



Ministry  
of Defence

# UK Regular Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey Results 2017



● Annual

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United Kingdom

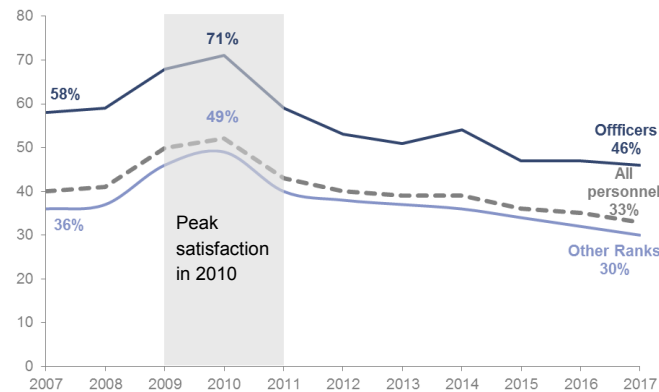
This statistical release provides results from the Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey (AFCAS) 2017, along with results from previous years.

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

## 42% of personnel are satisfied with Service life in general

- 35% are dissatisfied with Service life in general, up four percentage points from 2016.
- Morale of self, Unit and Service has decreased since 2016.
- Royal Marines have seen large decreases in morale in 2017.
- 74% of personnel are proud to be in their Service, unchanged from 2016.

## Satisfaction with pay is decreasing over time



## Satisfaction with Single Living Accommodation has decreased from 2016

- Overall standard ↓ 4 PP to 50%
- How fairly accommodation is allocated ↓ 5 PP to 43%
- Quality of maintenance/repair work ↓ 5 PP to 30%
- Response to requests for maintenance/repair ↓ 5 PP to 28%

PP = Percentage Point

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**Background quality report:** <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/armed-forces-continuous-attitude-survey-index>

Would you like to be added to our **contact list** so that we can inform you about updates to these statistics and consult you if we are thinking of making changes? You can subscribe to updates by emailing [DefStrat-Stat-WDS-Pubs@mod.uk](mailto:DefStrat-Stat-WDS-Pubs@mod.uk)

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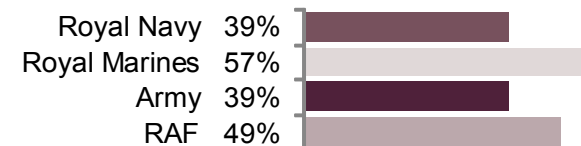
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## About these statistics

The 2017 Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey (AFCAS) was distributed to a sample of 27,967 trained UK Regular Armed Forces personnel between September 2016 and February 2017 using both online and paper questionnaires. Participants were chosen using stratified simple random sampling, designed to ensure sufficient responses from each Service and from each rank group within each Service, whilst minimising respondent burden.

### Response Rates:

Overall, 12,469 responses were received, representing a response rate of 45%.



Reference tables and questionnaires for AFCAS 2017 are published as separate documents and can be found on the AFCAS webpage - <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/announcements/armed-forces-continuous-attitude-survey-2017>

Please see the Background Quality Report for full details of survey methodology, analysis, and data quality considerations.

*Note: throughout the report, where statistical significance tests are applied, they are carried out at the 99% confidence level. This is at a fairly stringent level and means that there should be less than a 1% (1 in 100) chance that differences observed in AFCAS results are not representative of the Armed Forces as a whole. This reduces the likelihood of wrongly concluding that there has been an actual change based on the survey results, which only cover a sample of the Armed Forces.*

### A National Statistics publication

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority 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.

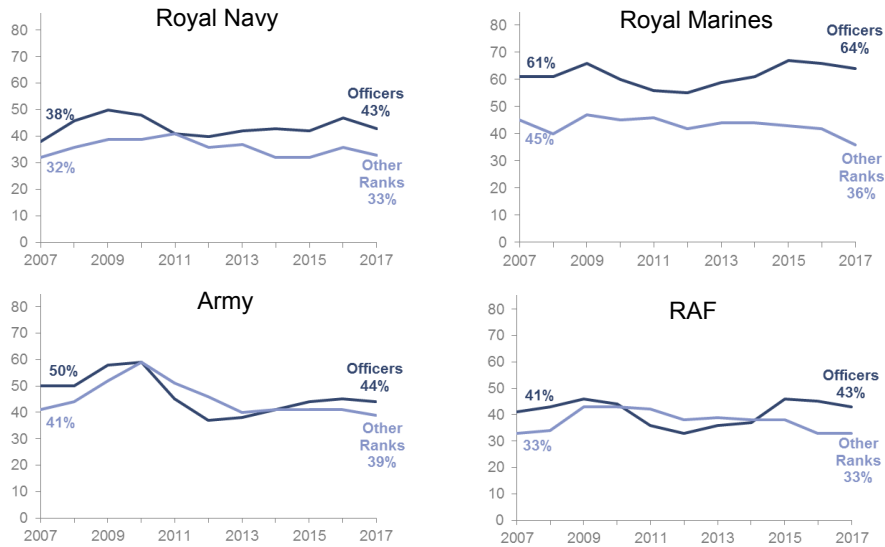
Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

# Section 1 - Morale, Commitment and Engagement

Section 1 covers satisfaction with a number of topics including morale, aspects of the job, Service ethos, commitment and engagement.

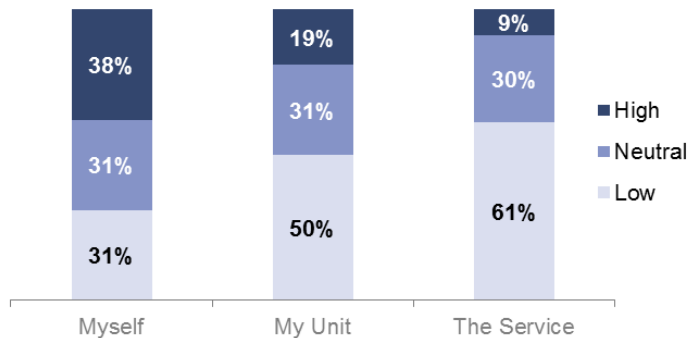
## Overall, 38% of personnel report high self morale, two percentage points lower than 2016

% of personnel reporting high self morale



Officers report higher self (44%) and Unit (28%) morale than Other Ranks (36% and 17% respectively).

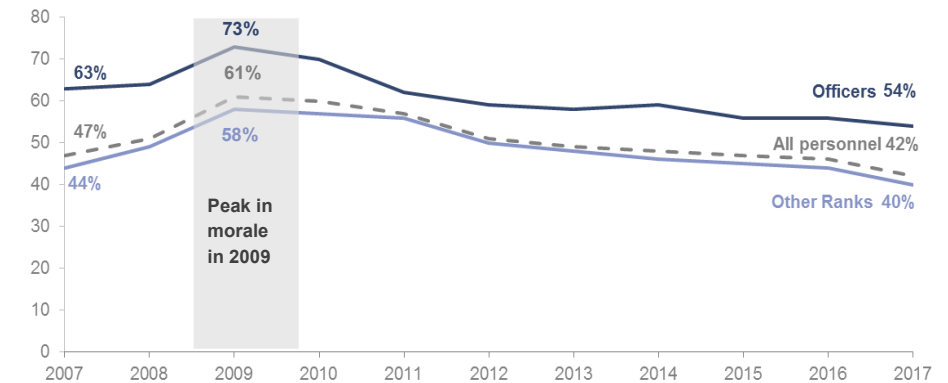
## Morale in 2017



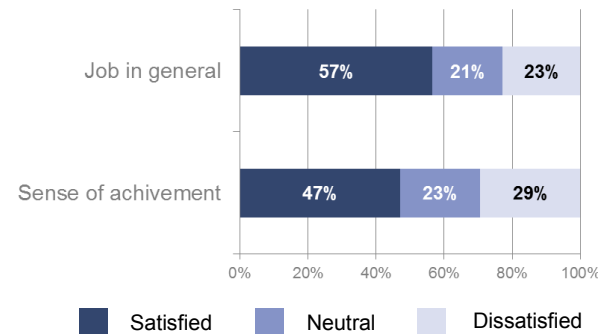
The proportion of personnel who perceive Service morale as being low has increased since 2016, driven by the Army (up 12 percentage points) and changes in the Royal Marines (up 15 percentage points). *More information on the changes in morale observed amongst Royal Marines can be found on page 3.*

## Satisfaction with Service life in general has decreased since 2009, especially for Other Ranks

% personnel satisfied with Service life in general



Satisfaction with Service life has fallen 18 percentage points since the peak of 61% in 2009. Royal Marine Officers continue to be the most satisfied (73%) and Royal Navy Other Ranks are the least satisfied (36%).



57% of personnel are satisfied with their job in general and 47% are satisfied with the sense of achievement they get from their work. This remains unchanged from 2016.



Satisfaction with work location is at its highest level (66%) since this question was asked in 2011 (62%), largely driven by increased satisfaction amongst Army Other Ranks (up four percentage points from 2016 to 64%).

### The proportions of personnel feeling valued and those feeling proud remain unchanged from 2016



A third of all personnel feel valued by their Service\*



Three quarters of all personnel are proud to be in their Service\*\*

■ Agree ■ Neutral ■ Disagree

Officers (89%) are more likely to say that they are proud to be in their Service than Other Ranks (71%).

### There has been a two percentage point increase from 2016 in the proportion of personnel who agree that their family is proud of them serving in the Armed Forces

Almost 9 in 10 are in agreement



Just under half (43%) of personnel would recommend joining the Service to others, with Officers (58%) more likely to recommend joining than Other Ranks (39%). More RAF Officers agree with this statement this year. However, both Royal Marine and Army Other Ranks saw falls in agreement.

#### Data Quality Note

\*Prior to 2015 this question was 'I feel proud to be in the Service', changed to 'I am proud to be in the Service'.

\*\*Prior to 2015 this question was 'I feel valued by the Service', changed to 'I am valued by the Service'.

### Engagement Index

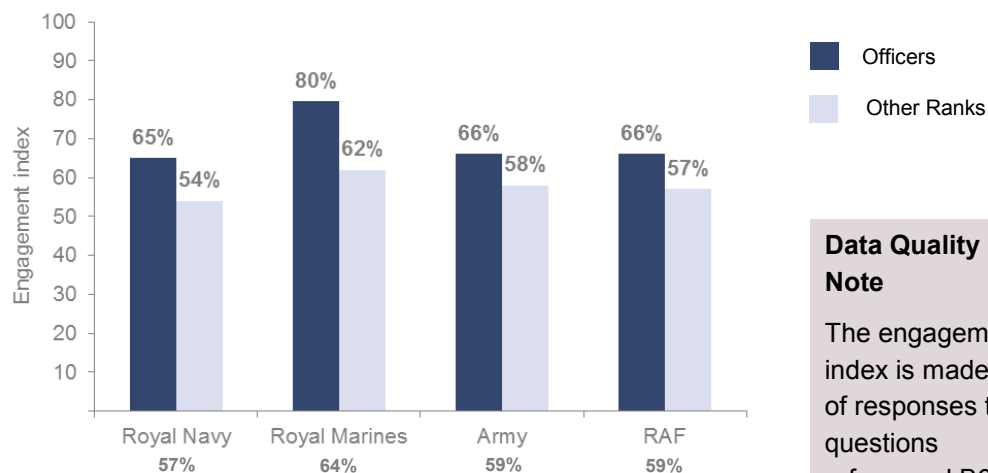
The overall engagement index is 59%, a similar level to 2016.

Officers (66%) remain more engaged than Other Ranks (57%).

Despite the changes in satisfaction observed amongst the Royal Marines this year, this Service has an overall higher engagement score than the other Services. As in previous years, the Royal Navy has the lowest.

With an engagement index of 80%, Royal Marine Officers are more engaged than Officers from the remaining Services. Similarly, Royal Marine Other Ranks are the most engaged with an index of 62%.

### Engagement Index by Service and Rank



#### Data Quality Note

The engagement index is made up of responses to questions referenced B6.3, B6.5, B6.6, B6.8 and B6.9<sup>1</sup>

It was calculated using the same method as that used in the Civil Service People Survey<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following?

**B6.3** I am proud to be in the [Service]. [A031]

**B6.5** I would recommend joining the [Service] to others. [A033]

**B6.6** I feel a strong personal attachment to the [Service]. [A331]

**B6.8** The [Service] inspires me to do the best in my job. [A332]

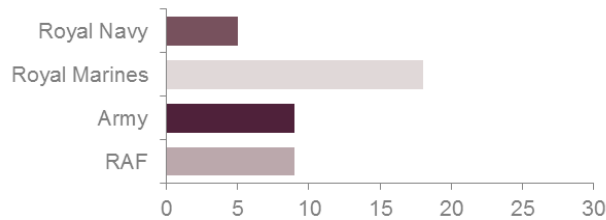
**B6.9** The [Service] motivates me to help it achieve its objectives. [A333]

<sup>2</sup> [Civil Service People Survey 2015 Technical Guide](#)

**In 2017 the Royal Marines have seen large decreases in morale and satisfaction with Service**

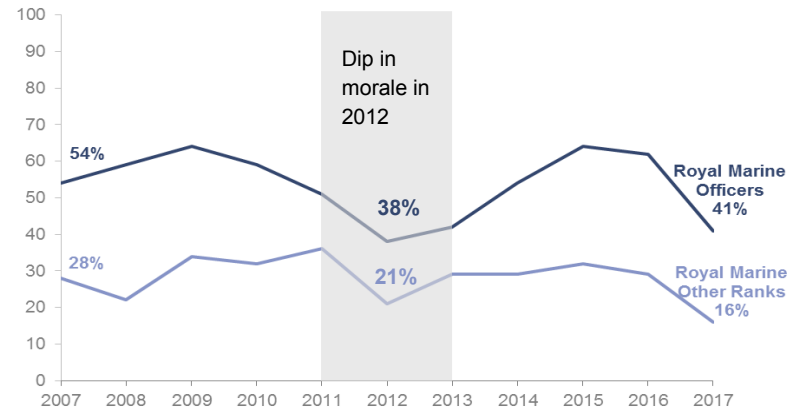
*This section highlights some of the changes in morale and Service life observed amongst Royal Marines.*

**Despite a decrease in the proportion of Royal Marines who rate Service morale as high, this Service has the largest proportion rating morale as high overall (18%)**



The proportion of Royal Marine Officers who rate Service morale as high has decreased 20 percentage points from 2016 to 41%. The proportion of Royal Marine Other Ranks who rate Service morale as high decreased 13 percentage points from 2016 to 16%.

% of Royal Marines rating Service morale as high



Self morale and Unit Morale have also fallen for this Service compared to last year. Around a third (32%) of Royal Marine Other Ranks rate self morale as low (up from 24%) and almost half (47%) rate Unit morale as low (up from 32%).

**44% of Royal Marines are satisfied with Service life in general, which is now similar to all other Services (RAF: 43%, Army: 42%, Royal Navy: 40%)**

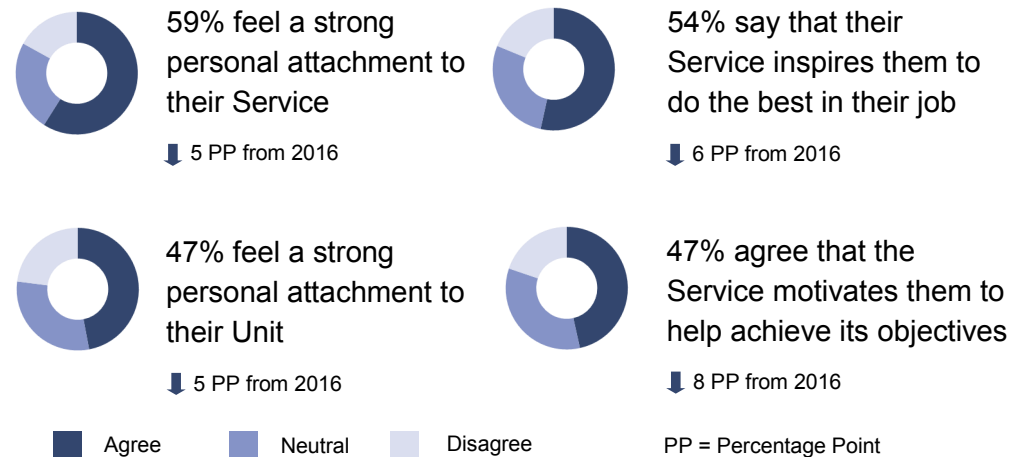
Almost three quarters (73%) of Royal Marine Officers are satisfied with Service life in general. However, satisfaction has fallen 11 percentage points over the last year for Royal Marine Other Ranks to 40%.

**Royal Marine Other Ranks have decreased satisfaction with many aspects of work compared to 2016 whilst other Services remain unchanged**

Satisfaction with:

- My job in general ↓ 7 percentage points to 44%
- Sense of achievement ↓ 5 percentage points to 37%
- The challenge in my job ↓ 3 percentage points to 42%
- The amount of variety in my work ↓ 5 percentage points to 39%

**Fewer Royal Marine Other Ranks agree that they have a strong personal attachment to their Service and Unit compared to last year**



## Section 2 - Work and Line Management

Section 2 focuses on Service personnel's own work, their equipment, line management and teamwork.

### Attitudes to work remain largely unchanged except for Royal Marine Other Ranks who are less satisfied with many aspects of work compared to a year ago

Over the last few years, attitudes amongst the RAF have changed slightly. The proportion of RAF personnel who agree that people do not automatically look for someone to blame when things go wrong has risen from 33% in 2008 to 41% in 2017.

### Opinions about immediate superiors are largely unchanged from 2016

Three-quarters of all personnel say that their immediate superiors support them in their job



Two-thirds say that they are encouraged to develop their skills



Over two-thirds say that their immediate superiors set a positive example

Two-thirds personnel agree that their immediate superior understands and represents their interests

■ Agree ■ Neutral ■ Disagree

These figures are largely unchanged over the last five years.

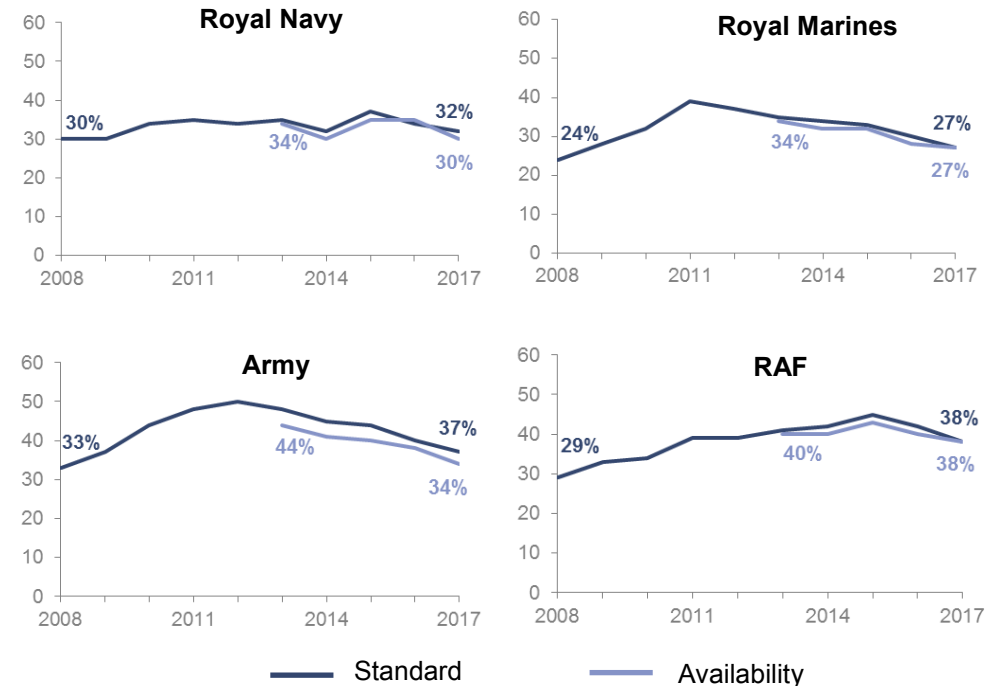
Over a third of personnel (68%) agree that their immediate superior is supportive over work/life balance issues. This proportion has been increasing since 2013 (63%).

### Working with others

Attitudes towards team members remain highly positive overall and have remained largely unchanged. Over three-quarters (79%) of personnel say that their team know exactly what their responsibilities are, and that their team can be relied upon to help when things get difficult in their job (78%).

### Satisfaction with major equipment has declined since 2015

% satisfied with the standard and availability of major equipment



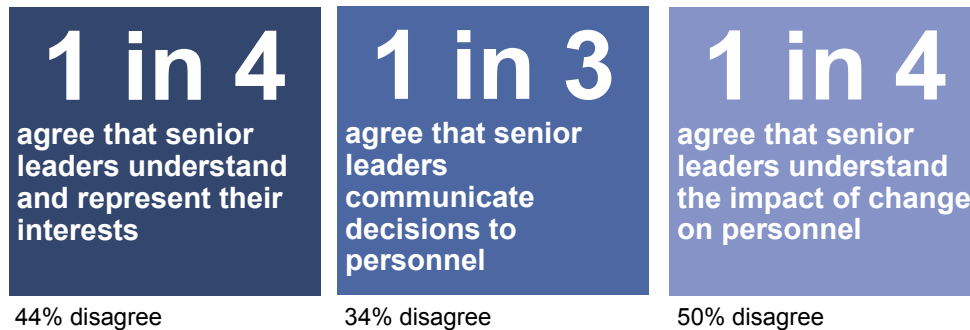
Overall, around a third of Service personnel are currently satisfied with the standard (36%) and availability (34%) of major equipment.

53% of all Service personnel are satisfied with the standard of their personal equipment/kit; 44% are satisfied with the availability.

Officers are more satisfied with the standard (68%) and availability (57%) of personal equipment/kit compared to Other Ranks (50% and 41% respectively).

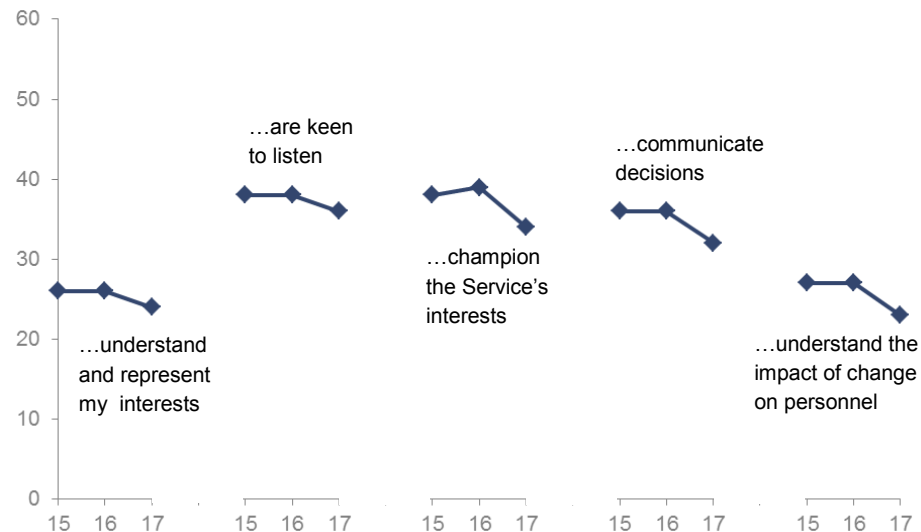
## Section 3 - Leadership and Managing Change

Section 3 focuses on the views of personnel about their senior leaders, and about how change is managed.



### Most personnel are less satisfied with their senior leaders than two years ago

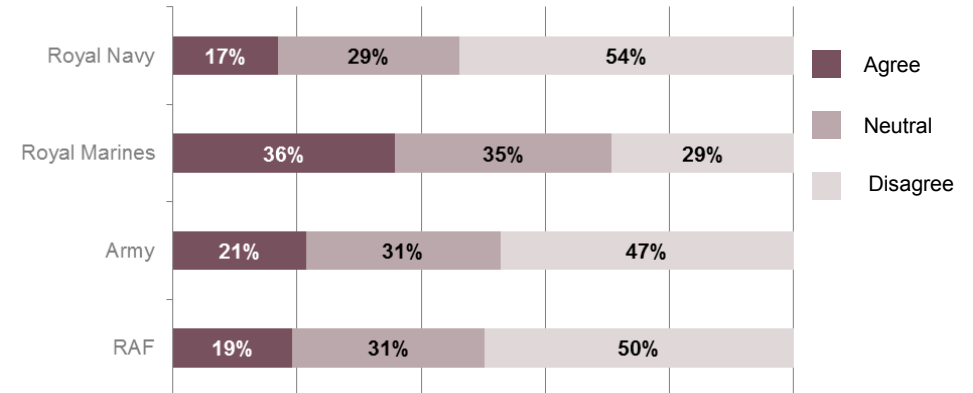
% personnel that are satisfied their Senior leaders...



However, satisfaction amongst Royal Navy personnel has either remained stable or returned to 2015 levels.

### The Royal Marines are the most satisfied with how well change is managed in their Service, the Royal Navy are least satisfied

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



However, Royal Marines have seen a ten percentage point fall over the last year in agreement with how well change is managed in their Service. Army and RAF personnel have also seen a decline in agreement.

On managing change in teams, the largest changes are amongst Army personnel. The proportion of Army Officers who say that change is managed well in their teams fell from 76% in 2011 to 62% in 2017, and in Other Ranks from 65% in 2011 to 50% this year.

### Service personnel are less likely to agree that change is managed well compared to 2013

PP = Percentage Point



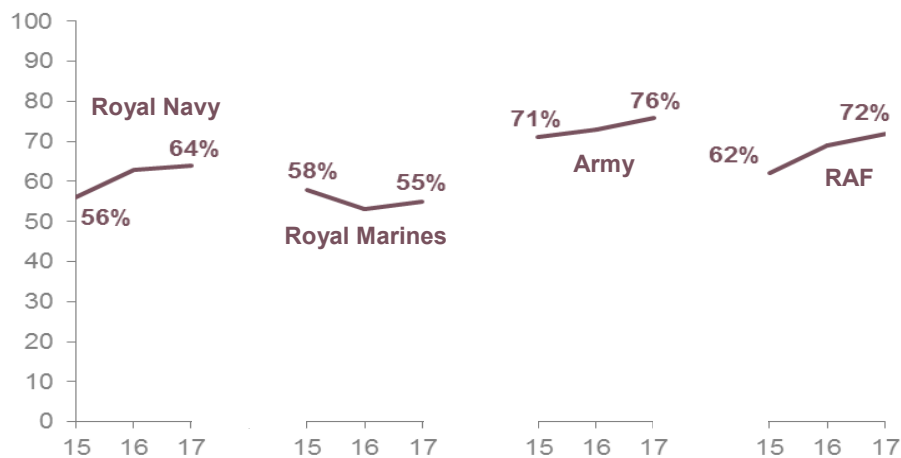
## Section 4 - Working with Others

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

### The level of working contact with Armed Forces Reserves remains unchanged since 2015 at 51%

Officers are much more likely to have working contact with Reserves in comparison to Other Ranks (72% and 47% respectively). Officers have also experienced an increase in working contact with Reserves since 2015 (up from 65% in 2015).

% Officers with working contact with Reserves in the last two years



### Of those who have had working contact, around two thirds (63%) rate the contribution of Reserves as valuable; just over half (53%) state that Reserves are well integrated

The RAF are more positive about the contribution Reserves make than the other Services, with 76% describing this as valuable, compared to the Royal Navy (70%), Army personnel (56%) and Royal Marines (54%).

1. [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/210470/Cm8655-web\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/210470/Cm8655-web_FINAL.pdf)

### More than half of personnel (58%) have had working contact with MOD Civil Servants, an increase of five percentage points since 2015

Similar to Reserves, Officers (82%) are more likely to have working contact with MOD Civil Servants compared to Other Ranks (53%).

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

**76%** rate the contribution of MOD Civil Servants as valuable.

**74%** rate the MOD Civil Servants as professional.

Royal Marines are less likely to rate MOD Civil Servants as professional, valuable and well integrated compared to the other Services.

### Working contact with MOD contractors has increased in the last year (up two percentage points to 55%)

Of those who have had working contact with MOD contractors, there have been decreases since 2015 in the proportions who rate MOD contractors as:

- Valuable ↓ 7 percentage points to 62%
- Well integrated ↓ 6 percentage points to 48%
- Professional ↓ 6 percentage points to 58%

These changes are largely driven by Army personnel, who have seen a drop of 10 percentage points in how valuable, well integrated and professional they view working with MOD contractors since 2015.

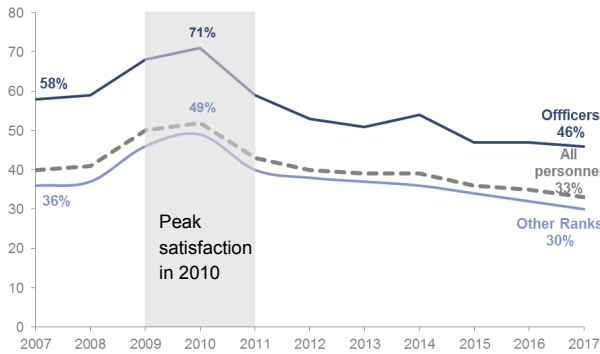


# Section 5 - Allowances, Pay and JPA

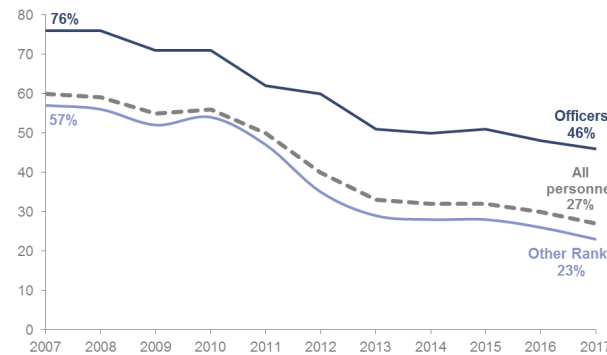
Section 5 covers on the attitudes of Service personnel towards their pay, pension and allowances, as well as satisfaction with access to the Joint Personnel Administration System (JPA).

## Satisfaction with basic rate of pay and pension benefits are at the lowest levels recorded

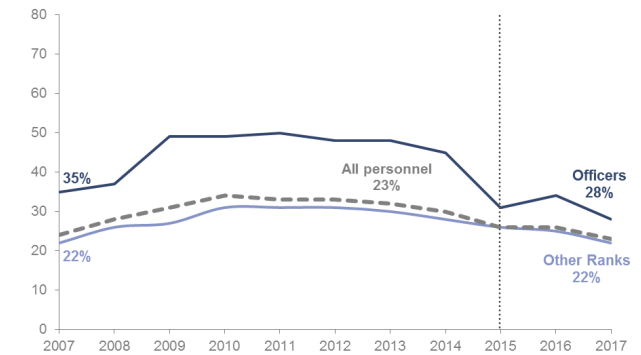
**33%** of personnel are satisfied with their basic rate of pay.



**27%** of personnel are satisfied with their pension benefits.



**23%** of personnel are satisfied with their recruitment and retention

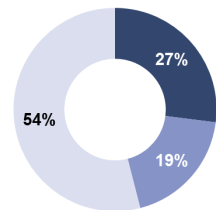


Less than half (43%) of all personnel are satisfied with their allowances.

Officers (28%) remain more satisfied than Other Ranks (22%) with recruitment and retention pay (RRP). However, satisfaction with RRP amongst RAF Officers fell from 39% in 2016 to 29% in 2017.

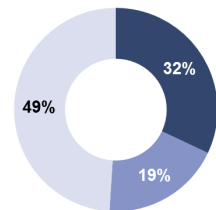
**X-Factor:** Additional payment to Armed Forces personnel to compensate for differences in lifestyle, working conditions and expectations compared to civilian equivalents.

**Data Quality Note**  
Caution is advised when comparing the latest results for RRP to previous years. Until 2014, RRP was called 'Specialist pay'.



**Just over a quarter of personnel agree the X-Factor is enough compensation**

Over half disagree that the X-factor in their salary is enough. Royal Marines are the least satisfied of all Services (19% agree).



**Around a third of personnel agree that the pay and benefits they receive are fair for the work they do**

Officers (42%) tend to agree more than Other Ranks (30%).

■ Agree ■ Neutral ■ Disagree

In April 2016, the MOD introduced Pay 16, the new model for Armed Forces pay which may have influenced the views of personnel regarding their pay and benefits. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/armed-forces-pay-reform-explained>  
Details on Armed Forces pay and allowances are available in the Armed Forces Pay Review Body 46th report. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/armed-forces-pay-review-body-forty-sixth-report-2017>

The new Armed Forces Pension Scheme was introduced on 1 April 2015. <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/armed-forces-pension-scheme-2015>

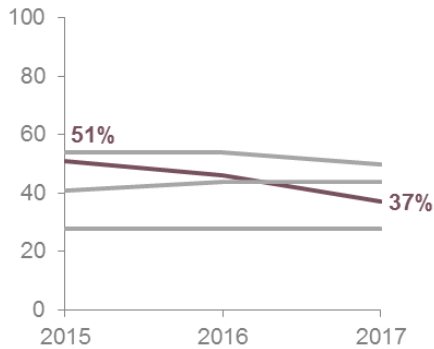
## Section 6 - Deployment

Section 6 covers respondents' satisfaction with various aspects of their operational deployments. The section focuses only on those who have been deployed at any time since 1 January 2014.

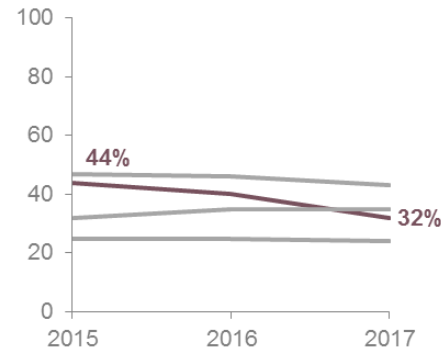
### Satisfaction with aspects of post operational deployment has declined in the last two years

The Army are the most satisfied with aspects of post operational deployment compared to the other Services. However, satisfaction with some of these aspects have decreased this year. The Royal Navy are the least satisfied compared to other Services. Satisfaction amongst Royal Marines has declined.

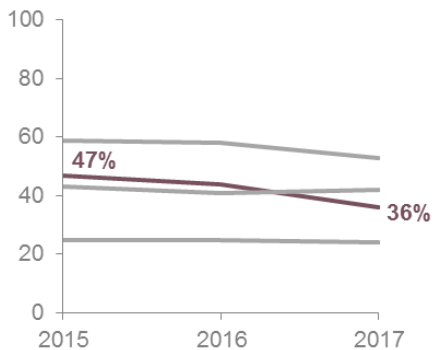
% satisfied with welfare support after deployment



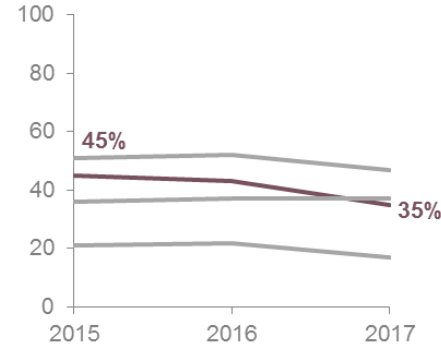
% satisfied with welfare support family, partner and/or parents receive after deployment



% satisfied with decompression and post operational tour support



% satisfied with Post Operational Stress Management

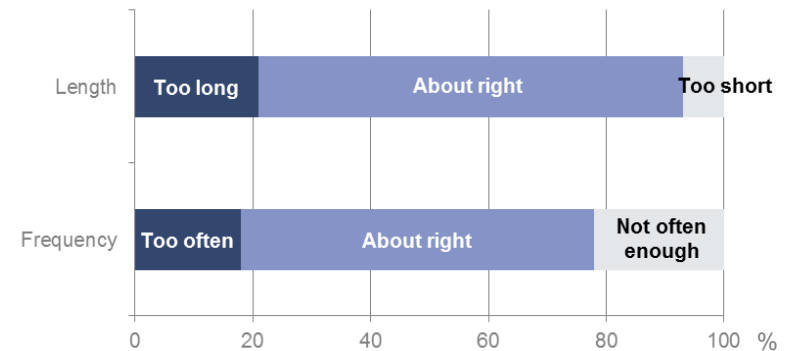


— Royal Marines — Other Services

The nature of deployment has shifted in 2017 particularly for the Army where 46% of Officers and 25% of Other Ranks deployed individually rather than as a Unit, compared to 32% and 18% respectively in 2016.

RAF Officers also saw an increase in deployment as individuals. Less than half (46%) of RAF Officers are satisfied with their Operational allowances, down 17 percentage points from 63% in 2016.

### The majority of personnel are satisfied with the frequency and length of their operational deployments



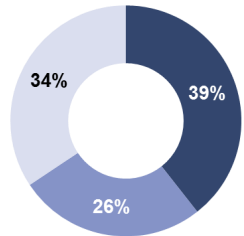
The proportion of personnel who state that the length of their operational deployments are too long has increased two percentage points since 2016 to 21%.

There has been a six percentage point increase from 2016 in the proportion of Army personnel who think their deployments are not often enough (34%).

## Section 7 - Training, Development and Career

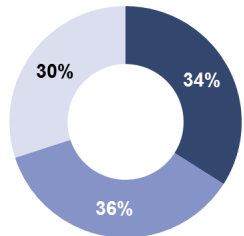
Section 7 looks at respondents' satisfaction with various aspects of their career, training and development, including questions about the promotion system, career management, and the notice received before the last assignment.

### There are slight decreases from 2016 in satisfaction with career management



39% of personnel are satisfied with the way their career is managed down from 42% in 2016.

34% are dissatisfied.



34% of personnel are satisfied with the career management service provided down from 36% in 2016.

30% are dissatisfied.

■ Satisfied   ■ Neutral   ■ Dissatisfied

The Royal Marines are less satisfied this year with how their career is being managed (down seven percentage points to 38%) and the career management service provided (down five percentage points to 37%). RAF are the least satisfied with the way their career is managed (33%) and the career management service provided (26%).

Just over half (54%) of all personnel are satisfied with the timing of training they received to carry out their current role. Satisfaction has decreased three percentage points from 2016.



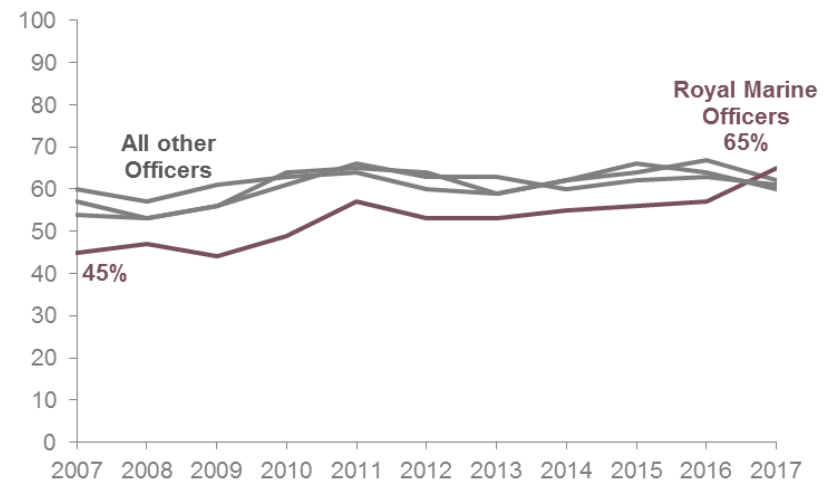
### The majority of personnel (86%) agree that they have the knowledge, skill and experience to do their job

RAF personnel are most likely to agree with this statement (89%). Fewer personnel overall agree that their knowledge, skill and experience are being used in their current assignment (71%, down from 73% in 2016). This change is driven by Officers and Royal Marine and RAF Other Ranks.

### Over half of personnel (57%) are satisfied that they are doing the job for which they were trained

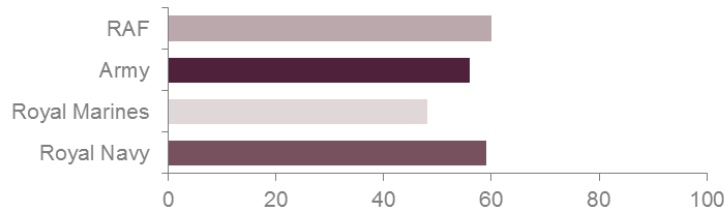
Royal Marine Officers are now more satisfied than 10 years ago (up 20 percentage points)

% Royal Marine Officers satisfied that they are doing the job for which they were trained

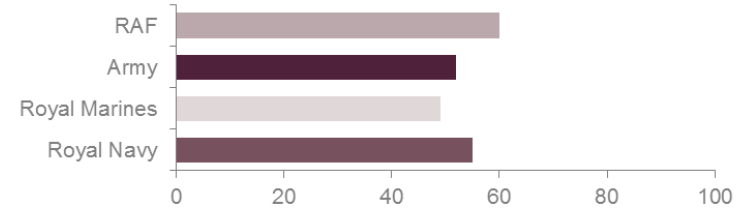


**Over half of personnel are satisfied with the opportunities for professional (57%) and personal development (54%)**

**Professional**



**Personal**

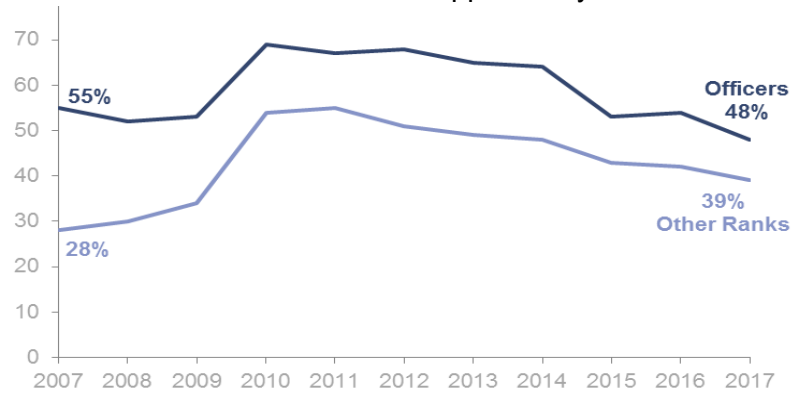


Satisfaction with opportunities for professional development remains unchanged from 2016; satisfaction with personal development has decreased from 57% in 2016.

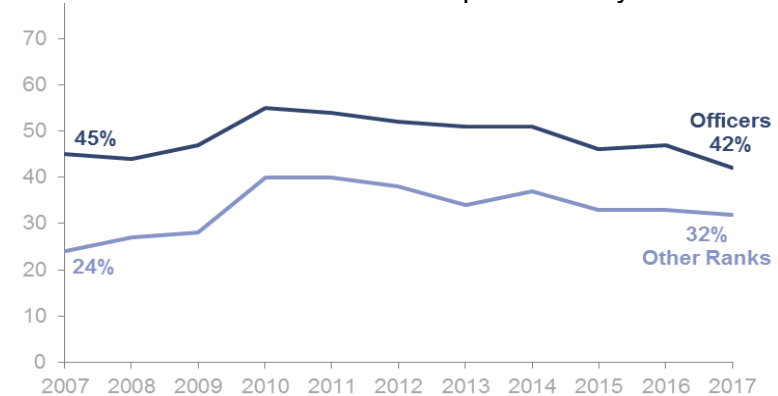
One in five (20%) are dissatisfied with their opportunities for professional development and around one in four (23%) are dissatisfied with the opportunities for personal development.

**Satisfaction with the fairness of appraisal and promotion systems has been decreasing since 2010**

% satisfied with the fairness of the appraisal system



% satisfied with the fairness of the promotion system



More personnel are dissatisfied with the fairness of the appraisal system compared to last year, excluding the Royal Navy.

Officers (48%) continue to be more satisfied with the fairness of the appraisal system than Other Ranks (39%).

Changes with Officers are largely driven by the Army; 49% are satisfied with the fairness of the appraisal system, down from 57% in 2016.

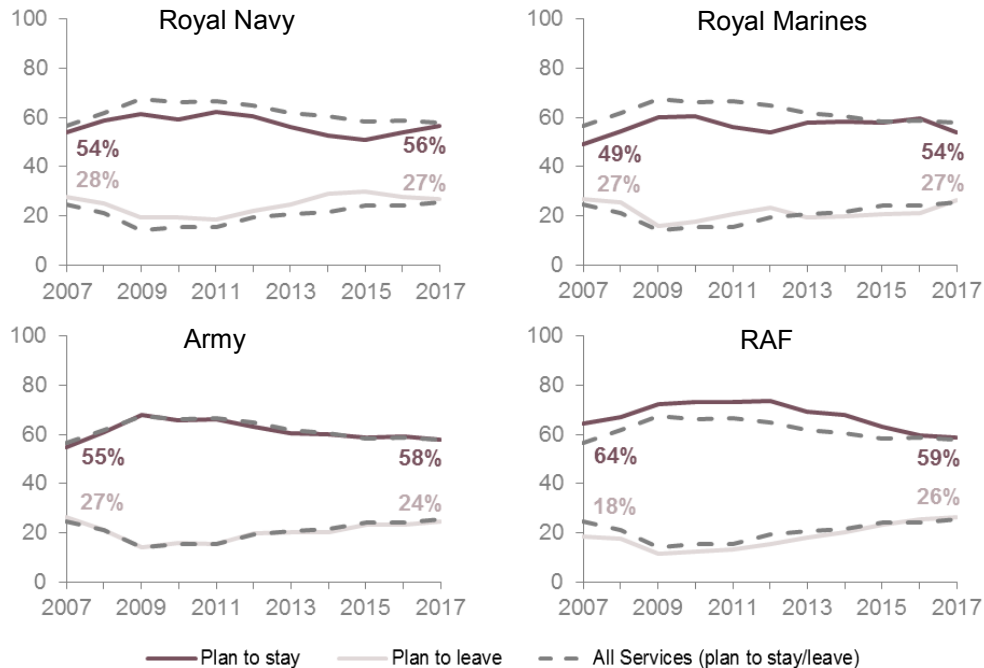
The proportion of Officers who are satisfied with the fairness of the promotion system has decreased this year, largely driven by changes in the Army (down eight percentage points to 47%) and RAF (down five percentage points to 29%).

Overall, the RAF are least satisfied with the fairness of the appraisal (30%) and promotion (22%) systems when compared to other Services.

## Section 8 - Future Plans

Section 8 focuses on personnel's plans to leave the Services, whether they would join the Volunteer Reserves, and what influences their intentions to stay or leave.

**The majority of personnel (58%) say that they plan to stay in their Service for as long as they can or until the end of their current engagement/commission**



A quarter of personnel (25%) say they intend to leave before the end of their current engagement or commission, which includes 7% intending to leave as soon as they can and 4% who have already put in their notice to leave.

These figures are largely unchanged since 2016, except for the Royal Marines where the proportion who say they want to stay serving for as long as they can has fallen from 39% to 33%.

### Data Quality Note

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

**Two in five (40%) personnel have very or quite actively searched for a job outside the Service in the last 12 months, the same proportion as 2016**

There has been an increase in the proportion of Royal Marine Other Ranks who say they have actively searched for a job outside the Service in the last 12 months from 36% in 2016 to 44% in 2017

Other Ranks (14%) are more likely to have very actively searched for a job outside the Services in the last 12 months compared to Officers (9%).

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

**Similar to last year, just under one in five (19%) would consider joining the Reserves full-time and over a quarter (28%) part-time**

Officers are more likely to consider joining both full-time (23%) and part-time (39%) than Other Ranks (18% and 25% respectively).

RAF Officers are most likely to consider joining the Volunteer Reserves full-time (30%) compared to Officers in the other Services.

## Factors influencing intention to leave/stay



### The proportion of personnel citing job security as an intention to stay has steadily increased from 63% in 2013

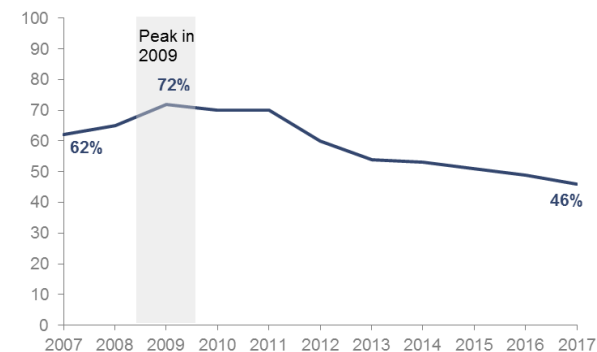
Both Officers (up ten percentage points to 44%) and Other Ranks (up four percentage points to 47%) have seen increases in the proportion citing that financial incentives influence intentions to stay in the Service.

Almost half (46%) of personnel say that Service morale increases their intentions to leave. There has been an increase in the proportion citing self morale as influencing intentions to leave (from 40% in 2016 to 43%).

## Pension is no longer cited in the top reasons increasing intentions to stay

Pension has historically been cited as a top 5 reason increasing intentions to stay in the Service.

Since 2009 there has been a 27 percentage point decrease in the proportion of personnel citing this as an intention to stay. Changes this year are largely driven by Army Officers and Royal Marine Other Ranks.



The majority of personnel state that having the option to work part-time (63%) or have reduced separated Service (61%) has no effect on their intentions to stay or leave.

### Personnel who have decided to leave continue to state 'impact of Service life on family and personal life' as the top reason for leaving

Of those who have put their notice in to leave (4%), the most cited reasons for leaving are:

All personnel	%	Officers	%	Other Ranks	%
Impact of Service on family and personal life	54	Impact of Service on family and personal life	56	Impact of Service on family and personal life	54
Current job satisfaction	43	Opportunities outside the Service	41	Current job satisfaction	49
Opportunities outside the Service	40	My morale	32	Opportunities outside the Service	39
My morale	31	Promotion prospects	29	Amount of pay	35
Amount of pay	30	Current job satisfaction	22	My morale	31

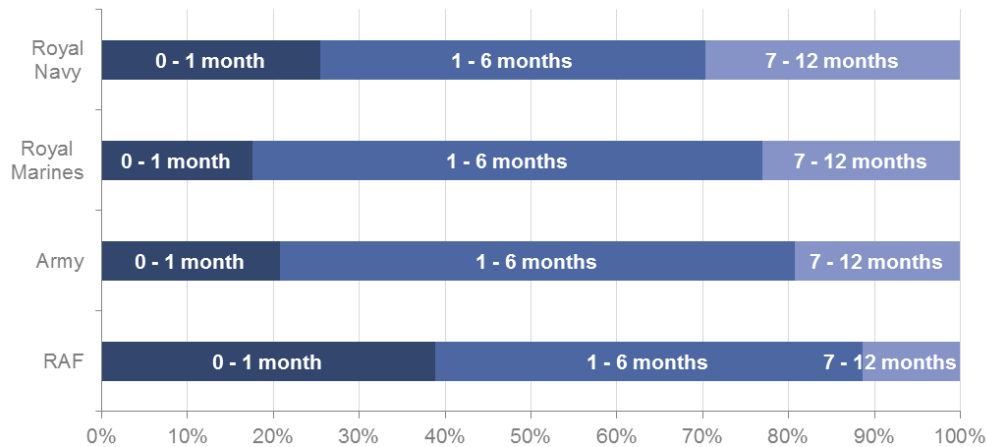
## Section 9 - Work/Life Balance

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

### Time spent away from family for Service reasons remains unchanged for most personnel

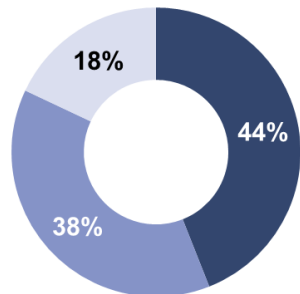
The proportion of Royal Navy personnel spending more than four months away has increased from 49% in 2016 to 56% in 2017.

% time spent away from family for Service reasons\*



#### Data Quality Note\*

'Not Applicable' responses are excluded from the charts.



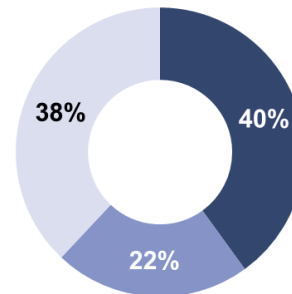
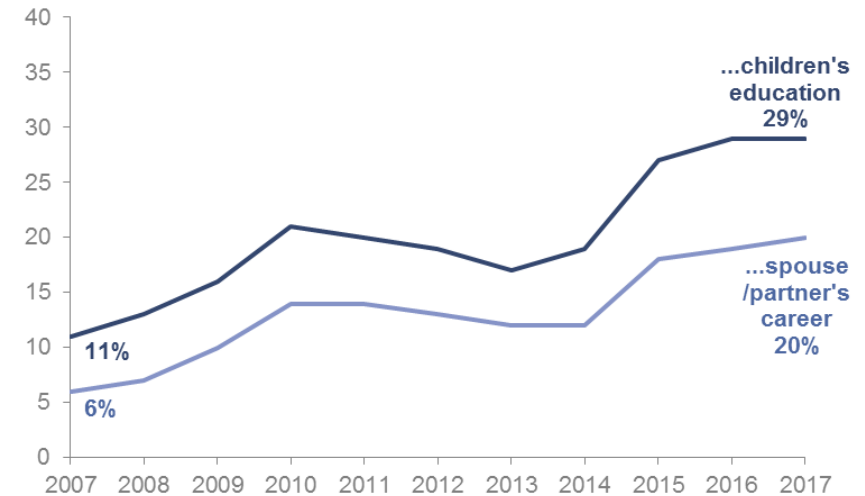
**Under half of personnel are satisfied with the amount of time spent away from their usual place of duty**

Satisfaction has increased four percentage points from 2016.

■ Satisfied ■ Neutral ■ Dissatisfied

### Satisfaction with the effect of Service life on children's education and spouse/partner's career has remained unchanged since 2016 following increases seen in previous years

% satisfied with effect of Service life on...

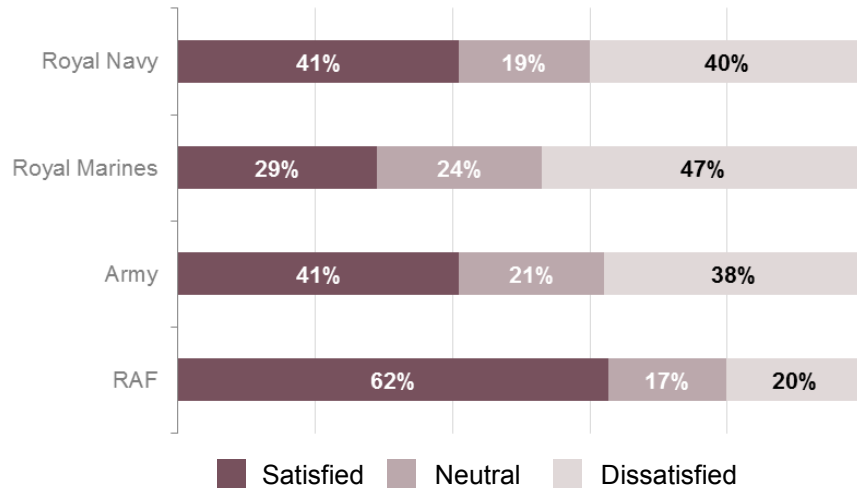


**Two fifths of personnel agree that they are able to maintain a balance between personal and working life**

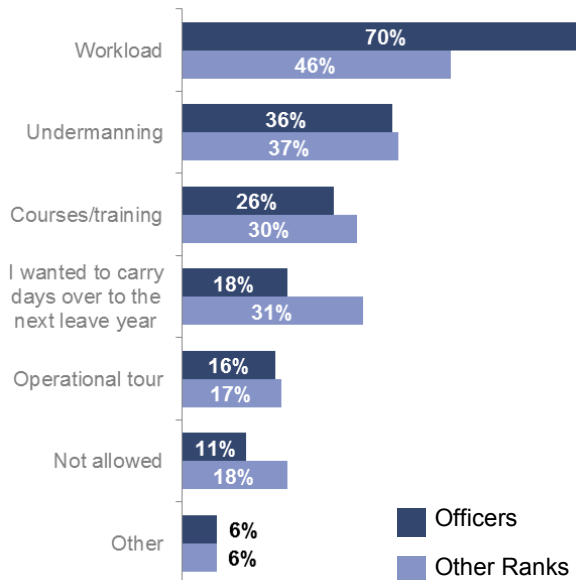
Since 2015 the proportion of those who disagree has increased from 33% to 38% in 2017. This is driven by the Royal Navy, Royal Marines and Army. Views of RAF personnel remain largely unchanged.

■ Agree ■ Neutral ■ Disagree

## RAF personnel are more satisfied with their opportunity to take leave when they want compared to the other Services



## Workload is the top reason for both Officers and Other Ranks for not taking all of their annual leave allowance



Other Ranks are more likely than Officers to want to carry days over to the next leave year.

**47% of personnel say their workload is about right and 48% it is too high.**

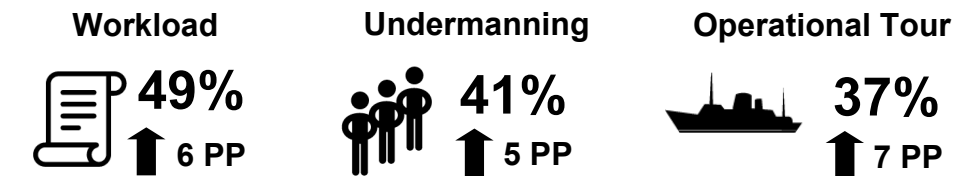
## The proportion satisfied with the amount of leave they were able to take in the past 12 months has remained stable at 61%

There has been a decrease in satisfaction with various leave aspects amongst Royal Navy Other Ranks

PP = Percentage Point



The proportion of Royal Navy Other Ranks selecting the following as reasons they did not take all of their leave has increased over the last 12 months:



Although there has been an increase in Royal Navy Other Ranks not taking their leave due to workload and undermanning; manpower figures have remained relatively stable since 2016<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup><https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/royal-navy-and-royal-marines-monthly-personnel-statistics-2017>

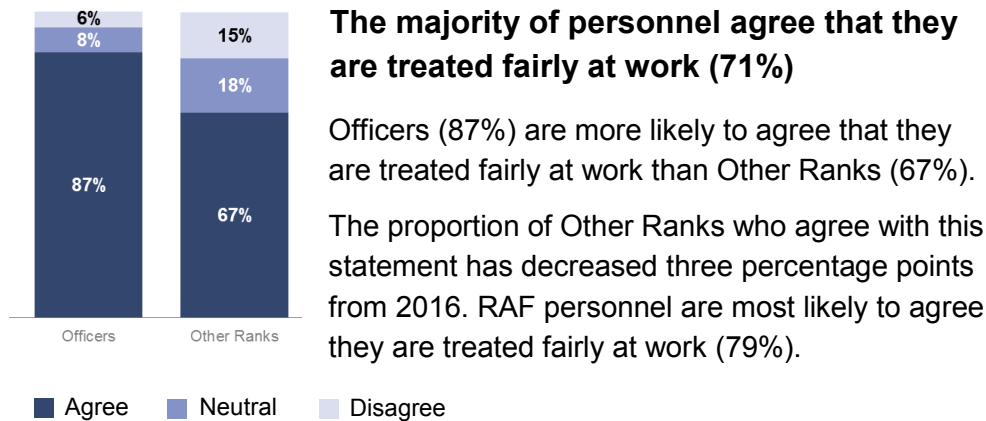
A text box option was provided for those selecting 'other' as the reason for not taking all of their annual leave allowance. Some of the more common reasons provided were:

- Maternity leave
- A Serving partner whose leave wouldn't coincide
- A Civilian partner whose leave wouldn't coincide
- Not enough availability due to new post or role
- Too much leave carried over from previous year
- Sickness



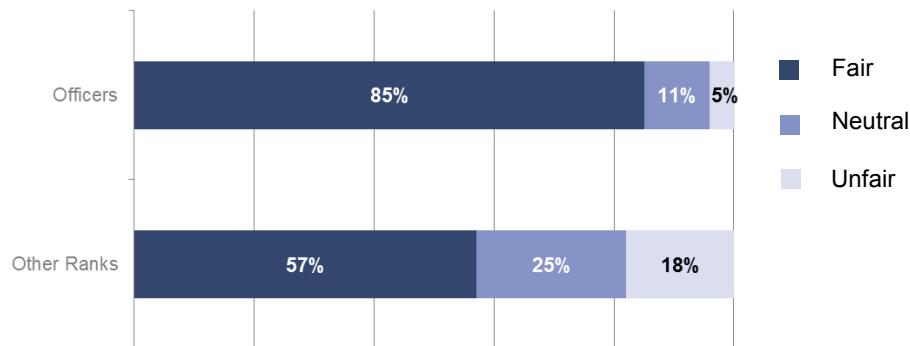
## Section 10 - Fairness at Work

Section 10 covers the views of personnel on fair treatment in their Service, whether they feel they have been subjected to bullying, discrimination or harassment, and their knowledge and experience of Service complaints.



**Officers (85%) across all Services are more likely than Other Ranks (57%) to believe the discipline system is fair**

% satisfaction with the discipline system

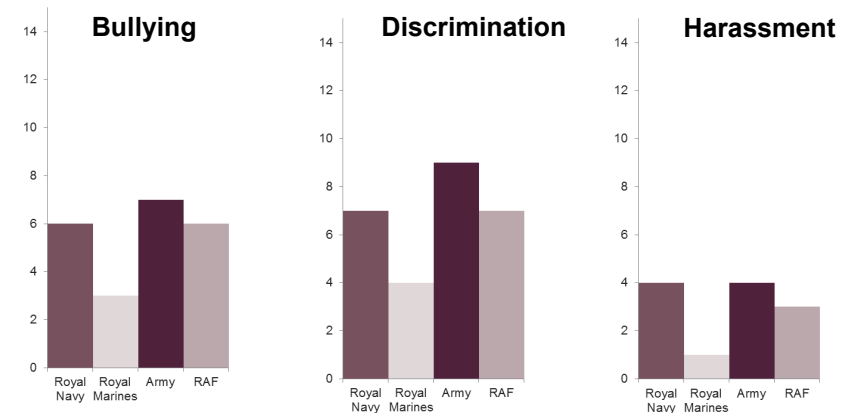


Fewer Royal Marines (63%) and Army personnel (58%) believe that the discipline system is fair compared to 2016 (Royal Marines: 73%; Army: 64%).

Across all Services there has been an increase in the proportion of Other Ranks who think the discipline system is unfair compared to 2016.

**The proportion of personnel reporting that they have been subject to bullying, discrimination or harassment in the last 12 months remains unchanged at just over one in ten (13%)**

% reporting they have been subject to...



**The majority of personnel are fully aware or are aware to some extent of how the Service Complaints Ombudsman can help them with a complaint about bullying, discrimination or harassment**



Of those who experienced bullying, discrimination and/or harassment in the last 12 months, one in ten (10%) have made a formal complaint.

The top three reasons why personnel experiencing bullying, discrimination and/or harassment did **not** make a formal written complaint are:

1. Not believing anything would be done if a complaint was made (59%)
2. Belief that it might adversely affect their career (52%)
3. Worry about recriminations from the perpetrators (32%)

# Section 11 - Health, Fitness and Welfare

Section 11 covers respondents' satisfaction with various aspects of health, fitness and the provision of welfare services, including medical treatment, fitness facilities and welfare support for personnel and their families.

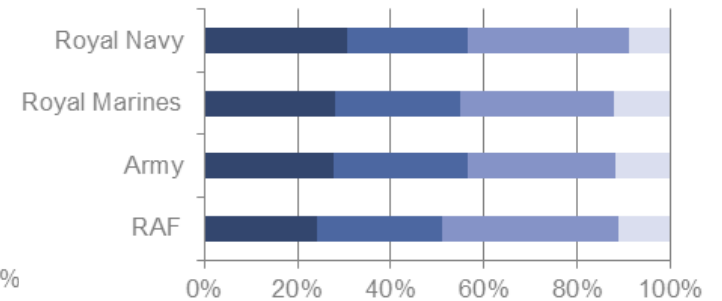
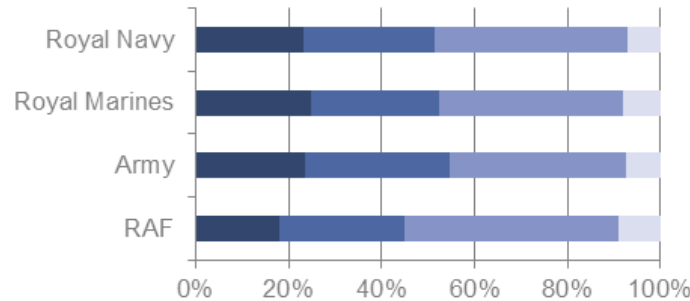
Personnel are asked to respond on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is "not at all" and 10 is "completely". These questions allow people to make an assessment of their life overall, as well as providing an indication of their day-to-day emotions.

The proportion of personnel rating their happiness yesterday as high (9-10) has remained unchanged from 2016, except Royal Navy personnel who have seen a slight increase (from 10% to 12%).

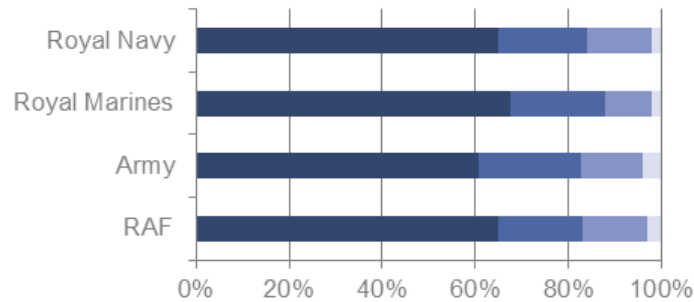
In 2017, Officers are more likely to rate their life satisfaction as 7 or above (62%) compared to Other Ranks (45%). Officers also feel less anxious the previous day and had a greater feeling that the things they do in life are worthwhile.

Royal Marine Officers are the least anxious with 77% rating their anxiety yesterday as 4 or below, with an overall proportion of 66% for Officers.

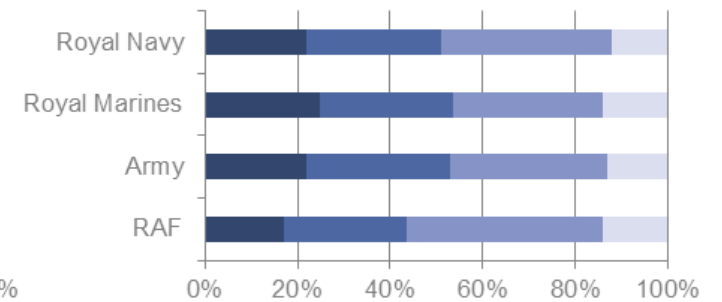
**How satisfied are you with your life nowadays? Overall how happy did you feel yesterday?**



**How anxious did you feel yesterday?\***



**To what extent do you feel the things you do in your life are worthwhile?**



■ Not at all (0) - 4    ■ 5 - 6    ■ 7 - 8    ■ 9 - Completely (10)

\*Note: 0-4 for this chart on anxiety is a 'positive' response

The Office for National Statistics collects data on well-being for the general population in their Annual Population Survey. Average scores are released in their Measuring National Well-being report<sup>1</sup>. The demographic make-up of the Armed Forces is different to the general population; Armed Forces personnel are predominantly male and aged between 18 and 55. Armed Forces well-being scores are therefore not directly comparable to the general population.

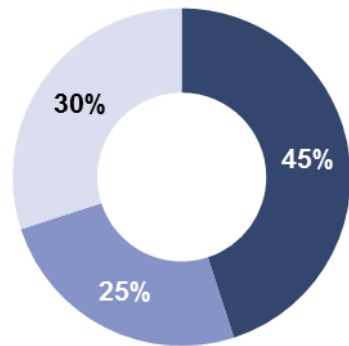
<sup>1</sup><http://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/bulletins/measuringnationalwellbeing/2015-09-23>

## Fitness

**75%** of personnel are satisfied with the Service sport, exercise and fitness facilities in general.

**67%** of personnel are satisfied with the opportunities to undertake fitness activities.

**Under half of personnel (45%) are satisfied with the opportunities to take part in Adventure Training**



There was a reduction in the proportion satisfied with their opportunities for Adventure Training this year in both the Royal Navy (from 45%<sup>r</sup> in 2016 to 41%<sup>r</sup> this year), and the Royal Marines (from 39% in 2016 to 36% in 2017).

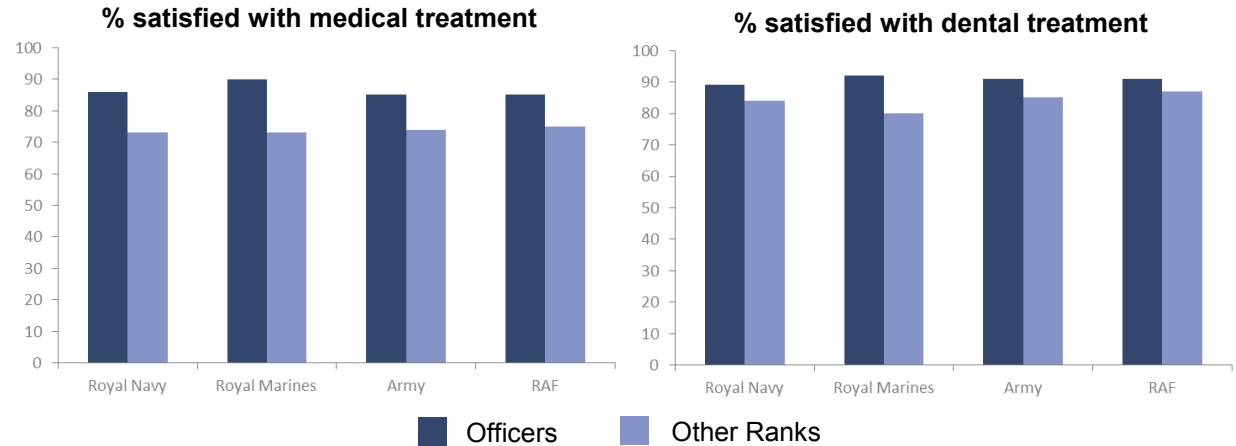
■ Satisfied ■ Neutral ■ Dissatisfied

<sup>r</sup> These figures have been revised.

## Health

The proportion of personnel satisfied with both medical and dental care in terms of access and treatment has not changed from 2016.

Overall Officers are more satisfied than Other Ranks in terms of access and treatment.



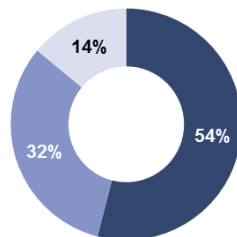
## Welfare

The proportion of personnel satisfied with welfare support provided for themselves (54%) and their families (45%) has stayed consistent compared to last year.

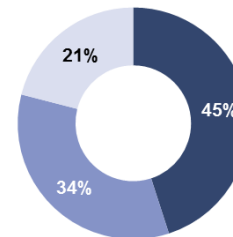
Satisfaction with welfare support provided to families has decreased for the Royal Marines this year, falling from 49% satisfied in 2016 to 44% in 2017. Similarly, this group are less satisfied with the support their spouse/partner gets when they are absent, falling four percentage points to 32% this year.

### Satisfaction with...

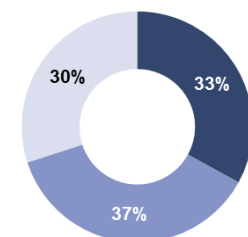
...The welfare support provided to me



...The welfare support provided for my family



...The welfare support my spouse/partner gets when I am absent

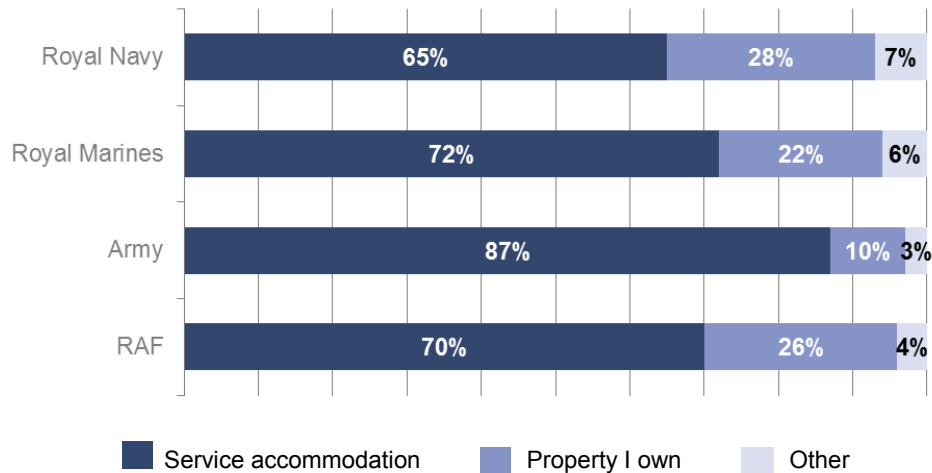


## Section 12 - Accommodation and Catering

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

### Three quarters of personnel (76%) live in Service accommodation during the week

% personnel by accommodation type



39% of personnel live in Single Living Accommodation (SLA) and 33% live in Service Family Accommodation (SFA) during the working week.

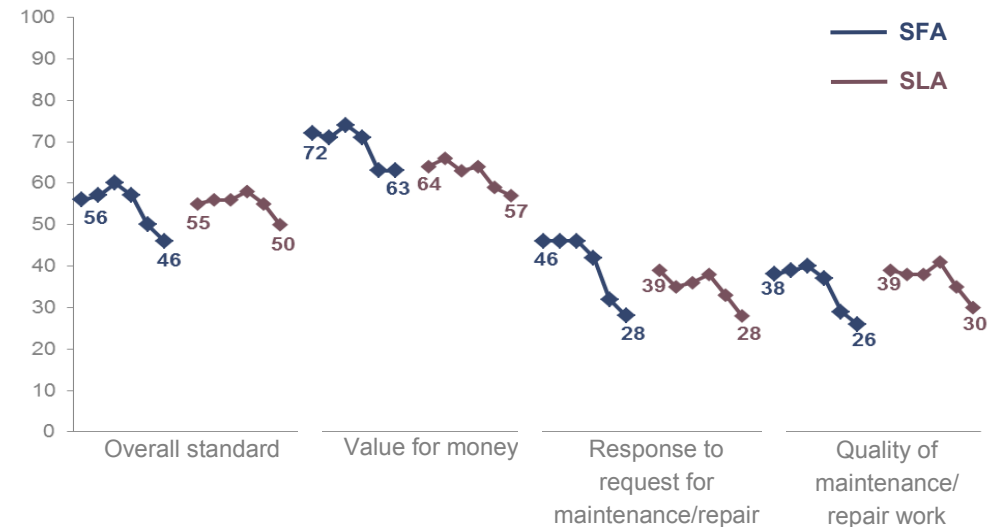
Around a third of RAF (33%) and Royal Navy (29%) personnel live in SLA, compared to 51% in the Royal Marines and 44% in the Army. 14% of Royal Navy personnel live on ships and submarines during the working week.

The Army (39%) and RAF (33%) have the highest proportion of personnel in SFA, compared to the Royal Navy (16%) and Royal Marines (15%).

One in ten (10%) of Army personnel live in their own home during the week, compared to around a quarter in the other Services.

### Satisfaction with overall standard of Service accommodation continues to fall, driven by decreased satisfaction with SLA

% satisfied with different aspects of SFA and SLA, 2012-2017



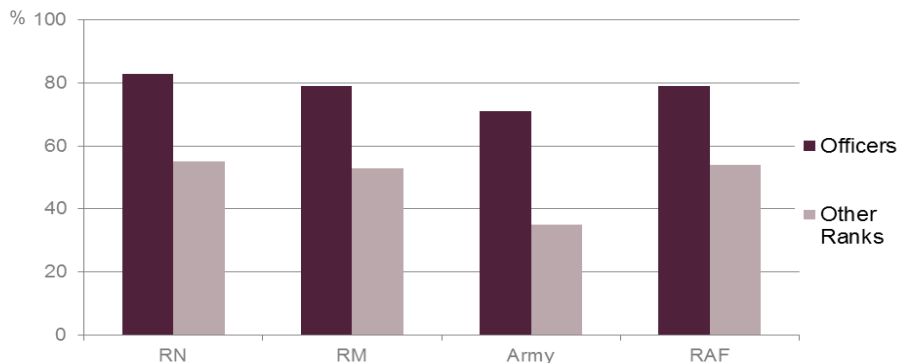
Following a gradual increase in satisfaction since the beginning of AFCAS in 2007, satisfaction with the overall standard of Service accommodation has fallen four percentage points in the past year, with just under half (49%) now reporting that they are satisfied. The Royal Marines remain the least satisfied with their Service accommodation (42%).

In 2017, decreased satisfaction with Service accommodation is driven by changes with SLA, particularly amongst Other Ranks (excluding Royal Navy).

Since 2016, satisfaction with both the response to requests for repairs to Service accommodation, and the quality of repairs, has declined. These are mainly driven by changes in satisfaction amongst Other Ranks, predominantly those living in SLA.

## Half of personnel (49%) report owning their own home, whether they live in it or not

Since 2011 there has been a steady increase in the proportion of Other Ranks who own their own home (43%). Increases this year are observed amongst Royal Marine Other Ranks, with half (49%) now reporting that they own their own home. Army personnel are least likely to own their own home (see chart below).



### Almost a quarter of personnel bought their own home because of the poor standards of SLA or SFA

Overall, nearly half (46%) owning a home are satisfied with the opportunity to live there and a third (34%) are dissatisfied.

In April 2014, the MOD introduced the Forces Help to Buy (FHTB) scheme, under the New Employment Model programme. The scheme offers advances of salary to Service personnel for the purpose of buying a home<sup>1</sup>.

## In 2017, 6% of personnel report using Forces Help to Buy to purchase their own home in the last year



Two in ten (21%) state that they are considering using Forces Help to Buy for a future home purchase.

6% of personnel state that they purchased their home without the use of this or any other Government Affordable Housing scheme. This is down three percentage points from last year,

The numbers of applications and payments made under FHTB are reported in the monthly FHTB Statistics publication<sup>2</sup>.

## Officers (45%) continue to be more satisfied than Other Ranks (27%) with the standard of catering from contractors on their unit

Just under a third of personnel (30%) are satisfied with the standard of catering from contractors on their unit, with more personnel dissatisfied (40%) than last year. When choosing where to eat, personnel rate quality (87%), value for money (72%) and choice (66%) as the top three factors influencing their decision.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/forces-help-to-buy>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/forces-help-to-buy-scheme-monthly-statistics-2017>

### Future Accommodation Model

Following the 2015 Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) the MOD is considering options for how it provides Service personnel with accommodation in the future. The Future Accommodation Model is still at an early stage.

[www.gov.uk/government/collections/mod-future-accommodation-model](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/mod-future-accommodation-model)

### Data Quality Note

Questions on FHTB were not asked prior to 2016, therefore time series comparisons are not possible.

Statistics reported in the FHTB publication are not directly comparable to AFCAS estimates; the AFCAS question is worded generically to cover 'usage' of the scheme rather than any specific stage.

# Section 13 - Family Life and Being Part of Society

Section 13 covers a number of questions relating to respondents' personal lives, such as their marital status and childcare situation. This section also captures the perceptions of Service personnel of their involvement in, and relative advantage or disadvantage when compared to, wider society.

## Family life of Service personnel

**52%** are married and a further **22%** are in long-term relationships

**46%** of spouses/partners are in full-time employment

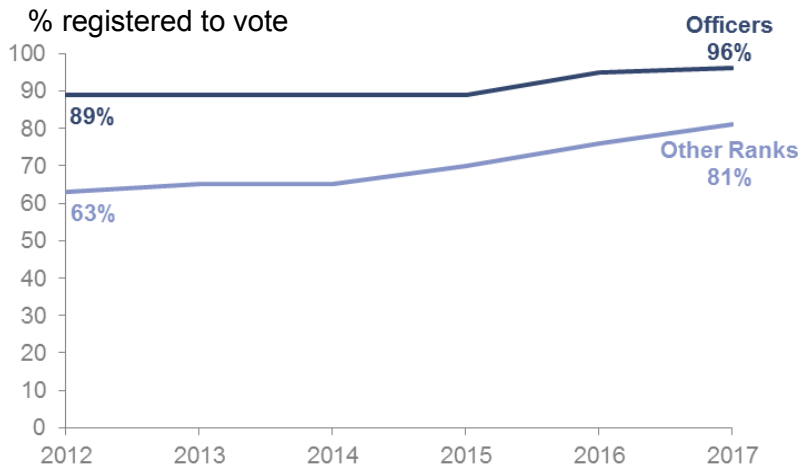
**21%** of spouses/partners are in part-time employment

**50%** have children they support financially

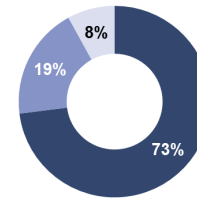
**48%** of those who require childcare are satisfied with locally provided facilities

## The proportion of Service personnel registered to vote has been steadily increasing since 2012

Since 2016 an overall increase of four percentage points has been observed. This was mainly driven by Other Ranks (RAF, Army and Royal Marines) who saw the largest increases.

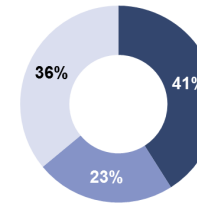


The MOD has been taking a number of steps annually, with assistance from the Electoral Commission, to inform Service personnel of the arrangements for electoral registration which may have influenced recent results.



**Almost three quarters (73%) of personnel feel they offer an important service to the country**

Officers (88%) agree more than Other Ranks (70%).

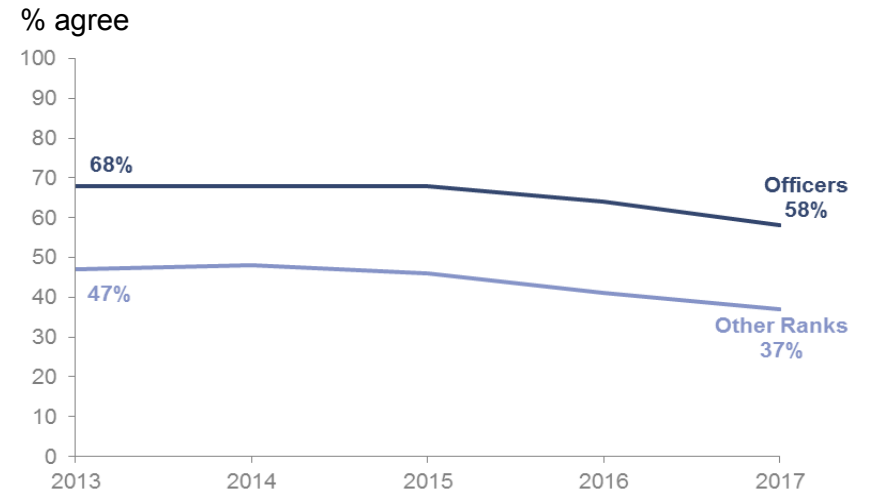


**A fifth (41%) of personnel agree that they are valued by society at large**

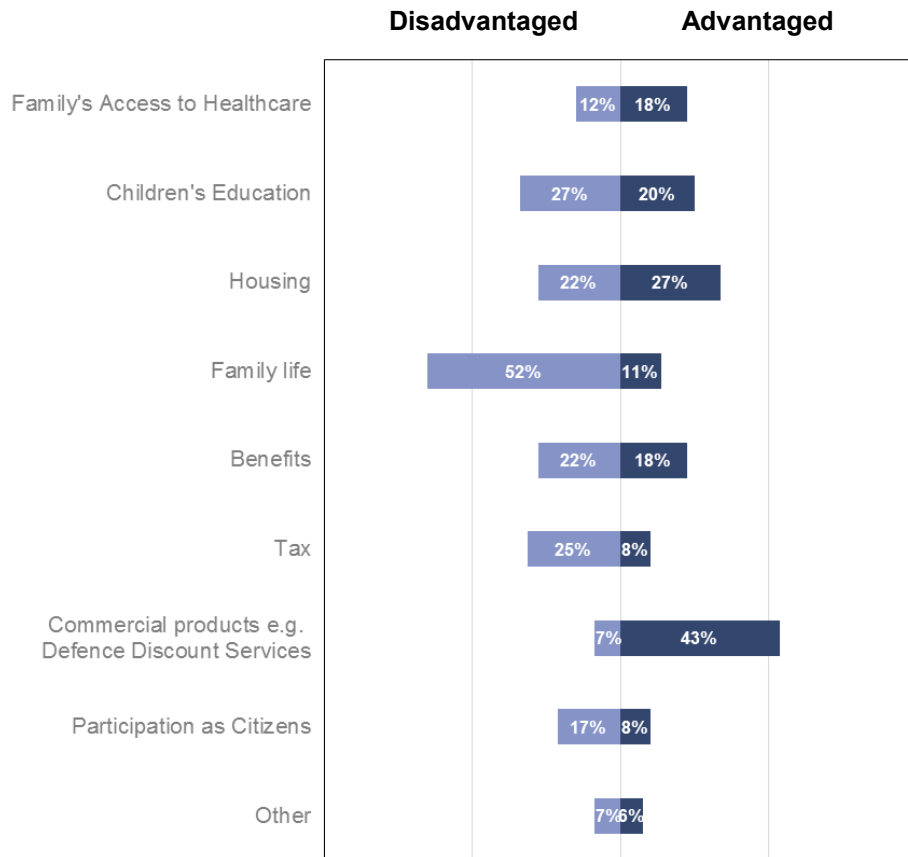
Officers (58%) agree more than Other Ranks (37%).

Legend: Agree (Dark Blue), Neutral (Medium Blue), Disagree (Light Blue)

## Every year since 2014 fewer Service personnel agree that members of the Armed Forces are valued by society at large



**The overall proportion of personnel feeling advantaged or disadvantaged compared to the general public has remained consistent with 2016 in all areas**



Other Ranks are more likely to feel advantaged compared to the general public than Officers in most areas.

Army personnel are more likely than the other Services to consider themselves advantaged compared to the general public in all areas except 'Commercial products, e.g. Defence Discount Services'.

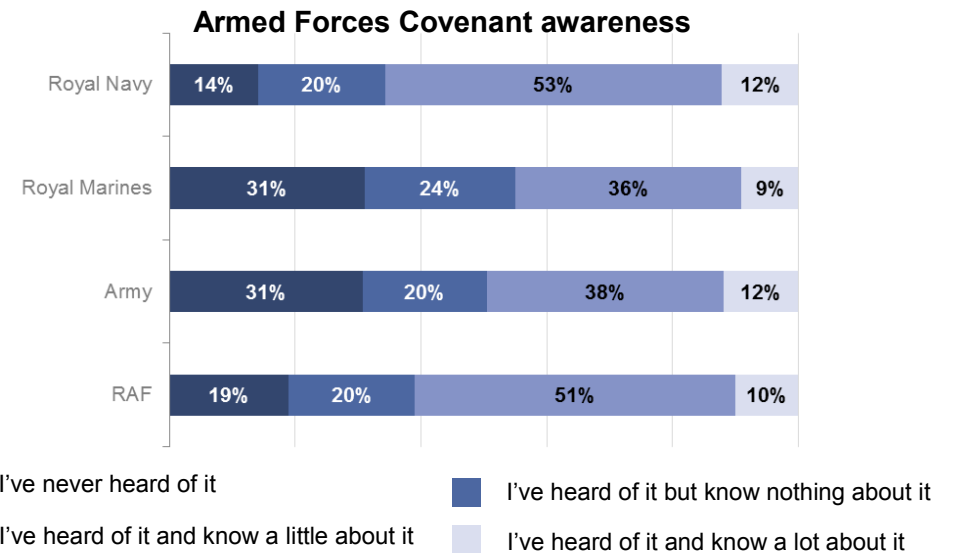
**The Armed Forces Covenant**

The Armed Forces Covenant, announced by the Government in May 2011, sets out how Armed Forces personnel and their families can expect to be treated by the Government and the nation in a number of areas.

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

**The majority of personnel (74%) have heard of the Armed Forces Covenant**

89% of Officers have heard of the Covenant and know a little or a lot about it, compared to 46% of Other Ranks. Only 2% of Officers have never heard of the Covenant compared to 31% of Other Ranks.



**Data Quality Note**

The questions on comparisons to the general public were changed in 2016. The 2015 survey offered two response options (Advantaged/Disadvantaged) and the 2016 survey included a 5-point advantage scale, plus a Don't Know/Not Applicable option. Comparisons to 2015 results are not possible due to this change in question structure.

## Section 14 - Taking Action

Section 14 covers beliefs on whether action has been taken on the results of AFCAS, and asks whether personnel feel the survey is of the right length.

**In 2017, the AFCAS survey achieved an overall response rate of 45%, the same as 2016**

In 2014, a major review of AFCAS resulted in a shorter survey updated to better reflect the current priorities of the MOD. It was hoped that this would result in less burden on respondents and boost response rates.

Since 2015 there has been a decline in the proportion of personnel who agree that effective action has been taken on the results of AFCAS and that leaders will take action on the results of AFCAS.

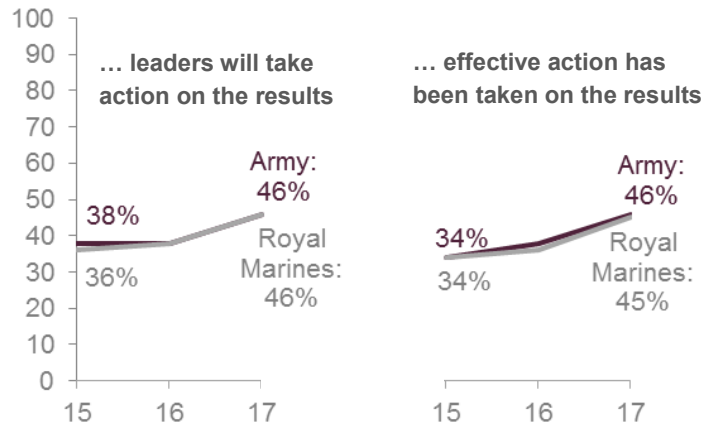
**18%** of personnel agree that effective action has been taken on the results of AFCAS

**22%** believe that leaders in their Service will take action on the results

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

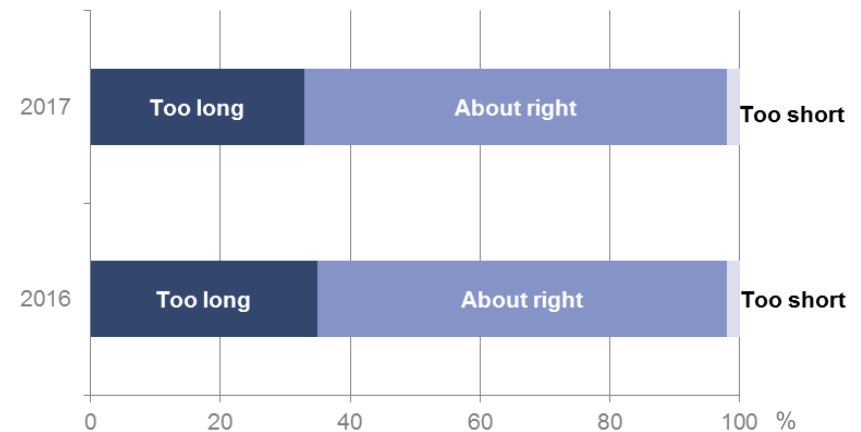
**Changes in agreement are largely driven by a reduction in the proportion of Army and Royal Marine personnel who agree with these statements**

% of Army and Royal Marine personnel who disagree that...



**The majority of personnel (65%) think that the survey length is about right. A third (33%) state that it is too long, which is unchanged from 2015 when the shorter survey was introduced**

The proportion of Royal Navy personnel who say that the survey is too long has decreased four percentage points from 2016 to 30%.



66% of personnel report that they completed the survey in 30 minutes or less.

Other Ranks are more likely than Officers to take longer than 30 minutes to complete the survey.



# Key questions

The following charts highlight the key questions for each section of the AFCAS report. The key questions are presented by Service in the charts with an overall tri-Service figure provided for comparison. Overall differences from last year (2016) are presented, along with the differences from five years ago (2013) for a longer time-series comparison.

A positive change value represents an increase from a previous time period, a negative value represents a decrease.

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

## Key Questions - Morale, Commitment and Engagement

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2016	% Change from 2013
B2.1	How satisfied are you with Service life in general? Positive= % satisfied		42	-1	-7
B2.2	How would you rate your level of morale? Positive= % high		38	-2	↔
B2.3	How would you rate the level of morale of your unit? Positive= % high		19	-3	↔
B2.4	How would you rate the level of morale of the Service as a whole? Positive= % high		9	-3	-3
B2.5	How satisfied are you with your job in general? Positive= % satisfied		57	↔	↔
B7.3	I am proud to be in the Service Positive= % agree		74	↔	-7
B7.4	I am valued by the Service Positive= % agree		33	↔	+5
B7.5	I would recommend joining the Service to others Positive= % agree		43	-2	↔

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

## Key Questions - Work and Line Management

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2016	% Change from 2013
B2.11	I am given sufficient authority to make decisions Positive= % agree		58	↔	N/A
B3.1	The standard of personal equipment/kit I have to do my job Positive= % satisfied		53	↔	↔
B3.3	The standard of major equipment I have to do my job Positive= % satisfied		36	-3	-8
B5.2	My immediate superior supports me in my job Positive= % agree		74	↔	+3
B5.3	My immediate superior sets a positive example Positive= % agree		69	↔	↔
B5.5	My immediate superior is supportive over work/life balance issues Positive= % agree		68	+2	+5
B5.12	I am satisfied with the leadership provided by my immediate supervisor Positive= % satisfied		67	↔	N/A

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

## Key Questions - Leadership and Managing Change

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2016	% Change from 2013
B6.1	Senior leaders of the Service understand and represent my interests Positive= % agree		24	-2	-2
B6.6	I have confidence in the leadership of the Service Positive= % agree		30	-4	N/A
B9.3	Change is managed well in the Service Positive= % agree		21	-4	-7

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

## Key Questions - Working with Others

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2016	% Change from 2013
B8.7	How do you rate the contribution of the Reserves? Positive= % valuable		63	↔	N/A
B8.8	How well integrated into the Service are the Reserves? Positive= % well integrated		53	↔	N/A
B8.9	How do you rate the professionalism of the Reserves? Positive= % professional		66	↔	N/A

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

## Key Questions - Allowances, Pay and JPA

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2016	% Change from 2013
B1.1	The X-Factor in my salary is enough Positive= % agree		27	↔	↔
B1.2	The pay and benefits I receive are fair for the work I do Positive= % agree		32	↔	N/A
B1.4	My rate of basic pay Positive= % satisfied		33	-2	-6
B1.8	My Recruitment and Retention Pay (RRP) Positive= % satisfied		23	-3	-9
B1.5	My pension benefits Positive= % satisfied		27	-3	-6

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

## Key Questions - Deployment

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2016	% Change from 2013
B10.4	Deployment notice in current/last deployment Positive= % satisfied	<p>RN: 60% RM: 50% Army: 65% RAF: 65%</p>	65	↔	N/A
B10.5	Pre-operational/deployment training for current/last deployment Positive= % satisfied	<p>RN: 55% RM: 45% Army: 65% RAF: 60%</p>	62	-3	N/A
B10.9	Welfare support I received when I returned from operational deployment Positive= % satisfied	<p>RN: 25% RM: 35% Army: 50% RAF: 45%</p>	43	-3	N/A
B10.10	The welfare support that my family received when I returned from deployment Positive= % satisfied	<p>RN: 20% RM: 30% Army: 40% RAF: 35%</p>	36	-3	N/A
B10.18	The frequency of my operational deployments Positive= % about right	<p>RN: 60% RM: 55% Army: 60% RAF: 65%</p>	60	-3	N/A
B10.19	The length of my operational deployments. Positive= % about right	<p>RN: 55% RM: 80% Army: 80% RAF: 70%</p>	72	-3	N/A

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

## Key Questions - Training, Development and Career

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2016	% Change from 2013
B4.2	Career management service provided Positive= % satisfied		34	-3	-3
B4.3	I have the knowledge, skill and experience to do my job Positive= % agree		86	↔	-2
B4.4	My knowledge, skill and experience are being used Positive= % agree		71	-2	↔
B4.7	The notice I received for my current/last assignment Positive= % satisfied		67	-2	↔
B4.10	The fairness of the promotion system Positive= % satisfied		34	-2	-4
B4.11	My opportunities for promotion Positive= % satisfied		41	-1	-1
B11.4	The extent to which I am doing the job for which I was trained Positive= % satisfied		57	↔	↔

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

## Key Questions - Future Plans

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2016	% Change from 2013
B12.1	What are your plans for the future? To stay serving as long as I can Positive= % ticked		32	↔	-5
B12.1	What are your plans for the future? To stay serving to the end of current engagement/commission Positive= % ticked		26	↔	↔
B12.3	How actively have you searched for a job outside the Service in the last 12 months? Positive = % very or quite actively		40	↔	N/A
B12.6	When you leave the Service, would you consider joining the Volunteer Reserve Forces full-time Positive= % satisfied		19	↔	↔
B12.7	When you leave the Service, would you consider joining the Volunteer Reserve Forces part-time Positive= % about right		28	↔	+4

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

## Key Questions - Work/Life Balance

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2016	% Change from 2013
B3.5	How would you rate your workload over the last 12 months? Positive= % about right		48	↔	↔
B14.9	I am able to maintain a balance between my personal and working life. Positive= % agree		40	↔	N/A
B15.2	The opportunity to take leave when I want to. Positive = % satisfied		45	↔	+6
B15.3	The amount of leave I was able to take in the last 12 months. Positive= % satisfied		61	↔	+3

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

## Key Questions - Fairness at Work

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2016	% Change from 2013
B13.1	I am treated fairly at work Positive= % agree		71	-2	N/A
B13.2	The Service discipline system is fair/neutral/unfair Positive= % fair		62	-5	-4
B13.3	Do you believe you have been subject to bullying, discrimination or harassment in the last 12 months? Positive= % ticked yes		13	↔	N/A
B13.4	Do you believe you have been subject to <b>bullying</b> in the last 12 months? Positive= % ticked yes		6	+1	N/A
B13.5	Do you believe you have been subject to <b>discrimination</b> in the last 12 months? Positive= % ticked yes		8	↔	N/A
B13.6	Do you believe you have been subject to <b>harassment</b> in the last 12 months? Positive= % ticked yes		4	↔	N/A

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found



## Key Questions - Health, Fitness and Welfare

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2016	% Change from 2013
B16.1	Being able to access the medical care when I needed it Positive= % satisfied		80	↔	↔
B16.2	The medical treatment Positive= % satisfied		76	↔	N/A
B16.4	The dental treatment Positive= % satisfied		86	↔	↔
B17.1	Service sport, exercise and fitness facilities in general Positive= % satisfied		75	↔	↔
B17.2	My opportunities to undertake fitness activities (e.g. to meet fitness standards) Positive= % satisfied		67	↔	+3
B18.1	The welfare support provided by the Service for me Positive= % satisfied		54	↔	+4
B18.2	The welfare support provided by the Service for my family Positive= % satisfied		45	↔	+6
B18.3	The support my spouse/partner gets from the Service when I am absent Positive= % satisfied		33	↔	↔

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

## Key Questions - Accommodation and Catering

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2016	% Change from 2013
<b>B19.6</b>	The overall standard of Service Accommodation Positive= % satisfied		<b>49</b>	-4	-8
<b>B19.38</b>	The opportunity to live in my own home (For home owners only) Positive= % satisfied		<b>46</b>	↔	+3
<b>B19.39</b>	The allowances for living in my own home (For home owners only) Positive= % satisfied		<b>27</b>	↔	+5
<b>B19.44</b>	Have you used a Government Affordable Housing Scheme in the last year to buy or rent? Positive= % used		<b>2</b>	↔	N/A
<b>B20.15</b>	The availability of food during the week on my unit e.g. opening hours. Positive= % satisfied		<b>51</b>	↔	N/A
<b>B20.17</b>	The standard of service from catering contractors on my unit. Positive= % satisfied		<b>30</b>	↔	N/A

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

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

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2016	% Change from 2013
B21.1	I am married/ in a Civil partnership Positive = % ticked	<p>Bar chart showing percentages for RN, RM, Army, and RAF. RN is at 52%, RM is at 40%, Army is at 50%, and RAF is at 58%.</p>	52	↔	↔
B21.3	I have children that I support financially Positive = % ticked	<p>Bar chart showing percentages for RN, RM, Army, and RAF. RN is at 50%, RM is at 42%, Army is at 50%, and RAF is at 50%.</p>	50	↔	↔
B21.9	I am satisfied with the locally provided childcare facilities Positive = % ticked	<p>Bar chart showing percentages for RN, RM, Army, and RAF. RN is at 48%, RM is at 42%, Army is at 42%, and RAF is at 55%.</p>	48	↔	N/A
B22.1	I am currently registered to vote Positive = % ticked	<p>Bar chart showing percentages for RN, RM, Army, and RAF. RN is at 84%, RM is at 85%, Army is at 80%, and RAF is at 90%.</p>	84	+4	+15
B22.4	I have heard of the Armed Forces Covenant Positive = % heard of	<p>Bar chart showing percentages for RN, RM, Army, and RAF. RN is at 74%, RM is at 85%, Army is at 70%, and RAF is at 80%.</p>	74	↔	+2
B22.14	I offer an important service to the country Positive = % agree	<p>Bar chart showing percentages for RN, RM, Army, and RAF. RN is at 73%, RM is at 65%, Army is at 75%, and RAF is at 75%.</p>	73	↔	↔
B22.15	Members of the Armed Forces are valued by society at large Positive = % agree	<p>Bar chart showing percentages for RN, RM, Army, and RAF. RN is at 41%, RM is at 35%, Army is at 40%, and RAF is at 42%.</p>	41	↔	-10

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

## Key Questions - Taking Action

Table Ref	Question		Overall % Positive	% Change from 2016	% Change from 2013
B23.2	I think effective action has been taken in the Service on the results of AFCAS Positive = % agree	<p>Bar chart showing percentages for RN, RM, Army, and RAF. RN is at 18%, RM is at 20%, Army is at 20%, and RAF is at 15%.</p>	18	-3	N/A
B23.3	This survey is about right Positive = % about right	<p>Bar chart showing percentages for RN, RM, Army, and RAF. RN is at 65%, RM is at 48%, Army is at 62%, and RAF is at 70%.</p>	65	↔	+13

↔ Indicates no statistically significant change has been found

# Methodology

## 1. Target Population

The target population for AFCAS 2017 was trained UK Regular Armed Forces personnel including Gurkhas, excluding Special Forces and those deployed or attending training courses at the time the survey sample was drawn from the Joint Personnel Administration (JPA) system.

## 2. The survey

AFCAS is distributed both electronically and in paper format. Data collection ran from September 2016 to February 2017, a relatively long period which allows time for receiving paper responses from personnel serving overseas.

The survey is confidential rather than anonymous. An individual's unique Service number is used both to control access to the survey and allow responses to be linked to demographic data held on the JPA system. Personally identifiable data are only available to a small group of professional researchers working on analysis and report production.

## 3. The sample and respondents

The total AFCAS 2017 sample consisted of 27,967 personnel. AFCAS questionnaires were issued to Service personnel selected under a (disproportionate) stratified simple random sampling process.

Samples were designed to provide sufficient responses to yield estimates with a margin of error of plus or minus 3% for the main comparison groups of Officer/Rank and Service. A census of all Royal Marines was employed due to the small size of the Service. Despite a relatively high response rate of 61%, margins of error around the estimates for Royal Marine Officers may be greater than 3%, due to the relatively small number of respondents in this group.

12,469 responses were used in the AFCAS 2017 analysis, giving an overall response rate of 45%. The table below contains detailed information on the number of questionnaires issued and received along with corresponding response rates.

56% of responses were received electronically and 44% were paper responses.

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

		Sample size	Surveys returned	2017 response rate	2016 response rate
<b>Royal Navy</b>	Officers	1 495	921	62%	63%
	Ratings	6 165	2 071	34%	37%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>7 660</b>	<b>2 992</b>	<b>39%</b>	43%
<b>Royal Marines</b>	Officers	526	322	61%	56%
	Marines	4 377	2 458	56%	59%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>4 903</b>	<b>2 780</b>	<b>57%</b>	58%
<b>Army</b>	Officers	1 620	1 003	62%	64%
	Soldiers	7 058	2 367	34%	34%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>8 678</b>	<b>3 370</b>	<b>39%</b>	40%
<b>Royal Air Force</b>	Officers	1 798	1 098	61%	55%
	Airmen	4 928	2 229	45%	43%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>6 726</b>	<b>3 327</b>	<b>49%</b>	46%
<b>All Services</b>	Officers	5 439	3 344	61%	60%
	Ranks	22 528	9 125	41%	42%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>27 967</b>	<b>12 469</b>	<b>45%</b>	45%

Note that percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole % for ease of interpretation.

#### 4. Weighting methodology and non-response

Due to the sample design and the differences in prevalence of non-response between the Service and rank strata, the distribution of characteristics amongst the AFCAS respondents did not reflect the distribution in the whole Armed Forces population. Response rates tend to vary by rank, therefore responses are weighted by rank in order to correct for the bias caused by over or under-representation.

The weights were calculated simply by:

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

Weighting in this way assumes missing data are missing at random (MAR) only within weighting classes. This means we assume that within a single weighting class the views of non-respondents do not differ (on average) to the views of respondents.

**Table A2: Weightings used for AFCAS 2017 analysis**

Weighting Class	Weighting Applied
RN_OF-7+	1.94
RN_OF-4 to 6	4.97
RN_OF-3	5.88
RN_OF-1 to 2	5.73
RN_OR-8 to 9	5.24
RN_OR-7	6.75
RN_OR-6	8.91
RN_OR-3 to 4	7.90
RN_OR-2	10.51

Weighting Class	Weighting Applied
RM_OF-4+	2.34
RM_OF-3	2.07
RM_OF-1 to 2	2.50
RM_OR-8 to 9	1.80
RM_OR-7	2.42
RM_OR-6	2.22
RM_OR-3 to 4	2.70
RM_OR-2	2.55

Weighting Class	Weighting Applied
Army_OF-7+	2.52
Army_OF-4 to 6	11.29
Army_OF-3	11.60
Army_OF-1 to 2	13.10
Army_OR-8 to 9	13.94
Army_OR-7	17.02
Army_OR-6	21.58
Army_OR-4	25.62
Army_OR-3	36.68
Army_OR-2	50.43

Weighting Class	Weighting Applied
RAF_OF-7+	2.67
RAF_OF-4 to 6	5.44
RAF_OF-3	5.53
RAF_OF-1 to 2	6.99
RAF_OR-7-9	7.07
RAF_OR-6	9.10
RAF_OR-3 to 4	10.43
RAF_OR-1 to 2	16.00

## 5. Analysis and statistical tests

Attitudinal questions in the questionnaires have generally been regrouped to assist in analysing results and to aid interpretation.

For example, questions asked at a 5-point level (e.g. Strongly agree – Agree – Neither Agree nor Disagree – Disagree – Strongly Disagree) have been regrouped to a 3-point level (e.g. (Agree – Neutral – Disagree).

Missing values, where respondents have not provided a response/valid response, have not been included in the analysis. In addition, some questions are filtered to exclude invalid responses. As a result the unweighted counts (or 'n') will vary from question to question and these are shown within the reference tables published alongside this report on the AFCAS webpage here <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/armed-forces-continuous-attitude-survey-index>

Unless otherwise specified, 'don't know' and 'not applicable' responses are ignored and percentages are based only on the numbers of respondents who chose the remaining item response options.

Where applicable, Z tests at a 1% alpha level were used to test whether observed estimates were significantly different to estimates from previous surveys. A statistically significant difference means that there is enough evidence that the change observed is unlikely to be due to chance variation (less than a 1% probability that the difference is the result of chance alone).

**6. Format of the reference tables (published separately to the report on the AFCAS webpage here <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/armed-forces-continuous-attitude-survey-index>)**

Each reference table refers to a question asked in the survey and includes estimates of the proportion of the population by category.

Tables are arranged generally in the order in which they were asked in the questionnaires, which is not the same as the order of the sections in the Main Report.

An index is available within the Excel tables. Each table is broken down by Service and also by Rank Group with the Total column referring to the Officers and Other Ranks results combined.

Questionnaire Section	Table Numbers
01 Your Pay	B1.1 - B1.9
02 Your Work	B2.1 - B2.18
03 Resources and Workload	B3.1 - B3.7
04 Your Line Management	B4.1 - B4.21
05 Senior Leadership	B5.1 - B5.18
06 Commitment	B6.1 - B6.6
07 Working with Others	B7.1 - B7.14
08 Change	B8.1 - B8.17
09 Your Deployment	B9.1 - B9.3
10 Your Career	B10.1 - B10.19
11 Training and Development	B11.1 - B11.7
12 Your Future Plans	B12.1 - B12.40
13 Fairness at Work	B13.1 - B13.43
14 Your Work/Life Balance	B14.1 - B14.12
15 Your Leave	B15.1 - B15.10
16 Your Health and Wellbeing	B16.1 - B16.8a
17 Fitness, Sport and Adventure Training	B17.1 - B17.4
18 Welfare	B18.1 - B18.18
19 Your Accommodation	B19.1 - B19.45
20 Catering, Retail and Leisure	B20.1 - B20.17
21 Your Family Life	B21.1 - B21.12
22 Being Part of Society	B22.1 - B22.15
23 Taking Action and Your Comments	B23.1 - B23.3

## Glossary

Armed Forces Compensation Scheme	Compensation available to those who become injured or ill as a result of their service in the Armed Forces	Harassment	Includes unwanted conduct which is related to the characteristics mentioned above and is intended to or has the effect of violating another's dignity or creating a hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment
Armed Forces Covenant	The Armed Forces Covenant defines the principles for ensuring that Armed Forces personnel are not disadvantaged in their access to public and commercial services as a result of their service. It also sets out that in some cases special treatment may be appropriate, for example for those that have given the most, such as the injured and the bereaved	HIVE	Service information hub which assists personnel in a wide variety of topics affecting their everyday Service and personal life
Armed Forces Pay Review Body	Provides independent advice to the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for Defence on the pay and charges for members of the Naval, Military and Air Forces of the Crown	JPA	Joint Personnel Administration (JPA) is the system used by the Armed Forces to deal with matters of pay, leave and other personal administrative tasks
Assisting Officer	Appointed to provide help and support to personnel either considering or having made a formal written complaint about discrimination, harassment or bullying	Marines	RM personnel of NATO ranks OR1 to OR9
Bullying	May be characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, and abuse of or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipients	Ministry of Defence Research Ethics Committee (MODREC)	Ensures that all research involving human participants undertaken, funded or sponsored by the MOD meets nationally and internationally accepted ethical standards
Catering Retail and Leisure (CRL)	Provision of on-site facilities for dining, shopping and recreation by commercial partners	Missing at Random (MAR)	Statistical theory that states that those who did not respond to a question do not differ from those who did respond
Commission	Officer's period of employment usually under contractual terms	Missing value(s)	Refers to the situation where a respondent has not submitted an answer or a valid answer to a question
Core Meal	Meal supplied that should conform to certain cost and nutritional standards within core hours	MOD	Ministry of Defence
Defence Board	The highest committee in the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and is responsible for the full range of Defence business, other than the conduct of operations	Morale	A measure of commitment and willingness to the ethos of a Service
DIN	Defence Instructions and Notices	N/A	Not applicable
Discrimination	Can occur when a person is treated less favourably because of race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, gender reassignment, age or disability. Discrimination can also occur where a policy or practice which applies to everyone unreasonably disadvantages a person on the basis of the characteristics mentioned above	NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
Engagement	Period of employment usually under contractual terms	Naval Service	Comprises the Royal Navy (including the Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service) and the Royal Marines combined.
Ethos	The nature, aims and objectives of a Service	Non-response	Refers either to a person who although sampled and sent a questionnaire did not reply or to a respondent who did not reply to a question
Flexible working	Agreed variation in starting and finishing working hours normally designed to meet work/home life balance	OF	Officer of NATO rank designation ranking from '1' lowest to '10' highest
Government Affordable Housing Scheme	Schemes providing financial assistance for those who are unable to afford to buy or rent a home; includes Forces Help to Buy	Officer(s)	All regular trained officers of NATO ranks OF1 to OF10

Operational commitment and stretch	Refers to the situation where operational deployment requires the use of materiel and personnel in extended circumstances beyond the level they are resourced and structured to sustain in the long-term
Operational/Deployment Welfare Package	Measures taken to support the morale of Service personnel by making the fullest possible provision for their emotional and physical wellbeing whilst on operational deployment
OR	Other Ranks of NATO rank designation ranking from 'OR1' lowest to 'OR9' highest
Other Rank(s)	Other Ranks are members of the Royal Marines, Army and Royal Air Force who are not Officers. The equivalent group in the Royal Navy is known as "Ratings".
Pay As You Dine (PAYD)	Enables personnel to pay for meals when they want them rather than pay a fixed daily charge
Post Operational Leave (POL)	Leave granted in addition to annual leave for personnel returning from operational deployment and who are not entitled to Seagoers' Leave (Army uses Post Operational Tour Leave (POTL))
RAF	Royal Air Force
Recruitment and retention pay (RRP) - formerly Specialist Pay	Discretionary payment received in addition to basic pay by specific groups within the Armed Forces to assist with specific recruitment or retention requirements
Retail Meal	Meals supplied by the contractor in addition to Core Meals
RM	Royal Marines
RN	Royal Navy
Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR)	In the context of the Services, refers to a Review of what needed to be done to restructure and rescale the size of the Armed Forces to meet future Defence requirements of the UK's national security
Seagoers' Leave (SGL)	Leave granted in addition to annual leave for personnel employed in a seagoing unit
Service Accommodation	Any type of accommodation that includes 'SFA', 'SSFA', 'SLA', 'SSLA' and 'Onboard a ship or submarine'
Service Complaints Commissioner	Oversees the Service Complaints system and also acts as an alternative point of contact for Service Complaints including ensuring that Service Complaints are dealt with efficiently, effectively and fairly
Service Complaints Procedure	Available to those who believe they have been the subject of unlawful or unfair treatment in the Service
Service(s)	Royal Navy, Royal Marines, Army and RAF
SFA	Service Families Accommodation

SLA	Single Living Accommodation
SNCO	Senior Non-Commissioned Officer (NATO ranks OR6 to OR9)
Soldiers	Army personnel of NATO ranks OR1 to OR9
Special Educational Need (SEN)	Children who have needs or disabilities that affect their ability to learn
SSFA	Substitute Service Family Accommodation
SSLA	Substitute Single Living Accommodation
Standard Error	A measure derived using weighting factors from the sample proportion and unweighted count in a sampling distribution and used as a benchmark in order to ascertain a range of values within which the true population proportion could lie
Statistically significant	Refers to the result of a statistical test in which there is evidence of a change in proportions between years
Statistical tests	Refers to those tests which are carried out to see if any evidence exists for a change in response proportions from one year to another
Trained strength	Trained Strength comprises military personnel who have completed Phase 1 and 2 training. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Phase 1 Training includes all new entry training to provide basic military skills.</li> <li>Phase 2 Training includes initial individual specialisation, sub-specialisation and technical training following Phase 1 training prior to joining the trained strength</li> </ul>
Unit	A sub-organisation of the Service in which personnel are employed
Unweighted count	Refers to the actual number who provided a valid response to a question in the survey
Weighting (factors)	Refers to factors that are applied to the respondent data set by Service and rank group in order to make respondent Service rank groups representative of their population equivalents
Weighting class	Refers to those members of a specific rank group to whom a weighting factor is applied
X-Factor	Additional payment to Armed Forces personnel to compensate for differences in lifestyle, working conditions and expectations compared to civilian equivalents
Z test	Statistical test based on a standardised distribution which allows comparison between years for populations of different sizes



## Further Information

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### Contact Us

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