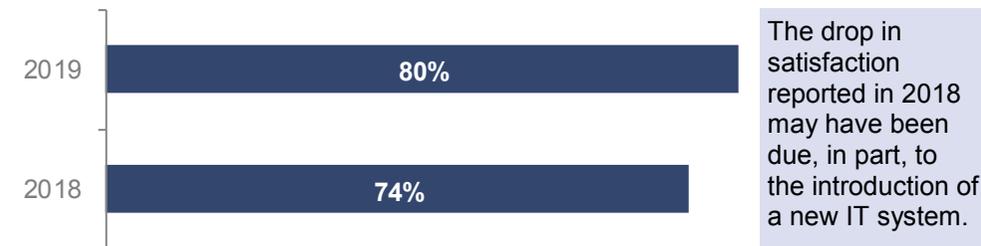


Royal Navy and Royal Marines personnel have seen an increase in satisfaction with pension benefits since last year (from 34% to 39% and 22% to 25% respectively).

<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>

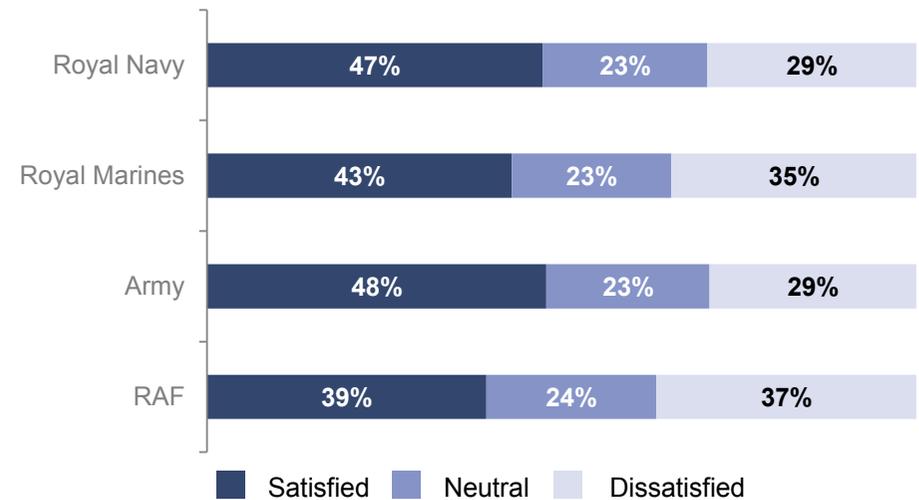
### Satisfaction with access to JPA has returned to levels reported in 2017 following a drop last year

% satisfied with ability to access JPA



### RAF personnel are the least satisfied with their allowances in 2019 compared to the other Services

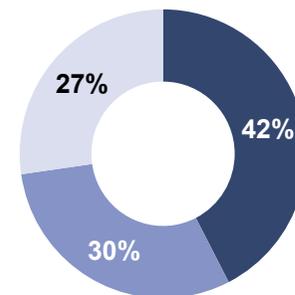
% satisfied/dissatisfied with allowances



Satisfaction with allowances has increased for Royal Navy personnel (from 43% in 2018 to 47% this year).

Officers and Other Ranks have similar levels of satisfaction with their allowances.

### Two in five (42%) personnel are satisfied with information about pay and allowances, a two percentage point increase since 2018



This increase has largely been driven by Royal Navy personnel.

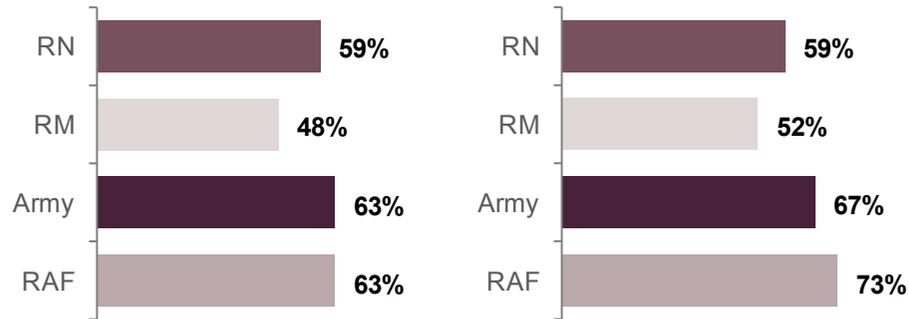
Royal Marines Other Ranks are least likely to be satisfied with information about pay and allowances (30%).

## Section 6 - Deployment

Section 6 covers satisfaction with various aspects of operational deployments. The section focuses only on those who have been deployed at any time since 1 January 2016.

### Royal Marines personnel continue to be least satisfied with aspects of pre-deployment in 2019

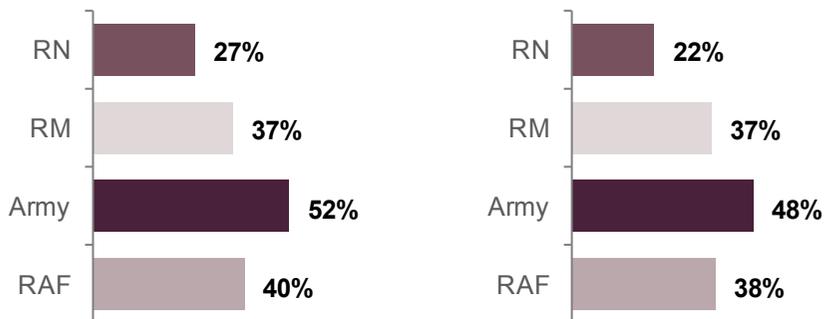
% satisfied with pre-operational training      % satisfied with deployment notice



These lower levels of satisfaction are largely driven by Royal Marine Other Ranks.

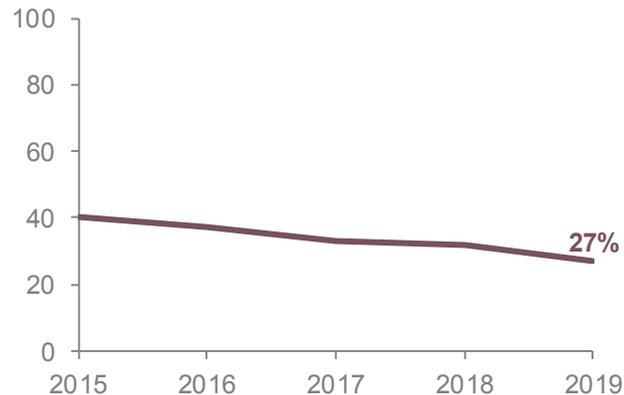
### Army personnel are the most satisfied with some aspects of post-deployment in 2019; Royal Navy personnel are the least satisfied

% satisfied with decompression and post operational tour support      % satisfied with Post Operational Stress Management



### The proportion of Royal Navy personnel reporting that the frequency of their operational deployments is too often has been falling since 2015

% RN reporting the frequency of deployments is too often



Royal Marines are the most likely to report that their deployments are not often enough (44%) compared to the other Services (Army: 36%, Royal Navy and RAF: both 12%).

### A third of Royal Navy personnel now report that operational deployments are too long, a decrease of ten percentage points since 2017

This decrease is largely driven by Royal Navy Other Ranks. However, Royal Navy personnel are still more likely to report that the length of their deployments is too long in comparison to any of the other Services.

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 satisfaction with various aspects of career, training and development, including questions about the promotion system, career management and opportunities for development.

### Overall four in ten personnel (42%) are satisfied with the way their career is managed; three in ten (31%) are dissatisfied

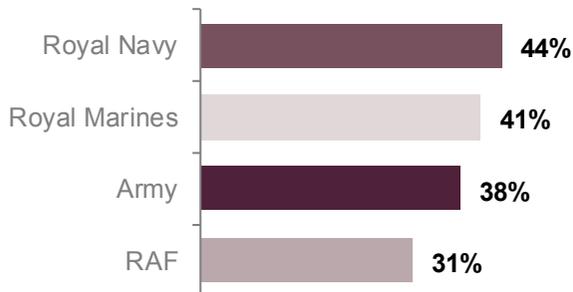
Whilst overall satisfaction has remained unchanged since 2018, satisfaction amongst Royal Navy personnel with the way their career is managed has increased by three percentage points to 45%.

### Personnel are more satisfied with their career management service compared to last year

Satisfaction has increased three percentage points to 38% in 2019, a return to the level of satisfaction reported in 2016. This change is largely driven by Royal Marine Other Ranks and RAF Other Ranks.

### RAF personnel are the least satisfied with their career management service in 2019

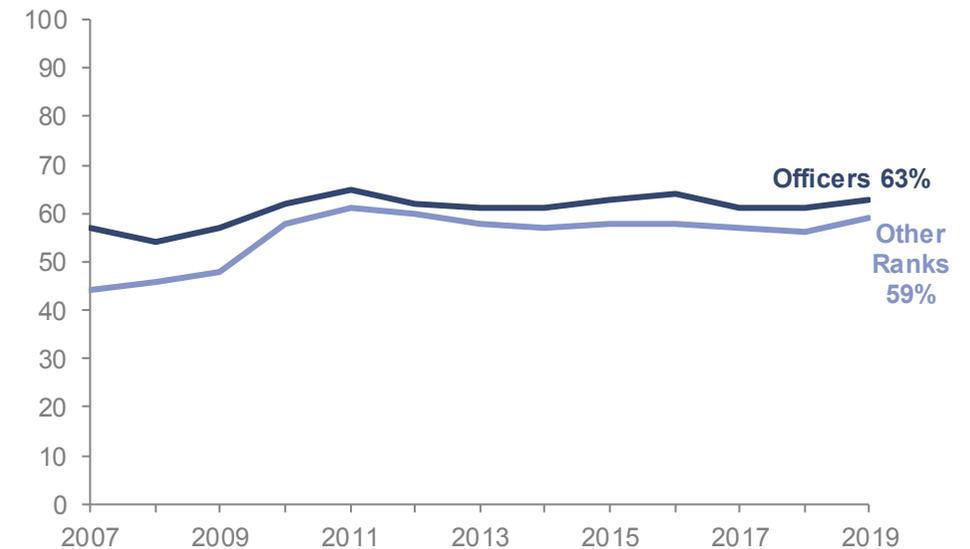
% satisfied with career management service



Just under half of personnel (48%) are satisfied with the involvement they have in decisions affecting their career, up from 44% in 2018. Also, the proportion of personnel who agree that their personal preferences were taken into account has increased this year (from 58% in 2018 to 61%).

### Satisfaction amongst Other Ranks that they are doing the job they were trained for has increased in 2019; satisfaction amongst Officers remains stable

% satisfied that they are doing the job they trained for



Following a drop last year, satisfaction amongst Other Ranks with the timing of the training received in order to carry out their current roles has increased in 2019 (from 54% to 57%).

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

**72%** agree that their knowledge, skills and experience are being used.

**Satisfaction with the opportunities for professional (60%) and personal development (57%) has increased this year, returning to 2016 levels**

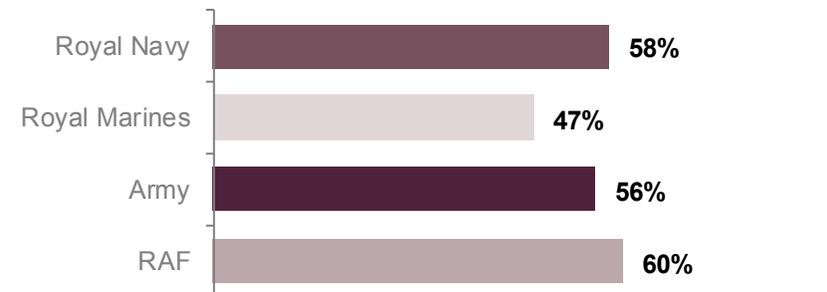
However, around one in five are dissatisfied with their opportunities for professional and personal development (19% and 22% respectively).

**Royal Marines continue to be the least satisfied with opportunities for professional and personal development in 2019**

% satisfied with the opportunities for professional development



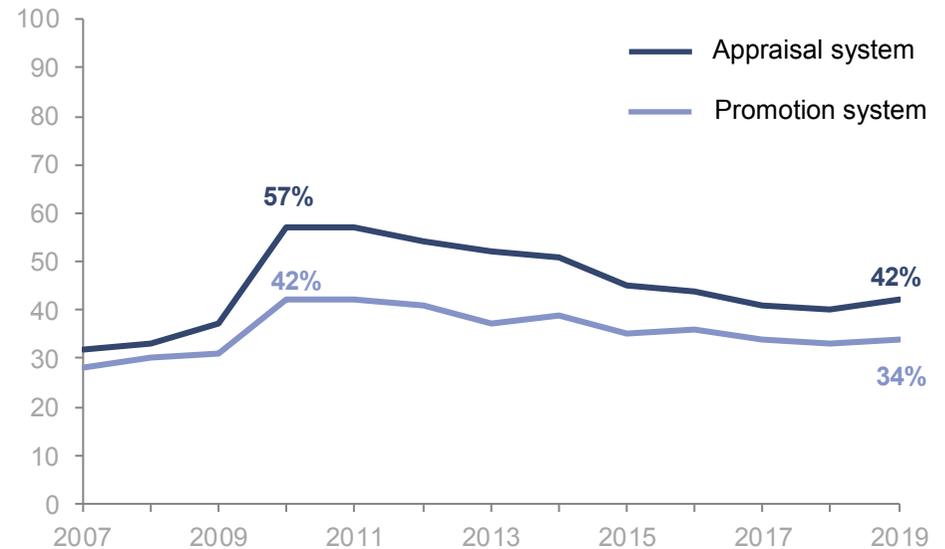
% satisfied with the opportunities for personal development



Royal Marines' satisfaction with opportunities for professional and personal development has fallen since 2015 (both by six percentage points).

**Satisfaction with the fairness of the appraisal and promotion systems remains largely unchanged since 2017**

% satisfied with the fairness of appraisal/promotion systems



The proportions of personnel satisfied with the promotion and appraisal systems have fallen since peak satisfaction in 2010 (by nine and 15 percentage points respectively). This general decline in satisfaction is evident across all Services, and for Officers and Other Ranks. However, current levels of satisfaction remain higher than those reported in 2007.

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

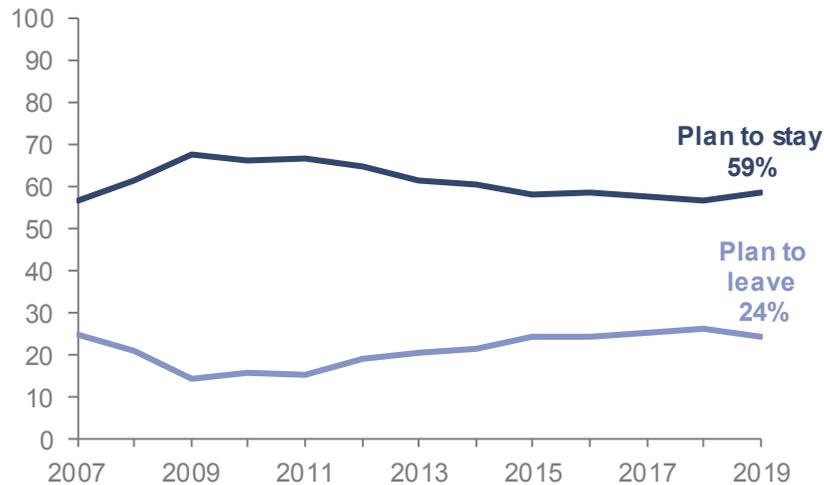
Largely driven by Other Ranks, RAF personnel are considerably less satisfied with the fairness of the appraisal (27%) and promotion (20%) systems, when compared to the other Services.

## 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.

### Nearly six in ten (59%) 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



Just under a quarter (24%) of personnel say they intend to leave before the end of their current engagement or commission, which includes 7% intending to leave as soon as they can and 3% who have already put in their notice to leave.

These figures are largely unchanged since 2018, except for the Royal Navy where the proportion who say they want to stay serving for as long as they can has increased from 26% to 30%.

Royal Marines are the least likely to plan to stay (53%) compared to the other Services. There are no differences between the Services or Officers and Other Ranks in the proportions planning to leave.

#### Data Quality Note

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

### Four in ten personnel have very or quite actively searched for a job outside the Service in the last 12 months, a similar proportion as in 2018

Other Ranks (14%) are twice as likely to have very actively searched for a job outside the Services in the last 12 months compared to Officers (7%).

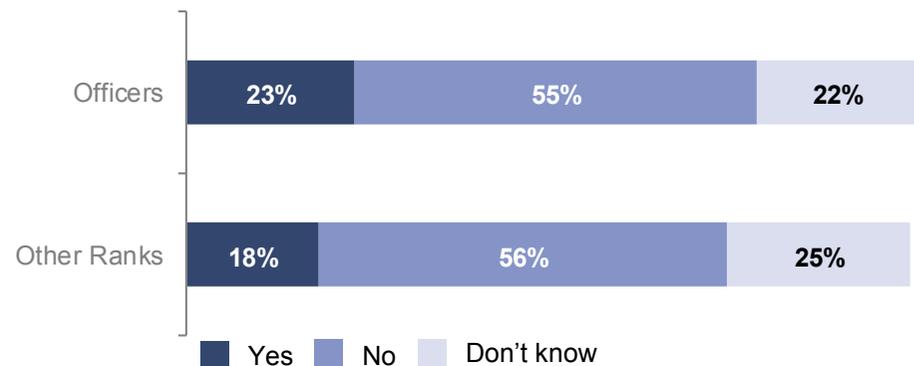
Under the Future Force 2020 programme, the MOD has introduced financial incentives for Regular personnel to join the Reserve Forces on completion of their Regular Service. AFCAS includes questions on whether personnel would consider joining the Reserves on a full-time or part-time basis.

### Just under two in ten (19%) would consider joining the Volunteer Reserves full-time and nearly three in ten (29%) part-time

These figures are unchanged since 2016 (full-time) and 2017 (part-time).

### Officers continue to be more likely to consider joining the Volunteer Reserves full-time than Other Ranks in 2019

% yes/no to joining the Volunteer Reserves full-time



Officers are also more likely to consider joining part-time (43%) than Other Ranks (26%).

## Impact of Service life on family/personal life remains the top factor influencing intentions to leave



### Data Quality Note

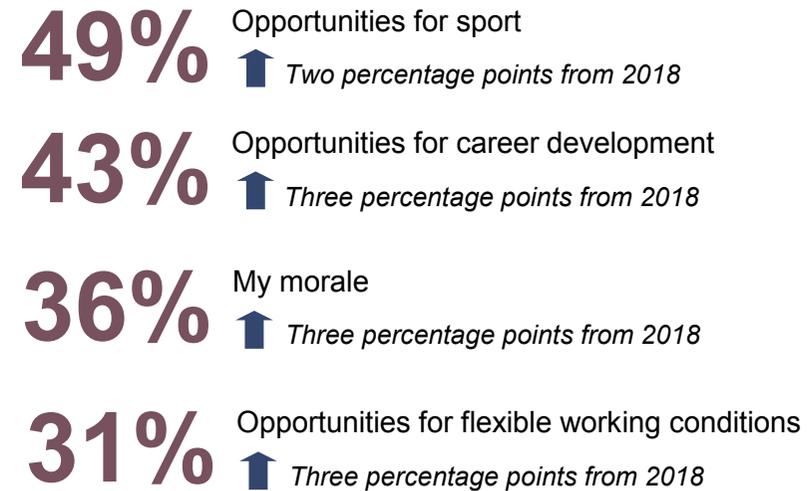
“Has no effect on intention to stay or leave” responses have been excluded from the chart.

The top five factors cited as increasing intentions to leave remain the same as last year.

### Job security remains the top factor increasing intentions to stay

Three-quarters of personnel cite job security as influencing their intention to stay, an increase of six percentage points since 2018. This change can be seen across the Services and for Officers and Other Ranks.

## More personnel are citing the following factors as influencing their intentions to stay this year compared to 2018



## The top reasons for leaving the Services differ slightly for Officers and Other Ranks; the impact on family and personal life remains the most cited reason

Of those who have put their notice in to leave (3%), 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	61	Impact of Service life on family and personal life	53
Current job satisfaction	42	Opportunities outside the Service	28	Current job satisfaction	46
Opportunities outside the Service	36	Current job satisfaction	28	Opportunities outside the Service	38
My morale	31	Promotion prospects	27	Amount of pay	34
Amount of pay	30	My morale	24	My morale	33

## Section 9 - Work/Life Balance

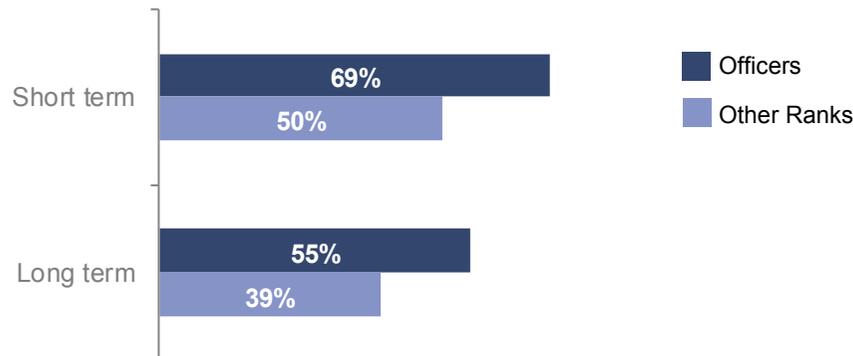
Section 9 looks at the work/life balance of respondents, their satisfaction with their workload, whether or not they are satisfied with the amount of leave allowance they have, and the reasons for not being able to take leave.

### More than four in ten (44%) personnel agree that they are able to maintain a balance between personal and working life

Overall this proportion has increased by four percentage points from 2018. This is largely driven by increases amongst Royal Navy and Army Other Ranks

### Officers are more satisfied with ability to plan their lives compared to Other Ranks

% satisfied with the ability to plan their lives in the short/long term



Officers are more satisfied with their ability to plan their own life both short term (work/weekends) and long term (holidays) compared to Other Ranks. This is particularly the case for Royal Marines.

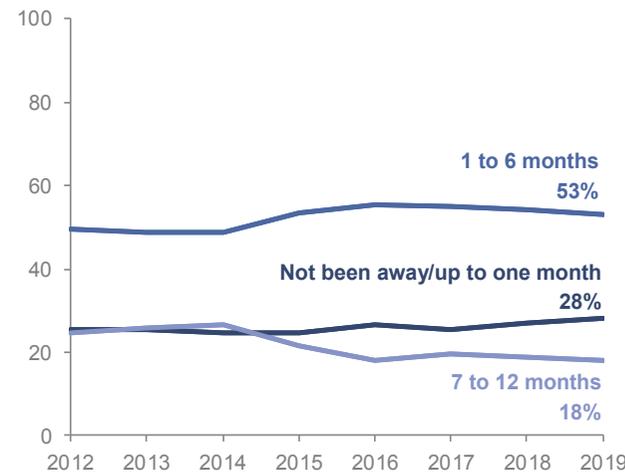
### Royal Marines<sup>1</sup> are the least satisfied with the effect Service life has on their partner's career

Of those who are married or in a long term relationship, just over one in seven (16%) Royal Marines are satisfied with the effect on their partner's career, compared to at least one in five personnel from the other Services.

<sup>1</sup> Of those RM personnel who are married/in a long term relationship (72% in 2019).

### The amount of time personnel spent away from their families and friends in the last year remains unchanged since 2018

% 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, a third of personnel are satisfied with the amount of time they spent away from family and friends (up from 30% in 2018).

### Around three in ten (29%) personnel are satisfied with the opportunities available to them to work flexibly this year

Around a third of personnel (32%) are dissatisfied and a further 39% feel neutral about their opportunities to work flexibly. Other Ranks are less satisfied (26%) compared to Officers (43%).

The MOD modernised its flexible working offer on 1st April 2019 by introducing Flexible Service, which allows Regular personnel of the Armed Forces to ask to temporarily work part time and/or restrict their separation from home base.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/flexible-engagements-system-what-you-need-to-know>

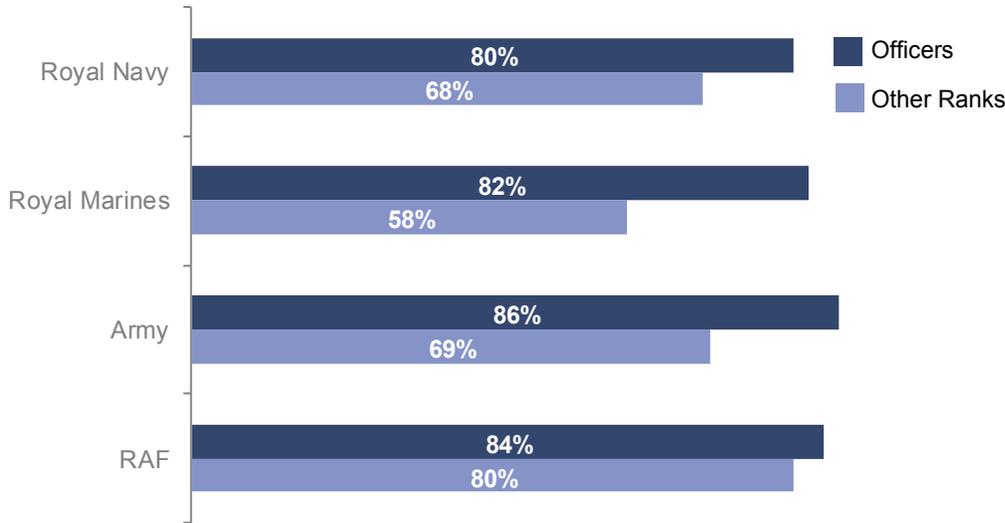
**Over four in ten (45%) personnel perceive their workload to be too high, unchanged since 2013**

Just under half (49%) rate their workload as about right, and a further 5% rating their workload as too low.

Other Ranks are more likely to rate their workload as about right (50%) compared to Officers (44%).

**Officers are more satisfied with their overall leave allowance than Other Ranks**

% satisfied with overall leave allowance



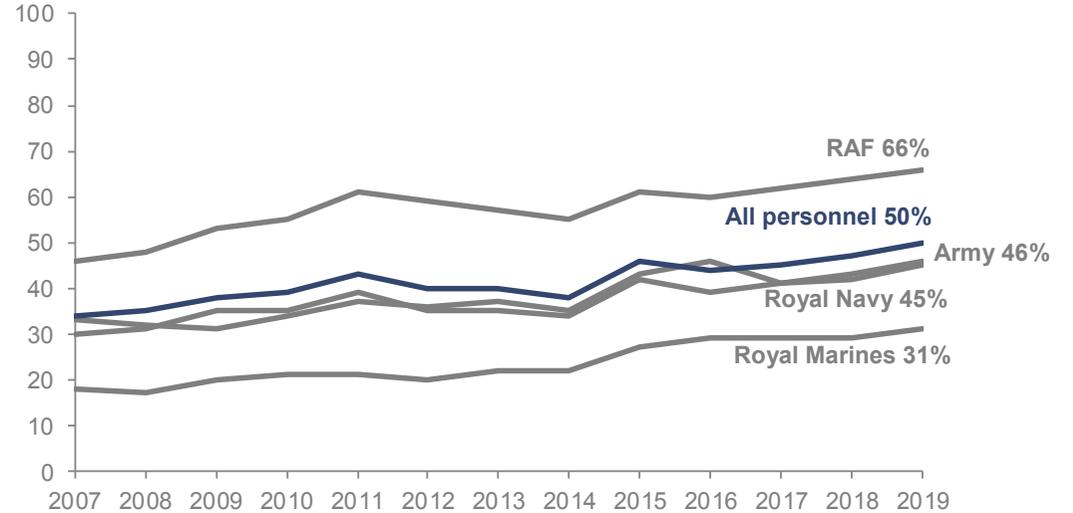
This difference is reflected across the Services, particularly for Royal Marines. RAF personnel are the most satisfied with their overall leave allowance compared to the other Services.

**'Workload' continues to be the main reason for personnel not using all their leave (48%)**

This year has seen a decrease in the proportion of personnel citing 'undermanning' as the reason they did not take all their annual leave allowance (from 38% in 2018 to 34%).

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

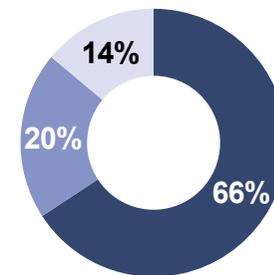
% satisfied with opportunities to take leave when they want to



Since 2007, this increase in satisfaction has been observed amongst Officers (up 12 percentage points) and Other Ranks overall (up 16 percentage points).

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

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



This remains unchanged since 2018.

RAF personnel are the most satisfied with the amount of leave they were able to take (72%), with Royal Marines being least satisfied (58%).

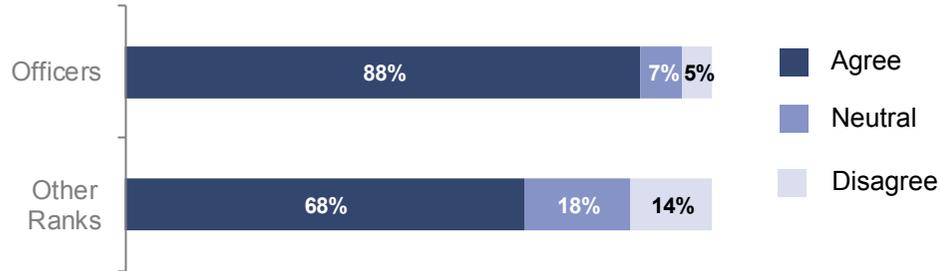
■ Satisfied ■ Neutral ■ Dissatisfied

## 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.

### More than seven in ten (72%) personnel agree that they are treated fairly at work

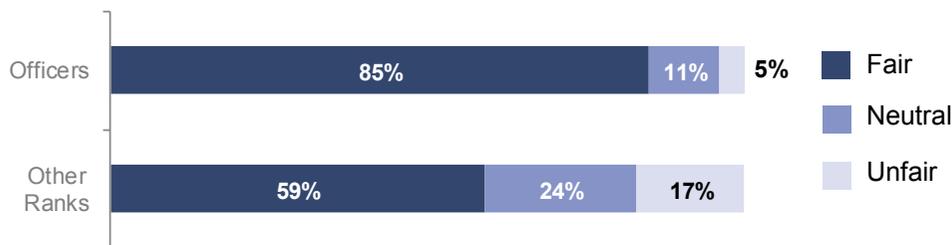
% agree/disagree they are treated fairly at work



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

### Officers (85%) are more likely than Other Ranks (59%) to feel the discipline system is fair

Views on the discipline system



Royal Marine Officers are more likely to think the discipline is fair (93%) compared to Officers in the other three Services.

Since 2018, the Army has seen an increase in the proportion who feel the discipline system is fair (from 58% in 2018 to 62%), whereas the RAF have seen a decrease (from 70% to 66%). These changes are largely driven by Other Ranks.

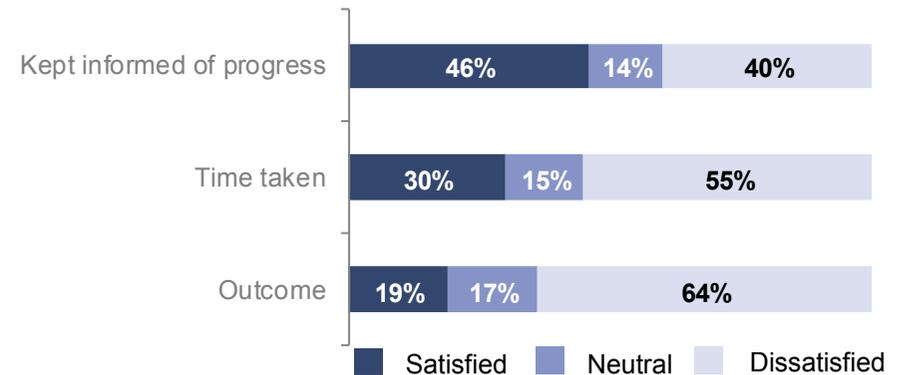
### Just over one in ten (11%) personnel report that they have been subject to bullying, discrimination or harassment in the last 12 months, unchanged since 2018

#### The majority of personnel who have been subject to bullying, discrimination or harassment do not make a complaint (93%)

The top three reasons why personnel did **not** make a formal written complaint are: not believing anything would be done if a complaint was made (57%); belief that it might adversely affect their career (50%), and not wanting to go through the complaints procedure (30%).

#### Of those who made formal complaint about bullying, discrimination and/or harassment<sup>1</sup>, over half are dissatisfied with the time taken and the outcome of the complaint process

Views on aspects of the formal written complaint process<sup>1</sup>



89% of Officers and 67% of Other Ranks are aware to some extent how the Service Complaints Ombudsman can help them with a bullying, discrimination or harassment complaint.



<sup>16</sup> Based on those who submitted a formal written complaint (<1%).

# Section 11 - Health, Fitness and Welfare

Section 11 covers satisfaction with various aspects of health, fitness, well-being and the provision of welfare services. This includes medical treatment, fitness facilities and welfare support for personnel and their families.

## Measuring well-being

The Office for National Statistics 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>.

### Average well-being scores of Service personnel:

How satisfied are you with your life nowadays?

**6.2 out of 10**

Overall, to what extent do you feel the things you do in your life are worthwhile?

**6.3 out of 10**

Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?

**6.1 out of 10**

Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?

**3.4 out of 10**

0 = Not at all, 10=Completely

## National comparison

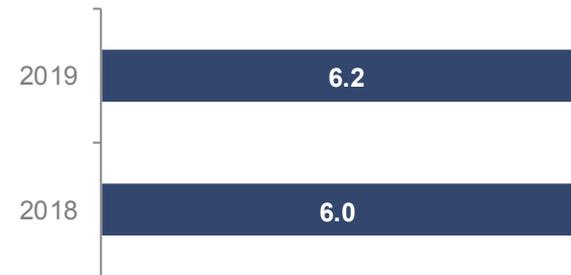
The demographic make-up of the Armed Forces is different to the general population: Armed Forces personnel are predominantly male and aged between 18 and 55. Armed Forces well-being scores are therefore not directly comparable to the general population. However, to provide some context, the average national well-being scores for UK males<sup>2</sup> ranged between 7.5 and 7.9 the average anxiety score is 2.8. For male Service personnel the average well-being scores range between 6.0 and 6.3; the average anxiety score is 3.4.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/bulletins/measuringnationalwellbeing/july2017tojune2018>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/datasets/personalwellbeingestimatesbyageandsex>

## The average score for “How satisfied are you with your life nowadays?” has increased this year

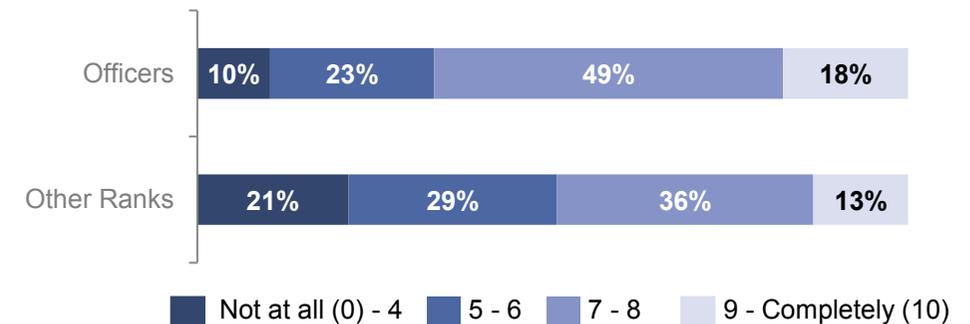
Average score: How satisfied are you with your life nowadays?



The average scores for “How happy did you feel yesterday?” and “To what extent do you feel the things you do in your life are worthwhile?” also improved this year.

## Officers have higher well-being scores than Other Ranks

Views on how worthwhile the things they do in life are



Officers have higher average scores for their life satisfaction, happiness and how worthwhile the things they do in life are than Other Ranks. They also have lower average anxiety scores.

**The proportion of personnel satisfied with medical care has increased this year**

**82%** are satisfied with access to medical care.  
 ↑ *Three percentage points from 2018*

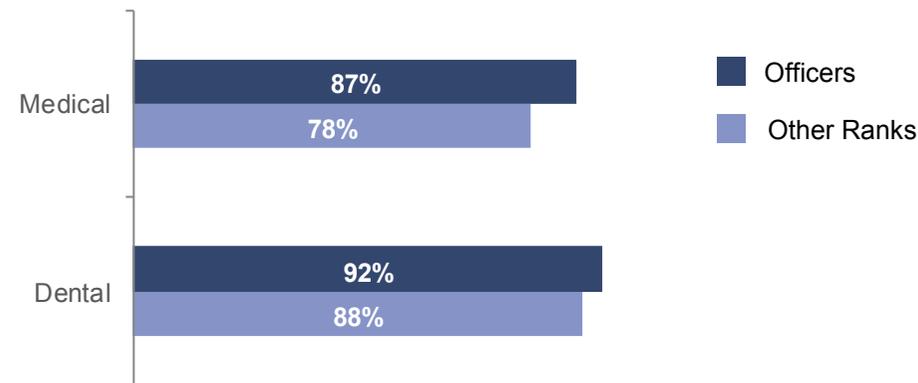
**80%** are satisfied with medical treatment.  
 ↑ *Three percentage points from 2018*

These changes are due to increases in satisfaction amongst Other Ranks.

Satisfaction with dental treatment remains high: 85% are satisfied with access to dental care and 89% are satisfied with dental treatment.

**Officers are more satisfied than Other Ranks with both medical and dental treatment**

% satisfied with medical/dental treatment



Officers are also more satisfied with access to medical care (86%) than Other Ranks (81%). However there is no longer any difference between their levels of satisfaction with access to dental care (both 85%).

**The proportions of personnel satisfied with their opportunities to take part in fitness activities and Adventurous Training have increased this year**

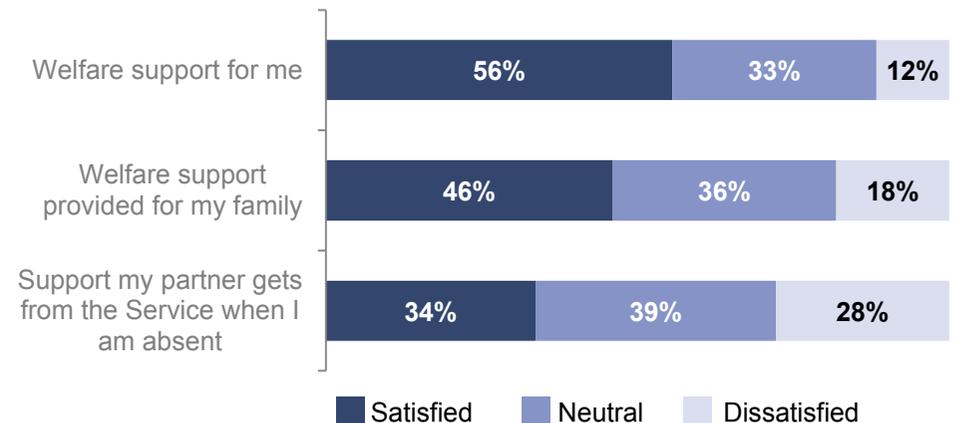
**70%** are satisfied with the opportunities to undertake fitness activities.  
 ↑ *Four percentage points from 2018*

**47%** are satisfied with the opportunities to take part in Adventurous Training.  
 ↑ *Three percentage points from 2018*

About three-quarters of Service personnel are satisfied with sports, exercise and fitness facilities, unchanged from last year.

**Over half of personnel are satisfied with the welfare support provided to them, whilst less than half are satisfied with welfare support provided to their family**

% levels of satisfaction with...



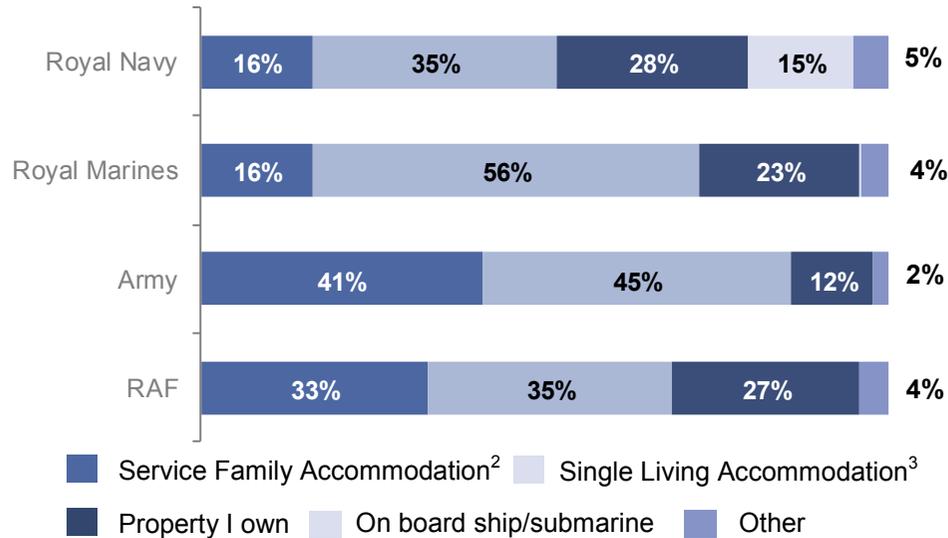
Lower levels of satisfaction are reported for the support their partner gets when they are absent with just over a third being satisfied.

## 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



About two in five (39%) personnel live in Single Living Accommodation (SLA) and about a third (32%) live in Service Family Accommodation (SFA) during the working week.

Army personnel are more likely to live in SFA and less likely to live in their own property compared to the other Services, whereas Royal Marines personnel are more likely to live in SLA.

Officers are more likely to live in SFA (35%) or their own property (28%) during the working week compared to Other Ranks (32% and 17% respectively) and less likely to live in SLA (Officers 24%; Other Ranks 42%).

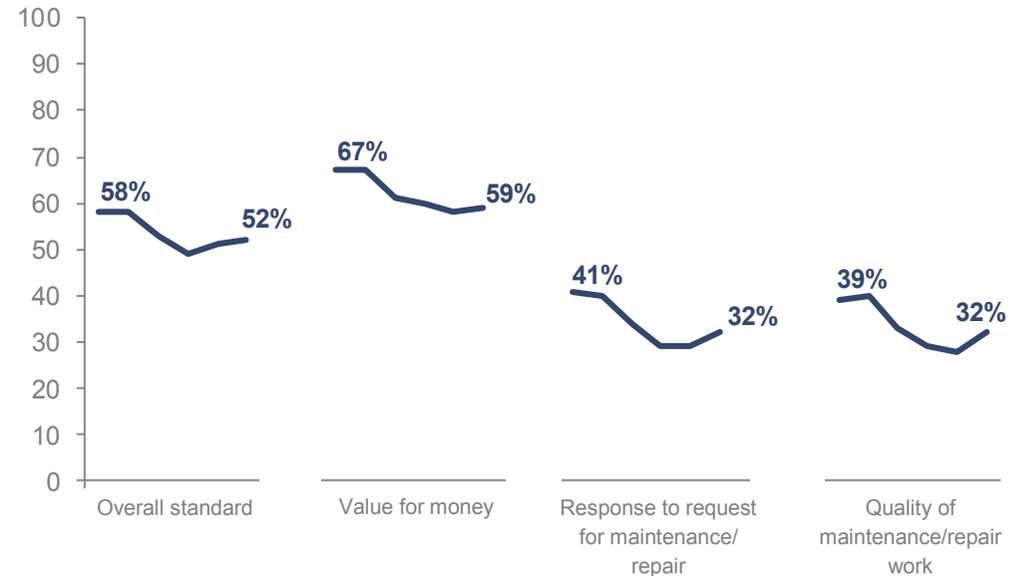
<sup>1</sup> Service accommodation refers to SFA, SLA, Substitute SFA, Substitute SLA, on board ship/submarine.

<sup>2</sup> Includes Substitute SFA

<sup>3</sup> Includes Substitute SLA

### Following large decreases in 2016, satisfaction with the overall standard of Service accommodation<sup>1</sup> has remained fairly steady in 2019

% satisfied with different aspects of Service Accommodation, 2014-2019



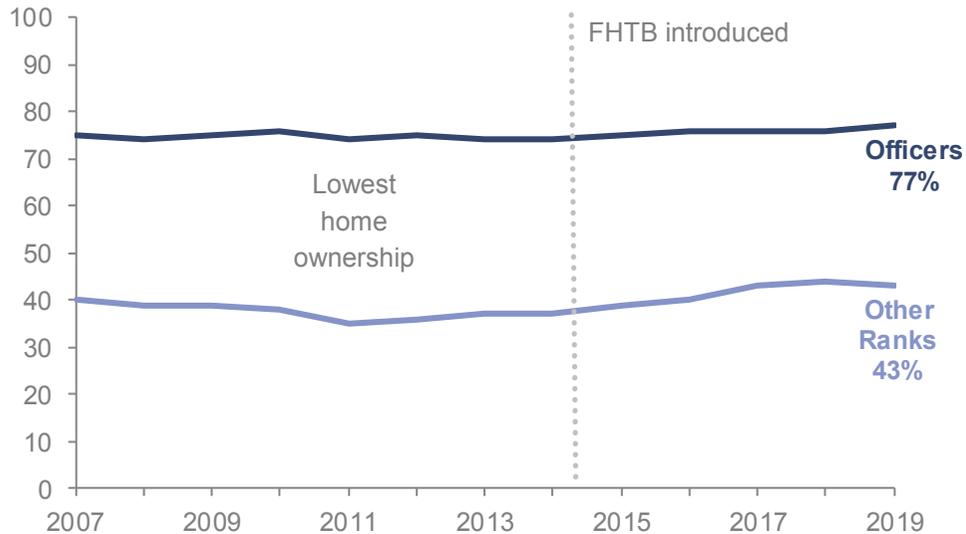
Satisfaction with the response to and quality of maintenance/repair work has increased since 2018 (both up four percentage points), largely driven by Army Other Ranks. However, satisfaction is still below levels previously reported.

Royal Navy personnel are more satisfied with the overall standard, value for money and response to maintenance work of SFA compared to last year.

Royal Marine Other Ranks are the most dissatisfied with various aspects of SLA compared to Other Ranks in the other three Services; their satisfaction with the overall standard of SLA remains at a historic low (38%).

## Half of personnel own their own home, with Officers (77%) more likely to own their own home than Other Ranks (43%)

% owning their own home



Since 2015 (the year after the introduction of Forces Help to Buy (FHTB)) the proportion of Other Ranks owning their own home has increased, but remains at the same level reported in 2018. There has been no change for Officers over the same period. As at 31st March 2019, 83% of FHTB payments were made to Other Ranks.

Home ownership remains much lower amongst Army personnel compared to the other three Services.

**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-201819>

**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/what-you-need-to-know-about-fam>

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



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

Other Ranks (65%) are more likely to have selected affordability when compared to Officers (53%).

Overall, satisfaction with allowances for living in their own home remains unchanged this year. However, over half (51%) of Other Ranks are now satisfied with the opportunity to live in their own home, an increase of four percentage points since 2018.

## The most common reason why personnel purchased their own home continues to be the stability for themselves and their family, at 75%<sup>2</sup>

### Less than a third (29%) of personnel are satisfied with the standard of service from catering contractors on their unit

Officers (40%) continue to be more satisfied than Other Ranks (27%).

Royal Marines are more dissatisfied with the standard of service compared to last year (from 40% to 44%), largely driven by Royal Marine Officers.

### Personnel tend to use<sup>3</sup> Service-provided catering facilities at lunchtime (55%), with around a third (34%) using it in the evening

A higher proportion of RAF personnel never dine at their facilities compared to the other three Services.

<sup>1</sup> Of those personnel who do not own their own home (50% in 2019).

<sup>2</sup> Of those personnel who do own their own home (50% in 2019).

<sup>3</sup> Use is defined as at least sometimes.

## 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

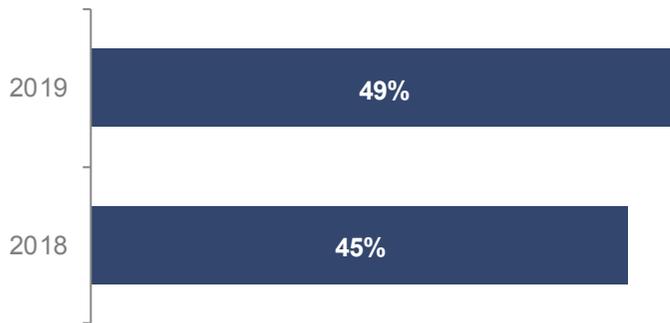
**54%** are married and a further **21%** are in long-term relationships.

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

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

**More personnel are reporting that their spouse/partner is in full-employment<sup>1</sup> this year; part-time employment remains unchanged**

% reporting that their spouse/partner is in full-time employment<sup>1</sup>

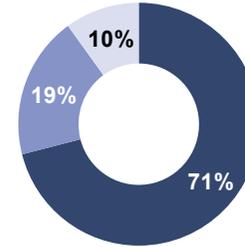


This change is largely driven by Army Officers and Royal Navy Other Ranks.

**The proportion of Royal Navy and RAF personnel registered to vote has fallen this year**

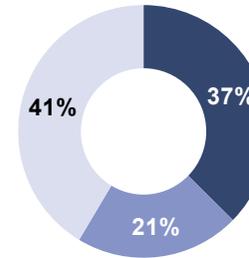
Whilst the majority of personnel are registered to vote (84%), the Royal Navy and RAF have both seen a reduction since 2018 (from 92% to 89% and from 93% to 90% respectively) in 2019.

<sup>1</sup> Includes self-employment but does not include those in the Armed Forces (11% in 2019).



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

This remains unchanged since 2017, with Officers (88%) more likely to agree than Other Ranks (68%).



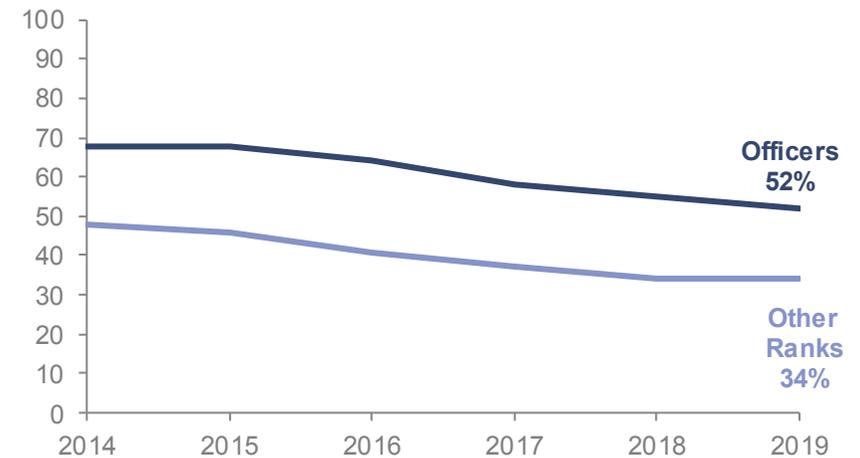
**Just over four in ten (41%) disagree that they are valued by society at large**

Other Ranks (45%) are more likely to disagree than Officers (27%).

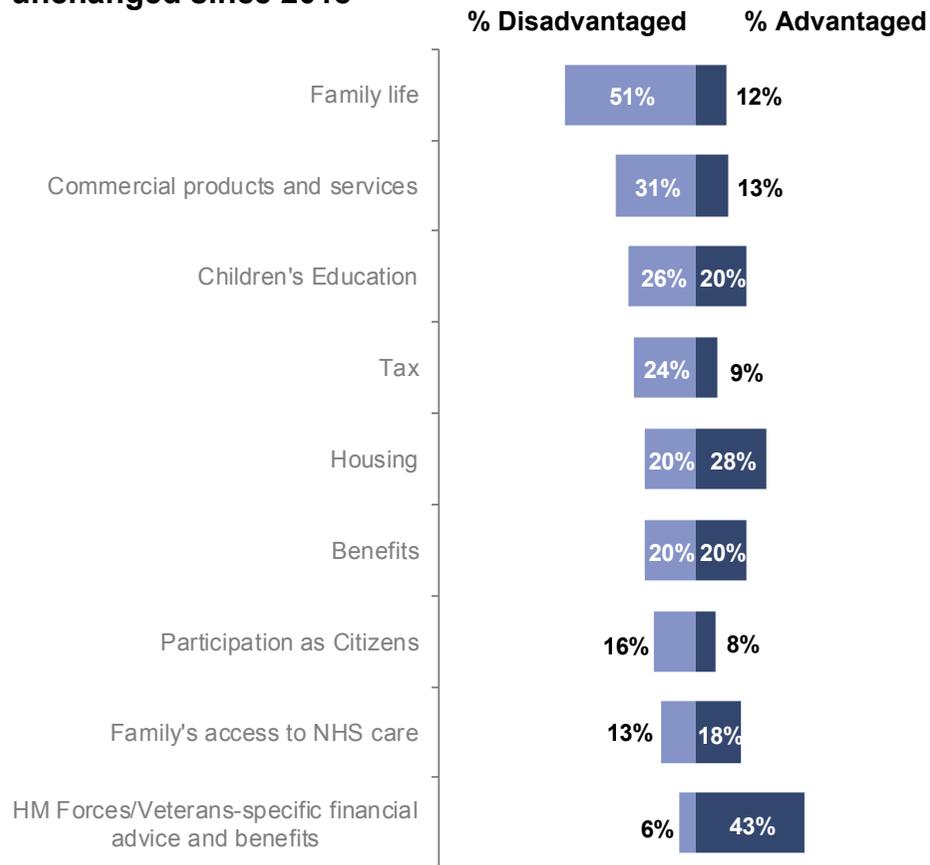
■ Agree ■ Neutral ■ Disagree

**The proportion of personnel who agree members of the Armed Forces are valued by society remains at a historic low**

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



**The proportions of personnel feeling advantaged or disadvantaged compared to the general public are largely unchanged since 2018**



Over one in ten (12%) feel advantaged about family life (up from 9% in 2018), whilst half (51%) feel disadvantaged. One in five feel advantaged about benefits compared to the general public (up from 18% in 2018); the same proportion feel disadvantaged.

**Data Quality Note**

Comparisons to 2018 are unavailable for “Commercial products and services” and “HM Forces/Veterans-specific financial advice and discounts” as these were new questions in 2019.

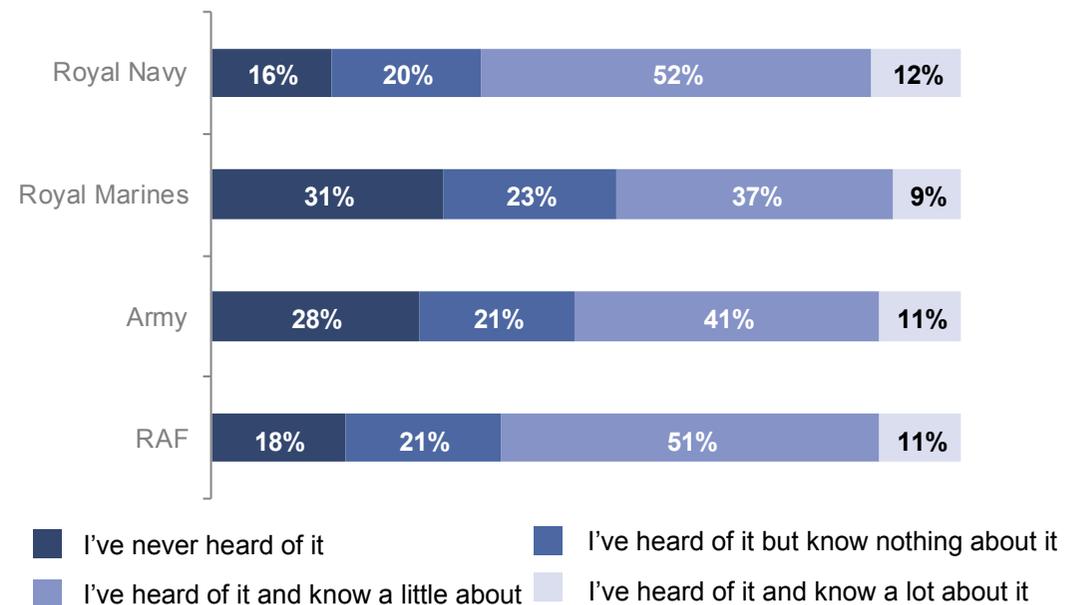
“Neutral” and “Don’t know / N/A” responses have been excluded from the chart.

**The Armed Forces Covenant** The Armed Forces Covenant is a promise by the nation ensuring that those who serve or who have served in the Armed Forces, and their families, are treated fairly.

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

**The majority of personnel (77%) have at least heard of the Armed Forces Covenant, unchanged since 2018**

Awareness of the Armed Forces Covenant



Royal Navy and RAF personnel are most likely to have at least heard of the Armed Forces Covenant (84% and 82% respectively) compared to the Army and Royal Marines (72% and 69% respectively).

Officers are more likely to have at least heard of the Armed Forces Covenant (97%) compared to Other Ranks (72%).

## 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.

The proportion of personnel who agree that action has been, and will be taken on the results of AFCAS has returned to levels previously reported, following a decline since 2016

**20%** agree that effective action has been taken on the results of AFCAS.

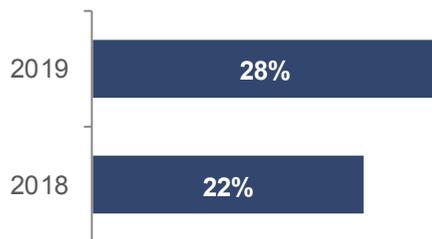
**25%** believe that leaders in their Service will take action on the results.

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

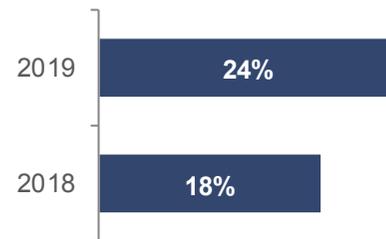
Changes are largely driven by more Army personnel agreeing with these statements this year

% Army personnel who agree that...

...leaders in their Service will take action on the results



...effective action has been taken on the results of AFCAS

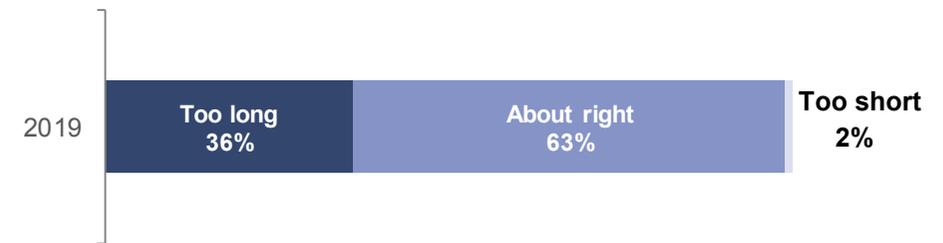


Royal Navy have also seen increases of three percentage points in the proportions of personnel who agree that effective action has been and will be taken since 2018 (up to 17% and 22% respectively).

In 2019 the survey achieved an overall response rate of 42%, a two percentage point increase since 2018

More than six in ten (63%) personnel think the survey length is about right, unchanged since last year

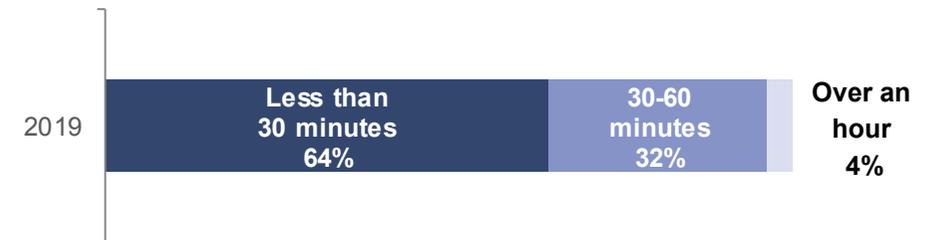
% views on survey length



The proportion of RAF personnel who think the survey is too long has increased four percentage points since last year to just over three in ten (31%).

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

Length of survey completion



# 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 (2018) are presented, along with the differences from 2014 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 2018	% Change from 2014
B2.1	How satisfied are you with Service life in general? Positive= % satisfied		46	+5	-2
B2.2	How would you rate your level of morale? Positive= % high		41	+5	↔
B2.3	How would you rate the level of morale of your Unit? Positive= % high		22	+5	↔
B2.4	How would you rate the level of morale of your Service as a whole? Positive= % high		9	+2	-4
B2.5	How satisfied are you with your job in general? Positive= % satisfied		58	+3	↔
B7.3	I am proud to be in the Service Positive= % agree		75	↔	-6
B7.4	I am valued by the Service Positive= % agree		35	+4	+6
B7.5	I would recommend joining the Service to others Positive= % agree		47	+5	+6

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

## Key Questions - Work and Line Management

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2018	% Change from 2014
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		57	+4	+6
B3.3	The standard of major equipment I have to do my job Positive= % satisfied		36	+3	-6
B5.2	My immediate superior supports me in my job Positive= % agree		76	↔	+4
B5.3	My immediate superior sets a positive example Positive= % agree		70	↔	+2
B5.5	My immediate superior is supportive over work/life balance issues Positive= % agree		71	↔	+8
B5.12	I am satisfied with the leadership provided by my immediate supervisor Positive= % satisfied		69	↔	N/A

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

## Key Questions - Leadership and Managing Change

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2018	% Change from 2014
B6.1	Senior leaders of the Service understand and represent my interests	<p>Positive= % agree</p>	25	+2	↔
B6.6	I have confidence in the leadership of the Service	<p>Positive= % agree</p>	33	+4	N/A
B9.3	Change is managed well in the Service	<p>Positive= % agree</p>	25	+5	-3

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

## Key Questions - Working with Others

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2018	% Change from 2014
B8.7	How do you rate the contribution of the Reserves? <sup>1</sup>	<p>Positive= % valuable</p>	69	+4	N/A
B8.8	How well-integrated into the Service are the Reserves? <sup>1</sup>	<p>Positive= % well-integrated</p>	61	+3	N/A
B8.9	How do you rate the professionalism of the Reserves? <sup>1</sup>	<p>Positive= % professional</p>	71	+4	N/A

<sup>1</sup> Of those who have had working contact with Armed Forces Reserves (50%).

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

## Key Questions - Allowances, Pay and JPA

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2018	% Change from 2014
B1.1	The X-Factor in my salary is enough Positive= % agree		30	+3	+2
B1.2	The pay and benefits I receive are fair for the work I do Positive= % agree		35	+4	N/A
B1.4	My rate of basic pay Positive= % satisfied		35	+5	-4
B1.8	My Recruitment and Retention Pay (RRP) Positive= % satisfied		22	↔	-8
B1.5	My pension benefits Positive= % satisfied		31	↔	↔

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

## Key Questions - Deployment

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2018	% Change from 2014
<b>B10.4</b>	Deployment notice in current/last deployment Positive= % satisfied		<b>66</b>	↔	N/A
<b>B10.5</b>	Pre-operational/deployment training for current/last deployment Positive= % satisfied		<b>62</b>	↔	N/A
<b>B10.9</b>	Welfare support I received when I returned from operational deployment Positive= % satisfied		<b>46</b>	↔	N/A
<b>B10.10</b>	The welfare support that my family received when I returned from deployment Positive= % satisfied		<b>39</b>	↔	N/A
<b>B10.19</b>	The frequency of my operational deployments Positive= % about right		<b>58</b>	↔	N/A
<b>B10.20</b>	The length of my operational deployments Positive= % about right		<b>74</b>	↔	N/A

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

## Key Questions - Training, Development and Career

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2018	% Change from 2014	
B4.2	Career management service provided Positive= % satisfied	RN		38	+3	+2
		RM				
Army						
RAF						
B4.6	I have the knowledge, skills and experience to do my job Positive= % agree	RN		86	↔	-2
		RM				
Army						
RAF						
B4.7	My knowledge, skills and experience are being used Positive= % agree	RN		72	↔	↔
		RM				
Army						
RAF						
B4.10	The notice I received for my current/last assignment Positive= % satisfied	RN		70	↔	+5
		RM				
Army						
RAF						
B4.13	The fairness of the promotion system Positive= % satisfied	RN		34	↔	-6
		RM				
Army						
RAF						
B4.14	My opportunities for promotion Positive= % satisfied	RN		42	+2	↔
		RM				
Army						
RAF						
B11.4	The extent to which I am doing the job for which I was trained Positive= % satisfied	RN		60	+3	↔
		RM				
Army						
RAF						

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

## Key Questions - Future Plans

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2018	% Change from 2014
B12.1	What are your plans for the future? To stay serving as long as I can Positive= % ticked		31	↔	-5
B12.1	What are your plans for the future? To stay serving to the end of current engagement/commission Positive= % ticked		27	↔	+3
B12.3	How actively have you searched for a job outside the Service in the last 12 months? Positive = % very or quite actively		40	↔	N/A
B12.6	When you leave the Service, would you consider joining the Volunteer Reserve Forces? Full-time Positive= % ticked		19	↔	+2
B12.7	When you leave the Service, would you consider joining the Volunteer Reserve Forces? Part-time Positive= % ticked		29	↔	+7

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

## Key Questions - Work/Life Balance

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2018	% Change from 2014
B3.5	How would you rate your workload over the last 12 months? Positive= % about right		49	↔	↔
B14.9	I am able to maintain a balance between my personal and working life Positive= % agree		44	+4	N/A
B15.2	The opportunity to take leave when I want to Positive = % satisfied		50	+3	+11
B15.3	The amount of leave I was able to take in the last 12 months Positive= % satisfied		66	↔	+11

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

## Key Questions - Fairness at Work

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2018	% Change from 2014
B13.1	I am treated fairly at work Positive= % agree		72	↔	N/A
B13.2	The Service discipline system is fair Positive= % fair		64	↔	↔
B13.3	Do you believe you have been subject to bullying, discrimination or harassment in the last 12 months? Positive= % ticked yes		11	↔	N/A
B13.4	Do you believe you have been subject to <b>bullying</b> in the last 12 months? Positive= % ticked yes		5	↔	N/A
B13.5	Do you believe you have been subject to <b>discrimination</b> in the last 12 months? Positive= % ticked yes		7	↔	N/A
B13.6	Do you believe you have been subject to <b>harassment</b> in the last 12 months? Positive= % ticked yes		3	↔	N/A

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

## Key Questions - Health, Fitness and Welfare

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2018	% Change from 2014
B16.1	Being able to access the medical care when I needed it Positive= % satisfied		82	+3	+3
B16.2	The medical treatment Positive= % satisfied		80	+3	N/A
B16.4	The dental treatment Positive= % satisfied		89	+2	+3
B17.1	Service sport, exercise and fitness facilities in general Positive= % satisfied		74	↔	-2
B17.2	My opportunities to undertake fitness activities (e.g. to meet fitness standards) Positive= % satisfied		70	+4	+4
B18.1	The welfare support provided by the Service for me Positive= % satisfied		56	N/A	N/A
B18.2	The welfare support provided by the Service for my family Positive= % satisfied		46	N/A	N/A
B18.3	The support my spouse/partner gets from the Service when I am absent Positive= % satisfied		34	N/A	N/A

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

## Key Questions - Accommodation and Catering

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2018	% Change from 2014
<b>B19.6</b>	The overall standard of Service Accommodation <sup>1</sup> Positive= % satisfied		<b>52</b>	↔	-6
<b>B19.38</b>	The opportunity to live in my own home (For home owners only) Positive= % satisfied		<b>49</b>	↔	+9
<b>B19.39</b>	The allowances for living in my own home (For home owners only) Positive= % satisfied		<b>30</b>	↔	+8
<b>B19.44</b>	Have you used a Government Affordable Housing Scheme in the last year to buy or rent? Positive= % used		<b>3</b>	↔	N/A
<b>B20.15</b>	The availability of food during the week on my unit e.g. opening hours Positive= % satisfied		<b>51</b>	↔	N/A
<b>B20.17</b>	The standard of service from catering contractors on my unit Positive= % satisfied		<b>29</b>	↔	N/A

<sup>1</sup> Service accommodation includes Service Family Accommodation (SFA), Substitute SFA, Single Living Accommodation (SLA), Substitute SLA and on board ship/submarine.

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

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

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2018	% Change from 2014
B21.1	I am married / in a Civil partnership Positive = % ticked		54	↔	+2
B21.3	I have children that I support financially Positive = % ticked		52	↔	+2
B21.9	I am satisfied with the locally provided childcare facilities Positive = % ticked		47	↔	N/A
B22.1	I am currently registered to vote Positive = % ticked		84	↔	+15
B22.4	I have heard of the Armed Forces Covenant Positive = % heard of		77	↔	+4
B22.15	I offer an important service to the country Positive = % agree		71	↔	+2
B22.16	Members of the Armed Forces are valued by society at large Positive = % agree		37	↔	-14

<sup>1</sup> Of those who have children that they support financially and live with them/have shared access.

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

## Key Questions - Taking Action

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2018	% Change from 2014
B24.2	I think effective action has been taken in the Service on the results of AFCAS Positive = % agree		20	+4	N/A
B24.3	This survey is about right in length Positive = % about right		63	↔	+10

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

# Methodology

## 1. Target population

The target population for AFCAS 2019 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 2018 to February 2019, 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 2019 sample consisted of 28,814 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 59%, 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.

12,102 responses were used in the AFCAS 2019 analysis, giving an overall response rate of 42%. The table below contains detailed information on the number of questionnaires issued and received along with corresponding response rates.

67% of responses were received electronically and 33% were paper responses.

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

		Sample size	Surveys returned	2019 response rate	2018 response rate
<b>Royal Navy</b>	Officers	1555	941	61%	60%
	Ratings	7257	2304	32%	28%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>8812</b>	<b>3245</b>	<b>37%</b>	35%
<b>Royal Marines</b>	Officers	563	334	59%	56%
	Marines	4023	1852	46%	42%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>4586</b>	<b>2186</b>	<b>48%</b>	44%
<b>Army</b>	Officers	1776	1174	66%	64%
	Soldiers	7050	2389	34%	33%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>8826</b>	<b>3563</b>	<b>40%</b>	39%
<b>Royal Air Force</b>	Officers	1679	984	59%	59%
	Airmen	4911	2124	43%	42%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>6590</b>	<b>3108</b>	<b>47%</b>	46%
<b>All Services</b>	Officers	5573	3433	62%	60%
	Ranks	23241	8669	37%	36%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>28814</b>	<b>12102</b>	<b>42%</b>	40%

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 2019 analysis**

Weighting Class	Weighting Applied
RN_OF-7+	2.43
RN_OF-4 to 6	5.23
RN_OF-3	5.17
RN_OF-1 to 2	5.71
RN_OR-8 to 9	4.80
RN_OR-7	5.48
RN_OR-6	7.29
RN_OR-3 to 4	7.16
RN_OR-2	10.75

Weighting Class	Weighting Applied
RM_OF-4+	2.17
RM_OF-3	1.97
RM_OF-1 to 2	2.44
RM_OR-8 to 9	1.85
RM_OR-7	2.49
RM_OR-6	2.63
RM_OR-3 to 4	3.37
RM_OR-2	3.29

Weighting Class	Weighting Applied
Army_OF-7+	2.15
Army_OF-4 to 6	9.81
Army_OF-3	10.37
Army_OF-1 to 2	10.94
Army_OR-8 to 9	12.71
Army_OR-7	15.19
Army_OR-6	17.93
Army_OR-4	25.63
Army_OR-3	36.54
Army_OR-2	61.53

Weighting Class	Weighting Applied
RAF_OF-7+	2.17
RAF_OF-4 to 6	5.96
RAF_OF-3	6.29
RAF_OF-1 to 2	7.51
RAF_OR-7-9	7.68
RAF_OR-6	9.07
RAF_OR-3 to 4	11.81
RAF_OR-1 to 2	14.64

## 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 Career	B4.1 - B4.24
05 Your Line Management	B5.1 - B5.18
06 Senior Leadership	B6.1 - B6.6
07 Commitment	B7.1 - B7.14
08 Working with Others	B8.1 - B8.17
09 Change	B9.1 - B9.3
10 Your Deployment	B10.1 - B10.20
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 - B15.11
16 Your Health and Wellbeing	B16.1 - B16.8a
17 Fitness, Sport and Adventurous Training	B17.1 - B17.5
18 Welfare	B18.1 - B18.19
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 - B22.16
23 Your Background	B23.1 - B23.7
24 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	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 (FHTB)
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	Harassment	Includes unwanted conduct which is related to the characteristics mentioned above (see Discrimination 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 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	HIVE	Service information hub which assists personnel in a wide variety of topics affecting their everyday Service and personal life
Assisting Officer	Appointed to provide help and support to personnel either considering or having made a formal written complaint about discrimination, harassment or bullying	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
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	Marines	RM personnel of NATO ranks OR1 to OR9
Catering Retail and Leisure (CRL)	Provision of on-site facilities for dining, shopping and recreation by commercial partners	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
Commission	Officer's period of employment usually under contractual terms	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
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	Missing value(s)	Refers to the situation where a respondent has not submitted an answer or a valid answer to a question
DIN	Defence Instructions and Notices	MOD	Ministry of Defence
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	Morale	A measure of commitment and willingness to the ethos of a Service
Ethos	The nature, aims and objectives of a Service	N/A	Not applicable
Engagement	Period of employment usually under contractual terms	NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
Flexible Service	Allows Regular members of the Armed Forces to request part time working and/or restricted separation from home base, for a limited length of time	Naval Service	Comprises the Royal Navy (including the Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service) and the Royal Marines combined.
Flexible working	Agreed variation in starting and finishing working hours normally designed to meet work/home life balance	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
Force Development Activities	Refers to a wide range of activities designed to improve operational effectiveness	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".
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
RM	Royal Marines
RN	Royal Navy
RNRMW	Royal Navy Royal Marines Welfare Service
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', 'SSSA' 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
SSSA	Substitute Service Single Accommodation (formerly SSLA)
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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