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18 July 2014

NEW EMPLOYMENT MODEL (NEM) – CONSULTATION – PHASE 1 FOCUS GROUPS

The attached report represents the qualitative research conducted for Phase 1 of NEM consultation with Service personnel.

This research was conducted on behalf of Chief of Defence Personnel in order to support the evidence-based approach to policy development on the NEM programme. The MOD Research Ethics Committee (MODREC) approved the design and delivery of the research.

The Focus Groups and Interviews, on which the results of the research are based, sought to elicit the opinions of Service personnel against a specific set of evidence requirements on themes such as home ownership and Service accommodation, overseas service, retention incentives etc. This research is not the only source for evidence used on the NEM programme; the evidence base includes annual attitude surveys like AFCAS and FAMCAS for example.

Quotations and case studies have been included in the report to illustrate how some of the views were expressed, and 'paint a picture'. By their very nature they are one person's words and should not be taken out of context.

The report provides an indication of which views were more or less prevalent in the Service personnel who took part in the research. However, those who took part in the research were not statistically representative of the wider population so the weighting of views might not reflect that of all Service personnel.

If you wish to use the information in this report you are recommended to contact Georgia Court, the lead Civil Service researcher, who can provide further advice on how to interpret these findings.

Georgia Court

Attachment:

NEM Qualitative Consultation Findings



The New Employment Model: Qualitative Consultation 2013

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Executive Summary

The vision of the MOD New Employment Model (NEM) Programme is to achieve an employment model that delivers the people component of Operational Capability, that is affordable, and that balances the aspirations of Service Personnel with the demands that the Service makes of them. A number of engagement and consultation exercises are underway to test and adjust potential changes to underpinning HR policies. This document reports the qualitative results from 65 focus groups and 69 interviews that took place from 3 July 2013 to 25 September 2013 across all Services and Joint Forces in the UK, Cyprus, Germany, Falkland Islands and Belgium. Levels of engagement and participation were high across all Services and ranks who contributed open and honest opinions.

These qualitative results represent the attitudes, perceptions and potential behaviours of the Service Personnel we consulted. This information is not representative of the Armed Forces as a whole and therefore cannot be extrapolated to form a statistically valid sample. The intended purpose of these results is to inform policy design within the NEM Programme Evidence Plan.

The areas for consultation were driven by the four design workstreams of Future Accommodation, Terms of Service, Training and Education and Value and Reward. This report sets out in detail the findings from the focus groups and interviews held with over 800 participants across 18 locations.

Consultation on accommodation found a strong desire for home ownership amongst Service Personnel with the idea of having a 'home' rather than a house important to many. Family considerations including access to good schools and proximity to family to provide a support network where key drivers of location. The affordability of mortgage deposit and repayments were seen as the largest barrier to home ownership. There was a clear recognition of the cost discount on Service provided accommodation, which allows for the low and variable conditions, compensates for mobility and acts as a recruitment and retention tool. Most Service Personnel's partners perceived a negative impact on their careers from their partner being in the Services. To enable employment many partners had taken on jobs that supported mobility and for some, childcare needs. There was strong support for employment assistance for partners of Service Personnel including MOD engagement with local employers and an appetite to access Service provided career guidance and learning credits.

Terms of Service consultation indicated that career streaming is recognised but not fully understood among Officers. There is a perceived lack of transparency and equal application, and it was felt that streaming can be unfairly divisive. It was suggested that the range of opportunities open to the 'executive stream' could be fewer, that there could be less geographical stability and that work life balance could be affected. For part-time and reduced commitment working, concerns were expressed about how this could be managed within current manning levels, the risk of skill fade and that the current culture of the Armed Forces would make this difficult. Service Personnel indicated that a move from the Regulars to the Reserves to facilitate part time working would make them consider whether to make the change to their working arrangements. However part-time and reduced commitment working was supported by individuals whose circumstances would benefit from a more flexible working arrangement, particularly those with caring responsibilities. For training, there was general acceptance that a return of service was fair and it was recognised that it already exists. It was suggested that the level of return should be based on the monetary and career development value of the course, both inside and outside of the Armed Forces. It was also thought that return of service would not discourage uptake.

Consultation on training and education showed that earlier career advice and guidance for civilian employment was supported across the Services, supporting individuals to prepare for life after the Services. There were some concerns however that it may distract people from their role, negatively impact on retention and that advice may become out-dated. There was strong support for financial planning advice to be available throughout an individual's career, with some comments indicating that it should form part of the duty of care responsibility that the Services have for Service Personnel. There was acceptance of the idea of distributed training, recognising the advantage of reducing time away from work and family, though concerns were raised about levels of focus and increased distraction if undertaking training at Unit. The need for hands-on, practical training and application and

a desire for networking drove the preference for residential training, though the opportunity to use technology to deliver blended learning was understood. Service Personnel expressed an interest in undertaking pre-course activity online, before joining a concentrated residential element. Phase 3 training was highly valued with life-long learning viewed as critical for personal and professional development. The idea of Phase 0 training was generally unsupported due to the perceived negative impact it would have on recruitment, ethos, standards and retention. Service Personnel indicated there would be a negative impact on an individual's commitment to Trade training if conducted at a Further Education College. For those that supported the idea, they viewed a civilian qualification as an advantage to the individual, though suggested it could mean individuals would be tempted by civilian opportunities.

Allowances and incentives consultation showed that early career ambitions for many were to have a career in the Armed Forces, seek out promotion opportunities and, where relevant, learn a trade. Current ambitions indicated a greater focus of staying in Service until the pension point while taking up the training and education opportunities available. Across the Services, workload, operational pace, change fatigue and the pull of civilian employment were seen as the main reasons why individuals leave the Service. The impact on family life was also an important consideration for many. Current financial incentives were viewed as effective retainers, albeit they could be timed better with a focus on earlier in career and at major life points. Desirable non-financial incentives include civilian accreditations, education and training and an improved work/life balance. Knowledge of allowances was good, particularly amongst those Service Personnel that had been through the process of claiming the particular allowance. The application and administration experience varied vastly however with frustrations expressed on the timing and accessibility of allowances. The adequacy of the 'Disturbance Allowance' was seen to depend on the distance to be moved and the number of family members involved in the move. There was little recognition or awareness of the X factor amongst participants with no views indicating it was seen as a separation allowance. The 'Get Yourself Home Overseas' allowance was viewed as inadequate, particularly for those not in Germany, and could leave individuals out of pocket for a period of time. The majority of Service Personnel kept in touch with family and friends while overseas by using the internet; typically Skype, social media and email. Daily commuting time of up to one hour was seen as acceptable and there was a lack of willingness to commute further if the MOD provided assistance with home purchase.

These findings will also inform the design and delivery of a quantitative survey that will contribute further to the evidence base for the NEM programme.



1 Introduction

The vision of the MOD New Employment Model (NEM) Programme is to achieve an employment model that delivers the people component of Operational Capability, that is affordable and that balances the aspirations of Service Personnel with the demands that the Service makes of them.

Due to the maturity of the programme, a limited consultation was conducted in Stage 1 and the programme is currently in Stage II (Policy Writing and Implementation). In May 2013 KPMG was engaged by the MoD to support the programme in the design and delivery of the qualitative elements of the next phase of consultation.

Decisions on NEM proposals will be made in early 2014 by the Defence Board; evidence gathered from consultation will be a key part of making sure those proposals are robust and the impact on Service Personnel is understood.

The purpose of this document is to report the qualitative findings from the 65 focus groups and 69 interviews that took place from 3 July 2013 to 25 September 2013 across all Services and Joint Forces in the UK, Cyprus, Germany, Falkland Islands and Belgium.

1.1 Objectives

KPMG was given the following objectives:

- Review the evidence/questions collected from NEM workstreams
- Design a fit for purpose consultation programme
- Deliver targeted focus groups with key groups
- Deliver 1:1 structured interviews
- Analysis of qualitative data collected throughout the consultation process.

1.2 Approach

The approach used by KPMG was driven and organised by the requirements of the NEM workstream team leaders and the Programme Evidence Plan. KPMG facilitated sessions were part of a larger communication and engagement programme led by the NEM and the single Service teams.

1.2.1 Workstream requirements

The NEM programme comprises four design workstreams, each of which manages a number of components. Each component addresses a potential change or addition to HR Policy. From the 22 design components, the workstream team leaders identified 83 requirements for consultation against which Service Personnel attitudes, behaviours and perceptions to change should be tested.

These requirements are limited to the NEM programme and do not include the other programmes of work and reviews underway within Chief of Defence Personnel, for example Future Armed Forces Pension Scheme and Future Reserves 2020.

1.2.2 Methods

The NEM programme is using a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches for gathering data. This will allow information on attitudes, perceptions and potential behaviours to be backed up by statistically reliable information obtained from numerical measurement.

It was agreed that a qualitative approach should precede and inform the later design of quantitative evidence gathering. Qualitative methods are ways of collecting data which are concerned with describing meaning rather than drawing statistical inferences. Requirements were reviewed for the most suitable method to test the attitudes, perceptions and potential behaviours of Service Personnel.

Of the 22 components, 11 had qualitative requirements. From these 11 components, 66 requirements were identified for qualitative consultation using focus groups, interviews and paired interviews. These requirements are listed by workstream and component in Appendix 1.

Qualitative results do not represent a statistically valid sample. This report identifies instances where there are majorities and minorities of opinion of those consulted. This information is not representative of the Armed Forces as a whole and therefore cannot be extrapolated across Service or rank. This will be achieved in later survey and census work by the programme.

1.2.3 Topic guides

The 66 qualitative requirements were collated into topic areas and converted into question sets. Ipsos MORI were engaged to support the development of Topic Guides for use in individual sessions. 284 questions, within five Topic Guides, were written to allow a manageable flow through the required subject areas and a consistent approach by multiple facilitators. Topic Guides are available from the NEM Programme Senior Policy Analyst.

1.2.4 Participants and recruitment

Based on the content within each Topic Guide, the Royal Navy, Royal Marine, Army and Royal Air Force population was reviewed to define a representative set of ranks and attributes that would be able to provide an informed view on the requirements. Ranks were split using the NATO rank structure and combined using the same method as the Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey (AFCAS). The objective was to establish an environment where participants could be open and honest and the subject matter could be covered sufficiently without relying on individuals. A recruitment criterion of attributes was defined for each set of focus groups and interviews, and is illustrated below in Figure 1. This was used by the single Service representatives on-site to seek voluntary participants. Focus groups for home and accommodation, career progression and training had typically 10 to 12 participants. Interviews on retention and remuneration were held with individual Service Personnel, whereas Service Personnel brought their partner for family impact interviews.

Persons in the recruitment process, but not yet joined the Services, Reservists and Veterans were excluded on the basis that there were no or very few requirements that needed the views of these audience groups.

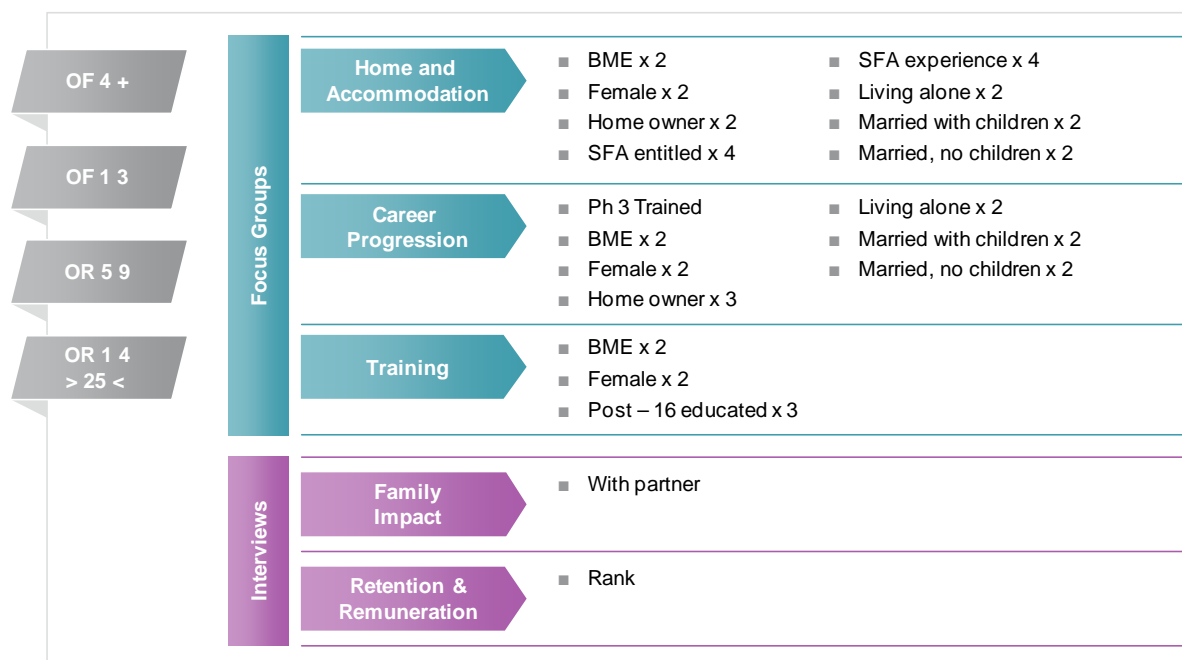


Figure 1: Ranks and attributes of Service Personnel in focus groups and interviews

1.2.5 Locations

The locations of focus groups and interviews were selected to ensure all Services were represented in rural, urban, overseas and joint locations, and to provide the best opportunity to speak to specific rank cohorts. All locations were used as central hubs to maximise the opportunity to provide NEM programme communication road show sessions delivered by the NEM Team ahead of focus groups and interviews. Access to the Royal Navy and Royal Marines on overseas postings was limited due to their onboard working location.

The 18 locations where focus groups and interviews were held are shown on Figure 2 opposite.

1.2.6 Validation of approach

The approach to qualitative consultation was approved by the NEM Programme Senior Policy Analyst, the single Service Occupational Psychologists, the Army Science Advisory Committee and the MOD Research and Ethics Committee (MODREC). This combination of approval bodies ensured the approach was robust, fair, in confidence, voluntary and would not cause harm to the participant. All participants are covered by the No-Fault Compensation Scheme available to research participants in MODREC approved studies.

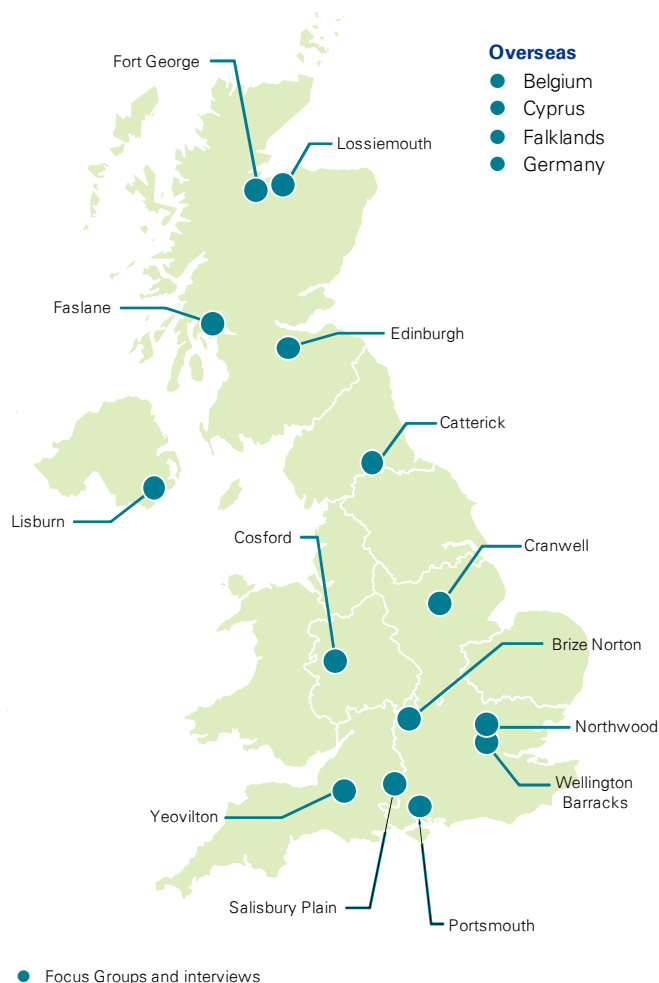
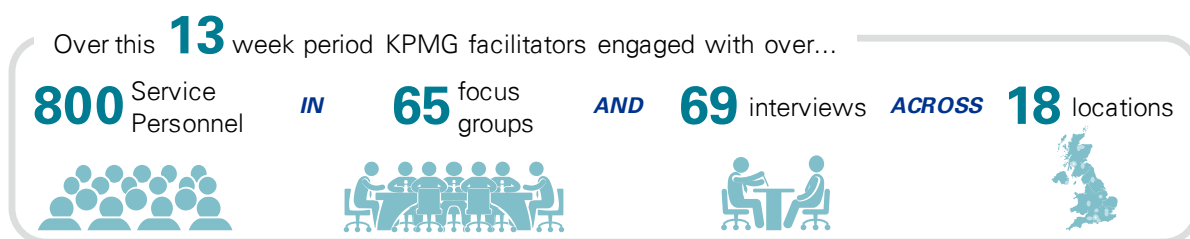


Figure 2: Focus group and interview locations

1.2.7 Set-up and delivery

Based on the desired participants and locations, the NEM team planned a 13 week programme of events. Single Service representatives at each location recruited participants against desired criteria. All attendees were provided with an information pack in advance and requested to provide consent before participating. All consent forms are stored centrally by the NEM Programme Senior Policy Analyst. The purpose was reiterated at the start of each session and the option to opt-out was available at all times.



Attendance levels were very good at all locations, with only a few mop-up sessions required at the end to ensure full coverage of the desired rank cohorts and attributes. Focus groups and interviews by location are shown in Figure 3 below.





Service	Location	Focus groups	Interviews
	Cosford & Shawbury	5	3
	Cranwell & Coningsby	4	3
	Lossiemouth	3	3
	Brize Norton	3	4
	Lisburn & Aldergrove	2	3
	Edinburgh	2	2
	Fort George	1	2
	London	1	-
	Catterick	4	5
	Salisbury Plain	7	6
	Germany	7	6
	Yeovilton	2	3
	Faslane	6	7
	Portsmouth	8	7
	Northwood	2	5
	Cyprus	4	6
	Falklands	2	2
	Belgium	2	2
TOTAL		65	69

Figure 3: Focus group and interviews by location

1.2.8 Analysis and reporting

The 134 KPMG-facilitated sessions gathered over 15,000 responses. Each session was transcribed and the responses were collated by Topic Guide. All responses linked to requirements were systematically cleansed for relevance to the question, coded for primary and secondary meaning and then categorised by theme. The codes and themes were used to analyse the responses against the requirement set by the workstream lead for each design component. Data collected in the UK and overseas was treated in the same way.

When identifying the attitudes, perceptions and potential behaviours of Service Personnel, the following key questions were also asked per component and where they existed they are presented in this report:

- Difference by Service
- Difference by rank
- Difference by location
- Difference by life stage.

Quotes and cases studies have been added to provide context through real examples.

This report presents the findings from the qualitative consultation sessions only, based on those questions and requirements set by the workstream team leaders. It does not analyse the results against the current design state of components and therefore does not include recommendations for next steps and changes to the Armed Forces HR policies.

2 Future Accommodation

2.1 Home Purchase Initiative

The Home Purchase Initiative component is reviewing how the MOD can provide Service Personnel with financial assistance to buy a home. To support this, the Future Accommodation workstream requested information on Service Personnel's:

- Aspirations for home ownership and the factors influencing choices on location and timing of purchase;
- Knowledge of the housing market;
- Knowledge and experience of home purchase assistance programmes and the Joint Services Housing Advice Office;
- Perception of Early Departure Payment, its influence to staying in the Armed Forces and if advanced access would be attractive to assist with home purchase; and
- Ability to afford and apply for a mortgage.

2.1.1 Aspirations for home ownership and the factors influencing choices on location and timing of purchase



Case study

One young married couple had managed to save the deposit and gain initial approval for a mortgage from a mainstream UK bank using their online application system. When they visited the bank for interview and to complete the application forms, the bank were unwilling to progress their application due to the fact they were in the Army.

"The bank was unwilling to lend to us due to the instability of being in the Army they were convinced we would rent it out and also that [SP's wife] had less chance of being employed if we kept changing location. This also reduced the amount we were being offered."

They have so far been unable to purchase their own home and are saving for a larger deposit to reduce the mortgage required.

Across all participants the majority of Service Personnel who currently do not own their own home expressed a desire for home ownership in future. The idea of having a 'home' rather than house was important to Service Personnel.

For those hoping to purchase a home in the future, several factors drove the preference of location. Family reasons were clearly the most important. These included:

- Consideration of schooling and school catchment areas;
- Proximity to where they had grown up or where their family/friends are based now. This provided partners with a support network to help with childcare and to provide welfare support when Service Personnel are on Operational Tour;
- Proximity to current posting/base, in particular to reduce the commute to work; and
- Employment opportunities for Service Personnel when they left the Armed Forces and opportunities now and in the future for their partner.

When Service Personnel could not decide on a preferred location they stated that the uncertainty around work location now and after they leave the Service was the key issue driving their indecision.

Other Ranks in particular stated home ownership as essential for 'life outside the Forces'. When considering the location of a property to buy they expressed a preference for living away from Service life whilst serving and also after they leave.

When Service Personnel would buy a property was driven by the affordability of deposit and mortgage repayments; when they most need family/child stability such as when a child attends school (but not via Continuous Education Allowance); or when a partner requires stability to support their employment.



Those who said that they were not interested in home ownership in the foreseeable future stated that their current role prevents stability and therefore makes it too difficult to settle down and buy a home. Some individuals were put off by the uncertainty of their future career and working location and also the practicalities of renting their property out if posted elsewhere for long periods of time.

Of those Officers who do not own a home there were a small number who stated that they would purchase a home for investment purposes and would therefore not live in it as their primary residence. In this instance, all stated that they would continue to use Service provided accommodation. This was not reflected among the Other Rank population, where the majority reported that they aspire to purchase a home to live in.

Additional information relating to broader aspects of home purchase is covered in Section 2.3.

2.1.2 Knowledge of the housing market

The majority of Officers across all Services indicated that they understood the UK housing market.

Other Ranks had mixed views on their understanding of the housing market. RAF Other Ranks reported a better understanding than those from the Army or Royal Navy. Of those that stated that they had a limited understanding of the housing market, reasons included the amount and complexity of the information they were required to understand and lack of understanding of the buying process.

In order to gain further knowledge, the majority of Service Personnel have sought, or would seek, advice from professional advisors including Independent Financial Advisors, estate agents and banks. Some individuals had consulted the Money Advice Service to help them manage their finances better. To a lesser extent people reverted to self help from the internet, friends, and colleagues.

Many Service Personnel stated they would like more advice on mortgages, legal factors and the housing market. Some found the whole area complex and stated a desire for simple communications in language that is easy to understand. Some commented that the Armed Forces should provide Service Personnel more information on buying property while others indicated it was an individual's responsibility.

2.1.3 Knowledge and experience of home purchase assistance programmes and the Joint Services Housing Advice Office

The majority of Service Personnel were aware of local and national home buying initiatives, particularly the Shared Ownership and New Buy schemes. Participants stated they would like to know more about the breadth and detail of these and whether they were viable options for serving members of the Armed Forces. Only a small number of participants had used home purchase assistance schemes, these were Other Ranks from across the Services. Overall Service Personnel had less of an understanding of the guaranteed mortgage scheme.

Awareness of the Joint Services Housing Advice Office (JSHAO) across Service Personnel was very poor. The few who had heard of the service were in the RAF or Royal Navy. Of these, there was limited awareness of its remit and the service provided. Only a few participants had used the service.

2.1.4 Perception of Early Departure Payment and if advanced access would be attractive to assist with home purchase

The majority of Officers were aware of Early Departure Payment (EDP). Other Ranks had a more limited knowledge of the scheme. Overall there was a desire for more information and understanding about EDP.

Of those Service Personnel that expressed some awareness, it was stated that EDP is linked to the pension scheme, although the specifics of who is eligible for EDP was unclear to some. Participants who had been in the Armed Forces for longer tended to make the link to gratuity payments.

Those Service Personnel who thought EDP was important agreed that it would be attractive to draw it before leaving, to support home ownership issues such as a contribution towards a deposit, mortgage repayments and transitioning to civilian life. This was most widespread among Officers. There was a view that, if it was available before the pension point, flexibility of choice for how it may be used is required, i.e. it should be permissible to use it as desired, not just for home purchase.

Officers stated that the attractiveness of using EDP early would depend on the impact on pensions and other allowances. Other dependencies such as LSAP, tax implications and scheme specific conditions, such as being forced to buy in one area or being unable to rent a property, also caused concern. Similarly, Other Ranks stated that the attractiveness of earlier EDP drawdown for home purchase would depend on the terms and conditions of the scheme.

Additional information relating to broader aspects of EDP can be found in section 3.4.



I would prefer to raise the money myself. In the long term you don't gain much from EDP. A cynic would say you are tying people in with no cost to the Army."



EDP will keep people to an option point, [but] other things such as promotion are important."

2.1.5 Ability to afford and apply for a mortgage

Prevalence of home ownership was highest amongst Officers. Across participants many reasons were given for not being able to afford to buy a home. While there were some differences across rank, an even split of opinion was found across Service.

Officers stated a lack of deposit as being the primary reason that they are unable to afford a home at this time. Reasons for not being in a position to save included paying for existing debts; such as student loans, poor credit history due to mobility, particularly when having served overseas, and child care costs.

Other Ranks stated current household income as the main reasons they believe they are not able to obtain a mortgage. Individuals commented that the ability to save enough money for a deposit was a significant hurdle because of their current low salary. In addition, being able to repay a mortgage was seen as a challenge for some.



[My] wages are definitely not enough to buy right now."



I wouldn't get the finance. As soon as you tell people you are in the Army, everything stops."



2.2 Market Average Rate and Policy Constraints

The Market Average Rate and Policy Constraints component is reviewing how the MOD can benchmark prices of Service accommodation against civilian rental rates. To support this, the Future Accommodation workstream requested information on Service Personnel's:

- Awareness of the amount of discount on Service accommodation and perceived reasons for this discount;
- Desire to live close to work, the reasons for this, and what is an acceptable commuting distance and frequency; and
- Desire to pay for larger Service Family Accommodation when circumstances change.

2.2.1 Awareness of the amount of discount on Service accommodation and perceived reasons for this discount

There was a clear recognition across all Services and ranks that SLA and SFA are cheaper than private rented accommodation. Perceptions about why SLA and SFA are cheaper were mixed. A lack of choice as to the accommodation that Service Personnel were offered came through strongly across all Services and ranks, as did the condition of the properties when compared to private rented accommodation. Frustrations here included general repair and maintenance issues, the age of some housing stock and that Service Personnel are unable to decorate the property (unless they return to original condition when vacating). Officers and Other Ranks also indicated that SLA and SFA was cheaper because it was seen as part of the financial reward of being in the Services. The need for Service Personnel to be mobile and move properties relatively frequently was also stated as a reason for SLA and SFA to be cheaper than the private market.



You always expect a list of 5 to 10 minor to major issues when you move into your SFA."



Back home [other people] pay all in £800. Here [we] pay £200."



Case study

A focus group with junior Ranks discussed the impacts and constraints of service accommodation entitlements. Several stated the desire to be allowed to apply for larger SFA, they knew it was available and were willing to pay for the extra space for their family. Married participants thought the accommodation provision was a major draw to and retainer for the Services, while those that were unmarried with children thought it was very unfair that their colleagues received this benefit over themselves. This was pertinent with two participants who were in long term relationships and their partners have children. They were extremely frustrated that since they weren't married, they were unable to apply for SFA. When asked if they planned to get married, they stated that while that was desirable, it was also a huge cost that they could not afford and were prioritising other things, like buying a car and home.

Service Personnel were asked how much they would be prepared to pay for improved SLA or SFA specifically in relation to condition, scale or location. The majority stated that they would be prepared to pay more however there was variation in whether condition, location or size were most important factor in driving an increased cost. The majority were not prepared to give a specific amount that they would be willing to pay as this was dependent on personal circumstances, the condition of accommodation that people are currently living in and what was on offer. For the small number who did indicate how much they would be willing to pay, the average was an additional £100 per month.



[Housing is] a lot cheaper – but we get what we pay for."



You don't have the choice of where to live."

When asked whether they would be happy to move to somewhere with a less good condition, scale or location if they could pay less, the majority of Service Personnel from all Services and ranks said no. The main reason for this was that they already felt the condition of their property was low.

Many also noted that it was important to ensure their SLA or SFA felt like a home, particularly if they had children and that this would not be possible if the condition, scale or location was less good.

Many participants stated that offering accommodation to Service Personnel at reduced rates is a significant recruitment and retention incentive. Some participants from all Services and ranks stated that inexpensive Service accommodation was the most significant part of the employment offer and is the main aspect of working in the Armed Forces that retains them.

The policy currently in place in respect of those Service Personnel who are eligible for SFA was also a source of frustration for some. A number of Service Personnel from all Services and ranks indicated that they did not feel that the current policy was set up to meet the demands of a 21st century family, where two people may be long term partners but not married, or have children from previous relationships for example.



Case study

An interview with two serving Service Personnel was conducted to discuss their family circumstances. They had been in a long term relationship and had a young child. However having only recently got married, the father had theoretically previously had to get permission to visit his child who lived with her mother on the SFA patch on base.



Think that we married earlier than a civilian couple may have done so you had the safety net of a house that was guaranteed if you were posted and had to move."

Case study

During a focus group discussion about home ownership we explored current living arrangements and family circumstances. One participant stated that he was currently getting divorced from his wife and had moved out of the family home they had bought together. He was now living in SLA, and as a consequence his children were not able to stay with him. In order for him to spend time with his children at weekends he had to rent a hotel room on a regular basis.

2.2.2 Desire to live close to work, the reasons for this, and what is an acceptable commuting distance and frequency



Royal Navy

A slight majority of Royal Navy Officers and Other Ranks indicated that being close to work was important in selecting where they would like their SFA or SLA to be. The main reason was that it meant Service Personnel could get to work more quickly and easily to meet operational demands. It was also noted that proximity to work may also mean fewer travel cost outlays.



Yes, very important. It is easier to get in last minute if required."



Can be the difference on whether you need an extra car or not for your family."

Those who indicated that being close to work was not important when selecting SLA or SFA location suggested this was down to privacy reasons and a desire to separate work and home lives.

When asked how important, if at all, would it be that the home they buy is close to work, although a low number of responses were received, all of the Royal Navy respondents indicated that it was not important. This was due to a desire to live away from work and also because of the frequency of movement. When asked what other factors impacted their decision on where to buy, all Royal Navy participants indicated that family related factors were the main considerations. These included proximity to family and friends, education needs of children and proximity to partner employment.

The majority of Royal Navy Officers and Other Ranks indicated that a commute of less than an hour would be a reasonable time to commute to and from work on a daily basis.



That's why we bought our own home so we can close the door at the end of the day."

Royal Navy Officers and Other Ranks were open to the idea of weekly commuting with the majority indicating that it may be a consideration if it meant that their family was afforded greater stability. The importance of providing stability of children's education was a consistent theme for those who would consider weekly commuting. A number indicated that the 'Get You Home' allowance would need to fully cover commuting distance.



Army

The predominant response from Army Officers and Other Ranks was that being close to work was important in selecting where they would like their SFA or SLA to be. Similar to the Royal Navy, being close to work meant that operational requirements could be met more easily. In addition it was felt that the working week could be made more 'straightforward' by being close to work.



Definitely important. So many things that could mean you have to be back immediately at very short notice. Part of job. If you aren't on site, then it makes it much harder. Could get called on 24hrs a day when on call."

The majority of Army Officers and Other Ranks indicated that it was important that the home they buy is close to work. Feedback suggested this should be commutable and with a journey of less than one hour. Some noted that journey time depended on how they travel to work (i.e. car or train) and that shorter journeys were preferable if travelling by public transport.

A preference for walking, cycling or being able to drive was expressed across all ranks. Army Officers also suggested that longer commute times would only be appropriate for those working more standard 9 to 5 hours and not those working shifts or irregular patterns.

The majority of Army Officers and Other Ranks were not interested in being weekly commuters. Improvements to 'Get Yourself Home' allowances and the opportunity to work more flexibly (leaving early and starting later) would be needed by those who indicated they would consider commuting weekly.



RAF

A slight majority of RAF Officers and Other Ranks indicated that being close to work was important in selecting where they would like their SFA or SLA to be. The main reasons for this were financial, with responses indicating that current allowances were not effective in supporting individuals to live further away from work locations. Proximity to work was also seen to build and generate community and mean that Service Personnel were able to use the facilities available on base.



There isn't enough encouragement for people to live out e.g. it costs me £100 in fuel to get to work and I get £40 back."



Proximity to facilities and support network is important (including medical centre, mess etc.)."

All RAF Officers and Other Ranks indicated that proximity of work to the home they buy is dependent on individual circumstances. Circumstances included the importance of family stability, partner employment opportunities, appetite to have separate work and home lives and also the particular demands of that person's role in the Service i.e. on call arrangements.



Commuting is not appropriate for shift work – need to consider duty of care."

Similar to the Army and Royal Navy, the majority of RAF Officers and Other Ranks indicated that a commute of less than an hour would be reasonable. RAF Other Ranks suggested that the length of commute would depend on whether the individual worked standard set hours or shift patterns, with potentially shorter commutes needed by those working shifts.

RAF Officers and Other Ranks indicated that flexible working opportunities would need to be available to make them more likely to consider being a weekend commuter. In addition this would depend on distance, personal circumstances and standard of accommodation.

2.2.3 Desire to pay for larger Service Family Accommodation when circumstances change

The majority of Service Personnel from all Services and ranks indicated that larger accommodation would be required if family circumstances changed, e.g. if they were to have more children or dependent parents needed to move in. Others indicated they were happy with the size of their current SFA or a change in circumstances was not relevant for them. Just one respondent indicated that they may want to downsize accommodation when their children left home but still recognised that they would require space for the children to come and visit.



Yes – would hope to get a 3 bed [SFA] so family could come and stay – especially if [the Service Person] is away on Operational duty."

When asked whether they would be prepared to pay for improved condition, scale or location of SLA or SFA, the majority responded that they would, but that all factors needed to be considered, not just size.

2.3 Home Purchase Decision Making (Integration)

Single Services requested further information on home purchase:

- The influencing factors when deciding where and when to purchase a home; and
- The intent for initial use of a purchased property.

See Section 2.1 above which also reports views and aspiration for home ownership.

2.3.1 Influencing factors when deciding when and where to purchase a home

Overall, Service Personnel cited location as being the most important factor when choosing to buy a home. Significant themes were affordability, desirable or familiar area, and being close to friends/family. Proximity to friends and family was referenced as important due to a strong desire to be near wider family for support while Service Personnel are away on Operational Tour. A further benefit of living close to family includes help with childcare. In addition, but to a lesser extent, there was a desire to spend spare time with friends rather than colleagues, something that was felt not to be possible if living in Service accommodation.

Service Personnel indicated that they would be likely to purchase a property when they were more financially stable. For some, this included when they had been promoted and therefore when they had adequate savings and/or mortgage deposit. Geographical stability also featured as a key point at which Service Personnel might be more inclined to buy. Some also stated that they would consider home purchase once the housing market changes and when they have more knowledge of the current schemes/support available.

2.3.2 Intent for initial use of a purchased property

The majority of Service Personnel would purchase a property to live in; a minority would purchase a property as an investment. Others commented that it would depend on personal circumstances (e.g. location) as to whether they would rent or live in the property. Those who said that they would prefer to rent their property rather than live in it were Officers; this compared with Other Ranks whose preference was to purchase a property to live in.



Royal Navy

When asked about what factors they considered when purchasing a home, Royal Navy Officer and Other Ranks predominantly saw their purchase being for residential purposes.

Factors they considered the most important were family (e.g. partner employment prospects and schools) and location.



Other family members being nearby to provide support while you are away."



Where my wife will be happy."



Army

For both Army Officers and Other Ranks there was a combination of those who intend to rent out their property, those who saw it as an investment opportunity and those who are specifically looking for a primary residence to live in.

The top three factors that Army personnel consider when choosing a home to buy are family, investment and personal choice.

Those citing family commented that partner employment, schooling and proximity to family and friends were important considerations.

Those interested in a property for investment purposes wanted to ensure that the property had high rental potential (desirable location and yield).

Additional factors included the location and/or size of property, and consideration of employment prospects upon leaving the Service.



There a trade off between buying somewhere to let and buying in a location you want to live once you've finished, or a central location where you can get to an Army base."



Future job prospects important. Make sure nice area and able to get a decent job when leave."



RAF

The majority of the RAF Officers and Other Ranks expressed that they planned to purchase a property with the intention of renting it out. Location was again a key factor.

When choosing a location to live in (this could be SFA/SLA rather than a house they had purchased), proximity to schools was the key driving factor for those with children. Reasons for this were the desire to have children in good schools, not to move children around schools and to live close to the school to reduce travel time.



Case study

A focus group with 10 RAF Junior Officers collectively owned 12 properties. Under half of these were currently being lived in, with the remainder of Officers living in SFA or in the Mess. All cited the desire to own one or more properties for family stability and investment purposes. Several participants indicated that the low cost of SLA/SFA allowed them to make multiple investments. The frequency of postings also meant they had minimal opportunity to live in the properties they owned, for example, several participants stated they had lived in their homes less than three years in the last five to seven.



If buying as an investment then the location is important."



Now I've bought a property and I rent it out and live in SLA."



If I could go back 6 years I'd buy and live in SLA and rent [my property] out."

2.4 Partner Employment Programme

The Partner Employment Programme component is reviewing the need, potential benefits and how the MOD can support partners of Service Personnel to enter and stay in valuable employment. To support this, the Future Accommodation workstream requested information on Service Personnel and their partner's:

- Type of qualifications, and whether these are commensurate to current earnings and role;
- Need for two salaries, in particular for home purchase;
- Level of career sacrifice made in support of Service mobility; and
- Initial thoughts relating to MOD initiatives to support partner employment.

It should be noted Family Impact interviews were conducted with Service Personnel and their Partners either at the base or their home locations nearby. This meant that the interviews were typically conducted with accompanied Service Personnel and their partners rather than unaccompanied Service Personnel and their partners. However to facilitate these in depth discussions, interviews were offered at a time and place of convenience to enable participation.

2.4.1 Current qualifications and earnings of partner

Partner employment is seen as an important issue to the majority of Service Personnel. For most it forms part of the overall consideration about family life and partner happiness. Of the families spoken to there was an even split between partners that do work and those that do not. Of those families spoken to as part of the consultation, Army and RAF partners were more likely to be in employment than Royal Navy partners.

Very few partners had no qualifications; most were trained to NVO/GSCE level and had some work experience. A small group had achieved A-levels, a degree or similar professional qualification.

Some employed partners commented that their current role fitted in with their lifestyle at present; either because it provided additional financial income, or enabled flexibility to support childcare arrangements.

There was a split between those that felt their job was in line with their qualifications and experience and those who felt that they were working in roles below the standards of their qualification and/or experience. For the partners who felt that they were underemployed, they believed their jobs had required a lower educational standard than they had. Partners tended to work in customer service, education and administrative roles, for some this was an issue. Very few partners were working in senior management/professional roles.

Information on how the MOD could support partner employment for those not currently working is included in section 2.4.4.

2.4.2 Partner employment and home purchase

Most couples from all Services and ranks agreed that both partners need to work to be able to afford the purchase and repayment of a mortgage.

All Service Personnel had selected their current living location based on their employment rather than that of their partner. However, Service Personnel felt that it was important that partner employment was taken into consideration when choosing a location to base the family in the long term.

Interviewees were asked if any family impact issues might cause them to leave the Forces. Many had not discussed this, but a small number said yes, mainly due to impact of Service life on family and the lack of stability in their preferred living location.



Case study

A young couple interviewed told of their desire to own their own property for family security.

"We are desperate to buy, we want to get on the property ladder to have home security away from the Army. We need the money for a deposit to get a mortgage and we are saving so hard for that."

2.4.3 Career sacrifice to support Service mobility

More Service Personnel's partners perceived there was a negative impact on their careers from their partner being in the Services than those that did not. Several partners stated they had made a choice to marry into the Service, and acknowledged a compromise to their career as a result. In order to enable employment that supported mobility and for some, childcare needs, a number of Service Personnel's partners had taken up welfare, customer service or childcare roles, often located at the base. Others, who were nurses or teachers for example, indicated that though their career choice had not been affected by being married to an individual in the Armed Forces, having a mobile job meant they could maintain a career.

The majority of Service Personnel felt that their career in the Services had not been impacted by the needs of their partner's career. For the few couples who had made choices to sustain the partner's career, this was about location. This included influencing where next assignments would be or choosing not to go on an overseas posting.

Those based overseas found employment opportunities harder to come by than those based in the UK. When overseas, partners typically work in roles on military bases. While overseas, there were some examples of voluntary work or running their own business back in the UK remotely. This was to keep skills up to date and provide an extra income. The internet and ease of travel to and from some locations enabled these working arrangements.



Important that both can be working."



I'm frustrated, we are missing out on financial benefits [of partner being in work] such as nice holidays."



I'm not bothered; we decided early on to stay together and that I would follow my husband and his job."

Case study

The wife of a Junior Officer told how she had adapted her skills and capabilities to allow her to work virtually, running her own business while overseas and in more remote locations in the UK. Moving around locations, following her husband's career, had forced her to adapt her type of work and how she conducted it. While this has worked in the last two locations, she is dependent on her SFA that is large enough to have an office and has good broadband provision.

2.4.4 MOD initiative to support partner employment

Those partners who were not currently working but expressed a desire to work were asked their views on what type of support they would require to help them return to the workplace. The majority of Service Personnel's partners across all Services and ranks stated that they would like to have support in preparation to become job-ready. While this included courses to support CV writing etc., partners also stated they would appreciate the ability to use Service Personnel's learning credits to attend courses to broaden their skills. Some also commented that they would appreciate face to face career guidance sessions.

In addition to providing training and education for those wishing to return to work, the next most popular theme was to support partners with barriers to employment. All of the feedback here was centred on childcare issues. Partners either felt that they could not afford childcare or that there were limiting factors which inhibited them using current childcare provision (e.g. opening hours).



Childcare is a huge issue – it is why I don't work. It would cost more to put the children into childcare than I would earn."



I'm misemployed – My CV must look terrible. It's very difficult for me to continue a career as it looks like I haven't stuck at anything."

There was strong interest in the MOD working with local employers to identify job opportunities for partners of Service Personnel. Some mentioned the need to be more honest with employers about the commitment that Service Personnel partners could give in terms of longevity of career, so that employers would be aware of the transient nature of personnel.

Only a very few commented that the MOD should not do anything more than that already offered and that they felt comfortable sourcing employment without the support of the MOD.



Form links with big companies to identify local job opportunities..... there is a need to be proactive in the local area."



Maybe MoD could help military wives get civil jobs beyond the garrison. They could help by providing references for them. But it could create ill feeling in the community, and they know the person is moving every 3 years."



Meeting local employers could be really helpful."



Would be beneficial if there were more jobs available for spouses on bases."



Sometimes partners sacrifice their career so there should be support for them."

3 Terms of Service

3.1 Career Streaming

The Career Streaming component is reviewing the creation of a Fast Track scheme for the top performing 15% Officers (the Executive Stream) while enabling the remaining 85% of Officers to develop highly specialised skills in the Defence Professional stream. To support this, the Terms of Service workstream requested information on Service Personnel's:

- Awareness of career streaming;
- Views on the impact of career streaming;
- Appetite for career management by Employment Field;
- Understanding of how ability and competence is currently rewarded; and
- Perception of importance of membership of professional bodies.

Given career streaming is only relevant to Officers, only views from this cohort were requested. It was also recognised that the RAF currently operates a 'stream for senior leadership potential' approach where approximately 15% of Officers are placed in the 'executive stream'.

3.1.1 Awareness of career streaming

There was a clear recognition of career streaming and the term 'executive stream' amongst Officers from all Services, however there was a mixed understanding of the maturity of any scheme, what it involved and whether an individual was part of it. A number of Officers indicated that streaming was meritocratic and based on talent while others indicated that its application was unclear, confusing and unevenly and unfairly applied.



Case study

When discussing Career Streaming a Junior RAF Officer discussed his experience. He indicated that it was not possible to fit enough individuals from the executive stream to the executive stream posts. This meant that executive stream posts were filled by others outside the stream, thus undermining the scheme.

No clear response was obtained as to when in their careers Officers should be 'streamed', however the majority of responses indicated that it should be clear to the individual and others whether they are part of a 'stream' so that careers can be appropriately planned and expectations managed.

CAREER STREAMING
MUST BE **TRANSPARENT**
AND PREDICTABLE

3.1.2 Views on the impact of career streaming

Officers from all Services indicated that appropriate application of career streaming could mean that talent was identified and targeted appropriately and that competition could mean that the right people were placed in the right positions. Officers recognised that clarity on the existence and application of career streaming enables an individual's career expectations to be managed appropriately. However it was suggested that the range of opportunities open to 'executive stream' members could be fewer; that it would be difficult to be geographically stable in this stream and that work life balance could be affected. A number of Officers indicated that the streaming process, though necessary, could be divisive for those outside the stream.

3.1.3 Appetite for career management by Employment Field

There was a slight preference for individuals in the Defence Professional Stream to be placed into one or two 'Employment Fields' in which they specialise. There was a mixed response as to whether allocation to 'Employment Fields' already occurred, with some responses indicating it already happens. Concerns were expressed however as to the ease with which all jobs could be mapped to 'Employment Fields' impacting the practicality of its application. In addition, for those posts that are already difficult to fill, adding further requirements to application may cause difficulty.

There was a varied response as to when 'Employment Fields' should be used, with responses ranging from immediately, earlier than SO1 and after SO1 as senior management expertise would be required.

3.1.4 Understanding of how ability and competence is currently rewarded

For formal career streaming to be effective, it must be supported by an appropriate and underpinning reward mechanism. Pay, promotion and career progression were identified as current positive ways of recognising ability and competence. In addition a number of participants indicated that Operational honours, rewards and commendations were a good recognition tool, though it was noted these can be subjective.

3.1.5 Perception of importance of membership of professional bodies

There was strong agreement amongst Officers that membership of a professional body was important to them. Individuals recognised the value in supporting their career while in the Services. The majority responding positively also recognised the value that such membership had in civilian life after leaving the Armed Forces. The minority of Officers that felt that membership was not important queried the value of membership during their Service career, indicating it was only relevant when entering the civilian job market and therefore less important while serving.

Similar responses were received from Other Ranks with regard to the importance of professional body membership. The majority indicated it was important, particularly in providing civilian recognised accreditation and important when building a second career. Those that did not see it as important indicated that it was not relevant for their role in the Service, their specific Trade or that it was not relevant to Other Ranks individuals at all.

3.2 Part Time Working

The Part Time Working component is reviewing the benefits and options for reduced working commitment and/or liability. To support this, the Terms of Service workstream requested information on Service Personnel's:

- Desire for working on a reduced commitment basis and whether impacts to allowances or entitlements would deter application;
- Perceived impact of leaving the Regulars and joining the Reserves to reduce commitment; and
- Preferred timescales for reduced commitment working.

3.2.1 Desire for working on a reduced commitment basis and impact on allowances or entitlements

The majority of Officers and Other Ranks from all Services agreed that part time working could provide greater flexibility to the Service as well as the individual; however the majority indicated they would not want to work in that way themselves, unless family commitments required it.

Officers tended to highlight that flexible working could support retention and improve workforce management by formalising arrangements, such as



Case study

In an interview with a Junior Officer, we explored the advantages and disadvantages of part time working. While he thought this may work for some trades he thought it was unnecessary as often such needs were often managed locally within the chain of command. He gave a recent example where a Junior Rank needed time off to care for a parent who was unwell. Time was given off and workload managed within the unit.

job sharing and compressed hours, while Other Ranks were primarily focused on enabling individuals to manage family life more effectively with a career in the Services.

There was however some firm views on the disadvantages of offering part time working. A number of Officers indicated a potential issue with skills currency and the ability to maintain effectiveness if working part time. The negative impact on the organisation was highlighted, citing that the organisation was not 'set up' to manage those working flexibly or that the work could be done in a flexible way. Other Ranks stressed the impact on the team, suggesting that others would have to 'take up the slack' and that this could cause resentment. A real depth of feeling came through on this topic; a number of Other Ranks indicated that those who currently work part time are not felt to pull their weight and are treated differently.

The majority of Officers indicated that if working part time impacted on their career and promotion opportunities it would impact their decision to work in that way, as would any changes to the allowances available. Other Ranks feedback indicated that the impact on pay, pension and allowances would be a significant consideration when deciding on whether to work part time. A small number of both Officers and Other Ranks indicated that their willingness to leave the Regulars and join the Reserves would depend on the ease of moving back to the Regulars when appropriate.



The military is not the place for part-time working."



I have a friend who would take that like a shot. [She is a] single mum and would take that option straight away."



It would be nice to have the opportunity for women to get promoted, have a family and a house. I'd love to do a full 20 years if I could."

3.2.2 Perceived impact of leaving the Regulars and joining the Reserves



A mixed response was received from Officers across the Services as to whether moving from the Regulars to the Reserves would make part time working more or less attractive to them. Officers indicated they would be either unconcerned or supportive of colleagues choosing to move from the Regulars to the Reserves. Responses indicated that it would have a very positive impact on Reserve capability.

The majority of Other Ranks indicated that if working part-time meant they had to leave the Regulars and join the Reserves it would make it less attractive for them. This view was shared across all Services, though particularly from the Army. Other Ranks were broadly split between whether they would feel differently towards colleagues who joined the Reserves or not, with a real strength of feeling being shown by those who would not support colleagues that did transfer. Those indicating that they would be less supportive of colleagues who did choose to move were from the Army and Royal Navy.



Less attractive – if you joined the reserves you would be the one with all the experience and so the workload would fall your way."



As long as their in-tray doesn't become my in-tray."

The majority of Service Personnel were keen to engage in extensive discussions on the role and capability of the Reserve Force when discussing any proposed move between the Regulars and Reserves. A summary of the opinions and views expressed, though not linked to a specific workstream requirement, is presented here.

The majority of Service Personnel indicated that there are real cultural differences between the Regulars and Reserves which would need to be managed appropriately to ensure positive and effective joint working. The operational component of the Reserves was questioned, as was their

effectiveness and capability. Service Personnel questioned the ability of the Reserves to maintain skills and capability given current commitment and training levels. A number of Service Personnel questioned whether individuals in the Reserves 'took it seriously'.

It should be noted that a few individual positive experiences of working with Reserves were highlighted, particularly by those Regular Service Personnel who had served alongside Reserves on operational duty. Some Service Personnel highlighted the need to clarify what the Reserves are expected to do and what they can be trained for given their commitment in order to make best use of their capability.



I wonder what the role of the

reserves in the Navy are? Are they a drinking club? Regulars and Reserves are different and this needs to be understood."



Case study

During an interview with a Royal Navy Officer the role of the Reserves was discussed. The Officer commented that he is unsure of the role of the Navy Reserves, stating that they have a poor reputation as a 'drinking club'. He commented that it could be a good organisation but it currently isn't. In his opinion the Navy Reserves should have more personnel in order to be more effective. This was balanced with the view that there is a limited effect that individuals who attend weekly training can have as they don't always have access to the most up to date equipment. He stated that there are also instances of Regulars who have failed to gain promotion and have left and gone on to join the Reserves. They have then rejoined the Regulars a few years later at a higher rank. This causes discontent amongst Regulars and Reservists and does little to help relations between the two groups.

3.2.3 Preferred timescales for reduced commitment working

When asked what sort of time periods would be most attractive for working part-time, of those who responded, there was an even spread of responses between:

- a year or less – this was expressed predominantly by Other Ranks from all Services;
- up to two years – this was expressed evenly between Officers and Other Ranks from all Services; and
- up to three years – this was expressed evenly between Officers and Other Ranks from all Services;

A small number of responses indicated that a period of greater than three years would be of interest.

A number of both Officers and Other Ranks indicated that the length of time should depend on the particular personal circumstances of the individual with no set time period stipulated. This would offer the individual flexibility to meet their needs.

3.3 Return of Service/Investment

The Return of Service/Investment component is reviewing a commitment to serve as a repayment for career or professional development courses. To support this, the Terms of Service workstream requested information on Service Personnel's:

- Views on Return of Service;
- Ideas on how the Return of Service should be determined;
- Views on whether the requirement to complete a Return of Service would discourage uptake; and
- The impact of not completing a Return of Service.

3.3.1 Views on Return of Service

The vast majority of Officers and Other Ranks from all Services felt that a Return of Service (RoS) was appropriate and was accepted as fair. The majority recognised that RoS already existed.

3.3.2 How the Return of Service should be determined

Officers from all Services responding positively to a RoS felt it was appropriate if the course provided a civilian qualification and/or the cost of the course was high. A RoS would then mean that the individual could apply the capabilities learnt for the benefit of the Service. A small number indicated that the RoS should be linked to the availability of the course.

Similar views were also expressed by Other Ranks. The majority agreed with a RoS, indicating the RoS should be linked to the value of the course – both in monetary terms and also to the individual; including the value they could add to the Service as a consequence of going on the course, and also in a civilian career after leaving the Service. Other Ranks also highlighted that a RoS should be applied to courses they deemed to be for ‘specialist’ individuals including Doctors, Dentists, Paramedics, Nurses and Accountants.

Both Officers and Other Ranks were clear that any RoS should be clearly articulated and understood from the beginning of a course so that individuals were aware of their commitments. All Service Personnel indicated that a RoS should only be applied if an individual had volunteered to attend the course.

3.3.3 Return of Service and course uptake

Officers from all Services indicated that having a RoS would not put them off attending a course assuming they had volunteered to attend. There was a more even split of Other Ranks between them being put off attending a course or not if a RoS was required. There was no major difference in the responses across the three Services. Again whether the individual had volunteered for the course or not was seen as an important consideration on whether a RoS should be implemented.

“Depends on if the course is of interest to you as an individual and helpful to career.”

3.3.4 The impact of not completing a Return of Service

The majority of Officer responses from all Services were similar, indicating that if an individual changed their mind after completing a course and they did not want to complete the required RoS, they should pay a portion, or the full cost, of the course. Other minority views from Royal Navy Officers indicated that an individual should be compelled to complete their RoS, while some RAF Officers indicated that if an individual did not complete the RoS it should affect the qualification that the individual received following the course.

The majority of responses from Royal Navy and RAF Other Ranks suggested that individuals should be liable to pay for the cost of the course. Army Other Ranks responses however did not include financial recompense, instead they indicated that the individual should be compelled to complete the RoS. There was recognition however that this could impact on the effectiveness of that individual during their remaining time in Service.

3.4 Integration: Retention Levers

Single Services requested further information on retention levers:

- Attractiveness of Early Departure Payment (EDP) throughout a career, at what point and what would it be used for; and
- Army only: level of interest to serve beyond 24 years (into Veng Long) and the willingness to deploy during that time.

3.4.1 Attractiveness and use of Early Departure Payment (EDP)



Royal Navy

The majority of Royal Navy Officers were aware of EDP but gave a mixed response regarding how well it works currently. Responses included that it was sufficient to draw someone through their

career and that it could support the transition to civilian life, while others felt it does not encourage people to stay and was not available at the right time. The majority felt that receiving it earlier in career would be positive citing house purchase, deposits and mortgage repayment as uses for the EDP. Duty of care considerations were also raised in respect of EDP; to ensure the money was used to invest in the individual's future, family or education. The majority indicated that being able to access their EDP earlier in career would make them more likely to stay in Service, though there was a mixed response as to the importance of EDP compared to other retention tools such as the opportunities available as part of Service life, team ethos and travel.

There was a mixed awareness and understanding amongst the Royal Navy Other Ranks of EDP and the majority of participants had negative views about the way the EDP works currently. They queried the idea of drawing EDP before leaving and so reducing the benefit available at the end of their career. However when asked whether they would be interested in drawing on their EDP earlier in their career, a slight majority responded in the positive. The Royal Navy Other Ranks had concerns if restrictive conditions were placed on what the money could be used for. A slight majority indicated that being able to draw early on their EDP would make them more likely to stay in Service but there was a mixed response as to its importance as a retention tool. Travel opportunities, stability of family life and team cohesiveness were flagged as important retention levers.



Army

The majority of Army Officers were aware of the EDP and were positive about the way it works currently, indicating it was a useful retention tool and could be used for key life decisions such as a house purchase. A small number of responses indicated that the EDP is not as important as it had been in the past, particularly for those Service Personnel receiving Army Pension 75. The majority of Officers indicated that it would be attractive to them to draw upon their EDP before leaving for reasons predominantly linked to house purchase, particularly mortgage repayment. However the majority stated it would make no difference to whether they would be more or less likely to stay in the Service; instead pension was a greater retention tool than early draw down of EDP.



Case study

In a focus group with Senior Officers we explored what would make them serve beyond their EDP point. For most, they had already passed this point (or equivalent under Pension 75). The key attraction and retention points cited were to have a full life career (always having the intention to stay until 55), education allowance (over half the group had children in boarding school), and leadership opportunities (desire to become a General).

There was a mixed awareness and understanding of EDP amongst Army Other Ranks. Junior Ranks were less aware than Senior Ranks. Feedback from across Army Other Ranks indicated that more information was required for individuals to understand fully what EDP is and what it means. Other Ranks who did understand EDP responded more positively than negatively in regard to how it works currently, indicating that the money could be useful to assist with house purchase, mortgage payments and to support planning for the future. The majority of Other Ranks also indicated that being able to draw upon their EDP before leaving would be attractive, though there were concerns as to the constraints or conditions attached, particularly as to what the EDP could be used for. Duty of

care considerations were also raised to ensure that money was used appropriately; concerns were noted as to Other Ranks existing levels of financial management and budgeting. The majority of Other Ranks indicated that earlier EDP access would make no difference to their decision on whether to stay or leave the Service, feeling that it was less important as a retention tool than pension, enjoyment of their role and team morale.



RAF

The majority of RAF Officers were aware of EDP but gave a mixed response on how well it works currently. Some responses indicated that EDP was important in enabling house purchase and supporting the transition to civilian life, while others indicated that it should be more flexible in terms of when it is available and what it can be used for. The majority felt that receiving it earlier in their career would be positive. It would enable better planning for the future, potential house purchase and

it would make them more likely to stay in the Service. Views on the importance of the EDP compared to other retention levers were mixed and appeared linked to whether the individual already owned a home. Promotion and career opportunities were stated as important retention levers.

RAF Officers provided mixed responses when asked what factors would affect their decision to serve until the end of their engagement if they were to qualify for EDP before the end. Themes included any assumed RoS required as a consequence of receiving their EDP, financial considerations and the career opportunities still available to them.

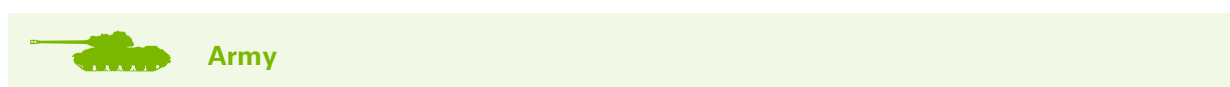
The majority of RAF Other Ranks were not aware of EDP or indicated they did not understand it. There was a mixed response as to the way that EDP works currently; themes included it being retention positive, and that it could help individuals to buy homes and support transition to civilian careers, while others indicated that career and final pension were of greater importance. Other Ranks were positive about the ability to draw on their EDP earlier in career with a number indicating it would depend on the career point at which EDP was available, how long the individual had left to serve and personal circumstances at that time. The majority indicated that it would either make them more likely to stay in Service or have no effect, rather than it making them less likely to stay. A mixed response was received as to the importance of EDP compared to other retention levers, particularly pension.

The majority of Other Ranks reported that career opportunities, accommodation and family considerations would affect their decision to continue serving after receiving EDP.

3.4.2 Level of interest to serve beyond 24 years (into Veng Long)



Views on an extended career were not a requirement for the Royal Navy and RAF.



All Officers responded that they would consider staying into an extended career indicating it provided more opportunities and would mean that a second career would not be needed. All indicated that they would be prepared to deploy during that time. Feedback indicated that deployment is part of being in the Service and so would be unavoidable if you wanted to stay in.

Army Other Ranks provided a broadly even split of responses as to whether they would consider staying on after 24 years or not. Some felt that having served for 24 years staying on would be a logical next step, while those who would not consider it highlighted concerns as to fitness levels and their body's ability to cope with the physical demands of Service life when older. Other Ranks indicated they would expect to be considered for a new engagement between one and four years before the end of their existing engagement, with the majority response being two years.

4 Training and Education

4.1 Personal Development Pathway

The Personal Development Pathway component is reviewing the potential benefits of providing earlier career advice and how the MOD could do this before the last two years of Service. To support this, the Training and Education workstream requested information on Service Personnel's:

- Desire for early career advice to support civilian employment upon leaving the Armed Forces; and
- Perception of how this would influence decisions regarding personal development while in the Armed Forces.

4.1.1 Desire for early career advice to support civilian employment upon leaving the Armed Forces



Royal Navy

A mixed response was obtained from Royal Navy Officers as to their awareness of the resettlement options and there was a suggestion that the resettlement support was inconsistent. Royal Navy Officers predominantly indicated that receiving the support earlier in career would be positive and this option would be welcome. Those Royal Navy Officers who responded less positively to earlier resettlement support indicated that it could cause issues with retention by giving people ideas about work outside the Royal Navy and potentially add to their marketability.

Royal Navy Officers responded that financial planning advice and guidance throughout their career would be beneficial. A number of participants highlighted that the Royal Navy has a duty of care to its Service Personnel in regard to financial planning information.

All Royal Navy Other Ranks were aware of the resettlement options available. A mixed response was received as to whether such support should be received earlier in career. Those responding positively suggested that the individual could then apply their skills in the remainder of their Service, while others indicated that it could lead to retention issues.

The majority of the Royal Navy Other Ranks indicated that if financial planning guidance was provided it should include pension advice.



It would chip away at trust people's faith in the offer. The fact they are saying they want to get rid of people sooner erodes commitment."



Good as could use the skills on the job."



However if lots of SP had civilian qualifications, would you lose people?."



Army

All Army Officers were aware of the resettlement options available to them. The majority indicated that receiving this support sooner would be positive, supporting the transition to civilian life and making it 'less of a shock'. Specifically, groups commented that preparing for civilian life should encompass more than training courses such as CV writing. It was suggested that the resettlement package should be expanded to include civilian work placements for example. A number of responses indicated that earlier support could in fact aid retention as the individual felt they were being invested in and would help to identify the transferable skills they had and could use when leaving the Service.

Similar to Royal Navy Officers, the majority of Army Officers indicated that financial planning advice and guidance throughout their career would be beneficial and should cover financial advice and



literacy, particularly for those Officers who in turn would often be asked for such support and advice from their Soldiers.

A mixed response was received from Army Other Ranks concerning their awareness of the resettlement options available and also whether such support should be available sooner. Those in favour indicated that it would help the individual to focus on the most appropriate qualifications. Those who were less positive about earlier support suggested it should be down to the individual to proactively seek support as and when required.

Again a mixed response was obtained from Army Other Ranks as to the impact of receiving earlier resettlement support. Those responding positively indicated it could help the transition to civilian life. Those who were not in favour suggested it could cause retention issues and that the individual would be distracted from their day job.

As with Army Officers, the majority of Army Other Ranks responding indicated that financial planning advice and guidance throughout their career would be beneficial and should include guidance on home purchase and mortgage requirements.



Yes – soldiers could do with it sooner. They are more blinkered and getting out is a shock. There is a lack of education amongst junior commanders.”



It is not always appropriate at earlier points in career.”



If you access resettlement provision early it would be wasted.”



RAF

All RAF Officers were aware of the resettlement options available. All responded positively to receiving the support earlier in their career indicating it would mean the individual had more time to prepare for civilian life and importantly to do the required courses and training available. No responses were obtained as to the impact of receiving earlier resettlement support.

In line with Army and Royal Navy Officers, RAF Officers indicated that consistent financial planning advice throughout their career would be beneficial. A recurring theme of the need for a 'one stop shop' for housing, mortgage and financial advice was stated.

The majority of RAF Other Ranks were aware of the resettlement options available though a number indicated that they were aware of this through discussions with colleagues rather than formal channels.

A mixed response was received from RAF Other Ranks as to their interest in receiving resettlement guidance sooner. Approximately half of participants indicated earlier advice would mean the individual would be more aware of their options and provide the required time to undertake any training or development requirements. However, the remainder indicated that earlier support could mean that qualifications achieved would not be current when the individual leaves the Service. The majority of participants indicated that receiving resettlement support sooner would have no impact.

The main types of financial advice that would be of interest to RAF Other Ranks include pensions and savings advice, although there was also a recognition that individuals need to take personal responsibility and seek out the advice they need.



If you are given the guidance too early then everything would have changed by the time you need it."



We need to ensure we remain competitive – you want time to prepare."

4.1.2 Perception of how this would influence decisions regarding personal development while in the Armed Forces

Where discussed, Service Personnel made the link between being better informed about which courses and roles to pursue while serving and how better choices may improve employability upon leaving the Armed Forces.

There was a strong desire for accreditation that was transferable to civilian employment and the idea of more of these opportunities was attractive. Significant frustration was voiced that very few military courses have a bearing in civilian employment. These views were predominantly held with Other Ranks for all Services and more so within the technical trades.

Membership of professional bodies also made sense to some trades with the attraction of career guidance, technical currency and networking with civilian employers.

4.2 Distributed Training

The Distributed Training component is reviewing the potential benefits and options for delivery methods and location of Phase 2 and Phase 3 training. To support this, the Training and Education workstream requested information on Service Personnel's:

- Desire for training to be delivered close to base unit/non-residential;
- Perception of impact on learning outcomes if training is non-residential;
- Views on the acceptable time to be separated from family for training; and
- Perception of the value of Phase 3 training.

4.2.1 Desire for training to be delivered close to base unit/non-residential



Royal Navy

A slight majority of Royal Navy Officers were interested in undertaking Phase 3 training that is non-residential. The main reason for this was that the training would be more accessible and could be carried out when most appropriate for the

Service Personnel and their team. Some responses did indicate that the delivery method would be dependent on the course type, indicating that more academic courses could be effectively carried out non-residentially. Those Royal Navy Officers who were not interested in non-residential Phase 3 training indicated that there may be a lack of hands on support for the participant and that e-learning training specifically did not support hands on, practical learning.



Work based learning is really good as your degree is made relevant to and part of your job."



Yes it's a really good idea – if you could do this on a ship or a sub e.g. [using] powerpoint and an exam – also you could do this at home (would work for MOSS, Computer driving)."



No. I can't stand e- learning. You need student/ instructor relationship."

The trade-offs identified by Royal Navy Officers were primarily focused on fewer opportunities to network with peers.



[There are] benefits of being with other colleagues across services and other nations – networking is important for your career during the service and for after."

Royal Navy Other Ranks also expressed a slight preference for undertaking Phase 3 training that is non-residential. As with Royal Navy Officers they indicated it would make the training more accessible, particularly if it was assumed laptops were available onboard, and could mean the individual was more stable if it could be completed at the home base rather than having to travel.

A clear preference for hands on, practical training was expressed by Royal Navy Other Ranks. They indicated that using equipment would ensure that skills and learning were embedded. Through-career training was seen as important to ensure Service Personnel could keep up with changes in technology.



Simulators are Ok for some things but not for technical engineering, you need to be hands on with real kit."

As with the Royal Navy Officers, Royal Navy Other Ranks also indicated that fewer networking opportunities may be available if training was conducted in a non-residential manner. Concerns were also raised as to whether appropriate facilities would be available for Service Personnel to conduct such training in a non-residential manner.



Army

Army Officers gave a broadly even response as to whether they would be interested in undertaking Phase 3 training that is non-residential. Officers indicating this would be of interest suggested it would reduce the time that is spent away from the Unit and the time taken out of day to day jobs. This would make planning more straightforward and lessen the burden on the chain of command. Those who were not interested in non-residential Phase 3 training indicated that it was better to be removed from the Unit so there were fewer distractions to learning. A lack of comfort with the non-residential options available, particularly e-learning, was also expressed.



Yes – Captains warfare is 2 months long which is too long out of the job."



No – with online training you miss the peer stuff."

The need for a more blended approach to Phase 3 training was suggested by Army Officers which combined upfront e-learning with shorter residential courses.



eLearning should be done pre-course, and then people go to the actual courses to learn properly."

Army Officers indicated that the trade offs of non-residential training courses would predominantly be networking opportunities. The value of the networks built up on training courses were seen as particularly strong and for some Officers seen to last throughout their careers.



Residential courses build network, the people on the course are the people you will want to call on when actually on the job."

Army Other Ranks were predominantly not in favour of undertaking Phase 3 training that is non-residential. Main themes as to why were that there would be greater work distractions if a course was non-residential and that the practicalities of running such training with appropriate content or equipment would not be possible.

Army Other Ranks expressed a clear preference for training to be hands on, conducted in a focused learning environment or as a residential course. Potential options suggested involved Unit based courses or taking the trainer to the trainees.

The main trade-offs associated with non-residential courses by the Army Other Ranks included that courses may be less effective, particularly if conducted on-line. Fewer networking opportunities and greater opportunity for distraction were also seen as drawbacks.



You can focus on learning much better away from home, especially if the course does have evening work."



RAF

A majority of RAF Officers were interested in undertaking Phase 3 training that is non-residential.

RAF Other Ranks expressed a slight preference for undertaking Phase 3 training that is non-residential, though indicated this would be dependent on the facilities being available and whether the course was appropriate to be delivered in this way.



With a longer course it's better to be away. This makes it more 'hands-on' and 'more intensive'. It means you can cover more in a shorter amount of time."



Should take the trainer to the people if you have the facilities – [however] some hangars are dark and dingey and so not conducive to a training environment"

Both RAF Officers and Other Ranks indicated a preference for a blended learning approach with a mixture of residential and non-residential elements that could be delivered through regional and Unit based courses.

However the trade-offs for non-residential courses, identified by both Officers and Other Ranks, were that courses delivered through e-learning may be less effective, that there would be reduced networking opportunities and that there may be a variation in the standards of courses if not delivered through a residential manner.



People just click through and don't pay attention to the material."



Going somewhere else makes you do the course."

4.2.2 Perception of impact on learning outcomes if training is non-residential

The perception of the impact of taking non-residential training on learning outcomes was that quality would be diminished. Service Personnel spoke from experience, saying they had less valuable learning experiences when taking courses on a non-residential basis due to the distractions that being close to work/home brought. However, there were instances where Service Personnel said they had used online and taken short courses locally that were effective learning experiences.

The key distinguishing factor on effectiveness of learning through residential versus non-residential appears to be the complexity of the subject and the length of course. Highly complex learning requires an environment where there are minimal distractions, and short courses can be effective and managed close to work and family commitments. Equipment access featured heavily for technical trades as an essential requirement to achieve hands on experience.

Officers and Other Ranks from all Services supported the effectiveness of residential and also accepted that there is a time and place for non-residential.

4.2.3 Views on the acceptable time to be separated from family for training

Officers across all Services stated that one year would be an acceptable time to be separated from family in order to attend a training course. Any time greater than one year and they would consider moving their family to be with them at the location they were based.

Views from Other Ranks, across all Services, stated a slightly shorter time frame ranging from six months to one year. Other Ranks stated that family considerations were important, in particular the availability of Nursery/schools for children if they were to move. In addition partner employment options would also impact the family decision to move for a training course.

Some Other Ranks stated that they were settled and would therefore not want to disrupt family life specifically for a training course. Again, factors considered included children's schooling and consideration of the cost of the moving.

4.2.4 Perception of the value of Phase 3 training

The opportunity to get a recognised qualification with [civilian] value outside is important to me."

[Phase 3 training is important for] progression, especially when engagements change so ongoing training is important."

You will never know everything – you need to be afforded the opportunity to continue learning."

The majority of Officers from all Services commented that Phase 3 training is worthwhile as it can enhance career prospects. Officers stated that training throughout their career was important for the following reasons; career advancement, personal development and building upon skills.

In relation to career advancement, Officers commented that diversity of training throughout an individual's career ensures that specialist knowledge and skills are gained to ensure career development. Officers felt that training and development provides individuals with the opportunity to have an interesting and varied career. It was also felt that lifelong learning is critical and that while individuals will never know everything, they need to be afforded the opportunity to develop. Officers commented that as part of ongoing training and development, building on their current skill set was important; to include trade specific skills as well as leadership and development training to prepare Officers for positions of responsibility.

For Officers who felt that some Phase 3 training was not worthwhile, they stated that timing was sometimes an issue. While there were lots of options for training, it was felt that there is limited time alongside their day job to complete training. In some cases they felt that training is often delivered when it is too late to be of use, for example not linked to specific career stage.

Similar to Officers, the majority of Other Ranks from all Services stated that career advancement, personal development, and maintaining skills were of importance when considering Phase 3 training.

Other Ranks stated that Phase 3 training was particularly important to them as it supports life-long development. Other Ranks commented that they wanted to feel a sense of achievement and that attending Phase 3 training gave them the opportunity to do this.

Interestingly, Other Ranks tended to focus more on maintaining, rather than building, skills. Here participants commented that relevant training throughout their career helps to avoid skill fade. Other Ranks stated that Phase 3 training was essential in supporting them to keep their skills up to date with changes in technology especially within technical trades.

The majority of Other Ranks commented that Phase 3 training should be linked to equivalent civilian qualifications. There was a perception that Phase 3 training does not always map across to industry standards and therefore it is not possible to obtain a civilian qualification on completion of these training courses. As a result much of the training delivered is not of use outside the Armed Forces.

4.3 Phase 0 Training

The Phase 0 Training component is reviewing the potential benefits and options for trade training to be taken before joining the Armed Forces, for example in a Further Education College. To support this, the Training and Education workstream requested information on Service Personnel's:

- Perception of the advantages and disadvantages to taking trade training before joining the Services;
- Perception on how this would affect decision to join the Services;
- Perceived impact on commitment during training; and
- Desired support from Services if studying in a Further Education College.

4.3.1 Perception of the advantages and disadvantages of taking Trade training before joining the Services



Royal Navy

The majority of Royal Navy Officers felt that there were distinct disadvantages to taking Trade training before joining the Services. Reasons focused around impact on Service ethos and retention issues.

A majority commented that there was a direct link between the training environment and the ability to be able to inspire military ethos. It was felt that Phase 1 training militarises Service Personnel prior to going on to learn a trade or skill and that by attending a college environment some of the 'Forces mindset' would be lost. In addition, some commented that not being within a military environment for the duration of Trade training would impact the way in which individuals learn about being an Officer, such as getting used to your rank and positioning with Other Ranks.

Officers also felt that there would be experience gaps if Trade training was not conducted within the Royal Navy environment. For example, some felt that by having the experience of being at sea and then coming back Service Personnel can directly relate this experience to what they do in the workplace. There were also concerns that Service Personnel would have limited 'social awareness' of what it is like being in the Services.

The main concern expressed by Royal Navy Other Ranks focused on retention. Some commented that conducting training at a Further Education college could negatively impact retention. There was a concern that this approach could lead to exclusion of some groups of applicants e.g. over 25's might not want to go back to a college environment and instead prefer the military training environment. Others commented that potentially individuals would not come back to the Royal Navy having gained a qualification that is attractive to the civilian market. It was suggested that, for example, Engineers are in high demand and there would be the potential for skilled individuals to be recruited by another organisations while at college. For many, training and education was seen as an incentive to join and it was felt that by expecting individuals to attend a Further Education college prior to joining would mean that the incentive to join the Royal Navy to gain a trade would be lost.



Army

The majority of Army respondents were Other Ranks. They commented that undertaking Trade training at a Further Education college would not have been attractive to them and cited a number of disadvantages. The majority stated that reduced military ethos, the attractiveness of civilian opportunities and an individual's lack of awareness of career path as the main reasons this proposition would not work.

There were concerns that individuals would not learn the discipline and respect that is instilled once they join the Army. A minority of Other Ranks were also concerned about the consistency of training if delivered by multiple colleges. Some commented that rather than expect individuals to attend a Further Education college, Trade training should be undertaken at a central military training college,

similar to Officer training at Sandhurst; therefore the military ethos could still be instilled whilst training.

There were some concerns that following attainment of an external qualification, an individual could get paid more in a civilian position and therefore would be more attracted by this than the Army. Some commented that if the Army paid closer to civilian salaries then the Armed Forces could attract individuals who 'really want to be a soldier'.

There was also a concern that many Soldiers do not know what career path they want to follow before joining the Army, and therefore until they have signed up they are unsure what exactly they need to train for. It was felt this could impact the individual's motivation to learn a trade if they are not aware of the job that they might later pursue.

A limited number of people stated that for some courses (such as signals, fibre optics and information systems) conducting Trade training at a Further Education college could work.



RAF

There was a combination of positive and negative views in relation to undertaking Trade training prior to joining the RAF.

RAF Officers were split between those that felt it was positive and those who had a more negative view of the suggestion. RAF Officers expressed concerns about the impact on military ethos and values. Again, stating that it would be difficult to instil RAF values to an individual who was not within the military environment. Similarly some suggested that being in a college environment for an extended period of time would have implications for the Service e.g. it would be difficult to know if the individual is suitable for the military as you would not have seen them operating in an RAF environment.

Some Officers felt that the scheme could work for some courses. B-Techs and City and Guilds modules were suggested as elements that could be taught externally. However it was stated that there would need to be a blend between theory, which could be taught at a Further Education college, and simulations which would need to occur on base.

The majority of RAF Other Ranks stated that undertaking Trade training prior to joining the Armed Forces was not a good idea. Specifically they were concerned that discipline, standards and familiarity with military life would be lost, and therefore expectations of what life in the RAF is actually like may be skewed. There was concern that individuals may spend time training for a job and if not exposed to military life they may not enjoy the lifestyle upon joining.

4.3.2 Perception on how this would affect decision to join the Services

The majority of Service Personnel from all Services felt that stipulating that an individual would have to complete training at a Further Education college before joining the Services would negatively impact their decision to join the Services.

Some of the reasons current Service Personnel joined centred on the training and education provision. A number of Service Personnel, particularly Other Ranks, stated that for them the main reason to join their particular Service was to learn a trade and acquire specific technical skills and knowledge. They also saw it as a job that provided access to different careers, depending on where skills were best placed and that this was discovered as they progressed through their career. Some RAF personnel commented that they had a preference for working in a technical environment and that joining the Forces was an opportunity to 'play with the best boys' toys available'; something they would not be able to do if they had attended a Further Education college.

4.3.3 Perceived impact on commitment during training

Service Personnel across all three Services felt that there would be some degree of negative impact on an individual's commitment to Trade training if conducted at a Further Education College. Some suggested that it would be similar to being at school, and that there would be a lack of discipline. This was further backed up by the impression that for some, there is a need for the lecturer to provide constant motivation by 'looking over the shoulder' to ensure work is completed. Again, it was felt

that this would not happen at a college as robustly as in a military environment. Within a military environment lack of commitment could be identified and remedial action could be taken.

Some Service Personnel did say that if training was to be conducted outside the Armed Forces, there would be the advantage of having a civilian qualification. However it was thought that this might lead to retention issues and potentially that individuals may be less committed to the Armed Forces. As a result, they may be tempted by a civilian job on completion of the course.

4.3.4 Desired support from Services if studying in a Further Education College

When asked what support individuals would require if they were to undertake training at a further education establishment prior to joining the Armed Forces, the majority stated that they would require some degree of financial support. Suggestions included to that offered to those being sponsored through university degrees. There was also a suggestion that some type of ongoing work experience programme might be useful, in parallel to Further Education training, to instil awareness of military life.

5 Value and Reward

5.1 Additional Commitment Incentives

The Additional Commitment Incentives component is reviewing the awareness and effectiveness of financial and non-financial recruitment and retention incentives. To support this, the Value and Reward workstream requested information on Service Personnel's:

- Early and current career ambitions;
- Influences on the decision to stay or leave the Armed Forces;
- Views on what financial incentives would affect decisions to join or stay in the Service; and Views on what non-financial incentives would affect decisions to join or stay in the Service.

5.1.1 Early and current career ambitions



Royal Navy

The majority of Royal Navy Officers indicated that their ambitions on joining the Royal Navy related specifically to the job, and included 'To drive a ship' and 'To fly a plane'. The majority of Royal Navy Officers indicated they want to stay in and that current ambitions are now more focused on financial considerations and achieving their pension. Mixed responses were received as to the best things about being in the Royal Navy. These included the kudos and pride that comes with the job, the variety and challenge and also the package, including not only pay but also the medical and dental benefits.



Your ambitions change – I joined for 5-8 years, but you get responsibility and I am now considering a full career."

The majority of Royal Navy Other Ranks had longer term ambitions when joining. They were interested in a career, making the most of opportunities to learn a trade and also to travel. The majority responded that current ambitions are to achieve the pension and also to make the best of promotion opportunities available. Pay and pension were both prevalent in the Royal Navy Other Ranks as to what are the best things about being in the Royal Navy, followed by travel opportunities and career and promotion options.



Army

Army Officer's ambitions when joining were predominantly long term and included the appetite for a long career, promotion and command responsibility. The majority of Army Officers indicated that their current ambitions were to stay within the Service and provide for their future and family. The majority indicated that the best things about being in the Army are the camaraderie, the kudos that comes with the job and the variety that it entails in terms of range of roles and opportunities. Some Army Officers did indicate that the package in terms of pay and pension was a real positive.

The majority of Army Other Ranks also had long term ambitions when joining the Service, looking for promotion opportunities and job security. A number of Army Other Ranks indicated more immediate ambitions when joining the Service in terms of needing a job and a lack of other opportunities. Again the pay aspect was also a draw. Current ambitions were that the majority are keen to stay in Service to achieve their pension. Views on the importance of the pension were strong with a number of participants indicating they felt trapped by their pension. In addition the ambition to gain further qualifications also came through. As with Army Officers, camaraderie came through as a strong

positive of being in the Army. Adventure training, sport and the opportunity to travel were prominent as well. Financial considerations including pay, pension and job security were also recurring themes.



The pension trap keeps us in."



Train and get qualifications and education"



RAF

Officers joining the RAF had ambitions to do something different and build a career. The majority indicated that they want to stay in the Service and that their current ambitions are now more focused on reaching their pension point. Variety and camaraderie were key themes from RAF Officers as to what is best, followed by the pay and benefits available.

The initial ambitions of RAF Other Ranks focused on building a long term career in the Service, importantly to learn a trade and work towards their pension. Current ambitions were that the majority wanted to stay in Service and take advantage of the education opportunities available to them. As seen across the other Services, camaraderie and variety were seen as the best things about being in the RAF, followed by travel and sport opportunities.

5.1.2 Influences on the decisions to stay or leave



Royal Navy

Royal Navy Officers and Other Ranks similarly indicated that the main reasons why people stay in the Royal Navy at present are non-financial, including the people they work with, the community that has built up and the camaraderie and ethos of serving in the Royal Navy. Travel opportunities were also important for Royal Navy Officer and Other Ranks.

For those Royal Navy Officers and Other Ranks who indicated that financial considerations were important retention factors, pay, bonuses and pension were identified as important.

When asked why people leave, the majority of Royal Navy Officers and Other Ranks indicated that primarily work life was an issue; encompassing workload, operational pace and the pull of civilian employment. Impact of home life was also seen as a reason for leaving, due to a lack of time with family, family upheaval and poor stability.

Other Ranks also indicated that poor treatment by more senior colleagues was sometimes a factor.



Army

When asked why they stay in the Army at the moment, Army Officers predominantly responded that it was due to financial considerations, flagging the importance of Continuous Education Allowance and pension and also the importance and security of a good wage. Non-financial considerations indicated by Army Officers included the job itself, sport, career opportunities and variety of experiences.

Non-financial considerations were the main reasons why Army Other Ranks stay in Service currently. These included the accommodation entitlement, access to quality education for their children, welfare, the people and community ethos of Service life. For those responding that financial considerations were important, pay, allowances and financial security came through as predominant themes.

When asked why people leave the Army, Officers and Other Ranks responded in a similar way indicating that primarily work life was an issue; encompassing workload, pace and operational tempo, change fatigue and lack of confidence in the future of the Service. Impact on home life was also seen

as a reason for leaving. A lack of family stability due to movement, time away due to operational duty and the impact of Service life on children's schooling were the prominent themes.



RAF

RAF Officers and Other Ranks gave similar responses as to why they stay in the Service with an even spread of responses covering the importance of RAF ethos, pride in their job and the service they deliver. The people and community aspects of Service life were also prominent, followed by financial considerations including pay and job security.

When asked why people leave, the RAF Officers and Other Ranks responded in a similar way to that of the Army and Royal Navy; indicating that primarily work life was an issue; with a focus on lack of career opportunities, operational turnaround and the pull of civilian employment. Home life considerations including mobility and the impact of being in the RAF on the family and children's education were noted.

5.1.3 Views on what financial incentives affect decisions

Officers and Other Ranks from all Services were predominantly aware of the different financial rewards available to attract or retain specific people to the Forces, including:

- commitment bonuses;
- Recruitment and Retention Payments (RRP);
- golden hellos; and
- financial retention incentives.

The majority of participants also indicated that they were aware what they were received for.



Without it I may have been tempted to leave earlier."



It influenced my choice to stay in."

The majority of Officers from all Services had not received financial retention incentives, while the majority of Other Ranks had received an incentive at some point in their career. The main reasons for receiving them were to aid retention, to reward time served and to reward 'effort and hard work'.

For those Service Personnel who had received an incentive, the majority indicated that receiving it had affected their decision to join, stay or leave the Service as appropriate. They indicated that the bonus was seen as a positive, that for many it was a significant amount of money that made a difference to them and that it did sway them to stay in the Service. It should be noted however that only Service Personnel currently serving were involved in the consultation activity. Therefore there was no opportunity to obtain views from those that had already left the Service about the impact of such incentives on their decisions.

The majority of Service Personnel suggested that financial retention incentives would have even more effect at different points in their career, particularly earlier and also at major life event points, including starting a family and when children are school age. The early 30s age band was seen as an important time as they may be more 'marketable' to civilian organisations having built experience in the Service but still being at a point in their career when a reasonable return could be expected from a civilian career.

5.1.4 Views on what non-financial incentives affect decisions

Common themes as to the non-financial retention incentives that could be offered to Service Personnel were identified across all Services, however the frequency with which the themes occurred differed across Services. There was no difference between the Officers and Other Ranks in the themes identified.



Royal Navy

The main non-financial incentives identified by Royal Navy Officers and Other Ranks focused on the following:

- Improved work/life balance – a strong response was received on this topic, particularly as to the appetite to take on career breaks, sabbaticals and flexible working;
- Education and training opportunities, focusing on skills that could be transferred to civilian life; and
- Greater career and promotion opportunities.



Army

The main non-financial incentives identified by Army Officers and Other Ranks focused on the following:

- Education and training opportunities, particularly for skills that could be transferred to civilian life;
- Adventure training;
- An improved accommodation offer, in terms of quality and consistency;
- Greater certainty and reassurance as to the direction of the Service, the changes underway and what it means for job security;
- Improved work life balance and the opportunity to take on career breaks/sabbaticals and flexible working opportunities; and finally
- Improved career and promotion opportunities.



RAF

The main non-financial incentives identified by RAF Officers and Other Ranks focused on the following:

- Education and training opportunities;
- Adventure training opportunities and sport;
- Improved location stability, which in turn supports family life and ability to plan for the future; and
- Improved work/life balance opportunities including flexi time and part time working.



Case study

A focus group with Junior Ranks was generally indifferent about the financial incentives in place. When non financial incentives were explored, they got very excited about their poor experiences of career management, and this was viewed as the most important element of retention. Stories included instances when people were not getting on courses they needed to do their job and progress to the next rank, Juniors not getting promoted or getting 'pushed out' because their face didn't fit, and how 'preferences and objectives' were never taken into consideration.

5.2 Allowances Consolidation

The Allowances Consolidation component aims to merge, cleanse and simplify the allowances paid to Service Personnel. To support this, the Value and Reward workstream requested information on Service Personnel's:

- Perception of importance and adequacy of removals support;
- Perception of importance and adequacy of Disturbance Allowance;
- Willingness and barriers to undertaking an overseas posting;
- Views on the adequacy and ease of administration of the current overseas allowance package;
- Views on adequacy of Separation and Get Yourself Home Overseas allowances and desired levels of support;

- Ways to stay in contact with family and friends while overseas;
- Views on the content and importance of proposed environment factors for Environmental Allowance;
- Experience of commuting to and from work; and
- Willingness to commute further if MOD provided assistance with home purchase.

5.2.1 Perception of importance and adequacy of removals support

Across all Services and ranks the majority of Service Personnel had moved more than twice in the past five years with many having moved more than four times. Those Service Personnel who had moved more than four times tended to be in the Army or RAF. Comments made during this discussion indicated that the majority of Service Personnel recognised that movement was part of being in the Services.

A slight majority from across all Services and ranks indicated they understood “well” or “quite well” the regulations for claiming relocation expenses, including eligibility and entitlement. Many indicated that this followed conversations with friends and colleagues or because they had been through the process themselves. A number of duty of care expectations were noted across all ranks indicating a strength of feeling that if Service Personnel are expected to relocate then appropriate and consistent support and welfare should be available to them.

Those indicating that they were less familiar with relocation expenses responded that they were not aware of everything that was available or the timing of when the expenses could be claimed.



Case study

During a focus group with Junior Ranks we discussed knowledge of allowances, particularly when moving bases. The level of knowledge varied drastically, with more inexperienced Junior Ranks displaying a significantly lower level of knowledge than those who had moved a few times. Those who had better knowledge explained to the newer Junior Ranks that knowing what allowances and how to claim them only comes with experience, stating that “you get told different stories left right and centre, then you are told to go and read the JSP, which is massive and not exactly straight forward”.



There is an element of logic if look at them in the totality, but there is now a culture of “look it up online yourself”. This isn’t the duty of care I expect from an employer.”



You find out when you need it, when you’re going through the process.”

5.2.1.1 The moving experience

A slight majority of participants across all Services and ranks gave a negative response when asked how well (if at all) the relocation support received met their and their family’s needs. The main themes included:

- the marching in and out standards and compressed timescales – encompassing the variation in cleaning standards and the difficulty aligning march out, move and march in timescales;
- the level and type of administration involved – including that the administration needs to be completed on DII terminals, therefore partners are unable to progress in the Service Personnel’s absence;
- the short notice period given for the move – this impacts on the ability to organise family life including schools and healthcare; and

- the poor engagement with DIO and their accountability for supporting the Service Personnel.



You don't have enough notice and time before moving to organise school applications/doctors and dentists etc. – you don't know your address details."



With furniture, we have stopped buying nice stuff as it gets smashed in doorways on the way in and out. Cleaning on march out is expensive as you can only use certain firms. It used to cost £250 now it costs £650. And then you can quite often arrive at the next house and it's a mess."

The scale of the move was also seen to impact the support received. Feedback indicated on a number of occasions that large Unit moves tended to go more smoothly and more support was available, particularly welfare, than when just one person or family was moving by themselves.

The location of where the individual or family were moving from and to also appears to impact how well the support meets Service Personnel needs. If significant distances are involved in the UK then the timescales of moving the people and furniture was flagged as problematic, including the amount of leave provided versus the need to travel long distances.



There is quite a long timescale of waiting for removals to arrive into Lossiemouth from the South of England – what are we meant to do without our stuff?"



Needed to use own leave entitlement to move from South East to Scotland. The move to Scotland is more like a move overseas. It took 12 hours to drive here."

5.2.1.2 Improving the moving experience

The moving experience generated significant feedback from all Services and ranks, with significant strength of feeling expressed on occasion. Not all of the feedback received however related to the impact of allowances on the moving experience, instead individuals were keen to express their views on a range of other accommodation and moving topics. These topics, though not in scope of this New Employment Model consultation activity, do impact the moving experience, so are summarised here:

- The majority of Service Personnel from all Services and ranks indicated they had little choice about the accommodation they were offered. They suggested that if they did not accept what was initially offered, the second offer would be worse; effectively providing no realistic choice from which to choose.
- The lack of information about a new property before arriving in the new location, including number of rooms, floor plans and exterior and interior pictures was a consistent frustration to Service Personnel across all ranks.
- Engagement with, and service provided by, the housing maintenance contractor(s) generated significant comment from all participants. A variation in the timeliness, service levels and quality of maintenance were evident.

The majority of responses received across all Services and ranks indicated that a more transparent, smoother moving process was required that was consistent across locations. Feedback indicated the smoother process would include a clear understanding of the moving process and the support and allowances available (including insurance requirements), appropriate notice of the move, adequate time to move and more consistent march in and march out standards. Instances of good practice of relocation support were identified however, including moving checklists, welcome packs and hands on welfare support; however this was not consistent for all.

The second key theme that came through strongly to improve the moving experience related to having a single point of contact, such as an Estates Officer. Feedback indicated that the single point of contact could then consistently meet and greet new arrivals and would work through any housing or move challenges with Service Personnel and their families.

5.2.2 Perception of importance and adequacy of Disturbance Allowance

The majority of Service Personnel across the three Services and ranks were aware of, and had received, Disturbance Allowance.

Feedback indicated that whether the Disturbance Allowance would cover the move would depend on the size of the family to be moved and therefore the costs associated with moving to a new area, for example for new school uniforms.



Moved to Germany as a single so received flights, bus and MFI box, and a £90 disturbance allowance."



We did end up out of pocket, with costs like school uniform, and car insurance."

Strong feedback was received indicating that the location of the move depended on whether the amount of Disturbance Allowance was appropriate or not. Moves of a significant distance, particularly those overseas, were not seen to be appropriately covered by Disturbance Allowance due to the particular requirements of moving overseas, i.e. if certain set up and shut down costs were higher overseas than in the UK (e.g. phone, broadband etc.).



When moving to Cyprus you have to put personal belongings/furniture into storage in the UK as you can only bring a certain amount with you – the cost of this and the insurance is not covered long term by the Disturbance allowance."



Disturbance doesn't cover what you need – insurance, non UK headlights, phone and broadband – all more expensive than the UK."



Disturbance allowance should depend on where you are moving too."

5.2.3 Willingness and barriers to undertaking an overseas posting

The majority of Service Personnel had been on an overseas posting. Posting locations included Germany, Cyprus, Hong Kong, Singapore and India. The majority had been overseas for two years or less. Those that volunteered for the overseas posting indicated it was because of an improved way of life while overseas, the opportunities available and the positive impact it could have on career. It was suggested by some that it was a way of building up additional money.

The majority were prepared to go on an overseas posting indicating that the being overseas would be a great opportunity to have different experiences, coupled with the professional opportunities that it could bring. The ability to experience different cultures and improved climate were also raised as positives on a number of occasions.

Those who indicated they would not be interested in an overseas posting indicated that the timing would not be right if they were towards the end of their careers, or that partner employment constraints meant that being overseas was not an option.

5.2.4 Adequacy and ease of administration of the current overseas allowance package

Only Service Personnel from the Army, RAF and Joint (Falklands and Belgium) locations were asked to respond to the Overseas allowance package questions. It is therefore only possible to report on those responses in this specific sub section.

The majority of participants from the Army, RAF and Joint locations and across all ranks did not feel that the current overseas allowance package allows them to have a similar standard of living to that they would have in the UK. The most prevalent reason was that the cost of living was higher overseas and that the allowance package did not cover this appropriately. Examples included the need to spend more in the Hermes supermarkets, the lack of offers available on shopping items and the higher price of clothing.

The impact of few partner employment opportunities while overseas was also raised with a number of participants indicating that the overseas package does not compensate for the loss of a second income that they would have if in the UK.



The LOA minus the accommodation charge, CILCT and costs of coming here mean that families definitely lose out financially. The reasons you come here are for the unique lifestyle or to be co-located with your spouse."



No – as [partner] is not working we only have one wage coming in and the allowance doesn't compensate."

Army and Joint participants indicated that they found claiming the overseas allowance package to be easy and straightforward. The RAF indicated that they found it to be complex and bureaucratic and suggested that the different allowances could be consolidated giving Service Personnel more autonomy on what the money could be spent on.



It comes in your pay and so it is automatic."



Should just provide 1 lump sum not lots of individual allowances – then it is up to the individual to make decisions on what they spend money on. I don't want everyone making decisions for me. Add it all together and you can look after yourself."

The majority of participants from the Army, RAF and Joint locations and across all ranks indicated that they received other allowances to account for separation from their family in addition to the Overseas allowance. These were mainly what were referred to as an 'indulgence allowance' (flights) and the tax-free options available including cars.

There was little recognition or awareness of the X factor amongst participants with no views indicating it was seen as a separation allowance.



I have no visibility of X factor."



X factor needs to be more transparent – what it is and what it is judged against in soldier speak."

5.2.5 Adequacy of Separation and Get Yourself Home Overseas allowances and desired levels of support

The majority of participants from across all Services and ranks were aware of the current level of Longer Separation Allowance (LSA) and Get Yourself Home Overseas (GYHO) allowances, with many participants having received them (predominantly Army and RAF).

For those that had received the allowance, a slight majority indicated that in their experience the GYHO allowance was not sufficient, particularly if they had a family. The majority indicated it was not seen as appropriate to cover the cost of travel from door to door, particularly for those people who had a significant distance to travel from the airport once back in the UK. A number of responses indicated that the variation in the number of travel warrants home depending on your overseas location was frustrating; instead Service Personnel indicated that a consistent number of travel warrants should be provided, typically suggesting an increase. The location of the overseas posting also impacted whether the GYHO allowance was seen as sufficient as individuals suggested they could more easily, cheaply and frequently drive back to the UK from Germany for example, than they could fly back from Cyprus or the Falklands.



The uncertainty of your job means you can't plan in advance and so get good prices [on flights to travel home]."



If you are on your own then it [GYHO] is do able but not with a family."

The majority of those who had received GYHO allowance indicated that they had not received the GYHO allowance in the best way due to:

- a lack of flexibility of what the allowance could be used for, i.e. travel back to the UK rather than travel elsewhere or to bring family members out to the overseas location; and

- the timing of when the allowance could be claimed. Different views were expressed as to when the allowance could be claimed (before or after the journey); though the majority indicated that either way it left them out of pocket for a period of time.



You can only claim back the expense 28 days before you're due to fly – but you don't always have the money of your own to book it earlier."



Need to make it easier – you can't claim until you come back."



Rationalisation of allowances needs to happen but that will impact everyone here."



Case study

During a focus group in the Falklands overseas allowances were discussed. Particular mention was given to the difficulties Service Personnel face when trying to maintain contact with family in the UK, either via flights or internet/calls. Service Personnel advised that they get a flight home once a year and a flight to Ascension or Chile after 6 months. They are also able to pay for "indulgence" flights for family members but that these can cost upwards of £300, and family members have to wait to the end of boarding to be given a seat (similar to being on standby with a commercial airline). In addition, the internet was very limited, slow and expensive as were telephone services. This made family contact difficult. There was a general feeling that Service Personnel would like greater flexibility in how they use their allowance entitlement. Suggestions included using their free flight entitlement to bring a family member to them or to use the money saved by not flying back to UK on phone/internet costs to keep in touch with family.

Of those individuals based overseas (Army, RAF and Joint locations), there was an even split as to how important the level of allowances available were when making a decision to accept an overseas posting. A slight majority of those spoken to indicated that the level of allowances were important due to the desire to maintain a reasonable lifestyle, to keep in touch with family and friends and to mitigate the loss of partner income by being overseas.



We wouldn't be able to come if it wasn't for the allowance."

However for those indicating that the level of allowance was not important or had not been a consideration, this was typically because they either had no choice in taking the overseas posting or had seen the posting as a positive career opportunity.

5.2.6 Ways to stay in contact with family and friends while overseas

The overwhelming method of keeping in touch with family and friends when on an overseas posting was using the internet; typically Skype, social media and email. This was followed by telephone conversations and family visits.

The majority of participants indicated that the Armed Forces have a role in supporting the individual to keep in touch, most typically through providing the means for, or covering the cost of, keeping in touch, including internet and Wi-Fi access.

The need for greater flexibility in allowance usage was flagged. Suggestions included:

- offering subsidised flights enabling family members to visit Service Personnel; and
- enabling extended family members to visit a Service Personnel's partner for longer periods when Service Personnel are on Operations from overseas locations.

The main determining factor as to the type and level of support available was the location of the overseas posting and the time and cost associated with returning back to the UK. The



If you are somewhere that doesn't have the infrastructure then you should get help."



For some areas, the expenses available doesn't cover the cost of travel to get to that location and the loss of spousal income if job opportunities are not available."

infrastructure available in the overseas location, in terms of phone and broadband access, should also be considered when determining what support is to be provided.

However the majority of participants indicated that even if their desired level of allowance for keeping in touch with family and friends was available, it would have little or no impact on their decision to accept an overseas posting.

5.2.7 Proposed environment factors for Environmental Effects Allowance

Only a small number of participants were asked for feedback on the 'Environmental Effects Allowance' which would be used as compensation for Service Personnel living and working in difficult environments.

Service Personnel from across all Services and ranks indicated that the types of environment that may necessitate such an allowance could include:

- hazardous environments;
- those with particularly varied climates – either very hot or cold;
- those with cramped space or poor lighting (particularly flagged by the Royal Navy participants); and
- those with poor hygiene infrastructure and facilities.

The majority of Service Personnel thought that the Environmental Effects Allowance already existed.

Discussion focused on a number of topics. Service Personnel were keen to understand how it would be administered, either centrally or individually and queried who would judge and approve if and when such an allowance was given. Service Personnel also queried whether a sliding scale of allowance would be used, particularly when working in an environment that met more than one environmental condition. The majority indicated that a sliding scale approach administered centrally would be preferable.

5.2.8 Experience of commuting to and from work

This content echoes that presented in section 2.2.2, but is relevant to consider in light of the Allowances Consolidation activity.



Royal Navy

The majority of Royal Navy Officers and Other Ranks indicated that a commute of less than an hour would be a reasonable time to commute to and from work.

Royal Navy Officers and Other Ranks were open to the idea of weekly commuting with the majority indicating that it may be a consideration if it meant that their family was afforded greater stability. The importance of providing stability of children's education was a consistent theme for those who would consider weekly commuting. A number indicated that the 'Get Yourself Home' allowance would need to cover commuting distance.



Longer commute ok if covered by allowances."



There are certain periods in a kid's education – 11 years, run up to GCSEs and A levels that you want stability for them."



Army

The majority of Army Officers and Other Ranks indicated that a commute of less than an hour would be a reasonable time to commute to and from work. A preference for walking, cycling or being able to drive was expressed across all ranks. Army Officers also suggested that longer commute times

would only be appropriate for those working more standard 9 to 5 hours and not those working shifts or irregular patterns.

The majority of Army Officers and Other Ranks were not interested in being weekly commuters. Improvements to 'Get Yourself Home' allowances and the opportunity to work more flexibly (leaving early and starting later) would be needed by those who indicated they would consider commuting weekly.



It's not worth it. You would spend too much on petrol. You need a better allowance."



You get long weekends if you live somewhere remote. You get Friday off and can come in later on the Monday."



RAF

Similar to the Army and Royal Navy, the majority of RAF Officers and Other Ranks indicated that a commute of less than an hour would be a reasonable time to commute to and from work. RAF Other Ranks suggested that the length of commute would depend on whether the individual worked standard set hours or shift patterns, with potentially shorter commutes needed by those working shifts.

RAF Officers and Other Ranks indicated that flexible working opportunities would need to be available to make them more likely to consider being a weekend commuter. In addition this would depend on distance, personal circumstances and standard of accommodation.



Compressed hours/flexible working/core hours [would make me consider weekend commuting]."

5.2.9 Willingness to commute further if MOD provided assistance with home purchase

The majority of Officers from all Services indicated that they would not choose to commute further even if the MOD assisted them financially with home ownership. Other Ranks from all Services gave a more mixed response. Those indicating they would not commute further cited that working hours would make this difficult. Those indicating they would commute further indicated that improvements to allowances could make longer commutes more of an option.



[Commuting] 1.5 hours a day, 5 days per week adds up to a lot of time."



Getting your costs covered, including both fuel and running the car."



Case study

A focus group with Junior Ranks got particularly energetic when asked about what was good and bad about their accommodation. This was their biggest issue with the Services. Complaints included poor showers, poor laundry facilities, no vacuum cleaner, difference in blocks, "like living in [swear word] Alcatraz", unfair to be charged the same for a 3 man room as 1 man room, wireless/mobile/TV Signals are all very poor, storage space is limited, repair timelines are too slow, and having such a variety of size/space for the same cost is unfair.

The slight majority of Officers and Other Ranks from all Services indicated that the financial support needed to make them consider commuting further (if the MOD assisted them financially with home ownership) concerned:

- covering travel costs; and
- a contribution towards either the purchase or ongoing mortgage payment of the house.

Appendix 1 Table of Consultation Requirements

Requirements		
Requirement number	Component	Requirement
Future accommodation		
FA01	Home Purchase Initiative	Understanding of home ownership aspirations: whether Service Personnel want to own a home and factors that govern their choices (i.e. stability? Money for loan? Monthly expenditure? Having a family?)
FA02	Home Purchase Initiative	Knowledge and use of JSHAO existence. Knowledge and use of various home buy options. Information/advice required to make a decision about buying a home.
FA03	Home Purchase Initiative	Case studies about people's experiences of having a mortgage application declined. Reasons for and effects of the rejection.
FA04	Home Purchase Initiative	Reasons for Service Personnel believing they cannot afford to buy a house. Assessment process, factors considered, advice received.
FA05	Single Services/ Integration: Army	Expected use of a property if/when purchased (live in? Rent out whilst in forces? Rent out indefinitely?)
FA06	Single Services/ Integration: Army	Factors affecting location of property if/when purchased (School catchment area? Family? Proximity to work?)
FA09	Home Purchase Initiative	Effect of the offer of an Early Departure Payment and its rules of entitlement on decision to stay or leave the Service.
FA10	Home Purchase Initiative	Attractiveness of the ability to access Early Departure Payment whilst still in the Service for the purpose of buying a house.
FA11	Home Purchase Initiative	Effect of ability to access Early Departure Payment to use for home purchase whilst still in the Service on decision to stay or leave the Service in the future.
FA12	Partner Employment Programme	Drivers and barriers for partner employment.
FA13	Partner Employment Programme	A broad-ranging quantitative view of the highest qualification that Service partners hold, the type of work they undertake (using standard classification of some sort), broadly what they earn and whether they feel that the work is commensurate with their qualifications, skills and experience.

Requirements		
FA15	Partner Employment Programme	Effect of partner employment on home ownership (is second salary required?) and retention.
FA16	Market Average Rate/Policy Constraints	Factors that currently (and potentially) influence: a) Decision to travel to work; b) Distance willing to travel; c) Willingness to be a weekend commuter.
FA17	Market Average Rate/Policy Constraints	Importance of proximity to work in selecting a) location of SFA or b) location of home.
FA18	Market Average Rate/Policy Constraints	When settling a family in home location, are Service Personnel prepared to pay for SLA at same rate as PStat 3 – 5 personnel, or would it prevent settling the family in the home location?
FA19	Market Average Rate/Policy Constraints	Service Personnel awareness that Service accommodation is discounted. Understanding and support for reasons for discount.
FA20	Market Average Rate/Policy Constraints	Demand for being able to pay more to gain a bigger SFA. Circumstances that this would be appealing.
FA21	Combined Accommodation Assessment System	Communicate the proposed methodology for calculating charges and allow Service people (and families) to offer their views.
FA22	Combined Accommodation Assessment System	Rank/rate the relative importance of property attributes/characteristics to build the weighting of assessment factors (Condition/Scale/Location) in determining the accommodation charge.
FA23	Combined Accommodation Assessment System	Test responses to the willingness to pay additional/increased accommodation charges for improvements to property attributes/characteristics and how much the charges should be.

Requirements

Integration

INT01	Removal of Accommodation policy constraints/ Home Purchase Initiative	Likelihood of reduced mobility, HPI and increase in rental charge for SFA leading to Service Personnel (that do not currently own a home) buying one.
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Training and Education

T&E01	Distributed Training	Attitude to undertaking more/some Phase 3 Training without travelling to a specialist facility (i.e. at home unit, online or at a regional centre).
T&E02	Distributed Training	Views on the 'value' of Phase 3 training to individuals and contribution to overall levels of satisfaction.
T&E03	Distributed Training	Effect of undertaking Ph3 Training via non-residential learning on learning outcomes.
T&E04	Distributed Training	Minimum duration of a training course for which the Service Personnel would wish to relocate their family.
T&E05	Phase 0 Training	Pros and Cons of Phase 1 training (according to Phase 2 trainees).
T&E06	Phase 0 Training	Likely take-up/enthusiasm for career advice/support earlier in career e.g. financial support, military learning mentor, visits to armed forces training facility.

Terms of Service

ToS01	Single Services/ Integration: Army	People are leaving the Services at particular points in their career (typically 16 years when qualifying for EDP). Identify drives for these points, and possible incentives to pull Service Personnel through to the next 'phase' of their career.
ToS02	Single Services/ Integration: Army	Understand the point at which you need to give people the option to stay longer. What engagement length would you be asking people to sign up for?
ToS03	Single Services/ Integration: Army	Appropriate redemption package for attending specialist training (e.g. is there a sliding scale of payback options for 'valuable' courses?)
ToS04	Part Time Working	Appetite for the opportunity to work on a Reduced Commitment basis for a limited period of time. Reasons for attractiveness of this opportunity.
ToS05	Part Time Working	If working less than full-time (Reduced Commitment) resulted in a reduction or removal of allowances or entitlements, would this affect appetite for working on a Reduced Commitment basis?

Requirements		
ToS06	Part Time Working	Attractiveness of the opportunity to work on a reduced commitment basis for short periods (e.g. three months) and longer periods (e.g. one year or three years).
ToS07	Part Time Working	If working less than full time necessitated leaving the Regulars and joining the Reserves, how would it affect willingness to apply?
ToS08	Career streaming	Perceptions of existing streaming in terms of career progression.
ToS09	Career streaming	Work to date has indicated that the most appropriate point at which to commence selection of individuals for one of the two Streams (Executive and Defence Professional) is at the start of Career Stage 2 (i.e. on promotion to OF3). Is this the correct time to begin selecting individuals for highest ranks?
ToS10	Career streaming	Attitude towards employment fields: It is currently envisaged that career management could be conducted on the basis of Employment Fields rather than by Branch/cap-badge with individual aptitude testing of some form helping to identify the best Employment Field during Career Stage 2 (OF3). This would mean that all assignment, promotion and CPD will normally be focused on one or perhaps two Employment Fields.
ToS11	Career streaming	It has been suggested that employment in the Defence Professional Career Stream would attract increased geographical stability and reduced frequency of assignment. Would a three to five year assignment be attractive?
ToS12	Career streaming	It is acknowledged that for formal Career streaming to be effective, it must be supported by an appropriate and underpinning reward mechanism. Reward by way of promotion is seen as the primary reward mechanism for the Executive Stream (top 15%); what would be appropriate rewards for deepening expertise in the Defence Professional Stream (majority 85%)?
ToS13	Career streaming	Alternative options, other than through promotion, that could be given to reward ability and competence in the Armed Forces.
ToS14	Career streaming	Importance of membership to a profession.
ToS15	Return of Service/ Investment	Attractiveness of a public/private sector placement or sabbatical in terms of personal career development.
ToS16	Return of Service/ Investment	Should the Services demand a Return of Service from Service Personnel after undertaking specific career or professional development courses?
ToS17	Return of Service/ Investment	Should the Return of Service be legally binding?
ToS18	Return of Service/ Investment	Should there be an opportunity to pay back some money to compensate for leaving early?
ToS19	Return of Service/ Investment	Should the length of training Return of Service be based solely on the financial cost of the course/training? Or should it be based on the value of the course to Defence and the resulting value of the Service Personnel to Defence?

Requirements		
ToS20	Return of Service/ Investment	Willingness to sign an undertaking before embarking on the course/training when a training Return of Service is required.
ToS21	Return of Service/ Investment	Would the requirement for a training Return of Service act as a deterrent from undertaking the course/training?
Value and Reward		
VR03	Additional Commitment Incentives	Effect of ACIs on an individual's decision to join the Service and/or to remain in the Service. This seeks to understand the impact that ACIs have on Service Personnel, and to understand their significance within the overall offer.
VR04	Additional Commitment Incentives	Which ACIs have personnel found particularly effective or ineffective? This seeks to increase understanding of effectiveness and VfM of the components of the ACI suite.
VR05	Allowances consolidation	Understanding of the allowances and ease of application. Examples of difficulties/complex processes.
VR09	Allowances consolidation	Understand whether the support provided for removals is considered adequate and what is most important to people.
VR10	Allowances consolidation	Understand whether Disturbance Allowance is sufficient for modern family circumstances.
VR11	Allowances consolidation	For Service Personnel that live out at place of duty, what is the length (in both time and distance) of the commute, and what mode of transport is used?
VR12	Allowances consolidation	For Service Personnel that live in at place of duty and travel to a GYH Qualifying Residence at weekends and on leave, what is the length (in both time and distance) of journey, and what is the primary mode of transport that is used?
VR13	Allowances consolidation	If MOD assisted with home ownership, would Service Personnel be willing to commute further? Would they change their mode of transport?
VR14	Allowances consolidation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Are Service Personnel prepared to undertake Overseas postings? b) Are there any Service barriers that prevent Service Personnel from volunteering for an Overseas posting (e.g. promotion prospects, financial recompense etc.)? c) Are there any personal barriers that will prevent Service Personnel from volunteering for an Overseas posting? d) Should personnel serving overseas be given financial assistance to return to UK – if so, how often?

Requirements		
VR15	Allowances consolidation	a) Does the current overseas allowance package adequately allow Service Personnel to have a similar standard of living to that experienced in the UK? b) Is the method for claiming the overseas support package simple to understand and use? c) Does GYH(O/Seas) adequately allow sufficient funds to get a family 'door-to-door'? d) Should the future GYH(O/Seas) allowance be warrant based or received as a daily rate of allowance?
VR16	Allowances consolidation	a) What financial support should be given when serving away from spouse/partner? (LSA, GYH, etc.) b) How often should the MOD contribute to allow Service Personnel to return home?
VR17	Allowances consolidation	a) Feedback regarding the environmental factors list – is there anything missing from the list? b) Which factors are the most important to Service Personnel?

