



Ministry
of Defence

UK Regular Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey Results 2021



● Annual

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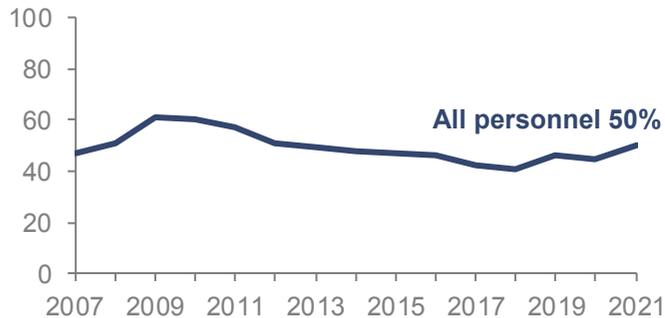
United Kingdom

This statistical release provides results from the Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey (AFCAS) 2021, 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.

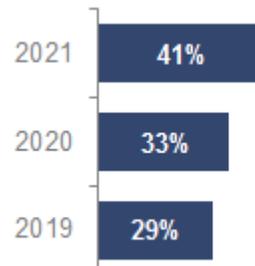
Half of personnel are now satisfied with Service life in general

Satisfaction with Service life has increased five percentage points since 2020, a return to 2014 levels. Yet, it is still below peak satisfaction reported in 2009 (61%).



Four in ten are now satisfied with the opportunity to work flexibly

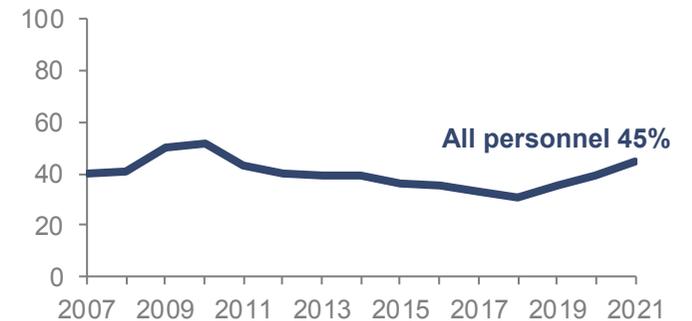
Satisfaction with the opportunity to work flexibly has increased for the second year in a row, up from a third in 2020.



Whilst following an increasing trend, this year's results may be due, in part, to the changes in working arrangements as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Satisfaction with pay has increased for a third year in a row, to 45%

Satisfaction with rate of pay has increased six percentage points since 2020 and 14 percentage points since 2018. However, this remains below peak satisfaction reported in 2010 (52%).



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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 Analysis-Publications@mod.gov.uk

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About these statistics

The 2021 Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey (AFCAS) was distributed to a sample of 27,862 trained UK Regular Armed Forces personnel between September 2020 and February 2021 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 Rate

Overall, 10,318 responses were received, representing a response rate of 37%.

Reference Tables

Reference tables, the Background Quality Report (BQR) and questionnaires for AFCAS 2021 are published as separate documents and can be found on the [AFCAS webpage](#). The BQR contains full details of the 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 Regular Armed Forces.

User Feedback

Defence Statistics are currently seeking feedback on changes to some questions within the AFCAS. Please visit the [AFCAS webpage](#) for more details. The closing date for feedback is 17 June 2021.

Following user feedback between October and December 2020, the decision has been taken to cease publication of the Key Questions section of this report. More information can be found in the BQR.

Changes since 2020 and COVID-19

AFCAS 2021 was in field during a time of national restrictions, imposed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and two national lockdowns (November 2020 and January 2021). Several areas of improvement are reported this year following increases since 2020, with many of the changes being driven by Army and RAF personnel. We should not completely ignore the potential impact of economic and labour conditions created by the COVID-19 pandemic on areas of Service life, such as pay and job security. In part, personnel may have reassessed their current employment situation, which might help explain some of the increases in favourable responses. Whether these increases are temporary or long-lasting is yet to be seen.

A National Statistics publication

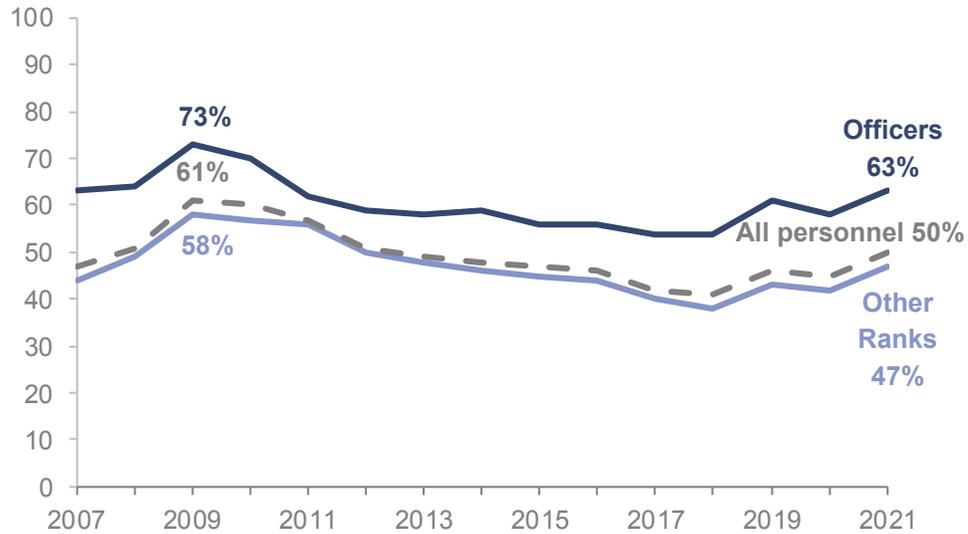
The United Kingdom Statistics Authority designated these statistics as National Statistics on 3rd June 2013, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Statistics. Further details about the development of this report since its confirmation as National Statistics, e.g. 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, commitment and engagement.

Satisfaction with Service life in general has improved this year, a return to levels reported in 2014

% satisfied with Service life in general



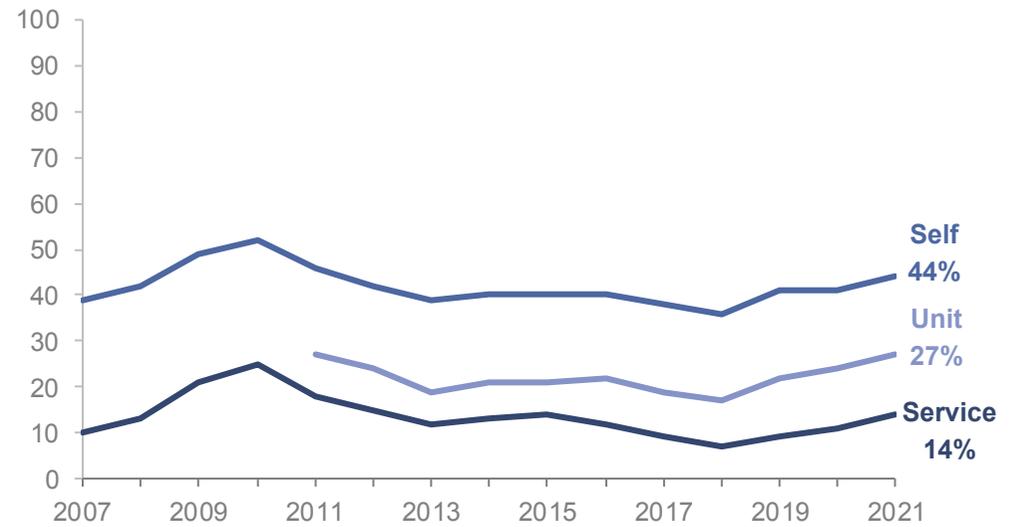
Half of personnel are now satisfied with Service life in general, up from 45% in 2020. This increase has largely been driven by Army and RAF personnel. Whilst this is a return to satisfaction levels reported in 2014, this is still below peak satisfaction in 2009.

Satisfaction with Service life amongst Royal Navy and Royal Marines personnel remains unchanged this year

Whilst Army and RAF personnel have both seen increases in satisfaction with Service life since last year, satisfaction levels for Royal Navy and Royal Marines personnel remain unchanged over the same period (at 41% and 44% respectively). As a result, Army and RAF personnel are now more satisfied with Service life than the Royal Navy and Royal Marines.

Overall, levels of high self, Unit and Service morale have been following an increasing trend since 2018

% reporting high...morale



Since 2018, the level of high self morale has increased nine percentage points. In the last year, high self morale has increased to 44% from 41%, largely driven by Army and RAF Other Ranks.

Levels of high self, Unit and Service morale remain unchanged for Royal Navy and Royal Marines in 2021, somewhat reflective of their satisfaction with Service life results.

Over a quarter (27%) of personnel report high Unit morale and 14% report high Service morale. Whilst these proportions are considerably lower than high self morale (44%), AFCAS consistently shows year-on-year that self morale is rated higher than Unit or Service morale.

Six in ten (61%) personnel are now satisfied with their job in general, up three percentage points since 2020

% satisfied with their job in general

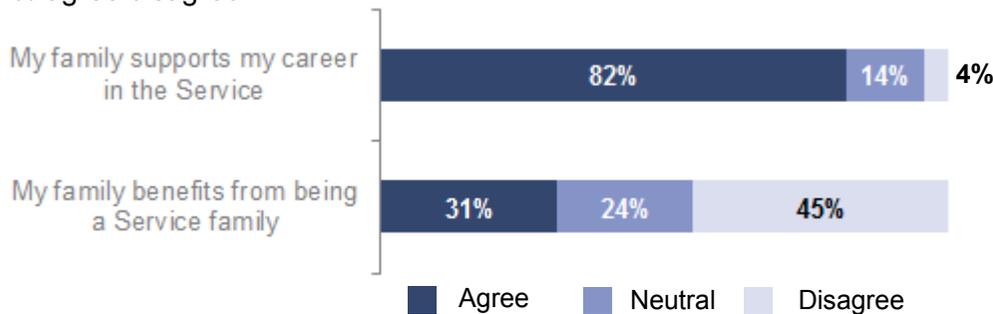


This is a return to the level of satisfaction in 2012, just below peak satisfaction reported in 2011 (64%).

Royal Marines are the least satisfied with aspects of their work including: their job in general (51%), the challenge in their job (48%), the amount of variety (45%) and the sense of achievement they get from their work (41%).

Whilst the majority (82%) of personnel agree that their family is supportive of their career, less than a third agree that their family benefits from being a Service family

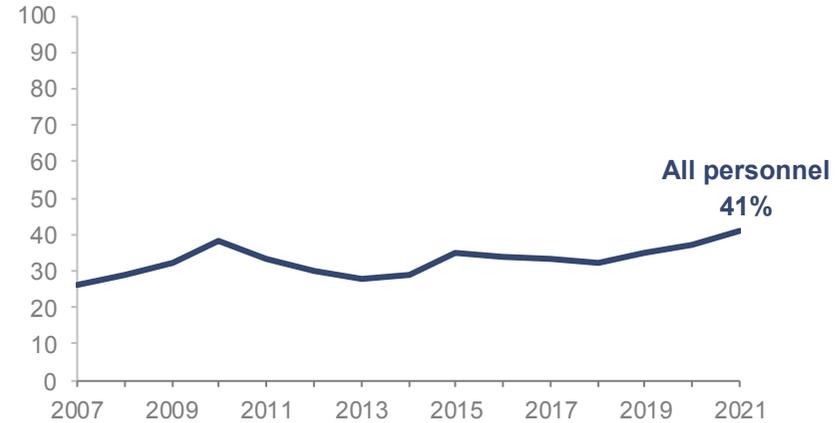
% agree/disagree



Over a third (36%) of Army personnel agree that their family benefits from being a Service family, more than any of the other Services.

The proportion of personnel feeling valued has been following an increasing trend since 2018, up to 41% this year

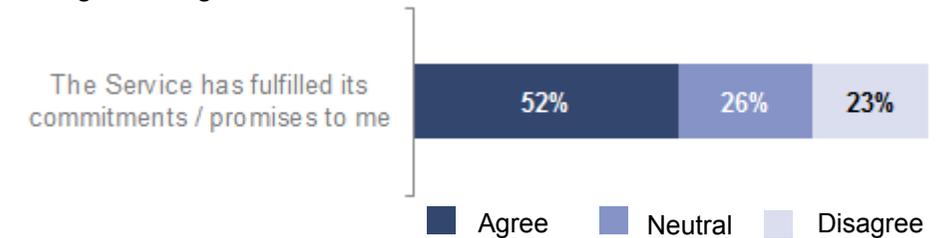
% feel valued by their Service



Although the proportion of personnel who feel valued by their Service is at its highest level since this question was first asked in 2007, three in ten (30%) personnel still do not feel valued by their Service.

Over half (52%) of personnel believe their Service has fulfilled its commitments to them in 2021

% agree/disagree



However this is well below the proportion who agree that they have fulfilled their commitments/promises to their Service (91%).

More personnel agree with the following aspects of commitment compared to last year:

- 79%** feel proud to be in their Service
↑ *Up three percentage points from 2020*
- 62%** feel a strong personal attachment to the Service
↑ *Up four percentage points from 2020*
- 57%** would recommend joining the Service to others
↑ *Up seven percentage points from 2020*
- 50%** agree the Service inspires me to do the best in my job
↑ *Up four percentage points from 2020*

As with morale, these changes are largely being driven by Army and RAF personnel, with levels of commitment for Royal Navy and Royal Marines personnel remaining unchanged over the same period.

Engagement Index

The Engagement Index is calculated using the same method as that used in the [Civil Service People Survey](#), using the following questions: How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following? (a) I am proud to be in the [Service]; (b) I would recommend joining the [Service] to others; (c) I feel a strong personal attachment to the [Service]; (d) The [Service] inspires me to do the best in my job; (e) The [Service] motivates me to help it achieve its objectives.

Civilian personnel comparison

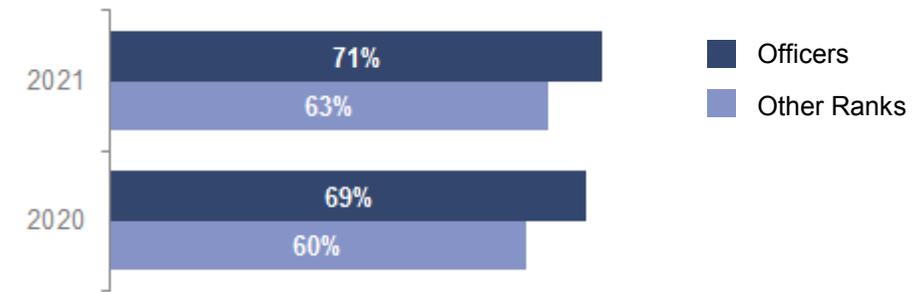
In the latest [Civil Service People Survey](#) (2020), MOD Civilians had an Engagement Index of 67%, up from 63% in 2019.

The Engagement Index for Service personnel is 64%

This is a slight increase from 61% in 2020 and has largely been driven by Army and RAF Other Ranks. The increase in engagement score is reflective of the changes to various commitment factors commented upon opposite.

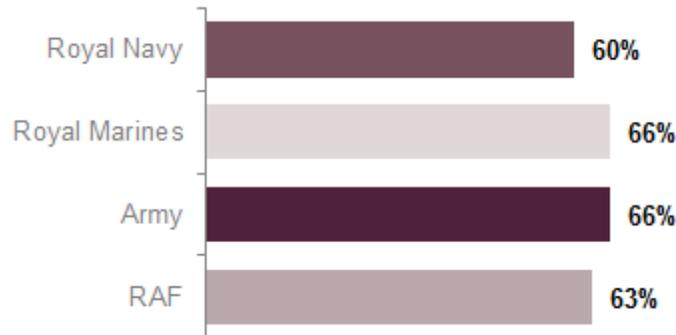
Officers continue to be more engaged than Other Ranks in 2021, although the gap has narrowed this year

Engagement Index



Royal Marines and Army personnel have a higher Engagement Index than the other Services

Engagement Index



The Engagement Index for the Royal Marines remains high, despite being the least satisfied with aspects of their job.

Section 2 - Work and Line Management

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

Attitudes towards the following aspects of work have increased to their highest levels this year

65% agree that they are encouraged to find better ways of working
 ↑ Up four percentage points from 2020

43% agree that where they work people do not automatically look for someone to blame when things go wrong
 ↑ Up three percentage points from 2020

Opinions about immediate superiors are at their highest levels

79% agree that their immediate superior supports them in their job.



74% agree that their immediate superiors set a positive example.

73% agree that they are encouraged to develop their skills.



73% agree that their immediate superior understands and represents their interests.

■ Agree ■ Neutral ■ Disagree

Army personnel are most likely to agree that their immediate superiors encourage them to develop their skills, help them understand how they contribute to objectives, and how major change decisions will affect them.

Attitudes towards team members have improved since 2020

The majority of personnel (84%) agree that they have confidence in themselves as a team (up from 81% in 2020).

Eight in ten (81%) agree that the people in their team can be relied upon to help when things get difficult in the job (up from 77% in 2020).

Satisfaction with the standard and availability of major equipment remains unchanged since 2019, both 37%

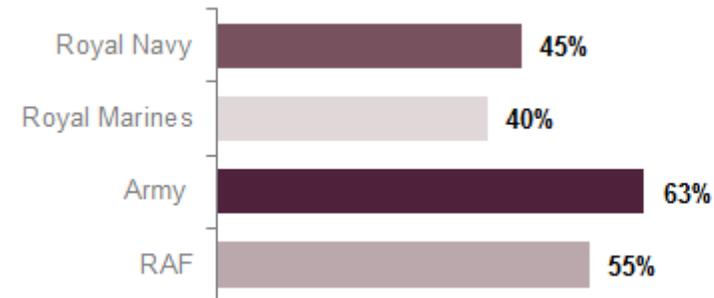
This is below peak satisfaction reported in previous years (45% and 41% respectively).

Satisfaction with personal equipment also remains unchanged since 2019

Less than six in ten (57%) personnel are satisfied with the standard of personal equipment; half of personnel are satisfied with the availability of personal equipment.

Army personnel are the most satisfied with the standard of personal equipment; Royal Marines are the least satisfied

% satisfied with the standard of personal equipment



Royal Marines personnel are also the least satisfied with the standard and availability of major equipment (22% and 24% respectively).

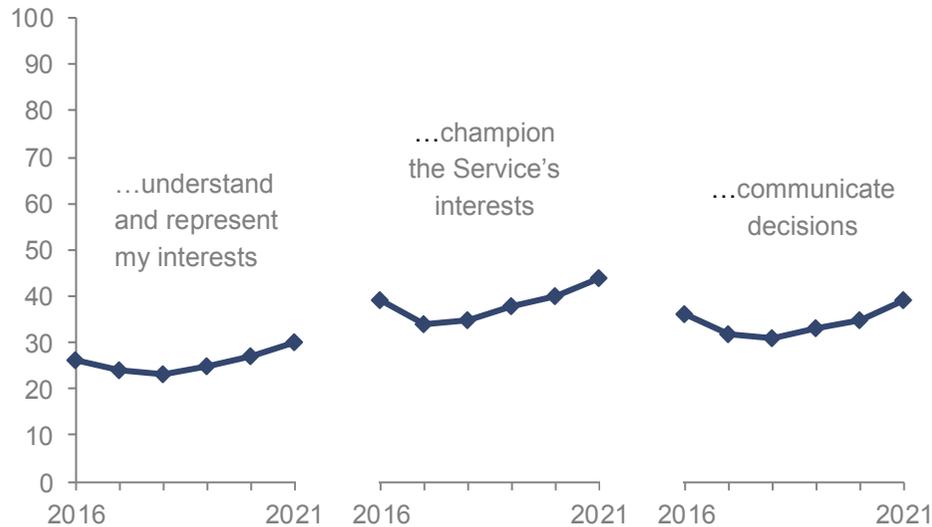
Whilst there is no difference in satisfaction with aspects of major equipment between Officers and Other Ranks, Officers are more satisfied with both the availability and standard of personal equipment than Other Ranks.

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 have improved since 2018

% agree that their senior leaders...



Furthermore, four in ten (40%) now have confidence in the leadership of their Service, up from three in ten (29%) in 2018.

Officers are more positive about some aspects of senior leadership than Other Ranks. For example, Officers are more likely to agree that senior leaders are keen to listen to their feedback (55%) than Other Ranks (41%).

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

3 in 10

personnel disagree that senior leaders are keen to listen to their feedback

3 in 10

personnel disagree that senior leaders communicate decisions to personnel

4 in 10

personnel disagree that senior leaders understand the impact of change on personnel

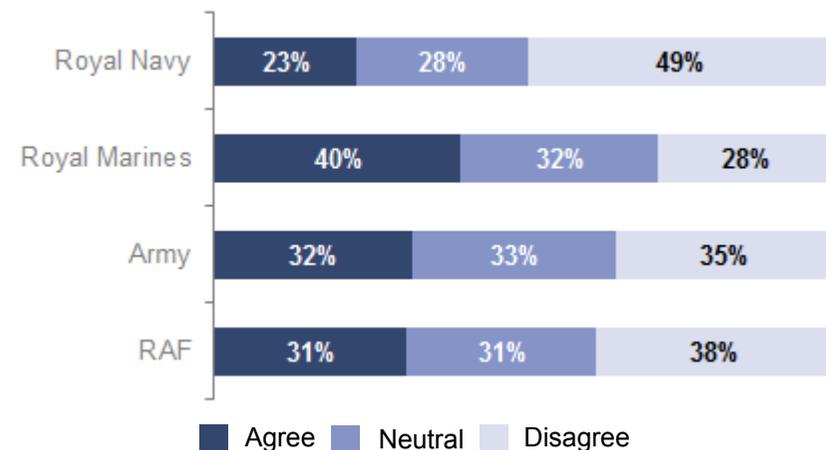
Attitudes towards change have improved since 2020

More personnel agree that change is managed well in their team (66%), their Unit (47%) and their Service (31%) compared to last year, each increasing by four percentage points. These positive attitudes towards change have increased for both Officers and Other Ranks.

Whilst Officers are more satisfied with how well change is managed in their team and Unit than Other Ranks, Other Ranks are more satisfied with how well change is managed in their Service.

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

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



Royal Navy continue to be the least positive about how well change is managed in their Service (23%) following increases in agreement amongst Army and RAF personnel since 2020.

Section 4 - Working with Others

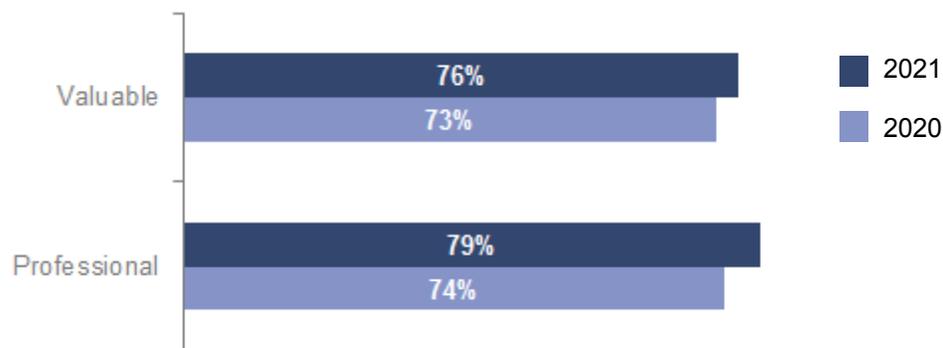
Section 4 focuses on working relationships with Reserves, MOD civil servants and contractors. The [Defence Reform Review of 2011](#) called for the closer integration of Regulars, Reserves, civil servants and contractors to ensure that Defence is supported by a sustainable, effective force.

Half (50%) of personnel have had working contact with Armed Forces Reserves

RAF personnel remain the most likely to have worked with the Reserves (62%), whilst the Royal Marines are the least likely (37%).

Opinions about the value and professionalism of the Armed Forces Reserves are more positive than they were in 2020

% rating Armed Forces Reserves as¹...



The increase in how professional the Reserves are viewed, since 2020, is evident across the Services, except for the Royal Navy. The increase in those rating the contribution of the Reserves as valuable is largely driven by Army and RAF personnel.

The proportion of personnel rating Reserves as well-integrated remains unchanged since last year (68%).

RAF personnel remain the most likely to rate the Reserves as professional (91%), valuable (84%) and well-integrated (79%).

Six in ten personnel have had working contact with MOD civil servants, unchanged since 2017

Of those who have had working contact with MOD civil servants:

80% rate the contribution of MOD civil servants as valuable.

78% rate MOD civil servants as professional.

72% rate MOD civil servants as well-integrated.

Royal Marines personnel are the least likely to have worked with MOD civil servants (48%). Additionally, Royal Marines are the least likely to rate MOD civil servants as professional (68%) and well-integrated (60%).

Over half (55%) of personnel have had working contact with MOD contractors

RAF personnel are the most likely to have had working contact with MOD contractors (67%), whilst Royal Marines are the least likely to have had working contact with MOD contractors (41%).

The proportions of personnel who rate MOD contractors as professional (66%), valuable (70%) and well-integrated (58%) have remained unchanged since 2020.

Similar to MOD civil servants, Royal Marines are also least likely to rate MOD contractors as professional (51%), valuable (57%) and well-integrated (45%).

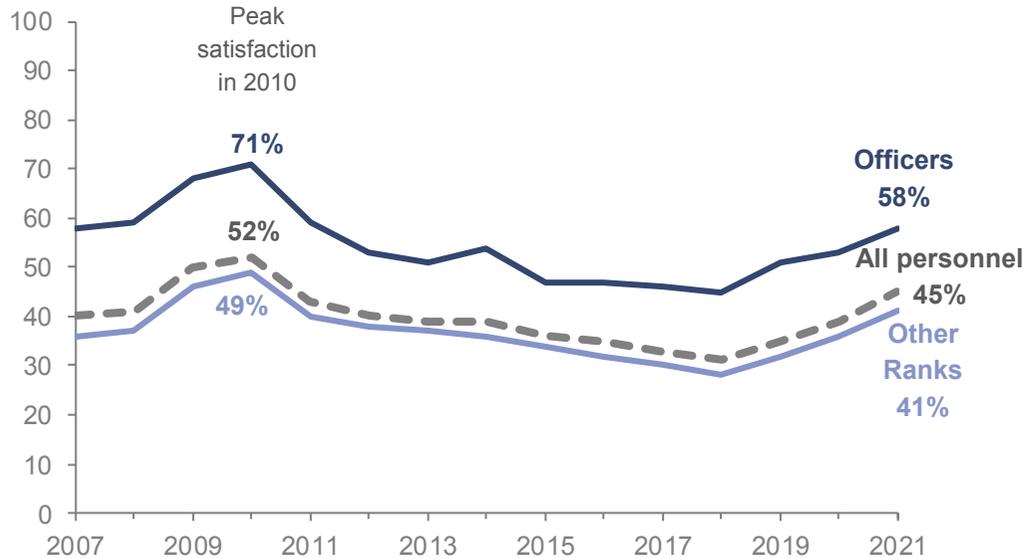
¹ Based on those who have had working contact with Armed Forces Reserves in the last two years (50% in 2021).

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 the rate of basic pay continues to improve this year from the low levels reported in 2018

% satisfied with basic rate of pay



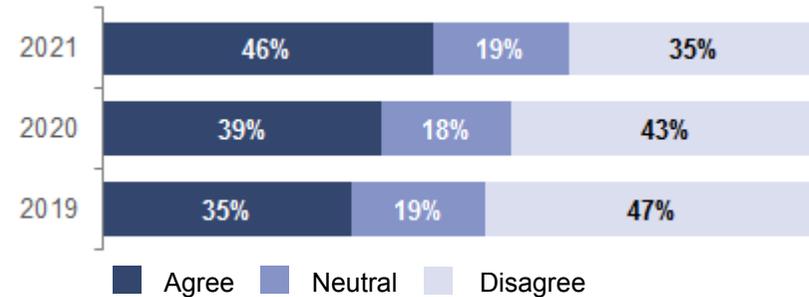
Overall satisfaction with pay has increased six percentage points since last year and 14 percentage points since the lowest levels reported in 2018. The increase reported this year can be seen across all Services, except in the Royal Navy where satisfaction levels have remained unchanged since 2020. Despite these increases, satisfaction with pay remains below peak satisfaction reported in 2010.

In July 2020, 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 49th report](#).

Civilian personnel views on pay Although not directly comparable, the latest [People Survey results](#) (2020) also show a notable increase in satisfaction regarding their pay and benefits for MOD civilians compared to 2019.

The proportion of personnel that agree the pay and benefits they receive are fair for the work they do has continued to increase this year, to 46%

% agree/disagree the pay and benefits they receive are fair



The proportion of personnel who agree that the pay and benefits they receive are fair is at the highest level since this question was first asked in 2015. However, over a third (35%) still disagree in 2021.

More Officers (56%) agree compared to Other Ranks (44%).

Just under four in ten (38%) agree that the X-Factor is enough compensation, up from 33% in 2020

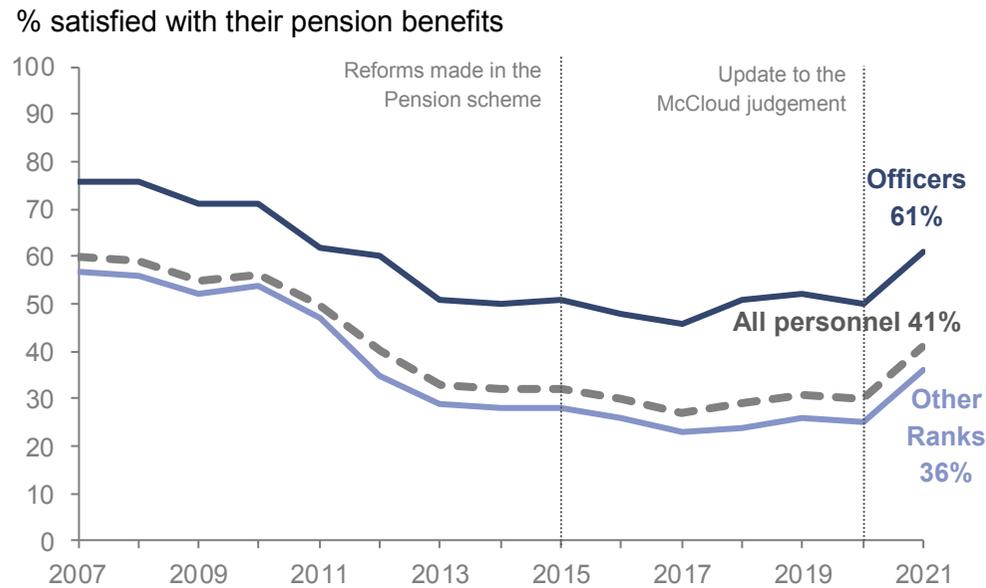
Despite this increase, just over four in ten (41%) disagree that the X-Factor is enough compensation for Service lifestyle.

More Officers agree (50%) compared to Other Ranks (36%).

Levels of agreement that pay and benefits are fair, and that the X-Factor is enough compensation have increased across all the Services this year, except for the Royal Navy, where levels remain unchanged since 2020.

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

Four in ten (41%) personnel are satisfied with their pension benefits, up from three in ten last year, a return to levels of satisfaction reported in 2012



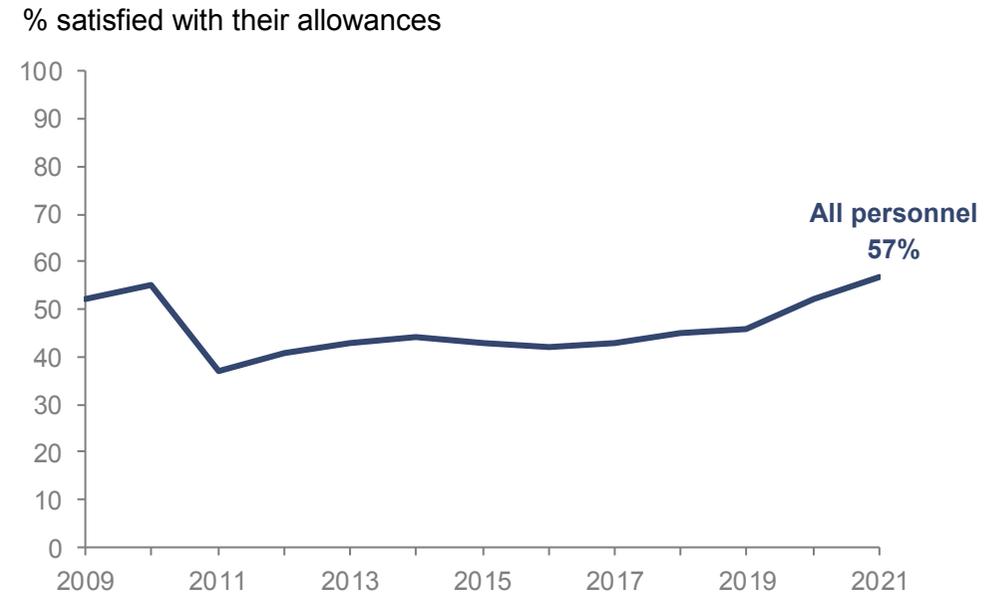
The increase in satisfaction with pension benefits is reflected across all the Services. Satisfaction levels amongst Royal Navy, Army and RAF personnel are now in line, with pension satisfaction lowest amongst the Royal Marines at 31%.

In December 2018 the Court of Appeal's McCloud judgement ruled that the transitional protection policy, part of the 2015 reforms to public service pension schemes, including the [Armed Forces Pension Scheme](#), was discriminatory. An update to the judgement was published in July 2020. This included a [public consultation](#) seeking views on proposals to address this discrimination. A consultation response was published in February 2021 a few days prior to the AFCAS closing date.

The majority (81%) of personnel are satisfied with their ability to access JPA

Royal Marines are the least satisfied with their ability to access JPA (70%) compared to the other Services.

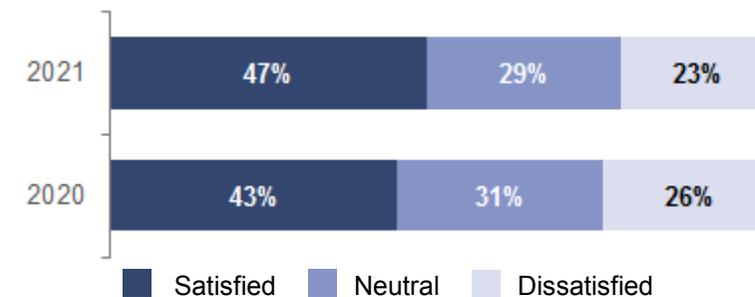
Satisfaction with allowances has increased, up five percentage points this year to 57%, the highest level recorded



Officers and Other Ranks have similar levels of satisfaction with their allowances except for Royal Marines where Officers are more satisfied.

The proportion of personnel satisfied with information about pay and allowances has increased four percentage points in 2021 to 47%

% satisfied/dissatisfied with information about pay and allowances



This increase has largely been driven by Army personnel.

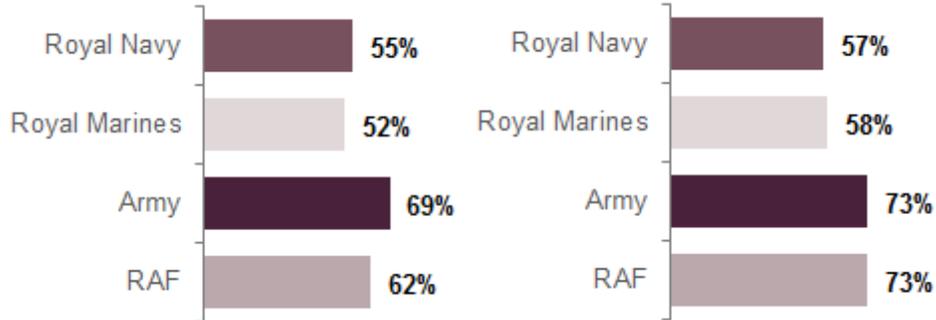
Royal Marine Other Ranks are least likely to be satisfied with information about pay and allowances (34%).

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 2018.

Royal Navy and Royal Marines personnel continue to be the least satisfied with aspects of pre-deployment in 2021

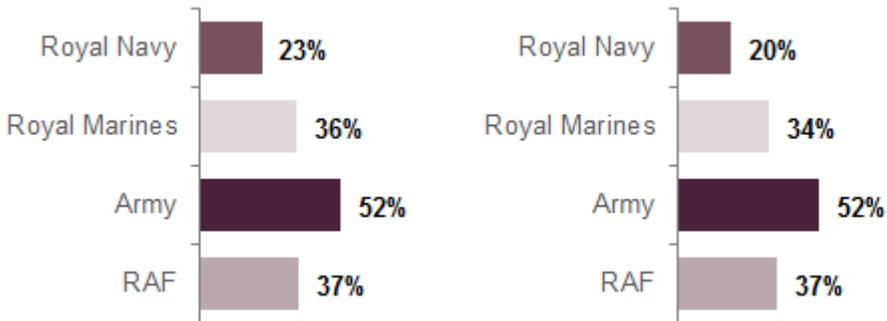
% satisfied with pre-operational training % satisfied with deployment notice



Army personnel are the most satisfied with pre-operational training compared to the other Services.

Army personnel continue to be the most satisfied with aspects of post-deployment in 2021; Royal Navy personnel are the least satisfied

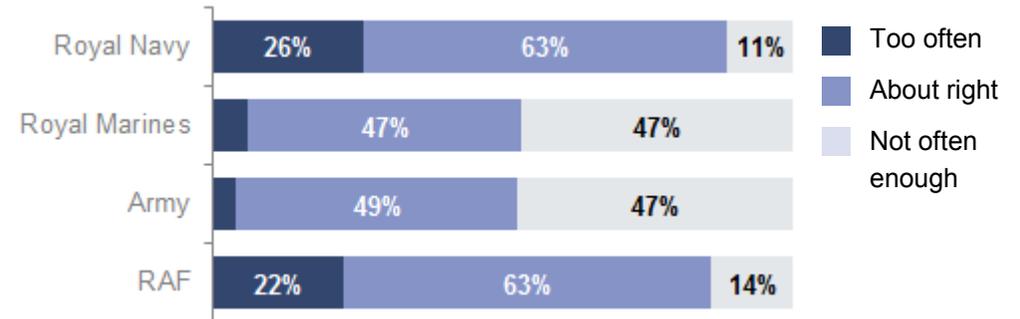
% satisfied with decompression and post operational tour support % satisfied with Post Operational Stress Management



Army personnel also continue to be the most satisfied with the welfare support they, and their family received when they returned from deployment, compared to the other Services.

One in seven (14%) personnel report that the frequency of their deployments is too often, down from 18% in 2020, however this differs across the Services

Views on deployment frequency



Royal Navy and RAF personnel are considerably more likely to report that they deploy too often compared to Royal Marines (6%) and Army personnel (4%).

Conversely, Army and Royal Marines personnel are more likely to report that the frequency of their deployments is not often enough (both 47%).

Officers are more likely to report that the frequency of their deployments is about right compared to Other Ranks (66% and 54% respectively).

Over three-quarters (77%) of personnel report that their deployment length is about right, up three percentage points since 2020

Over the same period, the proportion of personnel reporting that their deployments are too long has decreased from 18% in 2020 to 15%. Royal Navy personnel continue to be most likely to report that their deployments are 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

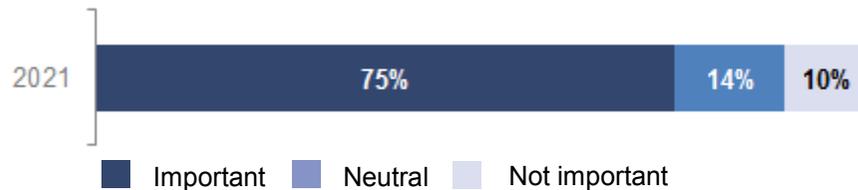
Section 7 looks at satisfaction with various aspects of career, training and development, including questions about the promotion system, career management and opportunities for development.

More personnel are satisfied with the way their career is managed this year

Up from 41% in 2020 to 44% this year. Despite this increase, three in ten are still dissatisfied with the way their career is managed.

Three-quarters of personnel view promotion as important to their Service career satisfaction

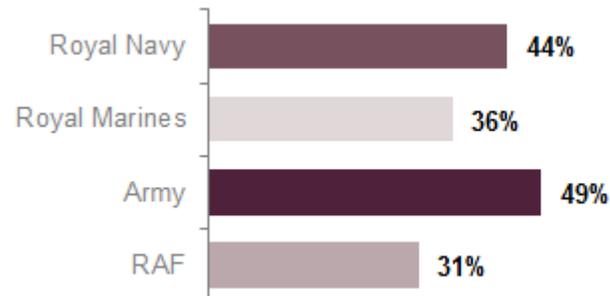
% importance of promotion to satisfaction with Service career



This differs by Service with eight in ten Army personnel reporting that promotion is important to their career satisfaction, compared to around seven in ten personnel from the other Services.

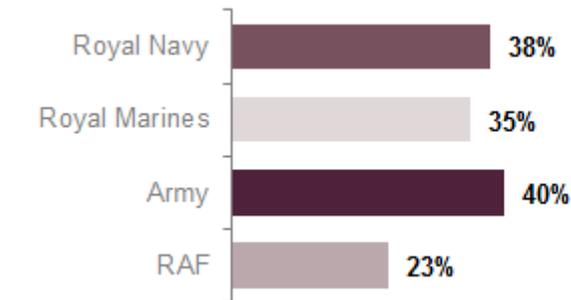
Army personnel are now the most satisfied with their opportunities for promotion; RAF personnel remain the least satisfied

% satisfied with opportunities for promotion



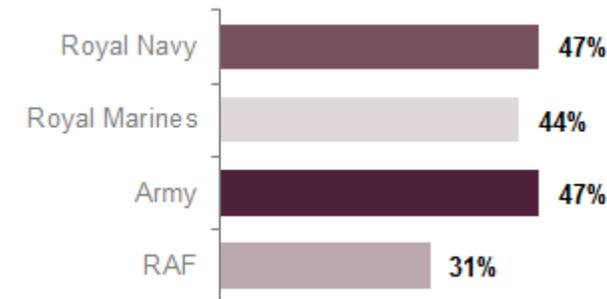
RAF personnel are also the least satisfied with the fairness of the promotion system...

% satisfied with the fairness of the promotion system



...and the fairness of the appraisal system

% satisfied with the fairness of the appraisal system



Overall, the proportions of personnel satisfied with the appraisal (43%) and promotion (36%) systems remain below peak satisfaction reported in 2010 (57% and 42% respectively).

The proportions of personnel who are satisfied and dissatisfied with the fairness of the promotion system are similar (36% and 38% respectively).

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

The majority of personnel (86%) feel they have the knowledge, skills and experience to do their job, unchanged since 2017

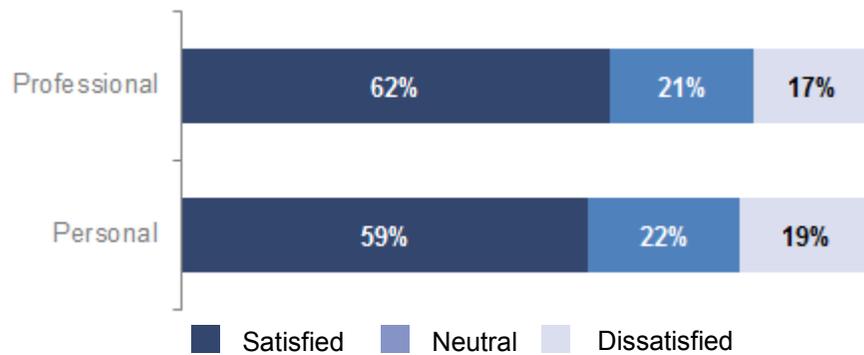
Three-quarters (75%) of personnel agree that their knowledge, skills and experience are being used, an increase of three percentage points since 2020.

Six in ten (61%) personnel are satisfied with the extent to which they are doing the job for which they were trained, unchanged since 2019

Royal Marines are less satisfied with the extent to which they are doing the job they were trained for (53%), compared to the other Services.

Around six in ten personnel are satisfied with their opportunities for personal and professional development

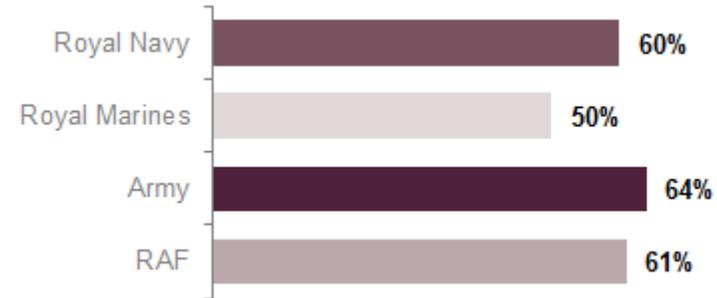
% satisfied/dissatisfied with...development



Satisfaction with opportunities for professional development has increased this year, up from 59% in 2020. Satisfaction with personal development is unchanged since 2019.

Royal Marines are the least satisfied with the opportunities for professional development

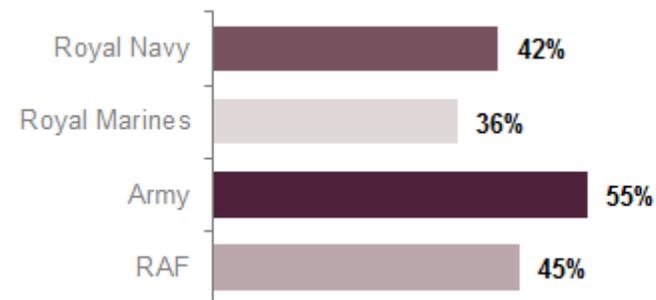
% satisfied with the opportunities for professional development



Officers are more satisfied with their opportunities for professional development (69%) than Other Ranks (60%). However, this gap has narrowed following an increase in satisfaction amongst Other Ranks in the last year (from 57% in 2020).

Army personnel remain the most satisfied with the opportunities to gain civilian accreditation for their Service training; Royal Marines are the least satisfied

% satisfied with the opportunities to gain civilian accreditation



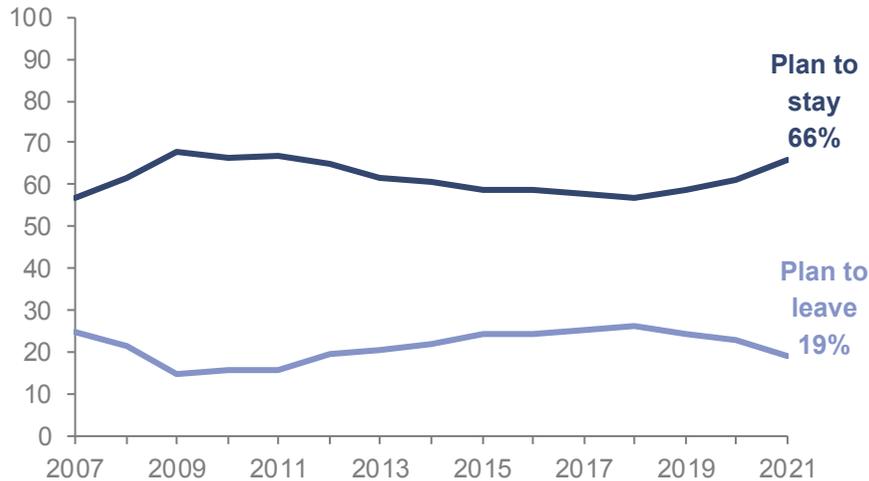
Overall, just under half (49%) of personnel are satisfied with their opportunities to gain civilian accreditation, unchanged since 2019.

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.

Two-thirds (66%) of personnel plan to stay in the Services, an increase of seven percentage points since 2019

% plan to stay/leave



This includes those who plan to stay as long as they can, or until the end of their current engagement or commission. The change since 2020 is largely driven by Army and RAF personnel.

The proportion of personnel who want to stay in the Services has increased for the second year running and is at its highest since 2012.

Less than a fifth (19%) of personnel say they intend to leave before the end of their current engagement or commission, which includes 5% intending to leave as soon as they can and 2% who have already put in their notice to leave.

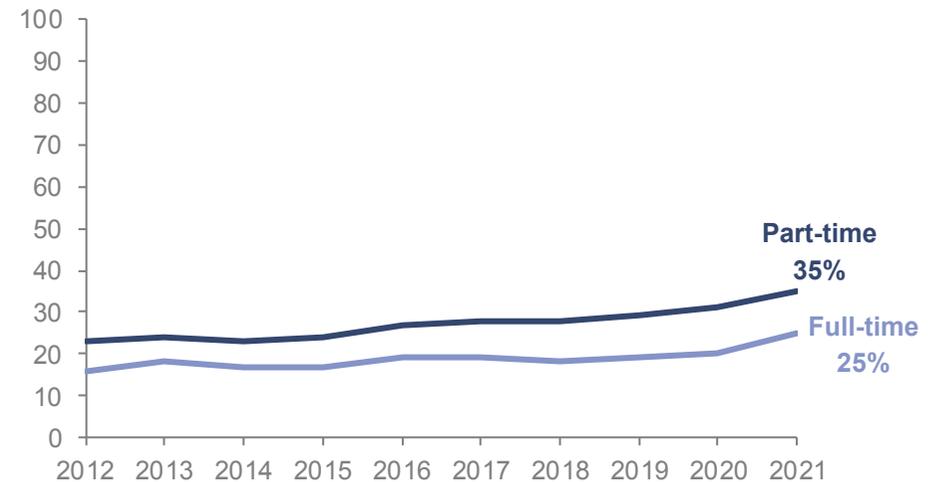
A further 15% do not know what their plans are for the future.

Over a third (35%) of personnel have very or quite actively searched for a job outside the Service in the last 12 months, a decrease of five percentage points in the last year

Under the Future Force 2020 programme, the MOD 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.

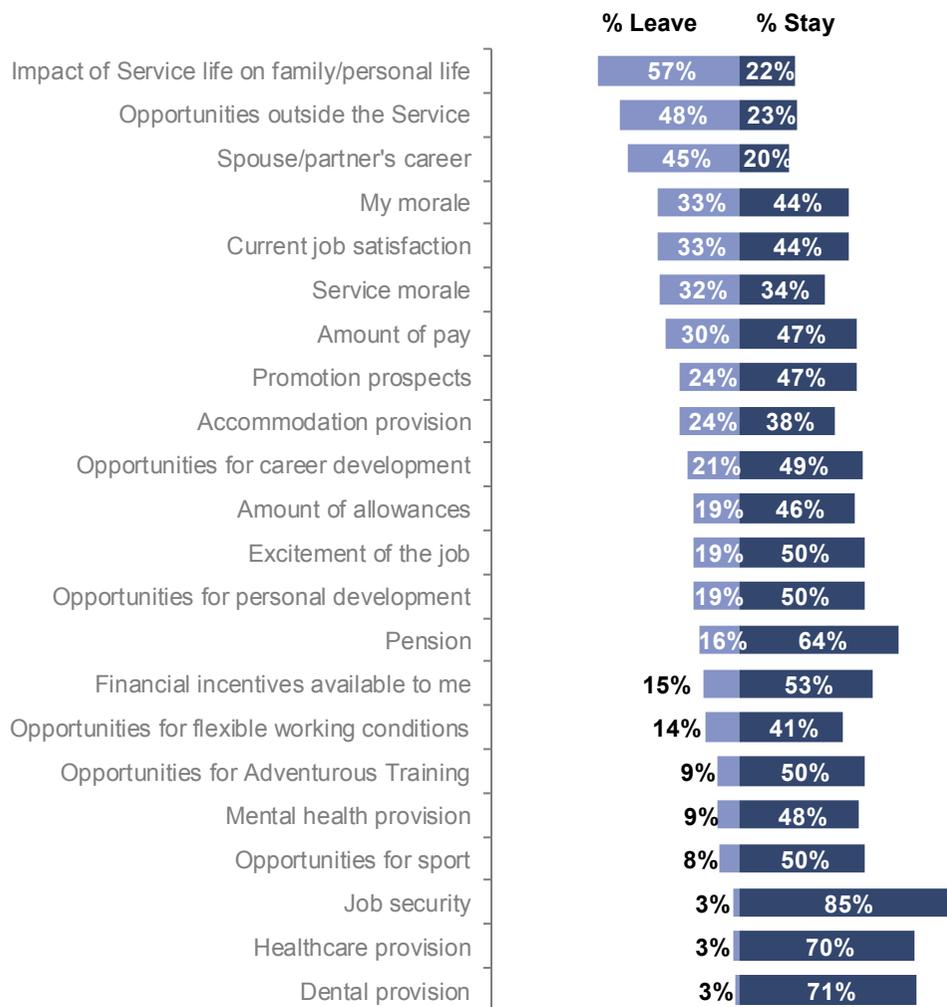
The proportions of personnel who would consider joining the Volunteer Reserves full-time and part-time have both increased this year

% yes to joining the Volunteer Reserves full-time and part-time



A quarter (25%) would now consider joining the Volunteer Reserves full-time, up from a fifth in 2020, an increase largely driven by Army and RAF personnel. Over a third (35%) would consider joining on a part-time basis, up from 31% last year. This increase is largely driven by RAF personnel.

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



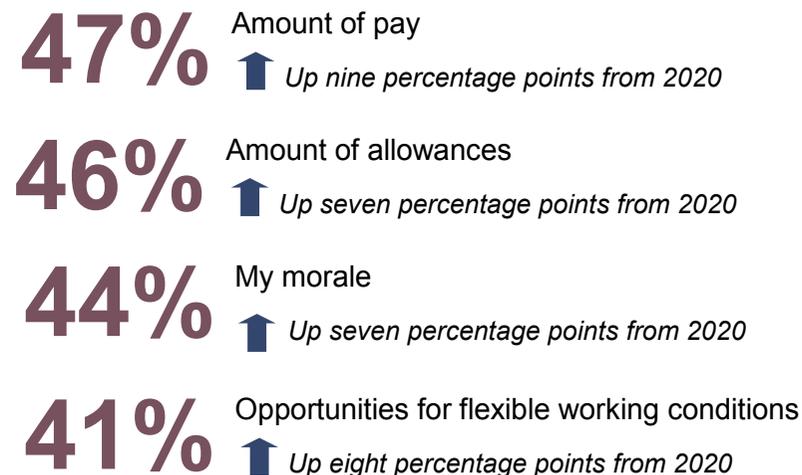
Job security remains the top factor increasing intentions to stay in 2021

The proportion of personnel citing job security as increasing their intention to stay in the Services has increased ten percentage points since 2020 to 85%. This change is somewhat reflective of the increase in the proportion of personnel planning to stay in the Services this year. It may also be due, in part, to the impact of the economic conditions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

More personnel are citing pension as a factor influencing intentions to stay in 2021

Almost two-thirds (64%) of personnel cite pension as a factor increasing their intentions to stay in the Services, up from 52% last year.

As well as pension, more personnel are also citing the following factors as influencing their intentions to stay compared to 2020:



These changes are, to an extent, reflective of the increases in satisfaction with basic rate of pay, pension benefits, morale and opportunities for flexible working reported this year (see Sections 5, 1 and 9).

Of those who have put their notice in to leave (2%), the most cited reason for leaving is the impact on family and personal life

Current job satisfaction, opportunities outside the Service, self morale and amount of pay make up the top five most common reasons for leaving.

Whilst impact on family and personal life is the top reason for Officers, for Other Ranks this is current job satisfaction, with impact on family and personal life the second most common reason cited for leaving.

Section 9 - Work/Life Balance

Section 9 looks at the work/life balance of personnel, 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.

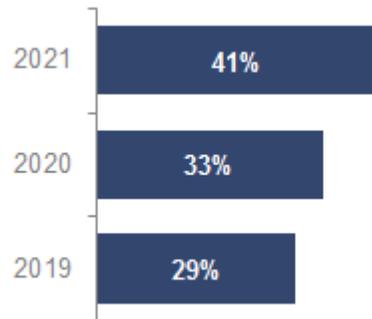
Just under half (49%) of personnel are able to maintain a balance between their work and personal life, an increase of four percentage points since 2020

This increase is seen across the Services except for Royal Navy personnel.

The MOD modernised its flexible working offer on 1 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.

The proportion of personnel satisfied with the opportunity to work flexibly has continued to increase since this question was first asked in 2019

% satisfied with the opportunity to work flexibly

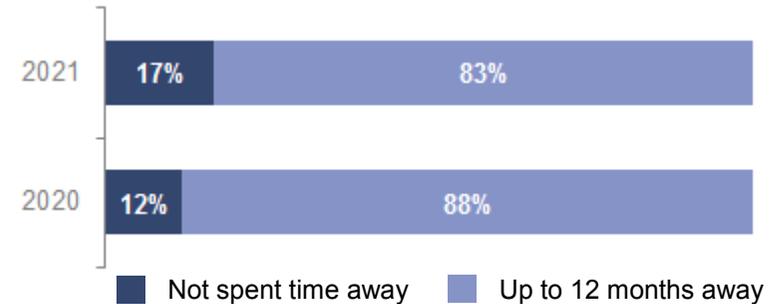


This increasing trend is reflected across the Services, with RAF personnel being the most satisfied (47%). Officers are considerably more satisfied with the opportunity to work flexibly (56%) compared to Other Ranks (37%).

Changes to working arrangements due to the COVID-19 pandemic, such as an increase in personnel working from home, may have had an impact on attitudes to working flexibly and work/life balance.

Fewer personnel have spent time away from their family in the last year compared to 2020

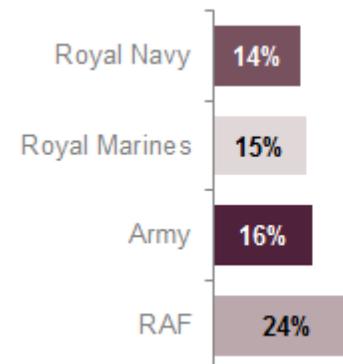
% time spent away from family in the last year for Service reasons



Historically, results are similar to 2020 figures. Of those spending time away from their family, 67% spent up to six months away and a further 16% spent between seven and 12 months away in the last year.

RAF personnel are most likely to have not spent time away in the last year compared to the other Services

% not spent time away from family in the last year for Service reasons



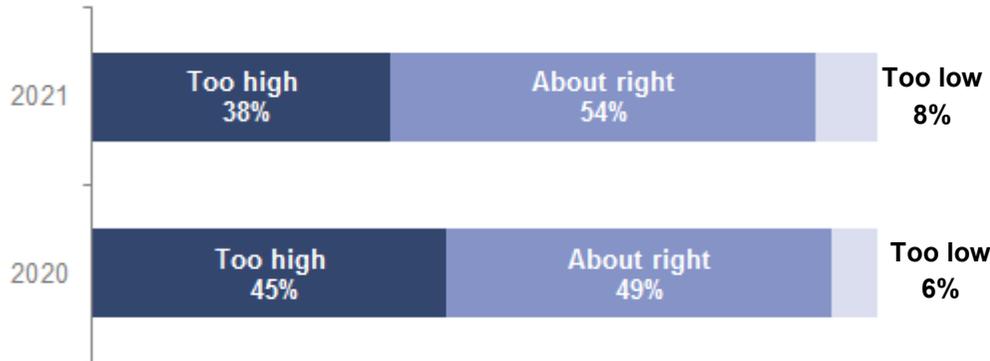
Almost a quarter (24%) of RAF personnel have not spent time away from their family this year, up from 16% in 2020. Since last year, the proportions of Royal Marines and Army personnel not spending time away have also increased, and are now in line with Royal Navy personnel.

Almost four in ten (39%) are satisfied with the amount of time spent away from family and friends, up four percentage points since 2020

This may be a reflection of fewer personnel spending time away from their friends and family in 2021 which may be due, in part, to the restrictions imposed and changes to working arrangements as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Over half (54%) of personnel rate their workload as about right, an increase of five percentage points since last year

Views on workload



This increase has largely been driven by Army Other Ranks.

Other Ranks are more likely to rate their workload as about right (56%) than Officers (48%).

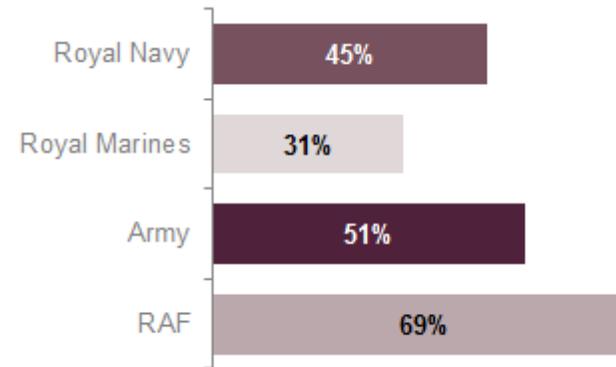
Workload continues to be the main reason for personnel not using all their leave (46%)¹

The proportion of personnel citing 'other' as a reason for not taking all their leave has almost doubled, from 7% in 2020 to 13% this year. Analysis of these 'other' reasons highlights COVID-19 as a considerable factor in why personnel did not use all of their annual leave allowance.

¹Based on those who did not use all of their annual leave allowance (67% in 2021).

RAF personnel remain the most satisfied with the opportunities to take leave when they want to compared to the other Services

% satisfied with the opportunity to take leave when personnel want to



Overall, satisfaction with the opportunity to take leave when personnel want to remains at its highest level (53%).

Officers are more satisfied with their opportunities to take leave when they want to (60%) compared to Other Ranks (51%).

Satisfaction with the amount of leave personnel were able to take in the last 12 months has fallen this year

Satisfaction with the amount of leave taken has decreased from 67% in 2020 to 63%. This is a return to the level of satisfaction reported in 2018 and has largely been driven by Royal Navy and Royal Marines personnel.

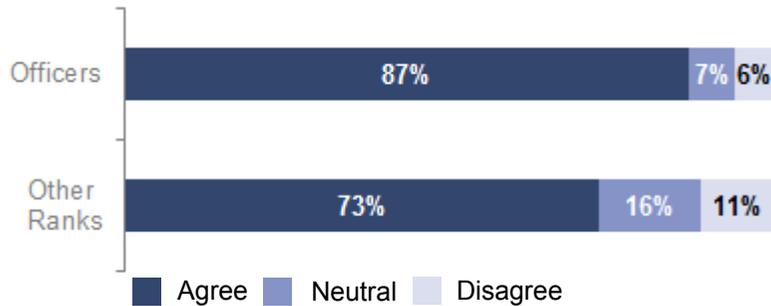
RAF personnel are the most satisfied with the amount of leave they were able to take in the last 12 months (72%).

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 awareness of the Service Complaints Ombudsman and Service Complaints Process.

Three-quarters (76%) of personnel agree that they are treated fairly at work

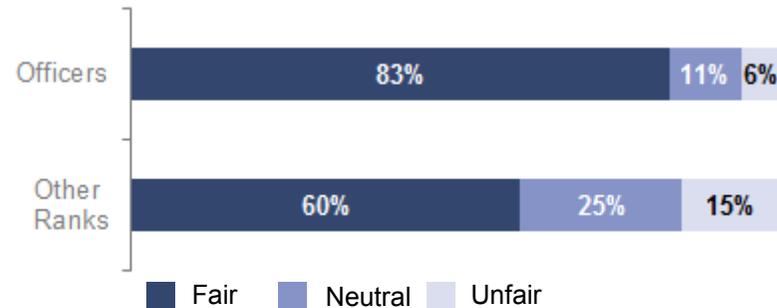
% agree/disagree they are treated fairly at work



Officers are more likely to agree that they are treated fairly at work than Other Ranks. This difference is particularly evident between Royal Marine Officers (93%) and Royal Marine Other Ranks (69%).

Officers are more likely to feel that the discipline system is fair, in comparison to Other Ranks

Views on the discipline system



Royal Marine Officers are most likely to feel that the discipline system is fair (92%), compared to Officers in the other Services, whilst RAF Officers are the least likely (78%).

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

Separately, 11% of all female personnel report being subjected to sexual harassment in a Service environment in the last 12 months, compared to less than 1% of male personnel.

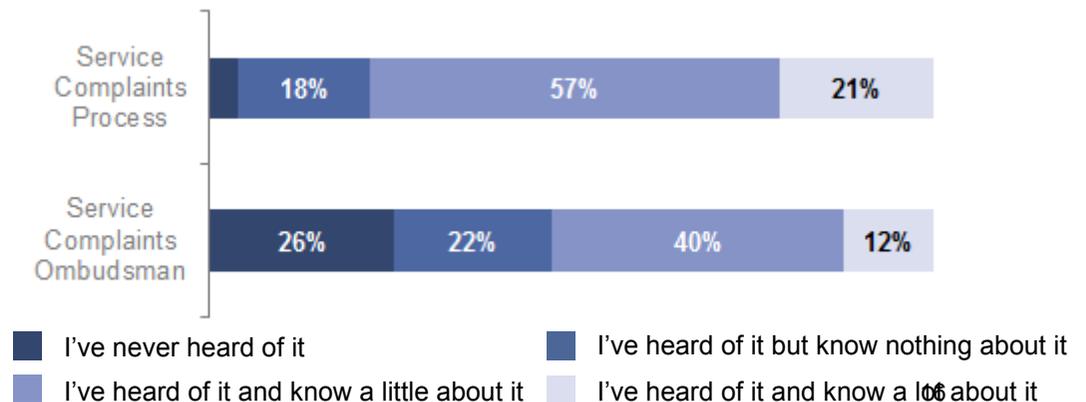
The majority of personnel who have been subject to bullying, discrimination or harassment do not make a complaint (89%)

The main reasons why personnel do not make a formal written complaint remain as: not believing anything would be done if a complaint was made (55%) and believing that it might adversely affect their career (49%).

Of those who made a formal complaint (less than 1%), around three-quarters are dissatisfied with the outcome of their complaint.

The majority of personnel (96%) are aware of the Service Complaints Process; three-quarters (74%) are aware of the Service Complaints Ombudsman

Awareness of the Service Complaints Process/Ombudsman



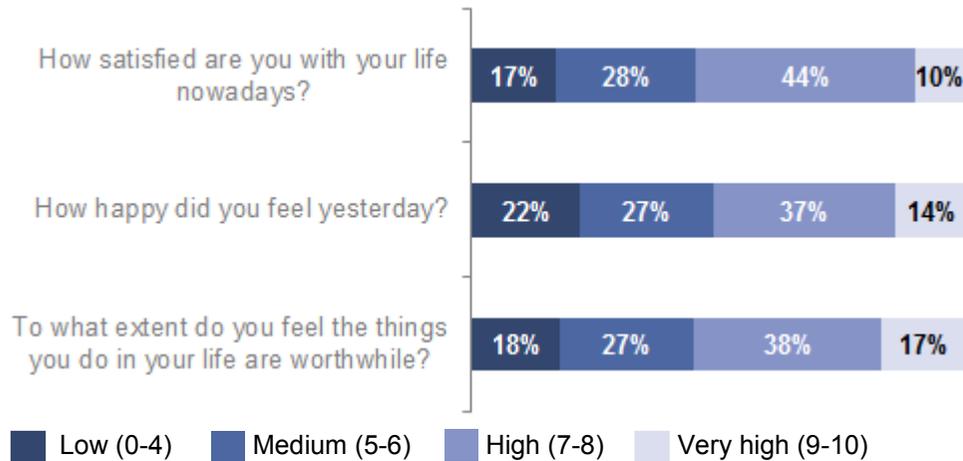
Section 11 - Health, Fitness and Welfare

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 UK population in their Annual Population Survey. Average scores are released in their [Personal Well-being in the UK report](#).

Well-being measures of Service personnel in 2021:

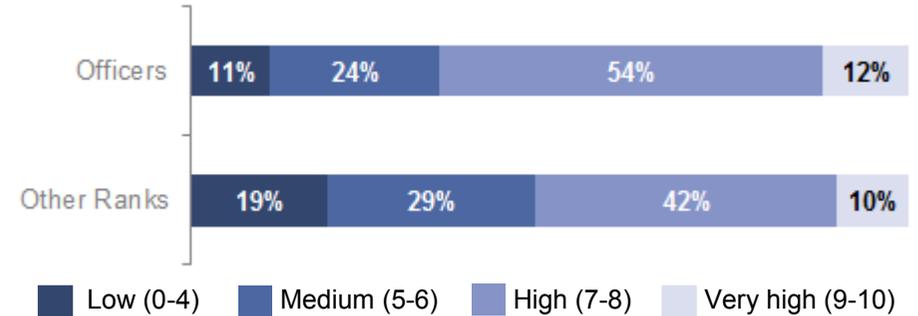


National comparison

[National well-being results](#) are not directly comparable to those of Service personnel due to differences in demographics i.e. the majority of Service personnel are male. Furthermore, national figures include a larger proportion of over 60s who generally score their well-being higher than younger people. However, the latest UK well-being results by sex may still provide some context. The proportion of UK males scoring aspects of their well-being as 'very high' (a score of 9-10) ranges between 24-31%. These are considerably higher than corresponding results for male Service personnel.

Officers have higher well-being scores than Other Ranks

Views on how satisfied with their life they are nowadays



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.

Satisfaction with opportunities to undertake fitness activities, sport, Force Development Activities and Adventurous Training has dropped in 2021

Over half (53%) are satisfied with opportunities to take part in sport, down seven percentage points since 2020, the lowest level of satisfaction since this question was first asked in 2015.

There has also been a drop in satisfaction with Service sport and exercise facilities in general, down from 76% in 2020 to 70%, the lowest level of satisfaction reported since 2008.

These decreases in satisfaction may be due, in part, to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Service facilities.

Although satisfaction with medical and dental care received within the last two years remains high, levels of satisfaction have decreased since last year

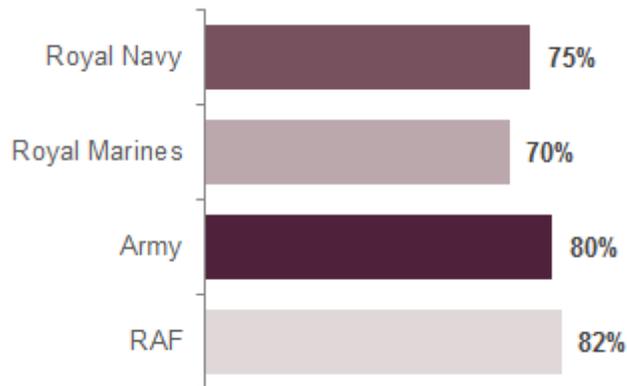
Just under eight in ten (79%) are satisfied with access to dental treatment, a decrease of seven percentage points since 2020. 84% are satisfied with dental treatment, down from 89% last year. These decreases are seen across all the Services.

Satisfaction with both access to medical care (79%) and medical treatment (77%) has decreased since 2020, returning to 2018 satisfaction levels (down from 83% and 80% respectively).

These decreases in satisfaction may be due, in part, to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on medical and dental facilities e.g. all dental centres closed (except for emergencies) during March-June 2020 in line with national lockdown guidance.

Royal Marines personnel are the least satisfied with both access to and treatment for medical care

% satisfied with access to medical care when they needed it

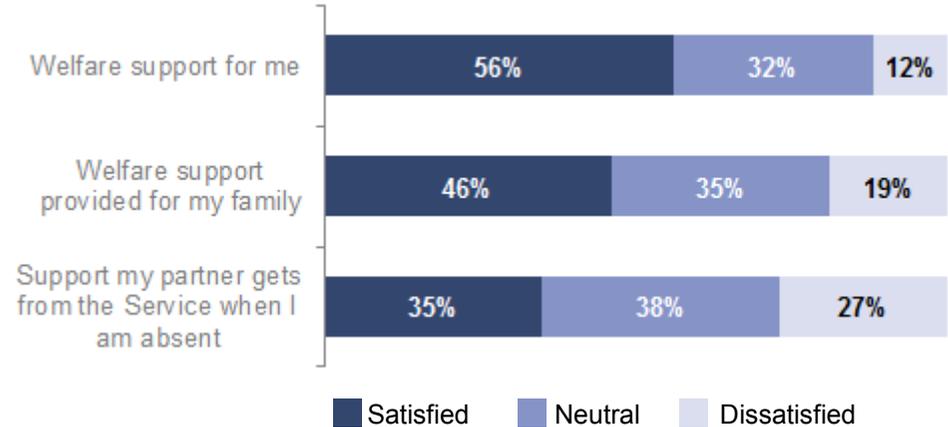


Royal Marines personnel are also least satisfied with access to and treatment for dental care.

Officers are more satisfied than Other Ranks with both medical and dental treatment, as well as access to medical care when they needed it.

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

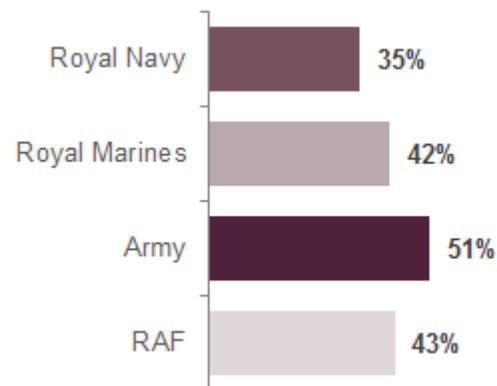
% levels of satisfaction with...



Lower levels of satisfaction are reported for the support their spouse/partner gets when they are absent, with just over a third being satisfied. (This is based on those who are married/in a long term relationship (73% in 2021).)

Army personnel are more satisfied with the welfare support provided to their family compared to the other Services; Royal Navy are the least satisfied

% satisfied with the welfare support provided by the Service to their family

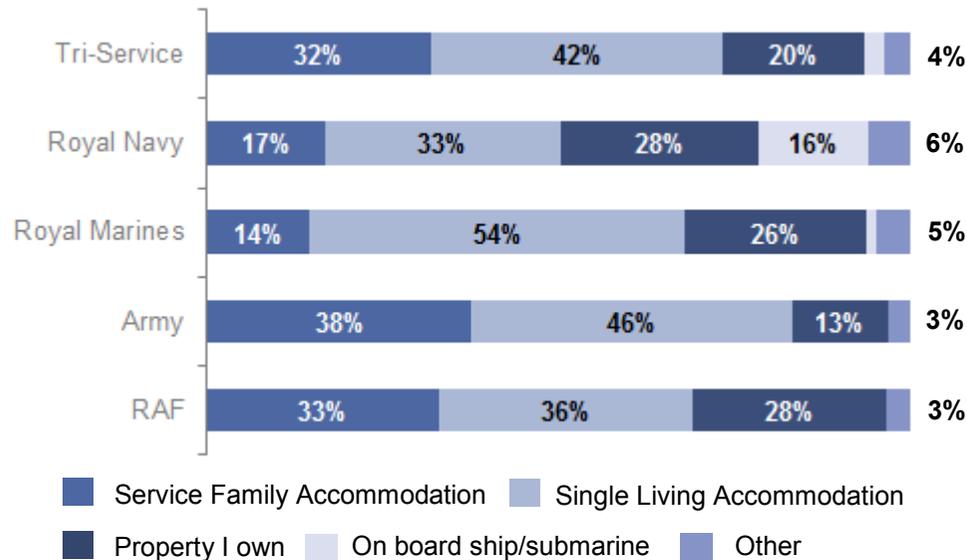


Section 12 - Accommodation and Catering

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

Three-quarters of personnel (76%) live in Service accommodation¹ during the working week

% accommodation type



Just over two in five (42%) personnel live in Single Living Accommodation (SLA) and about a third (32%) live in Service Family Accommodation (SFA) during the working week².

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

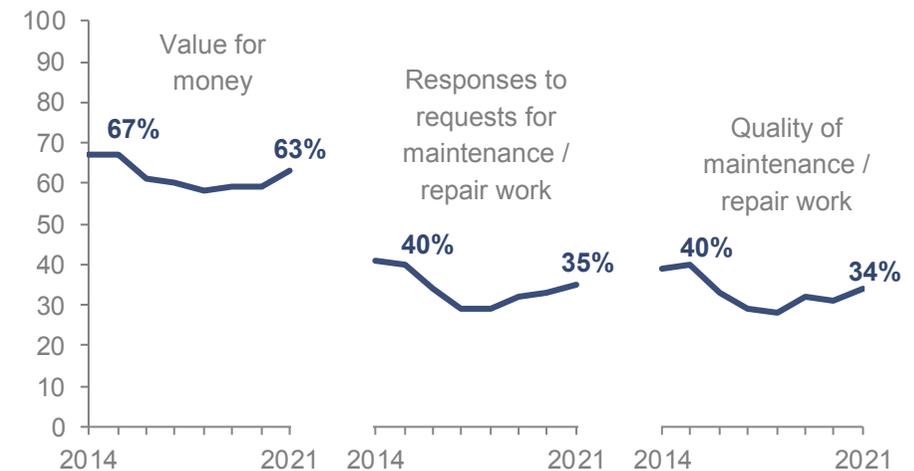
Officers are more likely to live in SFA (33%) or their own property (30%) compared to Other Ranks (30% and 17%, respectively) and less likely to live in SLA (Officers: 24%; Other Ranks: 43%).

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

² For these figures SLA includes Substitute SLA and SFA includes Substitute SFA.

Satisfaction with some aspects of Service accommodation has improved since 2018, but remains below 2015 levels

% satisfied with aspects of Service accommodation



Just over half (52%) of personnel living in Service accommodation are satisfied with the overall standard. This is unchanged since 2016 when levels of satisfaction fell from 58% in 2015.

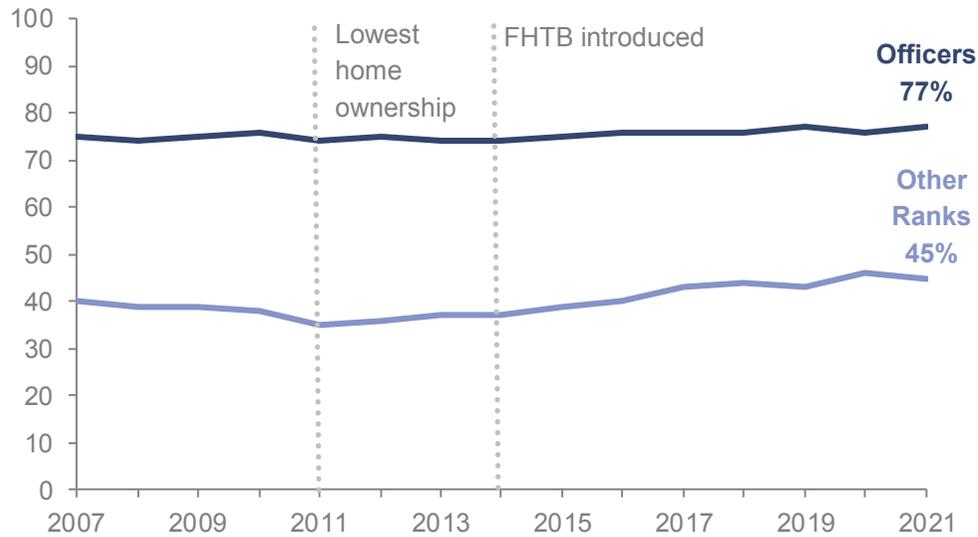
Satisfaction with how fairly Service accommodation is allocated remains unchanged since 2013 at 45%.

Royal Marines are the least satisfied with the overall standard, value for money and responses to maintenance/repair work of Service accommodation compared to the other Services.

Satisfaction with most aspects of Service accommodation fell markedly in 2016 due, in part, to underperformance by the National Housing Prime contractor and changes to the SFA charging method in April 2016.

Officers are more likely to own their own home than Other Ranks

% owning their own home



Overall, just over half (52%) of personnel own their own home, unchanged since 2020. Home ownership remains much lower amongst Army personnel (45%) compared to the other Services (between 58% and 63%).

Since 2015 (the year after the introduction of Forces Help to Buy (FHTB)) home ownership amongst Other Ranks has risen from 39% to 45%, largely driven by Army and Royal Marine Other Ranks. There has been no change for Officers over the same period. In December 2020, 81% of FHTB payments were made to Other Ranks.

Forces Help to Buy In April 2014, the MOD introduced the Forces Help to Buy (FHTB) scheme, under the New Employment Model programme. The scheme offers advances of salary to Service personnel for the purpose of buying a home. More information can be found in MOD's [FHTB Quarterly Statistics publication](#).

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. [Guidance on the Future Accommodation Model](#) is available on GOV.UK.

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 61%¹



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

Other Ranks (62%) are more likely to have selected affordability compared to Officers (50%).

The most common reason why personnel purchase their own home continues to be stability for themselves and their family, at 78%²

A third of those who live in their own home are satisfied with the allowances for living in their own home, up from 28% in 2020. This has largely been driven by Army personnel.

Less than a third (28%) of personnel are satisfied with the standard of service from catering contractors on their unit, unchanged since 2018

A similar proportion (29%) are satisfied with the number of functions during the year, nine percentage points lower than in 2020. This reduction in satisfaction is seen across all Services and may be due, in part, to the social restrictions imposed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Half of personnel tend to use³ Service-provided catering facilities for eating at lunchtime, with just under a third (31%) using it in the evening

A higher proportion of RAF personnel never dine at their facilities for breakfast, lunch and evening meals compared to the other Services.

¹ Based on those personnel who do not own their own home (48% in 2021).

² Based on those personnel who do own their own home (52% in 2021).

³ Use is defined as at least sometimes.

Section 13 - Family Life and Being Part of Society

Section 13 covers questions relating to personal lives, such as marital status. This section also captures awareness of the Armed Forces Covenant and the perceptions of Service life when compared to wider society.

Family life of Service personnel

49% are married. **24%** are in long-term relationships.

51% have children they support financially.

49% of those who require childcare are satisfied with locally provided facilities.

Personnel¹ reporting that their spouse/partner is in full-time employment² remains unchanged in 2021

Just under half (49%) report that their spouse/partner is in full-time employment. By Service, more Royal Marines (58%) report that their spouse/partner is in full-employment. Just under a fifth (19%) of spouses/partners are in part-time employment.

Seven in ten (71%) personnel feel they offer an important service to the country, unchanged since 2017

Officers (87%) are more likely to agree than Other Ranks (67%). Royal Marines are the least likely to agree (59%).

Just under four in ten (39%) agree that they are valued by society at large; a similar proportion disagree (38%)

The proportion feeling valued by society has remained stable since 2017, still below the highest figure reported in 2014 (51%). Officers (53%) are more likely to agree that members of the Armed Forces are valued by society compared to Other Ranks (35%).

¹ Based on those who are married or in a long term relationship (73% in 2021).

² Full-time includes self-employment but does not include those in the Armed Forces (13% in 2021).

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

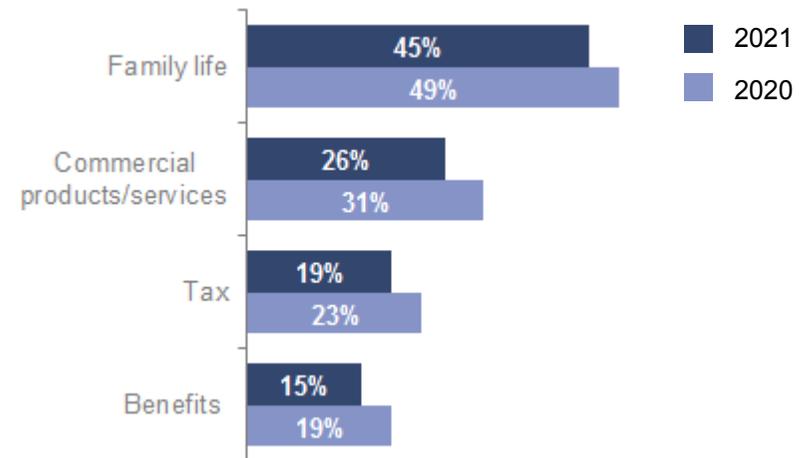
Royal Navy and RAF personnel are most likely to have at least heard of the Armed Forces Covenant (81% and 82% respectively) compared to the Army and Royal Marines (75% and 73% respectively).

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

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.

Fewer personnel feel disadvantaged about aspects of life compared to the general public than in 2020

% feeling disadvantaged about...



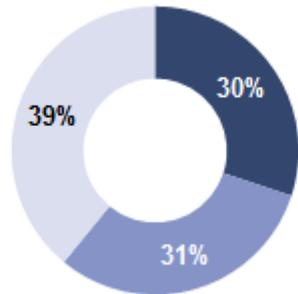
Feelings towards access to NHS care, children's education and housing compared to the general public remain unchanged.

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.

Three in ten (30%) personnel now agree that leaders will take action on the results of AFCAS, up four percentage points since 2020

% agree/disagree that leaders will take action on the results of AFCAS



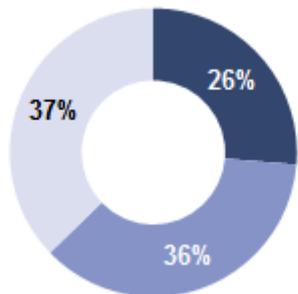
This increase has largely been driven by Army and RAF personnel.

Whilst levels of agreement are at their highest since this question was first asked in 2015, almost four in ten (39%) disagree that leaders will take action on the results.

■ Agree ■ Neutral ■ Disagree

Just over a quarter (26%) of personnel agree that effective action has been taken on the results of AFCAS, up from 22% last year

% agree/disagree that effective action has been taken on the results of AFCAS



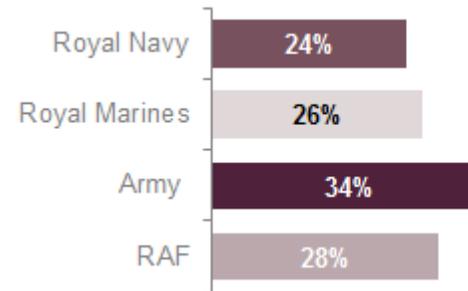
This increase is reflected across all the Services except the Royal Marines.

Similar to the above, whilst levels of agreement are now at their highest since this question was first asked in 2015, 37% of personnel still disagree.

■ Agree ■ Neutral ■ Disagree

Army personnel are more likely to agree that action has been, and will be taken on the results of AFCAS than the other Services this year

% agree that leaders will take action on the results of AFCAS



Six in ten (61%) personnel report that the length of the survey is about right; just under four in ten (38%) report that AFCAS is too long

Two-thirds (65%) of personnel reported that they completed the survey in 30 minutes or less in 2021

Length of survey completion



Methodology

1. Target population

The target population for AFCAS 2021 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 2020 to February 2021, 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 2021 sample consisted of 27,862 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 54%, 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.

10,318 responses were used in the AFCAS 2021 analysis, giving an overall response rate of 37%. The table below contains detailed information on the number of questionnaires issued and received along with corresponding response rates.

85% of valid responses were received electronically and 15% were paper responses, compared to 78% and 22% last year, respectively. Whilst the proportion of paper responses has reduced in the last few years, the drop in paper responses since 2020 may also be due, in part, to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Table A1: Response rates by Service and Rank group

		Sample size	Surveys returned	2021 response rate	2020 response rate
Royal Navy	Officers	1,470	873	59%	62%
	Ratings	6,828	1,655	24%	30%
	Total	8,298	2,528	30%	36%
Royal Marines	Officers	510	274	54%	55%
	Marines	3,531	1,314	37%	34%
	Total	4,041	1,588	39%	37%
Army	Officers	1,628	1,088	67%	62%
	Soldiers	7,675	2,270	30%	28%
	Total	9,303	3,358	36%	34%
Royal Air Force	Officers	1,614	963	60%	58%
	Ranks	4,606	1,881	41%	43%
	Total	6,220	2,844	46%	47%
All Services	Officers	5,222	3,198	61%	60%
	Ranks	22,640	7,120	31%	33%
	Total	27,862	10,318	37%	38%

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:

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

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.

Note: The weightings in Table A2 have been rounded for presentational purposes.

Table A2: Weightings used for AFCAS 2021 analysis

Weighting Class	Weighting Applied
RN_OF-7+	2.29
RN_OF-4 to 6	5.08
RN_OF-3	5.44
RN_OF-1 to 2	6.91
RN_OR-8 to 9	5.52
RN_OR-7	7.92
RN_OR-6	9.56
RN_OR-3 to 4	10.18
RN_OR-2	16.46

Weighting Class	Weighting Applied
RM_OF-4+	2.70
RM_OF-3	2.23
RM_OF-1 to 2	3.29
RM_OR-8 to 9	2.09
RM_OR-7	3.16
RM_OR-6	3.27
RM_OR-3 to 4	4.26
RM_OR-2	4.67

Weighting Class	Weighting Applied
Army_OF-7+	2.74
Army_OF-4 to 6	10.82
Army_OF-3	10.74
Army_OF-1 to 2	12.07
Army_OR-8 to 9	14.27
Army_OR-7	16.04
Army_OR-6	18.52
Army_OR-4	22.47
Army_OR-3	33.78
Army_OR-2	52.24

Weighting Class	Weighting Applied
RAF_OF-7+	1.55
RAF_OF-4 to 6	6.65
RAF_OF-3	6.84
RAF_OF-1 to 2	7.38
RAF_OR-7-9	7.20
RAF_OR-6	9.35
RAF_OR-3 to 4	13.24
RAF_OR-1 to 2	18.69

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 GOV.UK webpage](#).

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

These are published separately to the report on the [AFCAS GOV.UK webpage](#)). 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 reference 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 - B1.10
02 Your Work	B2.1 - B2.18
03 Resources and Workload	B3.1 - B3.7
04 Your Career	B4.1 - B4.25
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 - B13.45
14 Your Work/Life Balance	B14.1 - B14.12
15 Your Leave	B15.1 - B15.11
16 Your Health and Well-being	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

Term	Definition
Armed Forces Covenant	The Armed Forces Covenant defines the principles for ensuring that Armed Forces personnel are not disadvantaged in their access to public and commercial services as a result of their service. It also sets out that in some cases special treatment may be appropriate, for example for those that have given the most, such as the injured and the bereaved
Armed Forces Pay Review Body	Provides independent advice to the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Defence on the pay and charges for members of the Naval, Military and Air Forces of the Crown
Assisting Officer	Appointed to provide help and support to personnel either considering or having made a formal written complaint about discrimination, harassment or bullying
Bullying	May be characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, and abuse of or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipients
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
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
Ethos	The nature, aims and objectives of a Service
Engagement	Period of employment usually under contractual terms
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
Flexible Working	Agreed variation in starting and finishing working hours normally designed to meet work/home life balance
Force Development Activities	Refers to a wide range of activities designed to improve operational effectiveness

Term	Definition
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)
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
JPA	Joint Personnel Administration (JPA) is the system used by the Armed Forces to deal with matters of pay, leave and other personal administrative tasks
Marines	Royal Marines personnel of NATO ranks OR1 to OR9
Missing at Random (MAR)	Statistical theory that states that those who did not respond to a question do not differ from those who did respond
Missing Value(s)	Refers to the situation where a respondent has not submitted an answer or a valid answer to a question
MOD	Ministry of Defence
Morale	A measure of commitment and willingness to the ethos of a Service
N/A	Not applicable
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
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
Officer(s)	All regular trained officers of NATO ranks OF1 to OF10
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
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"

Term	Definition
RAF	Royal Air Force
Recruitment and Retention Payment (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
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(s)	Royal Navy, Royal Marines, Army and RAF
SFA	Service Families Accommodation
SLA	Single Living Accommodation
Soldiers	Army personnel of NATO ranks OR1 to OR9
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

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

Further Information

Contact Us

Defence Statistics welcomes feedback on our statistical products. If you have any comments or questions about this publication or about our statistics in general, you can contact us as follows:

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If you require information which is not available within this or other available publications, you may wish to submit a Request for Information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to the Ministry of Defence. For more information see the [GOV.UK guidance on how to make a Request for Information](#).

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