



Ministry
of Defence

The Armed Forces Memorial and The Roll of Honour

A Guide for Bereaved Families



Introduction

This document provides guidance for bereaved families about the Armed Forces Memorial and the Roll of Honour. It describes the process by which the names of serving Armed Forces personnel who have died may be considered for inclusion on the Armed Forces Memorial and the Roll of Honour.

In defining the general criteria that are applied it also describes other specific circumstances that may be relevant, and also the process by which families can apply for consideration to be given for names to be included where the general criteria are not necessarily met. This includes the circumstances under which the names of veterans may also be considered.

This guide has been produced in consultation with representatives of the Defence Bereaved Families Group and the three single-Service Widows' Associations.

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Background

The Armed Forces Memorial at the **National Memorial Arboretum** in Staffordshire contains the names of members of the UK Armed Forces, Regular and Reserve, who have died on duty since 1948 (the Commonwealth War Graves Commission commemorates war dead up until 31 December 1947). In the centre is the Obelisk, which commemorates all who have died in Service, irrespective of cause or circumstance.

The Memorial was dedicated in 2007 and included almost 16,000 names. Each year, the Armed Forces Memorial Naming Panel, chaired by the Defence Services Secretary, supported by senior members of each Service and a senior medical advisor, considers the names of serving Service personnel who have died during the preceding year in order to determine those who meet the necessary criteria to be included on the Memorial. A service for families is held at the National Memorial Arboretum, usually in July, to commemorate those personnel.

In addition to those named on the walls of the Armed Forces Memorial, the Obelisk is there for all who died in service and bears the inscription “They Died Serving their Country – We Will Remember Them”.



Criteria for the Armed Forces Memorial

The criteria for inclusion on the Armed Forces Memorial are as follows:

‘Those members of the Armed Forces (Regular and Reserve) who were killed on duty while performing functions attributable to the special circumstances and requirements of the Armed Forces, or as a result of terrorist action, and those who died while deployed on designated operations’.

‘Those members of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary and the Merchant Navy who died in conflict zones while in direct support of the Armed Forces.’

Within these general criteria there is a presumption that at the time of death (or event which led to the subsequent death) service personnel should be on duty and performing functions attributable to the special circumstances and requirements of the Armed Forces.

In addition, personnel who die under any conditions while deployed on a designated operation are included. In fulfilling these conditions, individuals will be automatically considered for inclusion on the Armed Forces Memorial by the Naming Panel.

Note: The Armed Forces Memorial was funded primarily by public subscription and the criteria for inclusion on the Memorial was established by an independent Board of Trustees. When the Trust disbanded in 2016, management of the Memorial was passed to the National Memorial Arboretum. The Ministry of Defence Armed Forces Memorial Naming Panel was only established in 2015.

Criteria for the Roll of Honour

The Armed Forces Memorial Roll of Honour is a searchable, electronic record, which contains the names of all UK Armed Forces personnel who have died during their service, since 1948, regardless of the cause of death.

The Roll of Honour, therefore, contains the names of many individuals who do not meet the more specific criteria for inclusion on the Armed Forces Memorial itself. Names are added to the Roll of Honour by the Ministry of Defence Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC) who are informed of all deaths in service.

The Roll of Honour is updated quarterly and there is a minimum gap of a year between the date of death and addition of a name to the Roll for data protection reasons.

Armed Forces Memorial Annual Process

In January each year, JCCC provides to the Defence Services Secretary Honours and Commemorations Office the names of all of those who have died in service in the preceding year

The Honours and Commemorations Office then undertake an initial review to consider those names that meet the criteria for inclusion on the Armed Forces Memorial and those that do not appear to do so.

Where further information may be required, Cases are referred to the appropriate single Services for advice. Recommendations are then provided to the Naming Panel for their consideration.

The Naming Panel is held in Spring each year and considers carefully the list of names that may potentially be added to the Memorial. In addition to the names of those who have died in the previous year, the Panel considers cases which may have been held over from the previous year (for example, where an inquest was pending) or any application for a name to be added from an earlier year.

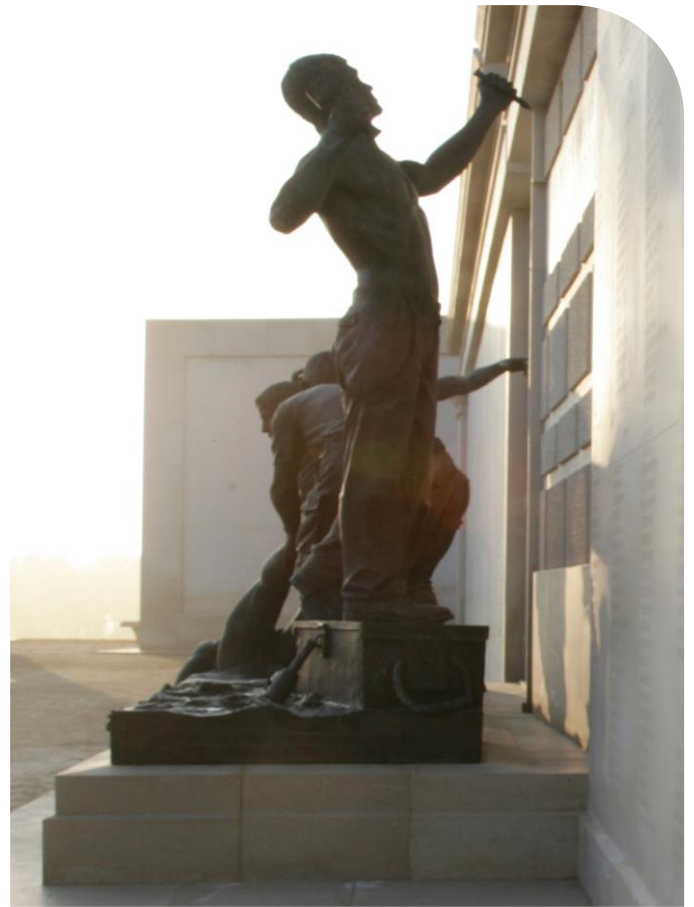
Very careful consideration is given to each name and how the criteria may apply to the circumstances of the death. Service records, inquest reports, medical records etc are reviewed as necessary.

The Panel will make final decisions on inclusion where possible but where any doubt remains, further documents or evidence may be called for, or decisions deferred pending the results of, for example, an inquest or a board of inquiry.

Specific Circumstances

Although the application of the general criteria will enable a clear decision in most cases, there are specific circumstances where greater consideration will be required. These include:

- Death from suicide.
- Death of members of the Reserves.
- Members of the Armed Forces (Regular and Reserves) targeted by terrorists.
- Death while serving on Designated Operations (as defined below).
- Death from disease contracted while serving overseas.



Suicide

Where a serving member of the Armed Forces has died from suicide, the following criteria will be considered:

Where death occurred during a designated operation, the name will be included on the Armed Forces Memorial and the Roll of Honour, unless there are circumstances which might preclude this, for example, in the case of dishonourable conduct (as defined by Service Regulations).

Where death occurred outside of a designated operation and the evidence suggests that the individual's suicide was occasioned as a direct result of the special circumstances of Service in the Armed Forces, names may be included on the

Armed Forces Memorial and the Roll of Honour.

Where death from suicide occurred in different circumstances, but where families believe that there is evidence of a direct link between the individual's service and the death, then **an application may be made to the Naming Panel** (see pages 9-10) for consideration to be given for inclusion on the Armed Forces Memorial. Regardless of whether or not an application was to be made, such an individual would be included on the Roll of Honour.

The role of the Armed Forces Memorial is to commemorate Service Personnel who die in service. However, where death from suicide involves a veteran, and families believe that there is evidence of a direct link between the individual's service and the death, then **an application may be made to the Naming Panel** (see pages 9-10) for consideration to be given for inclusion on the Armed Forces Memorial.

All such cases that are presented to the Naming Panel will be considered on an individual basis based on the evidence presented. In such cases, the Panel's deliberations are likely to include, but not necessarily be restricted to, the following questions:

Is there evidence of a specific event or events that may have affected an individual's mental health?

If so, were these occasioned as a direct result of the special circumstances of service in the Armed Forces?

Is there any evidence of mental health issues prior to service?

Had there been any previous suicide attempts and if so were these before, during or post service?

Who made the diagnosis of any mental health disorder?

Is the evidence consistent, fair, impartial and balanced?

Is there evidence that cannot be substantiated or is contradictory in any way?

On the balance of probability, does the evidence support the criteria for inclusion on the AFM – in other words, can the death be directly attributed to the special circumstances of service in the Armed Forces?

Veterans are not normally eligible to be included on the Roll of Honour but were such an application to result in the inclusion of a veteran on the Armed Forces Memorial, then they would also be added to the Roll of Honour.

Reserves

Specific considerations regarding Reservists are as follows:

Where a Reservist is on duty at the time of death (or at the time of the event which led to the subsequent death), and has fulfilled the general inclusion criteria above, the name will be included on the Armed Forces Memorial and the Roll of Honour.

Where a Reservist dies in circumstances that do not meet the general criteria but where the individual has either been mobilised, is serving on Full Time Reserve Service, is serving on an Additional Duties Commitment, or is engaged in training or

related activity, then their name will be included on the Roll of Honour alone.

With the exception of those killed as a result of acts of terror, Reservists who die under any other circumstances will not be included on the Armed Forces Memorial or the Roll of Honour.

Acts of Terrorism

Where a Regular or Reserve member of the Armed Forces is killed off duty, or after leaving the Service, and there is evidence that they had been targeted by terrorists because of their current or former service in the Armed Forces, names will be considered for inclusion on the Armed Forces Memorial and on the Roll of Honour.

Designated Operations

The term 'designated operation' is defined as:

'A theatre of operations where there is or has been the award of a British operational medal or where there is or has been the award of a UN or NATO medal'.

However, at the discretion of the Naming Panel, this could be extended to incorporate other non-medal earning operations.

Death as a Result of Endemic Disease Contracted Overseas

Where evidence shows that the death of a Regular or Reserve member of the Armed Forces is a direct result of an endemic disease contracted while serving overseas, while on duty, or under direct orders of the Crown, names will be included on the Armed Forces Memorial and the Roll of Honour.



Conclusion

This note describes the process by which the names of Armed Forces personnel who have died in service may be considered for inclusion on the Armed Forces Memorial or the Roll of Honour.

In most cases, the decision as to whether or not to include a name on the Armed Forces Memorial is clear, with the general criteria on page 4 providing adequate guidance. Moreover, and thankfully given no large-scale operations ongoing at the moment, the number of names added each year is relatively small.

However, there may be exceptional circumstances, as described above, where bereaved families believe that whilst the general criteria may not apply, that there may be other evidence that could result in a decision by the Naming Panel to include a name. Under such circumstances, families may apply for names to be considered following the guidance on pages 9-10.

The Ministry of Defence understands that circumstances surrounding these bereavements are deeply difficult for those involved, including providing traditional forms of evidence in support of applications.

How to Apply for a Name to be Considered for Inclusion on the Armed Forces Memorial

To apply to the Ministry of Defence for the name of a Service person to be considered for inclusion on the Armed Forces Memorial, the next of kin should write to the Defence Services Secretary Honours and Commemorations Office stating their relationship to the deceased.

A covering letter should set out the circumstances of the death, details of their Service and an indication under what criteria it is believed they may qualify for inclusion on the Armed Forces Memorial, should be provided. Wherever possible, evidence to support the application should also be provided. This may include, but is not limited to the following:

- Copy of Death Certificate.
- Coroner's Verdict where Applicable.
- Relevant Medical Records.
- Reports or referrals from other organisations, including charities, which have been instrumental in providing support and assistance to the deceased or their next of kin/families in the period leading up to the death.
- Personal statement/statements from next of kin and/or individuals with a close relationship to the deceased. This should seek to provide information relevant to the state of the deceased's mental health.

The letter and supporting evidence should be sent to the following address:

Defence Services Secretary
Honours and Commemorations
Level 6 Zone C
Ministry of Defence
Main Building
Whitehall
London SW1A 2HB

E-mail:

People-DSSec-AFMmailbox@mod.gov.uk

Processing of Applications

On receipt, applications will be checked to ensure that sufficient information and/or evidence has been provided. Applications will be acknowledged, and in those cases where further information is considered necessary, this will be requested by the Defence Services Secretary Honours and Commemorations Office.

Applications will then be considered at the next annual meeting of the Armed Forces Memorial Naming Panel.

The Armed Forces Memorial Naming Panel

The Armed Forces Memorial Naming Panel meets yearly, in early Spring, and for each case will consider the evidence that has been presented to decide if the circumstances of an individual's death meet the eligibility criteria for their name to be added to the Armed Forces Memorial.

This is in advance of the annual ceremony in July when new names are added to the Memorial.

After the Panel has met, the Defence Services Secretary will write to the applicant to advise of the Panel's decision and the reason/s for that decision.

For those cases where the Panel decides that the criteria have not been met, the letter will include details of how to appeal against the decision.

The Ministry of Defence will also notify the National Memorial Arboretum of the outcome of the Naming Panel.

Appeal

To appeal against the decision of the Armed Forces Memorial Naming Panel, a letter setting out the reason for the appeal should be sent to the Chief of Defence People, at the following address:

Chief of Defence People
Level 6 Zone B
Ministry of Defence
Main Building
Whitehall
London
SW1A 2HB

Appeals must be lodged within three months of receiving notification of the decision of the Naming Panel, and should include any additional information or evidence that may be considered relevant.

This document was produced by the Defence Services Secretary Honours and Commemorations Office. Comments on this document can be sent to:

People-DSSec-AFMmailbox@mod.gov.uk