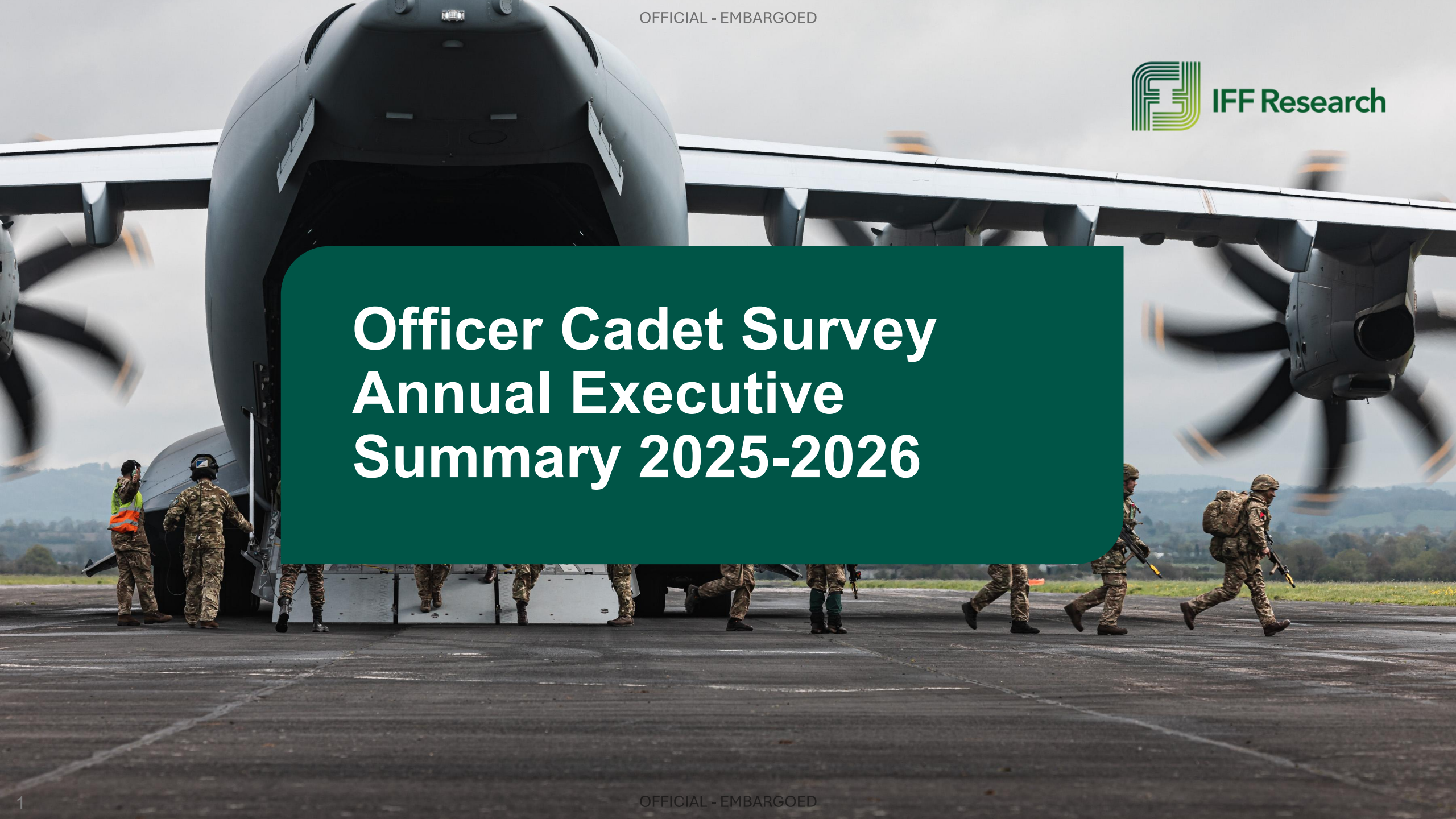

IFF Research

Officer Cadet Survey Annual Executive Summary 2025-2026

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Introduction



Introduction

The Officer Cadet Survey (OCS) was established in 2010 to monitor Officer Cadets' experience of training at all four initial Officer training colleges.

The OCS was created following the success of the Recruit Trainee Survey (RTS), a Tri-Service survey administered to gauge Phase 1 Recruits' experience of training. The RTS was established following an appraisal of initial training by the Defence Operational Capability (DOC) in 2002.

The aims of the surveys are to:

- Elicit attitudes towards the quality and benefits of training provided.
- Monitor the fairness of treatment for Recruits, Trainees and Officer Cadets.

Reported results are aggregated to reflect the experiences of Officer Cadets who attended training at a college under each Service command.



Notes on reporting

This Executive Summary compares results for the OCS survey for this current year, 2025/26, against the previous survey year of 2024/25. While reference is made to data collected between survey years 2021/22 and 2023/24, any statistically significant differences are only relevant between 2024/25 and 2025/26. This report has been produced in addition to monthly and quarterly reports that are shared with the Services throughout the year.

This Executive Summary makes reference to aggregated totals, labelled as '% positive'. This refers to the sum of two answer options that are affirmative to the question or statement (e.g. 'very good' and 'good' or 'strongly agree' and 'agree'). The aggregate score takes into account the rounding which occurs when two figures are presented separately.

All comments and statistically significant differences are based on the aggregated total.* Only differences that are statistically significant have been commented upon. A statistically significant result means the difference between two figures is likely the result of a factor rather than chance. **It does not mean the difference is necessarily large, important, or significant in the common meaning of the word.** A statistically significant difference can still occur if the overall percentage remains the same due to the base sizes included in the dataset.

*Two measures ("I was treated fairly" and "Training was conducted without harassment") do not have an aggregated total, instead only the 'Always' answer option is reported on.



Army



OFFICIAL - EMBARGOED

Army: Key Findings

A total of 171 Army Officer Cadets completed the Officer Cadet Survey in 2025/26, representing a response rate of 34%.

Key findings: There have been **six** statistically significant **increases** and **three** statistically significant **decreases** between 2024/25 and 2025/26.

Facilities and amenities

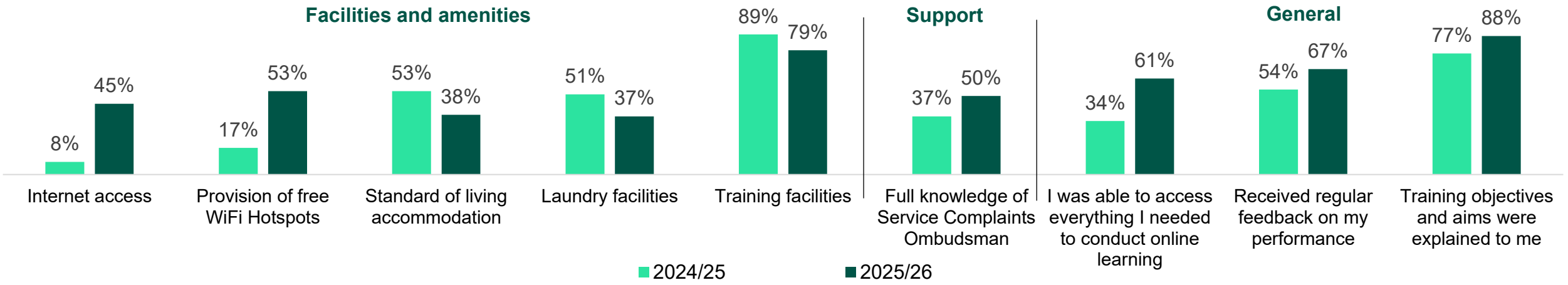
- Satisfaction with the internet access **(8% to 45%)** and the provision of free WiFi hotspots **(17% to 53%)** increased in 2025/26, partially reversing the decline recorded in 2024/25.
- Satisfaction with the standard of living accommodation **(53% to 38%)**, laundry facilities **(51% to 37%)** and the training facilities **(89% to 79%)** have all decreased since 2024/25. The longer-term trend indicates some variability in performance, with the decline in 2025/26 following a comparatively high level recorded in 2024/25.

Support

- Full knowledge of the Service Complaints Ombudsman increased from **37% to 50%** in 2025/26; this follows a fall in 2024/25 and returning to levels seen previously.

General

- The proportion of Officer Cadets able to access everything they needed for online learning increased from **34% to 61%** in 2025/26, following a decline in 2024/25, although it remains below previously reported levels.
- Receiving regular feedback on performance **(54% to 67%)** and having training objectives and aims explained **(77% to 88%)** also increased.



Army: Areas of positive change

- There have been six statistically significant increases between 2024/25 and 2025/26.
- Two measures relating to facilities and amenities increased. The technology related measures - internet access and provision of free WiFi hotspots - rose by 37 and 36 percentage points respectively, following the notably low levels recorded in 2024/25.
- One support measure increased; full knowledge of the Service Complaints Ombudsman returned to the higher-level performance achieved in 2023/24.
- Three general measures increased in 2025/26. The proportion of Officer Cadets able to access everything needed to conduct online learning increased by 27 percentage points, while the proportion receiving regular feedback on performance increased by 13 percentage points; both increased following the declines seen in 2024/25. The proportion agreeing that training objectives and aims had been explained also increased by 11 percentage points, reaching its highest level recorded in the last five years.

GAINS	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Facilities and amenities					
Internet access: Very good/Good	54%	77%	64%	8%	45%
Provision of free WiFi Hotspots: Very good/Good	65%	75%	67%	17%	53%
Support					
Full knowledge of Service Complaints Ombudsman: Yes	31%	33%	52%	37%	50%
General					
I was able to access everything I needed to conduct online learning: Strongly agree/Agree	..	84%	79%	34%	61%
Received regular feedback on my performance: Strongly agree/Agree	50%	60%	66%	54%	67%
Training objectives and aims were explained to me: Strongly agree/Agree	72%	82%	76%	77%	88%

Where there are fewer than 30 respondents, estimates are replaced with ~
Where data is not available, or no respondents have answered a question this is indicated with ..

Army: Areas of negative change

- There were three statistically significant decreases between 2024/25 and 2025/26, and all three decreases related to facilities and amenities measures.
- Satisfaction with the standard of living accommodation and laundry facilities fell by 15 and 14 percentage points respectively, following the comparatively high levels recorded in 2024/25.
- Satisfaction with the training facilities also decreased by 10 percentage points, although remaining relatively high overall.

FALLS	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Facilities and amenities					
Standard of living accommodation: Very good/Good	37%	49%	39%	53%	38%
Laundry facilities: Very good/Good	44%	42%	29%	51%	37%
Training facilities (e.g. ranges, classrooms, urban areas): Very good/Good	84%	87%	82%	89%	79%

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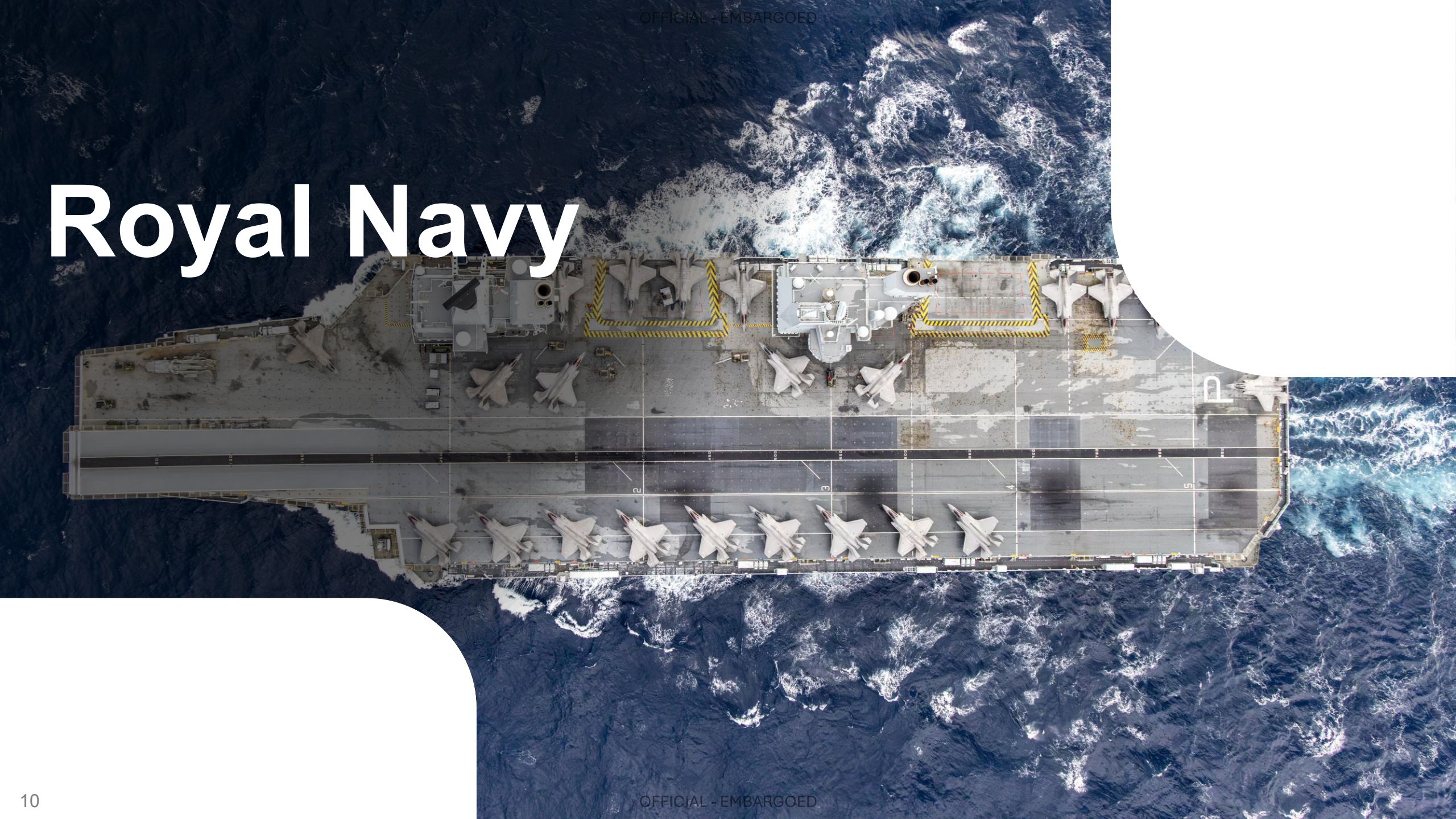
Royal Navy



Royal Navy: Key Findings

A total of 149 Royal Navy Officer Cadets completed the Officer Cadet Survey in 2025/26, representing a response rate of 35%.

Key findings: There was **one** statistically significant **increase** and **seven** statistically significant **decreases** between 2024/25 and 2025/26.

▼ General

- The proportion of Officer Cadets who were able to access everything they needed to conduct online learning decreased from **80% to 68%** in 2025/26.
- The proportion of Officer Cadets who agreed they received regular feedback on their performance **(52% to 28%)** decreased.
- The perception that training aims and objectives were clearly explained **(68% to 51%)** and that instructors did all they could to help **(73% to 60%)** also fell.

▲▼ Facilities and amenities

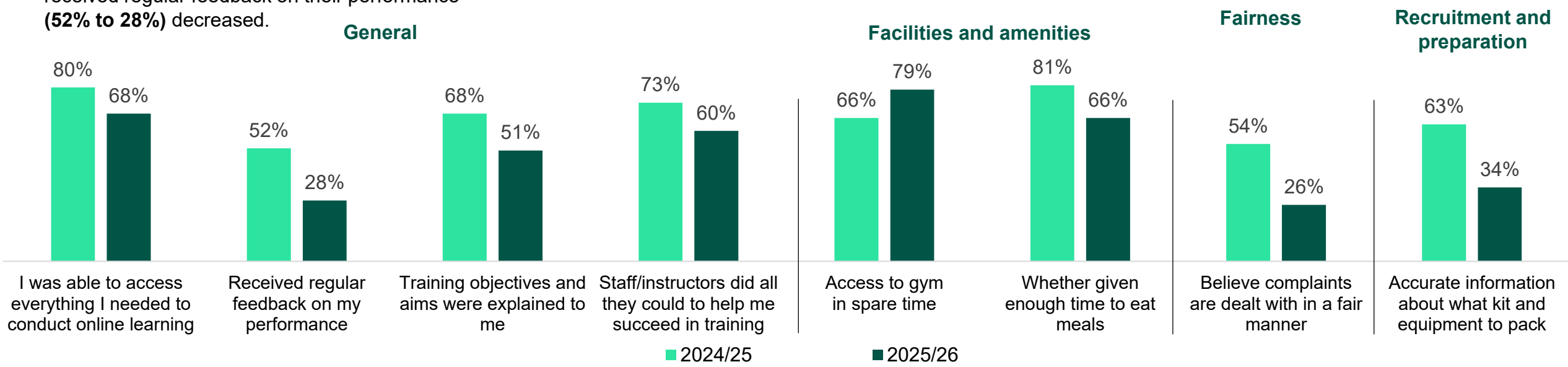
- Satisfaction with access to the gym in their spare time rose from **66% to 79%.**
- However, satisfaction with having enough time to eat meals decreased **(81% to 66%)** in 2025/26, following an upward trend in previous years.

▼ Fairness

- The proportion of Officer Cadets who believed that complaints were dealt with in a fair manner saw a decrease between 2024/25 to 2025/26 **(54% to 26%).**

▼ Recruitment and preparation

- Having accurate information about kit and equipment also fell to its lowest level in 2025/26 **(63% to 34%).**



Royal Navy: Areas of positive change

- There was one statistically significant increase between 2024/25 and 2025/26.
- Only one measure related to facilities and amenities showed an increase, access to the gym in their spare time rose by 13 percentage points between 2024/25 and 2025/26, reaching its highest level in five years.

GAINS	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Facilities and amenities					
Access to gym in spare time: Very good/Good	25%	58%	68%	66%	79%

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Royal Navy: Areas of negative change

- There have been seven statistically significant decreases between 2024/25 and 2025/26.
- One measure in recruitment and preparation - having accurate information about what kit and equipment to pack - fell by 29 percentage points, reaching its lowest level in five years.
- One measure across facilities and amenities fell; satisfaction with being given enough time to eat meals decreased by 15 percentage points, following a mostly sustained positive performance since 2021/22.
- There was also one decrease across fairness measures, relating to the perception that complaints are dealt with fairly, which fell by 28 percentage points, following the increase seen in 2024/25.
- Four general measures declined since 2024/25. Having the ability to access and conduct online learning fell by 12 percentage points, to reach its lowest level since the measure was introduced. Similarly, receiving regular feedback on performance decreased by 24 percentage points, also reaching its lowest level. Having training objectives and aims explained fell by 17 percentage points and staff doing all they could to help Officer Cadets succeed fell by 13 percentage points.

FALLS	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Recruitment and preparation					
Accurate information about what kit and equipment to pack: Strongly agree/Agree	60%	52%	56%	63%	34%
Facilities and amenities					
Whether given enough time to eat meals: Always/Often	73%	84%	79%	81%	66%
Fairness					
Whether believe complaints are dealt with in a fair manner: Yes	51%	56%	38%	54%	26%
General					
I was able to access everything I needed to conduct online learning: Strongly agree/Agree	..	85%	74%	80%	68%
Received regular feedback on my performance: Strongly agree/Agree	63%	52%	47%	52%	28%
Training objectives and aims were explained to me: Strongly agree/Agree	75%	68%	63%	68%	51%
Staff/instructors did all they could to help me succeed in training: Strongly agree/Agree	81%	78%	70%	73%	60%

Where there are fewer than 30 respondents, estimates are replaced with ~
Where data is not available, or no respondents have answered a question this is indicated with ..

Royal Marines



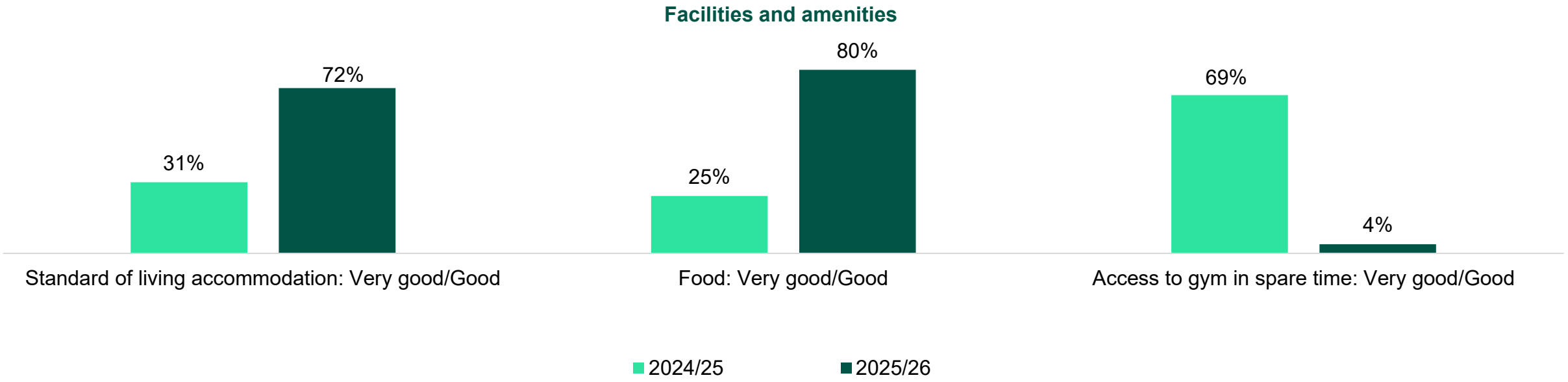
Royal Marines: Key Findings

A total of 46 Royal Marine Officer Cadets completed the Officer Cadet Survey in 2025/26, representing a response rate of 81%.

Key findings: There have been **two** statistically significant **increases,** and **one decrease** between 2024/25 and 2025/26.

Facilities and amenities

- Ratings for the standard of living accommodation **(31% to 72%)** and satisfaction with food **(25% to 80%)** both saw increases vs. 2024/25.
- However, access to the gym in their spare time **(69% to 4%)** fell.



Royal Marines: Areas of positive change

- There have been two statistically significant increases between 2024/25 and 2025/26.
- Two measures related to facilities and amenities showed an increase; the standard of living accommodation increased by 41 percentage points between 2024/25 and 2025/26 and the proportion of Officer Cadets that felt the food was good/very good increased by 55 percentage points. The base size is low so treat findings with caution.

GAINS	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Facilities and amenities					
Standard of living accommodation: Very good/Good	22%	~	~	31%	72%
Food: Very good/Good	3%	~	~	25%	80%

Where there are fewer than 30 respondents, estimates are replaced with ~
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Royal Marines: Areas of negative change

- There has been one statistically significant fall between 2024/25 and 2025/26.
- Only one measure relating to facilities and amenities decreased related to access to the gym in spare time falling by 65 percentage points. The base size is low so treat findings with caution.

FALLS	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Facilities and amenities					
Access to gym in spare time: Very good/Good	31%	~	~	69%	4%

Where there are fewer than 30 respondents, estimates are replaced with ~
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RAF



RAF: Key Findings (1)

A total of 241 RAF Officer Cadets completed the Officer Cadet Survey in 2025/26, representing a response rate of 77%.

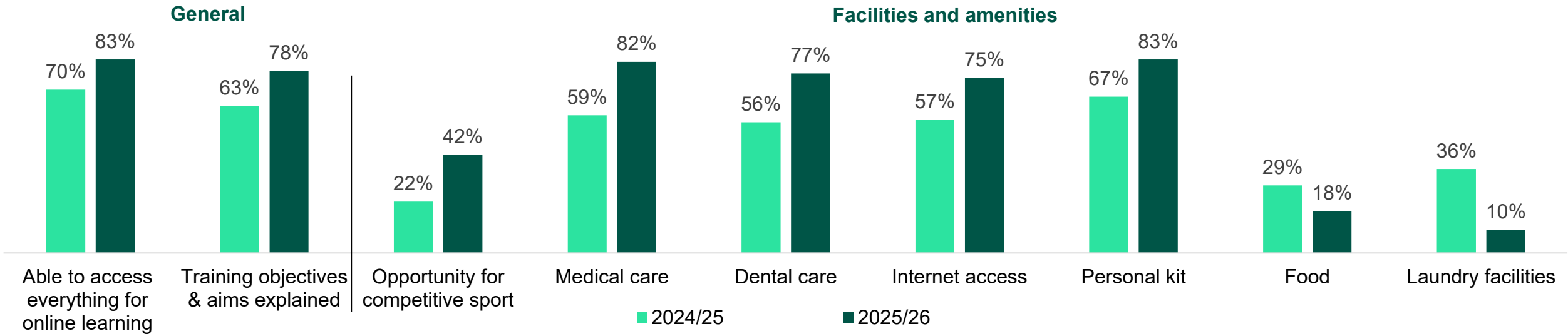
Key findings: There have been **14** statistically significant **increases** and **two** statistically significant **decreases** between 2024/25 and 2025/26.

General

- The proportion of RAF Officer Cadets who felt they were able to access everything they needed to conduct online learning **(70% to 83%)** and that training objectives and aims were explained **(63% to 78%)** increased.

Facilities and amenities

- The proportion satisfied with the opportunity for competitive sport increased from **22% to 42%** in 2025/26, following a longer-term period of lower reported satisfaction.
- Satisfaction with medical care **(59% to 82%)** and dental care **(56% to 77%)** increased following two years of lower reported satisfaction.
- Satisfaction with internet access increased from **57% to 75%**, and satisfaction with personal kit improved following a decline in 2024/25 **(67% to 83%).**
- However, satisfaction with food decreased from **29% to 18%,** while satisfaction with laundry facilities fell from **36% to 10%,** with both measures at their lowest levels recorded in the last five years.



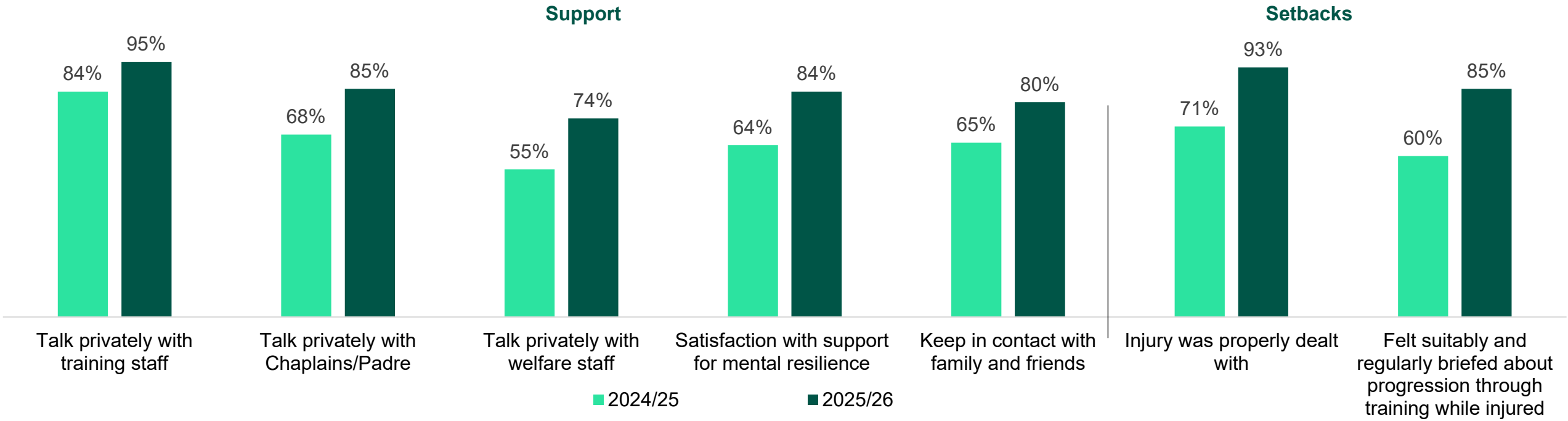
RAF: Key Findings (2)

Support

- The proportion of Officer Cadets who agreed they had the opportunity to talk privately with training staff **(84% to 95%),** Chaplains/Padre **(68% to 85%)** and welfare staff **(55% to 74%)** increased; all reaching their highest levels in the last five years.
- Satisfaction with general support for mental resilience increased by 20 percentage points, from **64% to 84%.**
- The proportion who felt able to keep in contact with family and friends increased from **65% to 80%.**

Setbacks during training

- The proportion of Officer Cadets who agreed that injuries were dealt with properly increased from **71% to 93%**, following a decline in 2024/25.
- The proportion who felt suitably and regularly briefed about their progression through training while injured increased from **60% to 85%.**



RAF: Areas of positive change

- There were 14 increases between 2024/25 and 2025/26.
- There were five increases across facilities and amenities measures. The opportunity for competitive sport rose by 20 percentage points, following a period of consistent lower performance. Ratings for medical and dental care improved following two years of lower performance, and ratings for internet access recorded the first increase in five years, rising by 18 percentage points. Satisfaction with personal kit also increased, following a decline in 2024/25.
- There were five increases across support measures. The opportunity to speak privately with training staff recorded its first increase in five years, reaching 95%. The opportunity to speak privately with Chaplains/Padre also reached its highest level in five years. The opportunity to speak privately with welfare staff rose by 19 percentage points, support for mental resilience rose by 20 percentage points, and the proportion of those who felt able to keep in contact with family and friends increased by 15 percentage points, with all three measures reaching their highest levels since 2021/22.
- Two setback measures increased, relating to injuries being dealt with properly and feeling regularly briefed about progression while injured, following a decline in 2024/25.
- There were two increases across general measures: access to everything needed for online learning and training objectives and aims being explained, following three years of lower performance.

GAINS	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Facilities and amenities					
Opportunity for competitive sport: Very good/Good	14%	18%	18%	22%	42%
Medical care: Very good/Good	80%	79%	61%	59%	82%
Dental care: Very good/Good	74%	72%	53%	56%	77%
Internet access: Very good/Good	60%	53%	52%	57%	75%
Personal kit (e.g. boots, uniform): Very good/Good	80%	74%	81%	67%	83%
Support					
Opportunity to talk privately with training staff: Very good/Good	89%	87%	87%	84%	95%
Opportunity to talk privately with Chaplains/Padre: Very good/Good	81%	79%	67%	68%	85%
Opportunity to talk privately with welfare staff: Very good/Good	70%	66%	59%	55%	74%
Satisfaction with the general support you received for your mental resilience: Very Satisfied/Satisfied	73%	70%	71%	64%	84%
Keep in contact with family and friends: Very good/Good	78%	74%	74%	65%	80%
Setbacks during training					
Injury was properly dealt with: Strongly agree/Agree	86%	91%	85%	71%	93%
Felt suitably and regularly briefed about your progression through training while injured: Strongly agree/Agree	..	74%	70%	60%	85%
General					
I was able to access everything I needed to conduct online learning: Strongly agree/Agree	..	71%	63%	70%	83%
Training objectives and aims were explained to me: Strongly agree/Agree	88%	73%	64%	63%	78%

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Where data is not available, or no respondents have answered a question this is indicated with ..

RAF: Areas of negative change

- There were two statistically significant falls between 2024/25 and 2025/26.
- Satisfaction with food fell by 11 percentage points, reaching the lowest level in five years.
- Satisfaction with laundry facilities fell by 26 percentage points, also reaching its lowest level in five years.

FALLS	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26
Facilities and amenities					
Food: Very good/Good	34%	28%	24%	29%	18%
Laundry facilities: Very good/Good	38%	28%	28%	36%	10%

Where there are fewer than 30 respondents, estimates are replaced with ~
Where data is not available, or no respondents have answered a question this is indicated with ..

Methodology



Survey methodology

Survey completion

All Officer Cadets who have completed at least two weeks training should be given the opportunity to participate in the online survey which is administered by training units.

All respondents completing the survey are reassured that they will not be asked to record their name anywhere on the survey, and are told how their information will be made available to those at their unit and involved in the training evaluation process.

Survey completion is voluntary and Officer Cadets can opt out of participating at any point.

The data set used for this Executive Summary includes data collected from full survey completes only. This report is based on data collected from Officer Cadets who completed their training in survey year 2025/26 (1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026) but also includes historical data from Officer Cadets who completed the survey between survey years 2021/22 and 2024/25.

Survey questions

The questionnaire was designed to include all the key questions raised by the Defence Operational Capability Audit and was developed by a Tri-Service group. The survey is reviewed annually by the Tri-Service Steering Group.

Questions are asked of all Officer Cadets unless they are specific to a sub-group of respondents. For example, questions about set-backs during training will only be asked of those who indicated that they were ill or injured and reported this.

Response rates

Over a twelve-month fieldwork period between 1st April 2025 and 31st March 2026, 607 Officer Cadets completed the survey. All training establishments were directed to give all Officer Cadets access to the survey and an opportunity to complete it. Officer Cadets are not mandated to complete the survey and can opt out if they wish. The tables below present the survey response rates for each Service.

	Total Responses (24/25)	Response Rate (24/25)	**Total Responses (25/26)**	**Response Rate (25/26)**
Army	447	86%	**171**	**34%**
Royal Navy	339	73%	**149**	**35%**
Royal Marines	32	60%	**46**	**81%**
RAF	171	46%	**241**	**77%**

***PLEASE NOTE**: the response rates provided here are approximations based on available figures.*

Statistical reliability

We are confident in the statistical reliability of the survey results based on both the design and execution of the study. The survey has been tested for relevance and understanding. The survey is administered consistently using an online self completion methodology. The sample size achieved was sufficiently large for each Service* to provide reliable feedback on the training experience.

Statistical tests were carried out over time to identify any significant changes compared to the previous year's results at a Service level. This includes the following:

- Army 2025/26 vs Army 2024/25
- Royal Navy 2025/26 vs Royal Navy 2024/25
- Royal Marines 2025/26 vs Royal Marines 2025/26
- RAF 2025/26 vs RAF 2024/25

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). Full details of the testing applied is included in the Background Quality Report.

As a sample of the overall 'population' has completed the survey, we cannot be certain that the figures obtained match those that would have been found if the entire population had been surveyed (i.e. the 'true' values).

For any percentage given, however, we can estimate 'confidence intervals' within which the 'true' values are likely to fall. For example; if 90% of our respondents' base of 171 Army Officer Cadets strongly agreed/agreed that the training was what they expected, we can be 99% confident that the 'true' value would be between 85.2% or 94.8%, i.e. a margin of 4.8% on each side.

Similar margins for other percentages and sub-groups of the respondents are given in the tables on the following page.

Please note, the confidence intervals in the table overleaf refer to questions where all respondents are asked. For routed questions where only a sub-set of respondents are asked (e.g. those who were ill or injured during training), confidence intervals will be larger.

Confidence intervals

The table below shows the confidence intervals for each Service at different performance levels. We can be 99% confident that the 'true' values fall within the ranges shown in the table below.

Size of respondent base on which survey results are based	10% or 90% ±	20% or 80% ±	30% or 70% ±	40% or 60% ±	50% ±
Army (171)	4.8	6.4	7.3	7.9	8.0
Royal Navy (149)	5.1	6.8	7.8	8.4	8.5
Royal Marines (46)	5.1	6.8	7.8	8.4	8.5
RAF (241)	2.4	3.2	3.7	3.9	4.0

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