

The changing role of Reservists

Working together to support the changing role of Reservists





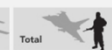
This article relates to the 2013 MOD White Paper ‘Reserves in the Future Force 2020: Valuable and Valued’. If you are an employer of Reservists, you’ll find it a useful summary of the key elements of the White Paper that are relevant to your business or organisation.

Background

In 2010, a Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) was conducted to look at the current structure of the Armed Forces and its ability to meet new security challenges at home and abroad. The Review proposed changes to the structure and the use of the Reserve Forces. These changes would make it necessary to increase the number of Reservists.

Following this Review, the 2011 Independent Commission on the Reserve Forces reported that the Reserves were in decline, particularly in the Army, and needed to be brought up-to-date to meet the demands of the new security environment.

The findings of these two studies led to a Green Paper in November 2012 and a subsequent consultation. The consultation prompted over 3,000 responses, many of which were from employers. The research and consultation have helped shape the 2013 MOD White Paper - ‘Reserves in the Future Force 2020: Valuable and Valued’.

Trained Strength	Training	Mobilisation	Legislation	
Volunteer Reserve Numbers since 1980				
				
Total ¹ Strength in 1980	5,800	63,300	500 ²	69,100
Total Strength in 1990	7,000	72,500	1,800	81,300
Total Strength in 2000	4,078	40,102	1,797	45,977
Current Total Strength	2,526	25,430	1,335	29,291
Total Strength Target by 2020	4,150	38,000	2,300	44,450
Trained Strength Target by 2020	3,100	30,000	1,800	34,900

¹ Trained and untrained

² Note that a number of RAuxF squadrons were formed from 1979 onwards, some as a direct result of the Falkland conflict.

Introduction

Reservists will play an increasingly important role in the Armed Forces. The key points for employers are as follows:

- Most Reservists will have an increased training commitment to ensure they are fully prepared to serve with the Armed Forces when required

- The MOD will build closer relationships with employers, with the aim of giving greater predictability as to when Reservists will be required for training or deployment
- The accredited military training that Reservists receive will help develop highly valued skills that can be easily transferred to their civilian roles
- For employers of mobilised Reservists, the MOD will revise the financial assistance regulations and introduce a financial incentive for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)

Reserve Forces will become even more integrated with their Regular Armed Forces counterparts. Army Reserve Units will be paired with Regular Units to undertake their military training and mobilisation commitments. The aim is to provide additional military capacity as well as harnessing niche skills (such as Cyber skills, languages and engineering) not found in the Regular Armed Forces.

As an integral part of the Armed Forces, Reservists will be used in almost all military operations. Reservists will be required for a broad range of duties (both military and humanitarian) abroad and in the UK:

Abroad:

- Short-term operations such as the evacuation of UK citizens from Lebanon in 2006 and the 2011 Libya operation
- Longer-term stabilisation operations such as in the Balkans, Iraq and Afghanistan

In the UK:

- General homeland security - including activities such as support to the Olympics and Paralympics
- Delivering emergency support such as responding to a foot and mouth crisis or providing flood relief
- Standing national commitments such as State ceremonial events

To enable the above, the MOD is looking to extend the powers of the Reserve Force Act 1996 so that Reservists can be called out for any purpose. Alongside these changes, in response to consultation with employers, the MOD has identified ways to enhance the support it offers employers. This includes providing better communication so that employers will have a clear idea of when their Reservist employees may be required for training or operations - and for how long.

Preparation and timescales

In the coming years, Reservists will be integral to almost every military operation. So the likelihood is they will be required to serve at some point. To help you manage this as an employer, the MOD will provide better communication - so you can predict and plan appropriately when your Reservist employees will be away for training or mobilisation.

How often?

To make the mobilisation process more predictable for you as an employer, the MOD aims to:

- Give employers 28 days' notice for short notice contingent operations

- Give employers three months' notice for longer-term operations
- Give employers at least one year's notice of a Reservist entering the peak period of their 'readiness cycle' (during which mobilisation is likely)

The frequency of mobilisation and notice periods vary according to which of the three Services a Reservist is part of:

Army Reserves and Maritime Reserves

- The intention is that Army and Maritime Reserves will be mobilised no more frequently than once in every five years

Royal Auxiliary Air Force

- Royal Auxiliary Air Force Reserves will be mobilised no more frequently than once in every 3 years

Given the increased reliance on Reservists, the MOD is committed to ensuring they are fully trained and prepared for deployment when needed. As part of this, the MOD is investing an additional £240 million across the three services to improve training for Reservists.



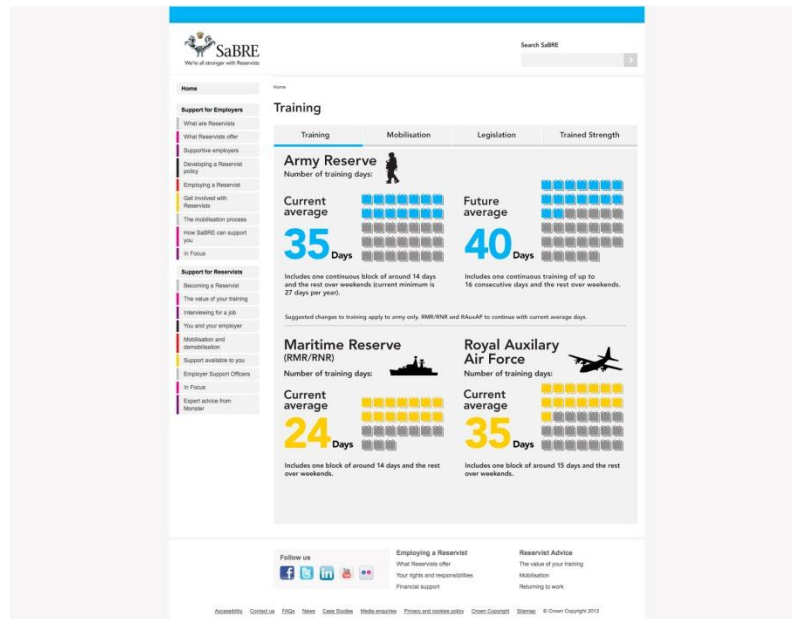
Increased training commitments for Army Reservists

The number of training days for Army Reservists will increase from an annual average of 35 to 40. The precise level of training required will vary according to how close a Reservist is to the peak period of the 'readiness cycle' (that is, the period during which mobilisation is likely).

The MOD will always aim to give sufficient notice to both Reservists and employers, to allow enough time for employers to plan.

Training commitments for Maritime Reserves and Royal Air Force Reserves

The level of training for Maritime Reserves and Royal Air Force Reserves will stay the same as is currently the case.



Mutually beneficial initiatives between employers and the MOD

Accreditation of training

To support employers, the MOD is looking to provide accreditation for specialist skills to make these recognisable and valuable to employers (particularly in construction, cyber, logistics, medical, oil & gas and retail industries).

- The MOD is working to increase the level of accreditation available to Reservists completing trade courses
- By working with trade bodies and awarding organisations, the goal is to match military training closely to existing qualifications and standards
- The MOD also plans to recognise non-technical skills that military training develops, such as leadership, communication, motivation, confidence and the ability to work under pressure
- Officer Initial Training at Sandhurst is already accredited, with plans in place to accredit Soldier Initial Training in the near future

National Relationship Management Scheme

Many of the UK's largest employers have a relationship with other parts of the MOD, in addition to their support for Reservists. As a result, the MOD is developing their approach to employers and employer organisations at a national level. This will help ensure relationships are coherent and productive.

A key part of this is the creation of a National Relationship Management Scheme - to provide a convenient single point of contact for employers. The organisation is being developed in consultation with both employer and employer bodies. It is expected to be in place by April 2014.

The existing national honours and awards system will be used to recognise the highest

levels of support and will be managed through a new National Relationship Management system

Additional initiatives

To fill the training gap between education and work, a wide range of initiatives are planned or already in progress. These will be mutually beneficial for employers and the MOD. These will include:

- Developing joint graduate training schemes in conjunction with employers
- Aligning Reserve recruitment within higher education
- Exploring how military leadership training could play a part in civilian apprenticeships

Delivering capability through Sponsored Reserves ([hyperlink???](#))

The MOD currently uses contractors to deliver certain military capabilities, such as highly specialised transport services. The MOD is working with industry to identify, develop and deliver further opportunities in this area. This will lead to a more consistent and cost-effective approach to the provision of certain capabilities for Defence, and greater commercial opportunities for business.

Support and recognition for employers

As part of the long-term plan for Reservists in the Armed Forces, the MOD is working in close partnership with employers both large and small - to ensure that businesses can prepare for and manage the periods when Reservist employees may be away from the workplace. The MOD want to make sure that Reserve Service is predictable and based on mutual benefit.

Improving financial assistance arrangements

During the consultation, some employers felt that the current levels of financial assistance do not offset the full cost of recruiting, employing and training a replacement, as well as the potential cost of retraining the Reservist on their return. They also pointed out that the arrangements for reclaiming costs were complicated. As a result, many larger employers didn't bother claiming back costs, while smaller employers have to invest significant effort to do so.

The MOD is revising the financial assistance regulations to simplify the administrative arrangements for making a claim. The MOD will also make sure that the types of costs employers can claim, and the financial limits of these claims, are set at an appropriate level.

Financial incentives for SME employers

A general observation from the consultation was that SMEs in particular felt that the benefits of employing a Reservist did not outweigh the costs. In response, the MOD plans to introduce a financial incentive for SME employers (under 250 employees). This incentive is a flat rate payment of £500 per month for the period that a Reservist employee is mobilised. This support is in addition to the existing financial assistance available.

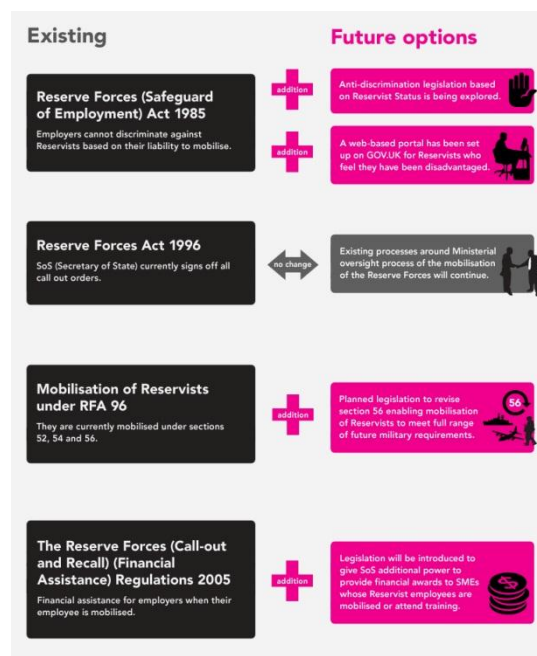
Recognising the contribution made by Reservist Employers

In addition to financial support, the MOD has launched a Corporate Covenant scheme, allowing employers to show their commitment to the Armed Forces. Employers' support for their Reservist employees will continue to be recognised through a SaBRE certificate, signed by the Secretary of State for Defence.

Measures to protect Reservists in the workplace

The MOD is fully committed to an open relationship with employers. It is also committed to protecting the interests of Reservists.

As a result, legislation is planned to provide greater protection against unfair dismissal for Reservists in employment. In addition a web-based portal for Reservists will allow them to report instances of where they feel they have been disadvantaged as a direct result of their service. This will allow the MOD to look into individual issues more closely, while always taking into account their employers' viewpoints.



Army Reserve (Territorial Army) Basing

Rebasing of the Army Reserve was also announced today please visit <[Link to MOD.GOV.uk](https://www.mod.gov.uk) article on rebasing> to find out more.