

FR20 Programme Update – Autumn 2015

Foreword Assistant Chief of Defence Staff (Reserves & Cadets), Major General John Crackett



We continue to make good progress in the delivery of the FR20 Programme. This has been confirmed by the External Scrutiny Team's first statutory report on FR20 and the Reserve Forces in July which concluded that the programme is on or near track for delivery. As you will read below, we continue to improve the Reserve proposition and the relationship between Defence and employers. This is evident from the increasing number of people signing up to the Reserves; the tri-service Reserves strength as at 1 August 2015 is 32,560.

We will continue to provide updates on progress regularly, but if you have any questions on the programme please do contact us.

Reservists on Operations

Reservists continue to provide personnel in support of operations and military tasks worldwide.

As well as continuing to support the train, advise and assist mission in Afghanistan, operations in Cyprus, Northern Iraq and global counter terrorism and counter piracy operations worldwide, small numbers of Reservists have been called out to support our permanent joint operating base in the Falkland Islands and support maritime operations dealing with the migrant crisis in the Mediterranean.

There are currently more than 300 Reservists called out for permanent service.

Overseas training opportunities

As part of the improvements to the offer to Reservists, Reserves now receive high quality, challenging training, including more opportunities to train overseas.

In June, Army Reservists from 3rd Battalion, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment (3 PWRR), trained in the Pyrenees Mountains in Northern Spain with the Spanish Regiment, 62 Regimiento de Cazadores de Montana - a specialist mountain warfare regiment who have been likened to the Royal Marines. It was the first time this regiment has trained alongside the British Army. The training involved intensive military manoeuvres using some of the latest weaponry and equipment in the British Army, including the Javelin anti-tank missile system, individual thermal imagery and night sights.



Lt Col John Baynham, Commanding Officer 3 PWRR, said: "I've been in command of the battalion for two and a half years and the difference has been astonishing. The equipment we've been given and the amount of uniform and everything else, you can't really tell the Regulars from the Reserves... and they've demonstrated that they've really come forward an awful long way."

In July, more than 25 Royal Navy Reservists deployed to Cyprus on Exercise Helios Encounter (ExHE). This qualifies the Reservist in basic and tactical weapons skills and gives them exposure to operations on Royal Navy warships. ExHE exposes Warfare Seaman Reservists to a hot environment, using a simulated mobilisation process with the aim of practising force protection skills and preparing for Royal Naval Service, particularly for operations in the Gulf.



This year, ExHE was fortunate enough to be visited by HRH Prince Michael of Kent, who spent a day on the ranges and with the exercising troops.

Reserves Day 2015

Reservists across the country wore their military uniforms in their civilian places of work to celebrate their commitment to the Reserve Forces on 24 June for the inaugural Reserves Day.

Reserves Day, previously known as Uniform to Work Day, was not only a chance for the UK's thousands of Reservists to show their commitment, it was also an opportunity for the hundreds of employers across the country to recognise their Reservist employees.

Employers such as British Airways, Bentley, BT, Google, National Express, Rolls-Royce, Tesco, The AA and Vodafone, as well as a number of industry partners including BAE Systems, Carillion and Serco, all showed their support by holding events and seminars to promote the work of their employees who are Reservists; and also invited their employees to wear their military uniform at work.

Reserves Day was also celebrated at an event at Admiralty House in London. Ministers and senior military personnel attended and were joined by more than 20 Reservists and their employers as a way of saying thank you to those who continue to support the Reserves.

Speaking at the event, Secretary of State for Defence, Michael Fallon, said: "Reserves Day is the moment to celebrate the bravery, sacrifice and service of all those who give up their spare time to protect our nation's security at home and overseas."



The Reserves Experience goes nationwide

Following on from the success of the London event in January, the Reserves Experience took to the road with the first of the planned regional events taking place in Birmingham on 24 June, giving attendees a taster of the opportunities, challenges and rewards open to Reservists.

People from ten government departments and arm's length bodies as well as from the wider public sector from across the Midlands attended the event held at the Council House in the heart of Birmingham city centre. Senior officials from across government attended the event along with Minister for Reserves, Julian Brazier, and PUS Jon Thompson representing the MOD. The Mayor of Birmingham even came along to support the event.

The Reserves Experience is designed to give both line managers and their teams an insight into the Reserve Forces – who they are, what they do and how the training, skills and experience gained in the Reserves can be used to improve performance in the day job, to the benefit of the whole organisation.



The Reserves Experience in Birmingham was designed and run by 11 Signal Brigade who are based in the West Midlands. It aimed to showcase the variety of roles within the Reserves and give attendees the opportunity to get a firsthand experience of Force Protection, Capacity Building and Logistics. They were also able to speak to people from within the Civil Service who are already Reservists and to the three Services about the opportunities available. One attendee said: "As I had no prior knowledge of the Reserves, every aspect of the day was very helpful and interesting".

Further regional Reserve Experience events will be taking place this year in the following cities:

- Cardiff – Tuesday 29 September (www.re-cardiff.eventbrite.co.uk)
- Manchester – Thursday 15 October (www.re-manchester.eventbrite.co.uk)
- Edinburgh – Tuesday 27 October (www.re-edinburgh.eventbrite.co.uk)
- Glasgow – Thursday 29 October (www.re-glasgow.eventbrite.co.uk)

Working with employers

Defence is committed to developing a closer relationship with employers and is constantly improving its communications and engagement with employers. Through partnering initiatives we seek to identify and better exploit those areas which mutually benefit the employer, Defence and the individual.

The MOD's effort to develop this relationship is evident from more than 670 employers signing the Corporate Covenant to date. These companies, including Tesco, Asda, BT Group, Amazon UK and PwC, have expressed their commitment to the Armed Forces by pledging support across a range of Defence Personnel issues.

Royal Mail recently added their name to this list. Chief Executive, Moya Greene, signed the Corporate Covenant with Secretary of State for Defence, Michael Fallon at Mount Pleasant Mail Centre in North London on 28 July, accompanied by Royal Mail Reservists (pictured). Royal Mail's Corporate Covenant pledge includes a commitment to support employees who choose to be members of the Reserve Forces, including by accommodating their training and mobilisation, and actively support Reserves Day. Michael Fallon said: "Having such a large, British institution putting its name to the covenant underlines the deep commitment within the business community to better support those who have bravely served their country."



Defence's improved relationship with employers is now beginning to bear fruit, particularly for Reserve units in the form of collaborative manning. The Army is forging strategic partnerships to promote a supportive relationship between key employers and Reservists, ensuring that the benefits of Reserve service are understood and valued. Regiments with natural links to industry sectors are at the forefront of these partnerships. For example, the Royal Signals Reserve is forging links with communications companies such as BT, Vodafone, HP and Virgin Media, the Intelligence Corps has links with the Office of National Statistics and the Military Provost Guard Service is partnering with Serco.

Civilian qualifications for Reserves

The Army has developed employability, leadership and management, and instructor-related qualifications that articulate the core skills and experience gained through military service.

A lack of qualifications and poor articulation of the experience gained through military service means that employers are less able to judge a Reservist's potential. The Army Skills Offer articulates the core skills that can be developed through military service, underpinned by national qualifications that are of value in wider employment. These qualifications provide tangible and national recognition of achievement, and reinforce the professional and personal development benefits to Reserves.

The Army Skills Offer to Regular and Reserve personnel and their current and future civilian



employers is that throughout a soldier's Army career the Army will provide opportunities for them to gain civilian qualifications as a result of Army training and service. These qualifications range from national Level 1-8 on the Qualifications Credit Framework and include academic and vocational qualifications for pan-Army training and service.

The Army Skills Offer will provide and pay for one qualification per course for soldiers who have successfully completed Phase one, two and three training; and for each level of Command Leadership and Management training. So far, more than 17,000

applications have been received from Regular and Reserve personnel.

Further information on the Army Skills Offer is available at: www.army.mod.uk/qualifications.

RAF Reservists in Sierra Leone

In April, three RAF Reservists deployed to Sierra Leone as part of the UK's effort against the Ebola outbreak. The medic Reservists were deployed alongside Regular and Reserve colleagues from all three Services as individual augmentees with 34 Field Hospital after 4626 Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron was asked to provide Emergency Department and Infection Prevention & Control specialists. Flt Lt Trudgeon worked as an infection control nursing officer, whilst Flt Lt Hodson and Sgt Jones worked as part of the nursing team in the Kerry Town Treatment Unit.



As they are all qualified flight nurses with previous transfer experience, they were allocated to the team in charge of transferring patients from the treatment facility to the airport for repatriation, as an additional duty. They were also involved in the training of clinical staff at the local military hospital and spent time within the clinical areas mentoring staff in correct Infection Prevention & Control practices.

The Reservists said that the Operation was “a very different tour from our previous experiences, with very different challenges... the knowledge we have gained from working in a level four infectious disease facility will remain with us for many years to come.”

Reserves post-nominal comes into effect

Reserve Forces personnel who complete 10 years' continuous service will now be able to use the new post-nominal letters “VR”, denoting "Volunteer Reserve". Members of the Volunteer Reserve Forces, regardless of rank or Service, will be eligible to use these post-nominal letters with the entitlement retrospective to 1 April 1999. On completion of 10 years' continuous service, Reservists should confirm eligibility to use the post-nominal with their unit administration office.

For more information on the post-nominals and to confirm eligibility, please read the associated DIN, available at the following link (DII account holders only):

defenceintranet.diif.r.mil.uk/libraries/corporate/DINShonours/2015/2015DIN09-018.pdf

Reserves Continuous Attitude Survey 2015

The results of this year's Reserves Continuous Attitude Survey (ResCAS) were published on 11 June.

The ResCAS results provide important evidence on the mood and attitudes of serving Reservists. This helps the MOD to understand the opinions of Reservists so that policy development supports and enables Reserve Service.

This is the second ResCAS survey and shows that 92% of Reservists feel proud to be in the Reserves with 86% ready to recommend joining the Reserves to others. Around three quarters of those surveyed are satisfied with Service life in general compared with 8% who were dissatisfied.

A full copy of the report can be found here:

www.gov.uk/government/collections/tri-service-reserves-continuous-attitude-survey-index

Monthly Service Personnel Statistics

The first edition of Monthly Service Personnel Statistics (MSPS) was published in August 2015. The new publication covers Strength, Requirement, Intake and Outflow for UK Service Personnel, Full-time UK Armed Forces and Regular and Reserve personnel. It is also the first publication of monthly Reserves statistics and quarterly applications statistics. This replaces the Reserves Quarterly Personnel Report (QPR).

The September 2015 MSPS provides data as at 1 August 2015 and can be found at the following link:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/459461/Service_Personnel_Statistics-1-August-2015.pdf

Minister for Reserves, Julian Brazier said: “I am delighted that we continue to see a strengthening trend in Reserve recruiting, with nearly 8,000 recruited in the past year.”