

# Background Quality Report

## Career Transition Partnership annual statistics: UK Regular Service Personnel Employment Outcomes, 2009/10 to 2013/14

### 1 Introduction

1. This annual Official Statistic provides summary statistics on the estimated employment outcomes for UK Regular Service personnel (including Gurkhas) who left the Armed Forces between 2009/10 and 2013/14 and used the services provided by the Career Transition Partnership (CTP). The figures relate to the employment outcomes for Service personnel within six months of leaving the Armed Forces
2. This Official Statistic includes:
  - a. Trends over time
  - b. Estimated employment outcomes by Service leaver characteristics
  - c. Redundancy employment outcomes (Tranche 1, 2 and 3 of the MOD's redundancy programme)
  - d. Comparisons with other employment and economic data sources

### Background

3. Today around 20,000 people leave the Armed Forces and make the transition to civilian life each year. They are of widely different ages and have a range of qualifications and aspirations. Everyone who leaves will have different personal circumstances and aspirations but the adjustment from the military environment to the civilian world is an issue common to all.
4. The Career Transition Partnership (CTP) is an agreement between a contractor (Right Management Limited, since 1998) and the MOD. The Career Transition Partnership also incorporates two Service charities, the Regular Forces Employment Association (RFEA) and The Officers' Association (OA). CTP exists to support Service leavers in their transition from the military to civilian employment.
5. The Career Transition Partnership philosophy is that resettlement preparation is for life, not just to get the first job after leaving the military. Support is provided from two years before discharge, through to two years after. The aim is to provide the tools that Service leavers need to market themselves confidently to employers and to get the most out of life outside the forces. This ranges from creating a CV through to learning interview skills, vocational training through to researching and applying for jobs. The services provided by the Career Transition Partnership (CTP) fall into the following four

categories: Guidance, Career Transition, Vocational Training and Job Finding Support.

## Methodology and Production

### *Data Sources*

6. The administrative database for Service personnel, Joint Personnel Administration (JPA), was used to identify all of the Service leavers in each financial year. JPA was also used to identify the Service, gender, ethnicity, years served, rank and age of each Service leaver. The MOD routinely publishes statistics on Service personnel including numbers leaving the Armed Forces<sup>1</sup>. Please note types of personnel included in the reports differ.
7. Defence Statistics (Health) compiles the Department's authoritative deaths database for all UK Armed Forces personnel who died whilst in Service going back to 1984. Information is compiled from several internal and external sources from which we release a number of internal analyses and external National Statistics Notices<sup>2</sup>
8. The Medical Discharge database held by Defence Statistics (Health) was used to identify Service personnel who medically discharged. The MOD publishes statistics on the numbers of personnel who medically discharge<sup>3</sup>
9. The number of Service personnel leaving the Armed Forces due to redundancy were calculated by matching Service Numbers from the original redundancy selection list (covering both applicants and non-applicants), with Service leavers data. Please note a small number of personnel listed on the Tranche 1, 2 or 3 redundancy list were recorded on JPA as having left the Armed Forces, but not due to redundancy. In this report they have been included in the Tranche 1, 2, or 3 redundancy cohorts. There may also be a few Service personnel who left the Armed Forces under the category of redundancies who have since rejoined the MOD. The MOD publishes redundancy statistics<sup>4</sup>
10. Right Management's administrative database, Adapt, contains the details of the eligible Service personnel as supplied by MOD (classified internally by MOD as pre-registered). Right Management's invoice list was used to identify Service personnel who used CTP services (classified internally by MOD as registered) and the type of service used.
11. The UK general population employment outcome estimates were taken from the Labour Force Survey<sup>5</sup> (LFS). These have been compared with the estimated employment outcomes for UK Regular Service personnel who used the CTP services. The Labour Force Survey (LFS) is the UK's primary data source for employment figures and is published by the Office for National Statistics

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-armed-forces-annual-manning-statistics-index>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-armed-forces-deaths-in-service-statistics-index>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/medical-discharges-among-uk-service-personnel-statistics-index>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-armed-forces-redundancy-program-statistics-index>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/>

### *Data Coverage*

12. The figures presented in this report show outflow from the UK Regular Forces including Gurkhas. This report does not include Full Time Reserve Service (FTRS) personnel or mobilised reservists.

### *Methodology*

13. The official figures on the number of Service leavers from the Armed Forces have been used as the foundation for this Official Statistic. Information held in JPA was used to identify personnel who are eligible to use CTP services. These eligible personnel were then matched with Adapt to identify the personnel whose details were passed to Right Management by MOD. Right Managements invoice list was then used to identify personnel who used CTP services. Currently no investigation has taken place to investigate the personnel who did not use CTP services.
14. The employment outcome has been taken from a monthly random 20% sample, of those who used CTP services, stratified by Resettlement Advice Centre (RAC).
15. Personnel selected for sampling were reviewed six months after the discharge date recorded on Adapt to identify their employment status.
16. At least four definite attempts were made to contact such Service leavers using a variety of means including phone, email or text before they are classed as being 'unable to contact'. Attempts to contact such Service leavers will be made for up to a year after leaving the Armed Forces.
17. The numbers for estimated employment outcomes have been calculated using the sample data and associated proportions then applied to the Service leaver who used CTP services population figure to estimate a particular employment outcome. The methods used have been selected to better align with the national employment figures published by the Office for National Statistics. Please note the first report was published 13 June 2013. The September 2013 report was reviewed and revised for all figures. Please refer to the September 2013 report for further details of these changes.
18. The Official Statistics provides employment outcome for groups of leavers including medical discharges and redundancy leavers as well as various demographic groups.
19. The methodology for redundancy figures was similar, but not the same, as the overall employment estimates. Key differences were:
  - a. Most Service personnel who left under redundancy registered with CTP and were surveyed to identify their employment status for Tranche 1, Tranche 2, and Tranche 3 Applicants. This compares with just one-in-five Service personnel who were surveyed for the overall employment outcome estimates.
  - b. 95% confidence intervals are not given around the employment outcomes since the estimates were close to a census of all Tranche 1, Tranche 2 and Tranche 3 redundancies.

20. Defence Statistics led an extensive manual data quality exercise on the survey data held by Right Management to review and revise the employment outcome category applied to every record. The aim was to align with the employment outcome terminology with the employment definitions used by the Office for National Statistics.

- a. Refer to **Annex A** for the Office for National Statistics definitions of employment outcomes for the definitions used in the Labour Force Survey (the Government's primary source for UK employment data), from which the categories applied within this Official Statistic are loosely based on. Please be aware the ONS definitions are more complex than the employment outcome definitions used in this report.
- b. **Annex B** provides a mapping between the CTP Right Management outcome terminology and the terminology included in this report.

## 2. Relevance

### Coverage

21. The estimated employment outcomes are calculated from the sample selected from Service leavers who used CTP services; therefore the estimated employment outcomes only represent this group of Service leavers.
22. In 2013/14 23,440 UK Regular Service personnel left the Armed Forces, of which 19,540 were eligible to use the services provided by the Career Transition Partnership, and 14,630<sup>p</sup> chose to use these services. Therefore the estimates represent 63% of all Service leavers.
23. The sample sizes of surveyed Service leavers used to estimate the employment outcome figures for CTP service users were as follows:

**2009/10:** 1,696

**2010/11:** 1,759

**2011/12:** 2,270

**2012/13:** 2,815

**2013/14:** 2,965

### User Needs

24. These statistics have been provided in response to interest in employment outcomes for UK Service personnel and concerns raised by the Chief Statistician over the quality of numbers previously released in Parliamentary Questions, Freedom of Information requests and internal reports.
25. The interest in CTP comes from Armed Forces charities, Other Government Departments including the Department for Work and Pensions; business and industry within the private sector; and within the Ministry of Defence.
26. The statistics will aid policy development. They will be used as an indication of effectiveness of the Career Transition Partnership resettlement services. They will also be used for monitoring of the UK Armed Forces Covenant, a component of the Armed Forces Act, which states that Service personnel should not be disadvantaged in terms of health or welfare.

27. The scope of the publication to meet all user needs will be under continuous review from feedback from users.
28. The figures published in this Official Statistic series are more representative than previous figures and enable a comparison with the UK-wide employment figures, unlike the old figures. However it must be noted the UK estimates have not been adjusted to reflect the age and gender spread seen in the UK Armed Forces population, for example there are fewer women in the UK Armed Forces than in the general population.

### **3. Accuracy**

29. There are a number of data quality, sampling and methodology issues which need to be taken into account when interpreting the statistics in this report.

#### **Data**

30. This report uses a number of different datasets which are matched on Service Number, a unique identifier. There is a risk of mismatching or finding no match as data on the CTP billing system is inputted manually.
31. Time served as recorded on JPA has been used to identify if Service leavers are eligible for Employment Support Programme (ESP) or Full Resettlement Programme (FRP). Time served has been calculated using entry date. There are known problems with the entry date information extracted from JPA. If personnel have transferred from another Service, have served under an alternative assignment type (e.g. reserve forces), are re-entrants or have transferred from Other Ranks to Officers, their entry date may correspond to any of these events. The resulting time served may reflect their current period of service, include previous service, or it may be the time that has elapsed since they first joined the Armed Forces, irrespective of any break in service.
32. In 2013/14 1,320 personnel who were eligible for CTP were not on the Adapt database (not pre-registered). Either their records were not passed to Right Management or their Service Number was incorrectly recorded on Adapt. A data quality exercise is currently taking place to investigate this issue.

#### **Methodology**

33. Service personnel have been selected from the population (CTP service users) at random to reduce any systematic bias. The sample has not been selected to ensure there is representation across the different demographic groups.
34. A disproportionate number of the sample who could not be contacted (non-response) were; aged under 30 at exit, Ranks, or had less than four years Service. It is generally felt that younger Service personnel may be more mobile thus hindering the contractor's ability to contact them six months later. The bias in the non-responders could result in bias in the overall employment outcome estimates. The sample has not been adjusted, or the outcomes weighted, to take account of the non-response bias.

35. Personnel selected in the sample were contacted six months after the discharge date recorded on Adapt to ascertain their employment status. However, those already recorded on Adapt (prior to the six month point) as employed were assumed to still be in employment at the six month point and are not re-contacted. This may lead an over estimate of the employment rate.
36. Personnel are supposed to be contacted six months after the leaving the Armed Forces. There are sometimes differences between the projected exit date recorded on Adapt and service personnel's actual exit date as their exit date can change. The data on Adapt is informed through an initial resettlement update from the MOD's JPA database. This information will currently only be updated if the individual provides Right Management with this new information. This may result in Service leavers being contacted at a different time point to six months after their actual exit date. MOD is currently investigating the feasibility of updating CTP billing database with the actual exit date.
37. UK employment outcomes and occupation sectors are compared against the estimated employment outcome and occupation sectors for UK Regular Service personnel who used the CTP services. The UK information has not been adjusted to take account of the age and gender spread seen in the UK Armed Forces.

## **4. Timeliness and Punctuality**

### **Timeliness**

38. Defence Statistics were asked to provide support on the production of statistics relating to the Career Transition Partnership in February 2013. The first report in the Official Statistics series was published four months later.
39. The 2013/14 Statistical Notice was published 15 months after the end of the 2013/14 financial year on 11 June 2015.
40. The timeliness of the publication release is driven by:
  - a. A required six month gap after leaving the Armed Forces before Service leavers can be surveyed by the contractor to establish their employment outcome.
  - b. Collation and delivery of the data by the contractor. This includes time required to follow-up Service personnel who were hard to contact.
41. Defence Statistics are currently reviewing the timeliness of the report with a review to releasing the information earlier.

### **Punctuality**

42. All Statistical Notices were published on time to a pre-announced release date. The release date for 2014/15 will be published on the Defence Statistics website at least one month in advance.

## **5. Accessibility and Clarity**

### **Accessibility**

43. The estimated employment outcome statistics for Career Transition Partnership service users can be accessed through Gov.UK<sup>6</sup>.

### **Clarity**

44. Users with an interest in the key findings can read a short summary of main messages at the start of the report.
45. Graphics have been used to visually demonstrate confidence intervals for those users with a limited understanding of sampling variation.
46. Tables with 95% confidence intervals are presented alongside estimates for those users with greater understanding of sampling variation.
47. A detailed methodology in this document presents the user with the data sources used, collection methods, and statistical analysis undertaken.

## **6. Comparability**

### **Comparability**

48. The Official Statistic presents estimated employment outcomes from 2009/10 through to 2013/14, including quarterly estimates. There are confidence intervals around each of the estimates, and any statistically significant changes over time can be identified.
49. The employment definitions have been adjusted to better align with the UK population enabling comparisons over time. However it must be noted the UK estimates have not been adjusted to reflect the age and gender spread seen in the UK Armed Forces population.
50. The definitions for demographic groups have stayed the same and are consistent with other MOD Official Statistics.

## **7. Trade-offs between output quality components**

51. Coverage versus resources for data collection is the key trade off for the Service leaver employment statistics.
52. 38%<sup>P</sup> of all Service leavers are not captured in the current employment estimates. This group is made up of personnel who either not eligible for the CTP Full Resettlement Programme or Employment Support Programme, or who opted not to use the CTP services.
53. In order to increase coverage of the statistics and thus capture more people and make the figures further representative, further resources (time, money

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/career-transition-partnership-ex-service-personnel-employment-outcomes-statistics-index>

and people) would be needed to widen the scope of the current data collection process.

54. The scope of the coverage is further limited by the level of contact information provided to the Ministry of Defence by Service personnel when they leave the Armed Forces.

## **8. Assessment of User Needs and Perceptions**

55. The estimated employment outcome statistics for Service leavers are used by:

- a. Government – policy making and monitoring
- b. Academia – facilitating research
- c. Charities - used for planning purposes

### **Description of Users and Usage of Statistics**

56. The employment statistics for Service leavers have been published in response to user demand. Interest has come from Parliament, Government Departments, the third Sector, academics, the media, and the general public.
57. In July 2007 the National Audit Office (NAO) published a report on “Leaving the Services”<sup>7</sup> The NAO summarised the Career Transition Partnership services as follows:

“The practical realities for people leaving the Armed Forces can be very demanding. The process of finding a new home and a new job at the same time is something most of us would find quite stressful. So it is encouraging that most make that transition smoothly, and without too many troubles.

“And undoubtedly, part of that is due to the good support the Ministry of Defence provides to those leaving the Forces. It is important that all those leaving the Services know what support is due to them, and have the opportunity to take advantage of it.”

58. The Statistical Notice is a publication on employment outcomes for Service leavers who used the Career Transition Partnership. The statistics are widely used to inform policy monitoring and development; to inform the delivery of the Career Transition Partnership; and to enable MOD to be held accountable for the support provided to Service personnel in relation to finding employment when leaving the UK Armed Forces.

### **Strengths and Weakness in Relation to User Needs**

59. This statistical series provides the first robust estimates of employment outcomes for Service leavers who used the Career Transition Partnership services. There is a lot of user demand for this information, and the publication of this statistical series will go towards meeting this demand.
60. Potential users have asked for figures of employment outcomes by Service, gender, rank, medical discharge, age at exit, and length of Service. The Statistical Notice meets this demand. Statistics on the employment outcomes

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.nao.org.uk/report/leaving-the-services/>



for the redundancy programmes have also been specifically requested, thus their inclusion in this Statistical Notice.

61. The statistical series uses employment definitions which are broadly comparable with UK employment statistics. This is an improvement on figures which were previously in the public domain and utilised terminology and methodology which was inconsistent with national approaches to measuring employment outcomes.

## **9. Performance cost and respondent burden**

### **Operational Cost**

62. The annual report takes approximately 20 days to produce each year. Further analysis and development work will require additional resource.
63. There are two key data sources required to produce this Statistical Notice, and four further sources. Four of these six sources are already collected as administrative systems (personnel data from the Joint Personnel Administration system; medical discharges data; deaths data; and redundancy information). There are marginal costs involved in obtaining this data. The primary data source is the survey of Service leavers which is undertaken by the contractor Right Management. The LFS is run and data made available by the ONS.
64. The data collection process is undertaken by a tracking team from Right Management and the ten Career Consultants based across the country. They collect employment status information through a mix of phone, email and text.

### **Respondent Burden**

65. The response rate in 2013/14 was 89%.

## **10. Confidentiality, Transparency and Security**

66. The data source used to compile the Official Statistics used Service number as a unique identifier. The medical discharges data was linked using a pseudo-random unique identifier.
67. The files are all stored on a secure MOD network, with access to files limited to individuals in Defence Statistics Health. All MOD, Civil Service and data protection regulations are adhered to.

### **Rounding**

68. Rounding in Defence Statistics (Defence Statistics Rounding Policy, May 2009) is the preferred method of disclosure control in published statistics. Rounding of small numbers preserves anonymity of data subjects in aggregate tables. Rounding can also improve the clarity of tabulated data. In most cases, the extra detail provided by unrounded figures is not needed, and may obscure the main features of the data.
69. Rounding has primarily been used in this Statistical Notice to manage issues around data quality as data are collated from a range of large administrative data systems.

70. When rounding to the nearest 10, numbers ending in "5" have been rounded to the nearest multiple of 20 to prevent systematic bias. Figures fewer than five have been suppressed with a ~. Figures fewer than five have been suppressed. Where rounding has been used, totals and sub-totals have been rounded separately and so may not equal the sums of their rounded parts. All percentages, standard errors and 95% confidence intervals have been calculated on unrounded figures.

## ANNEX A

### Office for National Statistics definitions

These definitions have not been used within this CTP employment statistics report. However since there is user interest in comparing the CTP employment statistics with national employment figures (see Section 6 of the report) the definitions used by the Office for National Statistics are provided here to provide some context. They can be compared with the definitions used for the CTP employment statistics report provided in paragraph 22 of the report.

**Employment** Anyone doing one hour or more a week of paid work is counted in the employment figures. This includes people on government supported training programmes if they are engaging in any form of work, work experience or work-related training. The employment estimates also include unpaid family workers, who work in a family business and benefit from the profits of the business although they do not receive a formal wage or salary. People working without pay (for example, volunteers in charity shops) are not included in the employment figures.

**Unemployment** People not in employment are counted as unemployed if they have been looking for work in the last four weeks and if they are able to start work within the next two weeks. It does not matter if the person is looking for a full-time job or a part-time job or whether the person is claiming Jobseeker's Allowance or any other benefits. The unemployment estimates also include people who are out of work, have found a job and are waiting to start it in the next two weeks.

**Economically Inactive** People who are not in employment but are not counted as unemployed either because they have not been looking for work in the last four weeks or because they are unable to start work within the next two weeks. The economically inactive population includes retired people, those looking after the family or home, those unable to work due to illness or disability and those students who choose not to look for work.

A common misunderstanding is to assume that all full-time students are in the economically inactive category. This is incorrect. A full-time student with a part-time job will be recorded in the employment figures. Students who have been looking for a job within the last four weeks and who would be able to start work within the next two weeks would be counted as unemployed, even if they are only looking for part-time work.

## **ANNEX B**

The mapping between the Right Management survey data and the employment outcomes used in this report is outlined below. These are the generic mappings. Records were reviewed on an individual level and may not always align to the mappings below.

- 'Settled' and some of the 'Excluded' categories mapped to **Employed**
- 'Not Settled' mapped to **Unemployed**
- 'Excluded' sometimes mapped to **Economically Inactive**

For definitions of Settled, Not Settled and Excluded refer to paragraph 21 of the report.