



UK Armed Forces Monthly Service Personnel Statistics 1 January 2017

Published 9 February 2017

This publication provides information on the number of **Military Personnel** in (defined as the **strength**), joining (**intake**) and leaving (**outflow**) the UK Armed Forces. Detail is provided for both the **Full-time Armed Forces** and **Reserves**. Further statistics can be found in the [Excel tables](#).

The recent trends in personnel numbers in this report relate to the targets outlined in the **Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) 2015** and the **Future Reserves 2020 (FR20) programme**. Prior to SDSR 2015, publications reported against SDSR 2010, the Three Month Exercise (3ME), Army 2020 and the Future Reserves 2020 (FR20) programme.

Some of the statistics previously published in the following publications can now be found in this release: [Monthly](#), [Quarterly](#) and [Annual](#) Personnel Reports, [UK Reserve Forces and Cadets](#), [Service Personnel Bulletin 2.01](#) and [Service and Civilian Bulletin 2.03](#).

Key Points and Trends

▲ 196 410	Strength of UK Forces Service Personnel at 1 January 2017 <i>an increase of 380 (0.2 per cent) since 1 January 2016</i>
▼ 139 420	Full-time Trained Strength (RN/RM & RAF) and Full-time Trade Trained Strength (Army) at 1 January 2017 <i>a decrease of 1 850 (1.3 per cent) since 1 January 2016</i>
▲ - 4.2%	Deficit against the planned number of personnel needed (Liability) at 1 January 2017 <i>an increase in the deficit from -4.0 per cent as at 1 January 2016</i>
30 960	Strength of the Trained Future Reserves 2020 at 1 January 2017 <i>a comparison is not currently available (for more information see page 9)</i>
▼ 13 440	People joined the UK Regular Armed Forces in the past 12 months (1 January 2015 – 31 December 2016) <i>a decrease of 440 (3.2 per cent) compared with the previous 12 month period</i>
▼ 15 100	Regular personnel left the Armed Forces in the past 12 months (1 January 2015 – 31 December 2016) <i>a decrease of 2 130 (12.3 per cent) compared with the previous 12 month period</i>
▼ 6 850	People joined the Future Reserves 2020 in the past 12 months (1 January 2015 – 31 December 2016) <i>a decrease of 1 710 (20.0 per cent) compared with the previous 12 month period</i>
▲ 5 010	Future Reserves 2020 personnel left the Armed Forces in the past 12 months (1 January 2015 – 31 December 2016) <i>an increase of 1 040 (26.0 per cent) compared with the previous 12 month period</i>

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Background quality report: www.gov.uk/government/statistics/tri-service-personnel-bulletin-background-quality-reports

Would you like to be added to our **contact list**, so that we can inform you about updates to these statistics and consult you if we are thinking of making changes? You can subscribe to updates by emailing DefStrat-Stat-Tri-Enquiries@mod.gov.uk

Contents

Introduction	page 2	
Policy background	page 3	
UK Service Personnel	page 4	(National Statistic)
Full-time Trained Strength (FTTS)	page 5	(National Statistic)
FTTS (RN/RM & RAF) & Full-time Trade Trained Strength (Army) and Liability	page 6	(National Statistic)
UK Regular Personnel	page 7	(National Statistic)
Future Reserves 2020 Programme Monitoring	page 9	(National Statistic)
Applications	page 11	
Further Information	page 13	

Supplementary tables containing further statistics can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-armed-forces-monthly-service-personnel-statistics-2016>

A glossary and other supporting documents are available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/armed-forces-monthly-service-personnel-statistics-supplementary-documents>

Introduction

This publication contains information on the **strength**, **intake** and **outflow** for the UK Armed Forces overall and each of the Services; **Royal Navy/Royal Marines (RN/RM)**, **Army** and **Royal Air Force (RAF)** and **Applications** to each of the Services.

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) announced on 29 June 2016 that it was changing the Army trained, disciplined manpower by changing the definition of trained strength to include those in the Army who have completed Phase 1 training. This affects some Tri-Service totals. This does not affect the Naval Service or the RAF in any way. The MOD held a public consultation on **SDSR Resilience: Trained strength definition for the Army and resultant changes to Ministry of Defence Armed Forces personnel statistics**, between 11 July and 21 August 2016. A consultation response was published on 7 November 2016. The changes outlined in the consultation and response have been incorporated into this publication from the 1 October 2016 edition onwards. This affects statistics in some of the accompanying Excel tables, specifically tables: 3a, 3e, 5a, 5b, 5c, 5d, 6a, 6b, 7a, 7b and 7c. Terminology has also been updated in Excel tables 3c and 4.

Whilst the total RAF liability has been agreed, the composition is undergoing review. The Officer and Other Rank breakdown is currently marked as provisional for RAF, for 1 April 2016 - 1 January 2017, along with the Tri-Service Officer and Other Ranks breakdown (see page 13 for further information).

Detailed statistics, including unrounded figures, and historic time series can be found in the **Excel tables**. These include quarterly statistics on the number of **Applications** to each of the Services, **Service and Civilian Personnel**, **Separated Service** (the proportion of personnel breaching harmony guidelines) and **Military Salaries**. Further historic statistics will be added in due course; in the meantime, historic statistics can be found in the following archived publications: **Monthly**, **Quarterly** and **Annual** Personnel Reports, **UK Reserve Forces and Cadets**, **Service Personnel Bulletin 2.01**, **Service and Civilian Bulletin 2.03**, **UK Armed Forces Maternity Report**, **Diversity Dashboard** and **Quarterly Location Statistics**. The **glossary** contains definitions of terminology used in this publication.

The next edition of this publication will be published on GOV.UK at 9:30am on 9 March 2017. A calendar of upcoming MOD statistical releases can be found on **GOV.UK**.

A National Statistics publication

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods; and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

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

Policy background

The main factors affecting decisions about the size of the Armed Forces required by the MOD to achieve success in its military tasks include:

- An assessment of current and future threats to UK national security;
- The need for contingent / reactive capability – the requirement to be able to respond immediately to domestic or international crisis;
- Current operational and international obligations (e.g. NATO, UN);
- Changes in technology, the introduction of new equipment and restructuring that leads to equipment becoming obsolete or surplus to requirements;
- The need to deliver against the military tasks as efficiently as possible, maintaining a balanced, affordable defence budget.

The Service personnel statistics in this publication are reported against the [2015 Strategic Defence and Security Review](#) (SDSR), released in November 2015. Prior to SDSR 2015, publications reported against the planned Future Force 2020, as set out in the SDSR 2010 which planned to reduce the size of the Armed Forces.

Army Trained Strength

On 29 June 2016, the MOD [announced](#) that the Army planned to use Regular and Reserve Phase 1 trained personnel in response to crises within the UK. Following this, the term 'Trained Strength' would include all Army personnel trained in the core function of their Service (i.e. those who have completed Phase 1 training). The MOD has [consulted](#) on these changes and the resultant impact it will have on this publication and a consultation response were published on 7 October 2016.

From the 1 October 2016 edition onwards, Army personnel who have completed Phase 1 training (basic Service training) but not Phase 2 training (trade training), are considered Trained personnel. This change will enable the Army to meet the SDSR 15 commitment to improve support to UK resilience. The Trained Strength definition for the Royal Navy, RAF, Maritime Reserve and RAF Reserves has not changed, reflecting the requirement for their personnel to complete Phase 2 training to be able to fulfil the core function of their respective Services.

Army personnel who have completed Phase 2 training are now called 'Trade Trained'. This population aligns with the old definition of trained personnel, therefore maintaining the continuity of the statistical time series and will continue to be counted against the liability and SDSR target for 2020.

Full-time Armed Forces personnel

In order to meet the manpower reduction targets set out in SDSR 2010, the [Three Month Exercise](#) (3ME) and [Army 2020](#) (A2020), a redundancy programme coupled with adjusted recruiting (intake) and contract extensions were set. The redundancy programme is now complete.

On 23 November 2015, the Ministry of Defence published the National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015. SDSR 2015 outlines plans to uplift the size of the Regular Armed Forces, setting targets for a strength of 82,000 for the Army, and increasing the Royal Navy/Royal Marines and Royal Air Force by a total of 700 personnel. The [SDSR 2015 Defence Key Facts](#) booklet announced new targets for 2020 for each of the Services.

Future Reserves 2020 (FR20) Programme

The Future Reserves 2020 (FR20) programme aims to increase the size of the Reserve Forces. Further information on the growth of the Reserves can be found in the Policy Background section of previous [Monthly Service Personnel Statistics](#) publications.

As a result of the changes to Army Trained Strength (referred to above) and their impact on the Army Reserve, the MOD released a [Written Ministerial Statement](#) containing revised Future Reserves 2020 strength growth profiles on 8 November 2016. Reporting of the growth of the Reserves will be based on strength profiles only.

This statement outlined trained strength targets for FY18/19 as follows: Maritime Reserve 3,100, Army Reserve 30,100 and RAF Reserves 1,860.

UK Service Personnel

UK Service Personnel comprise the total **strength** of the military personnel employed by the Ministry of Defence (**Excel tables**, Table1). The current strength of the UK Service Personnel is 196,410, which includes:

- All **UK Regular** personnel and all **Gurkha** personnel (which at 1 January 2017 comprised 77.4 per cent of UK Service Personnel);
- **Volunteer Reserve** personnel (which at 1 January 2017 comprised 18.4 per cent of UK Service Personnel);
- **Other Personnel** including the Serving Regular Reserve, Sponsored Reserve, Military Provost Guard Service, Locally Engaged Personnel and elements of the Full Time Reserve Service (FTRS) (which at 1 January 2017 comprised 4.2 per cent of UK Service Personnel).

Strength is the number of personnel.

Volunteer Reserves voluntarily accept an annual training commitment and are liable to be mobilised to deploy on operations. They can be utilised on a part-time or full-time basis to provide support to the Regular Forces at home and overseas.

The strength of the UK Forces¹ has increased between 1 January 2016 and 1 January 2017, by 0.2 per cent (380 personnel). Over the same period, there has been a decrease in the strength of UK Regular Forces and there have been increases in the Reserves populations. The total strength of the UK Regular Forces has decreased by 1,630 (1.1 per cent) between 1 January 2016 and 1 January 2017. The total strength of the Volunteer Reserve has increased by 1,750 (5.1 per cent) between 1 January 2016 and 1 January 2017.

Table 1: Recent Trends in the Strength of the UK Forces¹

	1 Apr 14	1 Apr 15	1 Apr 16	1 Oct 16	1 Nov 16	1 Dec 16	1 Jan 17
UK Forces Personnel	198 810	195 690	197 090	197 120	197 160	197 150	196 410
UK Regular Forces	159 630	153 720	151 000	150 250	150 160	150 040	149 280
Gurkhas	3 050	2 870	2 860	2 800	2 780	2 780	2 770
Volunteer Reserve	28 860	31 260	35 070	35 810	35 960	36 060	36 120
Other Personnel	7 280	7 840	8 170	8 250	8 260	8 280	8 250

Source: Defence Statistics (Tri-Service)

Table 2: UK Forces¹ Strength by Service

	1 Jan 15	1 Jan 16	1 Jan 17	Increase/Decrease 1 Jan 16 - 1 Jan 17	% Increase/Decrease 1 Jan 16 - 1 Jan 17
Strength					
Naval Service	38 120	38 140	38 240	+110	0.3%
Army	119 470	120 930	121 190	+260	0.2%
Royal Air Force	36 980	36 970	36 980	+10	0.0%

Source: Defence Statistics (Tri-Service)

1. UK Forces comprises all UK Regular, Gurkha, Volunteer Reserve and Other personnel. The constituents of "Other personnel" are reported towards the top of this page.

Full-time Trained Strength

Following public announcement and public consultation the definition of Army Trained Strength has changed. From 1 October 2016, UK Regular Forces and Gurkha personnel in the Army who have completed Phase 1 training (basic Service training) but not Phase 2 training (trade training), are now considered Trained personnel. This change will enable the Army to meet the SDSR 15 commitment to improve support to UK resilience. Previously, only personnel who had completed Phase 2 training were considered trained.

This change does not affect the Royal Navy/Royal Marines (RN/RM) or the Royal Air Force (RAF).

As a result of this change, the Full-time Trained Strength (FTTS) includes:

- UK Regular Forces who have passed Phase 1 and Phase 2 training, in the RN/RM & RAF, and UK Regular Forces and Gurkha personnel who have passed Phase 1 training in the Army;
- Those elements of the Full Time Reserve Service (FTRS) who are counted against the liability, for all three Services.

This change was implemented in the 1 October 2016 edition of this publication.

As at 1 January 2017, the Tri-Service Full-time Trained Strength was 143,610. A Service breakdown is shown below in Table 3. Comparisons prior to October 2016 are not available for the Army because it is not possible to identify a split between Phase 1 and Phase 2 training prior to that.

Table 3: Full-time Trained Strength by service

	1 Oct 16	1 Nov 16	1 Dec 16	1 Jan 17
All Services	144 180	143 950	143 680	143 610
Royal Navy / Royal Marines	29 520	29 440	29 450	29 500
Army	83 770	83 620	83 360	83 260
Royal Air Force	30 900	30 880	30 870	30 850

Full-time Trained Strength (RN/RM & RAF) and Full-time Trade Trained Strength (Army) and Liability

The Full-time Trained Strength (FTTS) (RN/RM & RAF) and Full-time Trade Trained Strength (FTTTS) (Army) (which comprises military personnel who have completed 'Phase 1' and 'Phase 2' training) is counted against the **Liability**. The difference between the two is measured as either a surplus or deficit. This is one indicator of the Service's ability to execute military tasks. Other indicators include the surplus / deficit within key trades or in specific Ranks.

Full-time Trained Strength (RN/RM & RAF) and Full-time Trade Trained Strength (Army) includes all UK Regular personnel, Gurkhas and those elements of the Full Time Reserve Service (FTRS) who are counted against the liability (see [glossary](#) for more detail).

Liability is the number of Service personnel needed, based on the Defence Planning Round, set for each of the three Services.

- The FTTS (RN/RM & RAF) and FTTTS (Army) is 139,420, a decrease of 1.3 per cent (1,850 personnel) since 1 January 2016.
- The FTTS for the RN/RM is 29,500 and 30,850 for the RAF. The FTTTS is 79,060 for the Army.
- The FTTS (RN/RM & RAF) and FTTTS (Army) comprises: 136,280 Regular personnel (97.8 per cent); 2,590 Gurkhas (1.9 per cent); and 540 Full Time Reserve Service personnel (0.4 per cent) who are filling Regular posts and count against the liability.

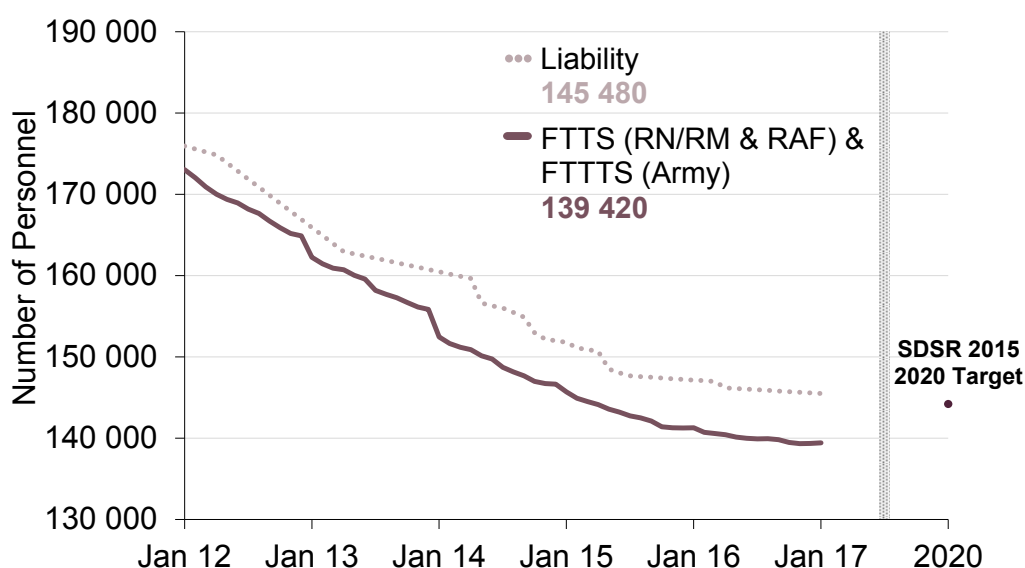
Table 4: FTTS (RN/RM & RAF) & FTTTS (Army) against the Liability

	1 Apr 14	1 Apr 15	1 Apr 16	1 Oct 16	1 Nov 16	1 Dec 16	1 Jan 17
FTTS (RN/RM & RAF) & FTTTS (Army)	150 890	144 120	140 430	139 480	139 320	139 350	139 420
Liability	159 640	150 700	146 190	145 720	145 640	145 560	145 480
<i>Surplus/Deficit</i>	<i>-8 750</i>	<i>-6 580</i>	<i>-5 750</i>	<i>-6 240</i>	<i>-6 320</i>	<i>-6 210</i>	<i>-6 070</i>
<i>% Surplus/Deficit</i>	<i>-5.5</i>	<i>-4.4</i>	<i>-3.9</i>	<i>-4.3</i>	<i>-4.3</i>	<i>-4.3</i>	<i>-4.2</i>

Source: Defence Statistics (Tri-Service)

- The current deficit against the Liability is 4.2 per cent for the UK Armed Forces. There is a deficit of 2.2 per cent in the Royal Navy/Royal Marines (RN/RM), 4.3 per cent in the Army and 5.6 per cent in the Royal Air Force (RAF).
- The SDSR 2015 envisaged that by 2020 the UK Armed Forces would have 144,200 personnel, comprising 30,450 for the RN/RM, 82,000 for the Army and 31,750 for the RAF.

Figure 1: FTTS (RN/RM & RAF) and FTTTS (Army) against Liability and 2020 target derived from SDSR 2015



UK Regular Personnel

As at 1 January 2017, the trained and untrained strength of the UK Regular Forces (which excludes Gurkhas) was 149,280.

There are 8,970 untrained personnel in the UK Regular Forces, of which 3,320 are in the Army. The untrained strength reflects the number of personnel who can potentially join the trained strength.

Table 5: UK Regular Forces Strength by Service

Strength	1 Jan 16		1 Jan 17	
RN/RM	32 400		32 440	
Of which trained	29 530	91.2%	29 190	90.0%
Army	84 960		83 610	
Of which trained	77 640	91.4%	80 280	96.0%
Of which trade trained			76 260	91.2%
RAF	33 540		33 230	
Of which trained	31 150	92.9%	30 840	92.8%

UK Regulars are full time Service personnel, including Nursing Services, excluding FTRS personnel, Gurkhas, mobilised Reservists, Military Provost Guarding Service (MPGS), Locally Engaged Personnel (LEP), and Non Regular Permanent Service (NRPS).

Intake is defined as the number joining the Strength, whereas **Outflow** is the number leaving.

Note: || Denotes break in series; the definition of 'Trained' for Army has changed from the 1 October 2016 edition onwards (see page 5). Hence the 1 January 2017 Army Trained Strength figures cannot be compared to earlier figures. However, the 1 January 2017 Army trade trained figure is comparable to the 1 January 2016 Trained figure.

Intake and Outflow since 2010

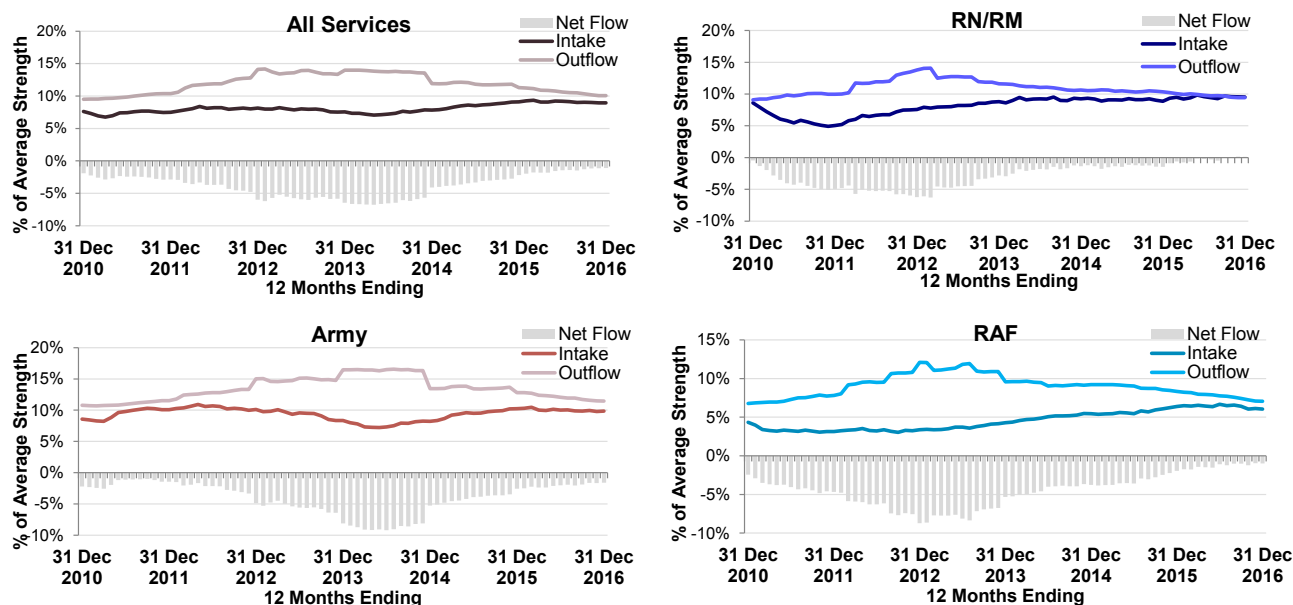
Intake and Outflow over the past six years are presented in Figure 2. Since 2010 outflow has exceeded intake for each 12 month period.

- Excluding personnel who left on redundancy, in the 12 months to 31 December 2016, there was a net outflow of 1,660 personnel from the UK Regular Forces. This difference has reduced compared with the 12 months to 31 December 2015, when 3,200 more personnel left the UK Regular Forces than joined.

Intake

- Intake into the trained and untrained UK Regular Forces was 13,440 in the 12 months to 31 December 2016. This has decreased from 13,890 in the 12 months to 31 December 2015.
- Of the current intake, 10.2 per cent was into Officers and 89.8 per cent was into Other Ranks.
- Compared to the 12 months to 31 December 2015, intake to the RN/RM has increased by 7.2 per cent, intake to the Army has decreased by 5.8 per cent and the RAF has decreased by 6.2 per cent.

Figure 2: Net Flow, Intake to and Outflow from the UK Regular Forces over a 12-month period



UK Regular Personnel

Outflow

- Outflow from the trained and untrained UK Regular Forces was 15,100 in the 12 months to 31 December 2016; down from 17,230 in the 12 months to 31 December 2015.
- In the 12 months to 31 December 2016, less than 5 trained and untrained personnel left the UK Regular Forces as part of the UK Armed Forces Redundancy Programme. This compares to 140 in the 12 months to 31 December 2015.

Armed Forces Redundancy Programme Tranche 1-4 statistics are available at:

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

Voluntary Outflow encompasses all trained (RN/RM & RAF) and Trade Trained (Army) personnel who voluntarily exit before the end of their agreed engagement or commission period.

Time Expiry is a term used to describe those in the Armed Services who reach the end of their engagement or commission and then leave.

Other includes outflow from the trained (RN/RM & RAF) and trade trained (Army) strength due to, amongst others, medical reasons, misconduct, compassionate, dismissals and death.

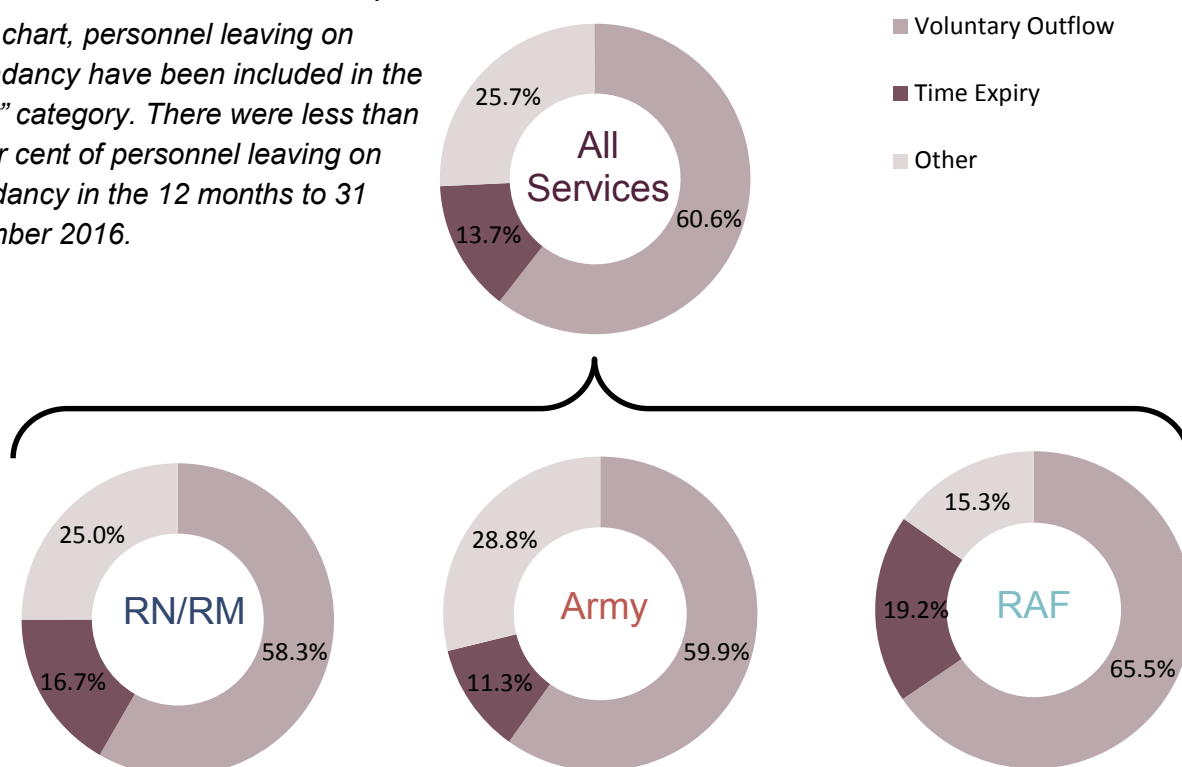
At a Tri-Service level, in the 12 months to 31 December 2016, more personnel left the trained (RN/RM & RAF) and trade trained (Army) UK Regular Forces by Voluntary Outflow (VO) than for any other reason (Figure 3).

- In the 12 months to 31 December 2016, 7,350 trained (RN/RM & RAF) and trade trained (Army) personnel left through VO; the VO rate was 5.4 per cent. This is a decrease from 7,920 in the 12 months to 31 December 2015 and a VO rate of 5.7 per cent.
- In the 12 months to 31 December 2016, the VO rate is higher amongst Other Ranks (5.6 per cent), compared to Officers (4.3 per cent).

There is no single reason why personnel leave on Voluntary Outflow, but the personnel who completed the [Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey](#) indicated reasons for leaving the Armed Forces included the impact of Service life on family and personal life and opportunities outside the Armed Forces.

Figure 3: Outflow of trained (RN/RM & RAF) and trade trained (Army) UK Regulars by exit reason (12 months to 31 December 2016)

In this chart, personnel leaving on Redundancy have been included in the "Other" category. There were less than 0.1 per cent of personnel leaving on redundancy in the 12 months to 31 December 2016.



Future Reserves 2020 (FR20) programme monitoring

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) has [consulted](#) on changes to the Army trained strength definition and the removal of the FR20 intake targets.

MOD has released revised Future Reserves 2020 trained strength growth profiles in the [Written Ministerial Statement](#) released on 8th November 2016. Reporting of the growth of the Reserves will be based on trained strength profiles only.

Future Reserves 2020 Strength

Progress against FR20 population trained strength targets is reported in table 6a of the [Excel tables](#).

The total **trained and untrained strength** of the Tri-Service Future Reserves 2020 was 35,860; an increase of 1,830 or 5.4 per cent since 1 January 2016.

Future Reserves 2020

includes volunteer reserves who are mobilised, High Readiness Reserves and those volunteer reserves serving on Full Time Reserve Service (FTRS) and Additional Duties Commitment (ADC). Sponsored Reserves who provide a more cost effective solution than volunteer reserve are also included in the Army Reserve FR20.

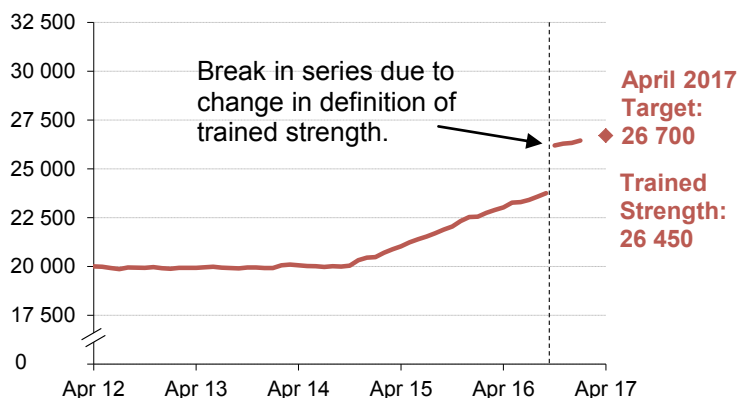
Figure 4: Maritime Reserve trained strength



The Maritime Reserve total strength as at 1 January 2017 was 3,480. This is an increase of 60 personnel (1.6 per cent) since January 2016.

Figure 4 shows that the Maritime Reserve trained strength was 2,430 as at 1 January 2017. This is an increase of 160 personnel (7.1 per cent) since 1 January 2016.

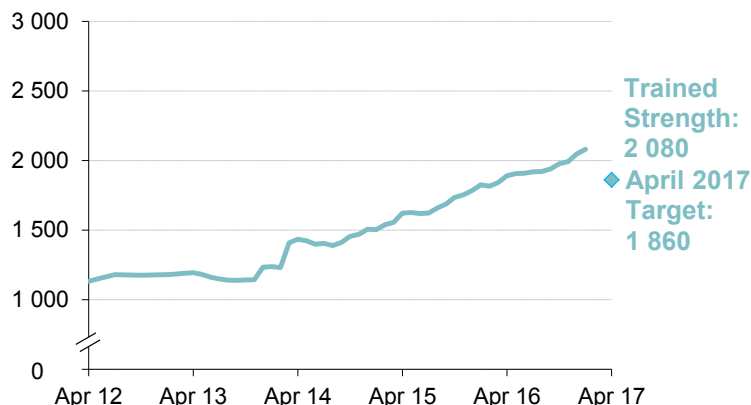
Figure 5: Army Reserve FR20 trained strength



The Army Reserve total strength as at 1 January 2017 was 29,690. This is an increase of 1,590 personnel (5.7 per cent) since 1 January 2016.

The Army changed its definition of trained strength to include phase 1 trained personnel from 1 October 2016 (see Policy Background for more information). Figure 5 shows that the Army Reserve trained strength was 26,450 as at 1 January 2017.

Figure 6: RAF Reserves trained strength



The RAF Reserves total strength as at 1 January 2017 was 2,690. This is an increase of 190 personnel (7.6 per cent) since 1 January 2016.

Figure 6 shows that as at 1 January 2017 the RAF Reserves trained strength was 2,080. This is an increase of 260 personnel (14.0 per cent) since 1 January 2016.

Future Reserves 2020 (FR20) programme monitoring

FR20 Intake

Intake statistics report how many people have joined the trained or untrained strengths. As well as new recruits, this can include personnel transferring from the Regular Forces, other Reserve populations, or Reserve re-joiners.

In the 12 months between 1 January 2016 and 31 December 2016, **intake** to the Tri-Service Future Reserves 2020 population was **6,850 people**; a **20.0 per cent decrease** on the same 12 month period in the previous year.

Table 6: Intake to Future Reserves 2020, trained and untrained

Intake	1 Jan 15 31 Dec 15	1 Jan 16 31 Dec 16	Increase/ Decrease	% Increase/ Decrease
Maritime Reserve	1 070	930	-140	-13.4%
Army Reserve FR20	6 480	5 240	-1240	-19.2%
RAF Reserves	1 000	680	-320	-32.3%

Source: Defence Statistics (Tri-Service)

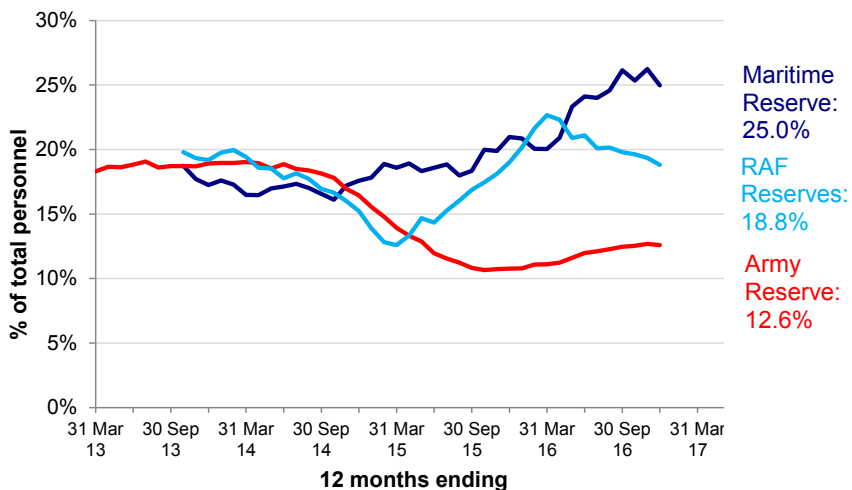
FR20 Outflow

Outflow statistics report how many personnel have left the trained or untrained strengths. The majority of outflow is personnel leaving the Armed Forces, though around 15 percent do transfer to another part of the Armed Forces, such as the Regulars or another Reserve Force.

In the 12 months between 1 January 2016 and 31st December 2016 **outflow** from the Tri-Service Future Reserves 2020 population was **5,010 people**; a **26.0 per cent increase** compared with the same 12 month period in the previous year.

All three services have seen an increase in total number of personnel leaving (total outflow) in the 12 months to 31st December 2016 compared to the same time period last year. Increases in outflow are expected following the FR20 programme's aim to increase the size of the Reserve Forces.

Figure 7: Total Outflow rate by service



Total outflow rate

12 months total outflow divided by the mean average strength.

Outflow includes personnel moving to any other part of the Armed Forces including the UK Regulars or another Reserve population not in the FR20.

Figure 7 shows the total outflow rate which takes into account the growth of total strength.

The total outflow rates for each service in the 12 months to 31st December 2016 are as follows:

- The Maritime Reserve total outflow rate was **25.0 per cent**; an increase of 4.0 percentage points since 12 months to 31st December 2015.
- The Army Reserve total outflow rate was **12.6 per cent**; an increase of 1.8 percentage points since the 12 months to 31st December 2015.
- The RAF Reserves total outflow rate was **18.8 per cent**; an decrease of 0.2 percentage points since the 12 months to 31st December 2015.

Applications to the Armed Forces

The figures in this publication include applications to the UK Regular and Volunteer Reserve Forces. They are broken down by Service, and by Officers and Other Ranks.

Due to differences in the application process for each Service, the three Services do not currently adopt the same definition of an 'application'. Therefore, **application numbers cannot be added together across the Services to show total Armed Forces applications** (hence separate tables and graphs are provided).

The number of applications received does not directly relate to intake figures, since:

Figures relate to the number of **applications** received and not the number of **applicants**, as one applicant may submit several applications;

For successful applicants who accept an offer to join the Services, there is a substantial processing time between their application being received and the applicant joining the Services. Therefore, the intake figures for Dec 15 are not comparable with the number of applications received in Dec 15, as the numbers apply to different cohorts of people;

Applications will not result in intake if, for example, they are withdrawn by the applicant during the recruitment process, rejected by the Services, or if an offer to join the Services is declined by the applicant. **See below** for further information.

Applications that do not result in intake

The main causes of **applicant** failure (i.e. no offer to join the Services given) include:

- Failing security clearance;
- Not having the required residency;
- Not achieving the required recruiting test score for the desired branch/trade;
- Failing the medical scrutiny;
- Not achieving fitness entry standards;
- Applicants withdraw for their own reasons (e.g. change of mind) during the process

The main causes of **application** failure (i.e. the applicant declines an offer to join):

- Applicants may have submitted other applications for employment (including multiple applications to join the Armed Forces) and accept another offer;
- Applications may be submitted with no intention to join (e.g. to satisfy the requirements of job seeking).

NOTE: Application numbers cannot be added together across the Services to show total Armed Forces applications due to differences in definitions.

Applications to the Armed Forces

Figure 7: Applications to the RN/RM split by UK Regular Forces and Volunteer Reserves

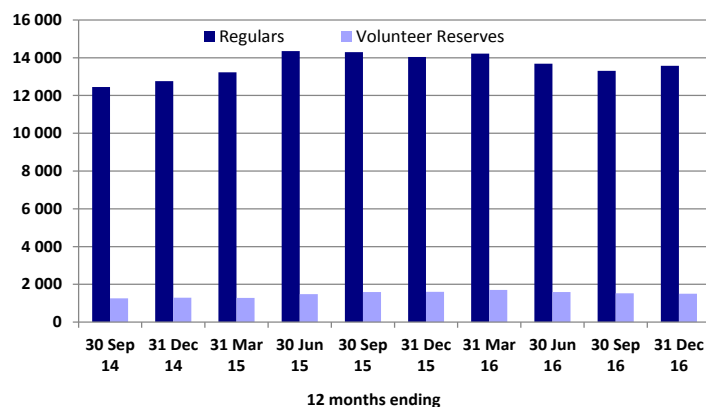


Table 7: RN/RM Applications to the UK Regular Forces and Volunteer Reserves

Applications	1 Jan 15	1 Jan 16	Change	%
	31 Dec 15	31 Dec 16		
Regulars	14 040	13 570	- 470	-3.3%
Volunteer Reserves	1 600	1 510	- 90	-5.7%

Source: Defence Statistics (Tri-Service)

The number of applications to join the RN/RM Regular Forces has decreased slightly since last quarter. There was an overall **decrease of 470** applications in the **12 months to 31 December 2016** compared with the same period last year.

Figure 8: Applications to the Army split by UK Regular Forces and Volunteer Reserves

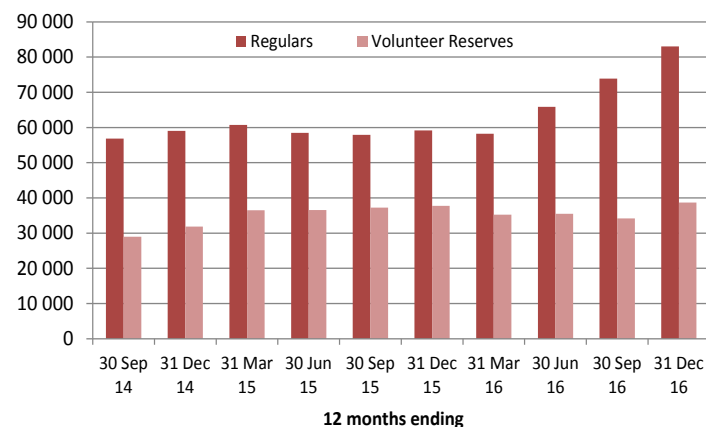


Table 8: Army Applications to the UK Regular Forces and Volunteer Reserves

Applications	1 Jan 15	1 Jan 16	Change	%
	31 Dec 15	31 Dec 16		
Regulars	59 170	83 010	+23 840	+40.3%
Volunteer Reserves	37 750	38 660	+ 920	+2.4%

Source: Defence Statistics (Tri-Service)

There has been a large increase in the number of applications to join the Army Regular Forces in the last three quarters. The increase is, in part, due to a rise in Commonwealth applicants as a result of the announcement that residency requirements would be waived to allow 200 Commonwealth citizens per annum to be recruited to fill a limited number of roles in the Regular Armed Forces which require specialist skills. In addition to this, the introduction of the Army Quick application process ('Quick App') in November 2016 may have resulted in increases in applications following this period. Since the same period last year, there has been an overall **increase of 23,840 applications** to join the UK Regular Forces.

Figure 9: Applications to the RAF split by UK Regular Forces and Volunteer Reserves

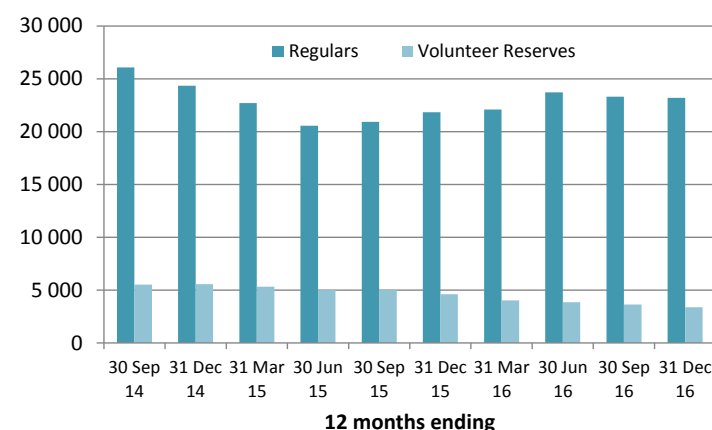


Table 9: RAF Applications to the UK Regular Forces and Volunteer Reserves

Applications	1 Jan 15	1 Jan 16	Change	%
	31 Dec 15	31 Dec 16		
Regulars	21 840	23 200	+1 360	+6.2%
Volunteer Reserves	4 620	3 390	-1 240	-26.7%

Source: Defence Statistics (Tri-Service)

There has been a net increase of 130 applications to the RAF as a whole in the **12 months to 31 December 2016** compared with the same period last year. The RAF Regulars have seen a large **1,360 increase** in applications offset by a **1,240 decrease** in Reserves applications for the same time period.

Further Information

Rounding

Figures in this publication have been rounded to the nearest 10, though numbers ending in a “5” have been rounded to the nearest multiple of 20 to prevent the systematic bias caused by always rounding numbers upwards. For example; a value of “25” would be rounded down to “20” and a value of “15” would be rounded up to “20”.

Additionally, totals and sub-totals are rounded separately and so may not equal the sums of their rounded parts.

Percentages are calculated from unrounded data and presented to one decimal place.

The MOD Disclosure Control and Rounding policy is published on GOV.UK and we have applied this policy to the statistics in the accompanying Excel tables. The policy is available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/defence-statistics-policies>.

Revisions

There are no revisions in this release.

Whilst the total RAF liability has been agreed, the composition is undergoing review. The Officer and Other Rank breakdown is currently marked as provisional for RAF, from 1 April 2016 to 1 January 2017, along with the Tri-Service Officer and Other Rank breakdown. As a result, the associated surplus / deficit figures are also provisional. These figures will be finalised in due course.

Corrections to the published statistics will be made if errors are found, or if figures change as a result of improvements to methodology or changes to definitions. When making corrections, we will follow the Ministry of Defence [Statistics Revisions and Corrections Policy](#). All corrected figures will be identified by the symbol “r”, and an explanation will be given of the reason for and size of the revision. Corrections which would have a significant impact on the utility of the statistics will be corrected as soon as possible, by reissuing the publication. Minor errors will also be corrected, but for efficient use of resource these corrections may be timed to coincide with the next annual release of the publication.

There are no regular planned revisions of this Bulletin.

Symbols

	Discontinuity in time series
*	not applicable
..	not available
–	Zero
~	5 or fewer
p	Provisional
e	Estimate
r	Revised

Italic figures are used for percentages and other rates, except where otherwise indicated.

Further Information (cont.)

Contact Us

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

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If you require information which is not available within this or other available publications, you may wish to submit a Request for Information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to the Ministry of Defence. For more information, see:

<https://www.gov.uk/make-a-freedom-of-information-request/the-freedom-of-information-act>

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