



**PARTNERING WITH DEFENCE:
NATIONAL EMPLOYER CONFERENCE
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THE SERVICE FAMILIES FEDERATIONS**



The Naval Service

- There are currently 30,200 serving members of the Naval Service and 2,600 serving members of the Maritime Reserves (Royal Naval Reserve and Royal Marines Reserve)
- 45% of the Naval Service is actively deployed globally at any time
- It is the most separated of the 3 Services. Personnel can expect to be away from home for 660 days over a 3 year period
- Only 5,000 families live in Service Family Accommodation (SFA). The majority of Naval Service families live their own homes, in civilian communities, around the UK



The Army

- The British Army consists of Regular Forces and Volunteer Reserves. There are currently over 89,000 Full-time Serving Personnel and over 24,000 Volunteer Reserves
- When Soldiers are deployed (for example to Iraq or Afghanistan) they are generally away from home for 6-9 months
- 10% of Army personnel live overseas with their families
- 24,113 Army Families live in SFA, with another 30% living in private accommodation



The Royal Air Force

- In 2015, the RAF will consist of around 33,000 full time regular personnel and 1800 part time reserve personnel
- The roles of the RAF include delivering control of the air through offensive and defensive operations, and providing other supporting air operations, such as reconnaissance and surveillance, air transport and air-to-air refuelling
- RAF Families are widely dispersed across the UK and around 65% of them own their own home. Others live in SFA on, or near to, RAF bases
- It's a complex, technical and varied business: Our people are highly qualified, motivated and committed, and have a huge range of transferable skills



The Armed Forces Corporate Covenant

*“We, the undersigned, commit to honour the Armed Forces Covenant and support the Armed Forces Community. We recognise the value Serving Personnel, both Regular and Reservists, Veterans and **military families** contribute to our business and our country”*

How can your company support the Armed Forces Community through your Corporate Covenant Commitments?



Employment Opportunities for Service Families

Understanding the challenges Service spouses/partners face when trying to pursue their own careers

- A disjointed employment history often reflects the demands of mobility, or the lack of employment opportunities in more remote areas or on overseas postings, rather than any other reason
- Further professional training and career development opportunities can be difficult to access or complete if you are part of a mobile family or have a spouse who is frequently away for extended periods of time, often at short notice
- Many Service spouses/partners are highly talented and well qualified and they will show a high level of commitment to a company – they just need an opportunity to demonstrate what they can do



What can your company do to support Service spouses/partners into employment?

- Offer opportunities for work experience/internships
- See beyond the gaps in a CV. If the applicant meets the eligibility criteria for a job, why not offer a Guaranteed Interview?
- Support requests to transfer or find alternative roles within your company if your employee needs to move because of a Service posting
- Implement flexible working patterns
- Consider offering a degree of flexibility in granting leave before, during and after a partner's operational deployment
- What about alternative methods of working – could that job be done by a home-based worker?



HOUSING

Many Armed Forces families live in their own homes but this can create unique issues, especially when they are posted around the country or overseas

- For example, some homeowners face financial penalties as their mortgage providers make them convert their mortgages to 'buy-to-let' if they have to rent out their houses during their posting

Can your company help families overcome some of these problems?

- If you offer mortgages, could you consider whether your consent-to-let criteria could be updated, so that personnel posted overseas, or to a different unit more than 50 miles away, could rent out their property for the duration of their posting, without incurring any additional mortgage costs?



LIVING AND WORKING OVERSEAS

Armed Forces families can be posted overseas, and whilst this could be a great opportunity for them, it can also create unique problems, during and after their posting. These can include:

- Gaps in their credit history
- Problems managing contracts, such as mobile phones
- Lack of recognition of British Forces Post Office (BFPO) addresses
- Not having a registered UK address
- Challenges contacting companies in the UK which only advertise 0800 or 0845 telephone numbers
- Banks and building societies insisting that they need to see clients 'in the branch'



So what could your company do to help?

- Consider whether there are any exceptional circumstances that could be taken into account e.g. if a family member applies to open a new bank account or applies for credit but has lived outside the UK for three years
- Recognise BFPO addresses and use the BFPO shadow post codes to ensure applications can be completed and processed
- Recognise and consider any gaps in an individual's credit history by dealing with them **in person** or by creating an on-line application specifically for the Armed Forces
- Allow Armed Forces families to freeze, or terminate, their contracts at no, or minimal, cost if they are deployed on operations or posted overseas
- Could you have designated members of staff, or Champions, to deal with Armed Forces families?



Military families are not asking for special treatment, just a recognition that some aspects of their lives can be affected because they are part of a mobile military community

As you continue to develop your Corporate Covenant commitments, please consider whether your current company policies might place military families at a disadvantage

This really will show our families that you do understand and want to support them



ANY QUESTIONS?