

UNITED KINGDOM - NATIONAL REPORT 2005

Policy Changes/New Policy

1. Flexible and Alternative Working Patterns. The UK Armed Forces recognise that the balance between personal life and Service commitments is important. A policy on managing the working day which enables personnel to work hours different to the norm in their particular working environment was introduced last year and was re-issued in March 2005. Also detailed guidance on career breaks will be published this year. A review into the scope for alternative working arrangements without compromising operational capability is continuing.

2. Maternity Policy. Maternity policy for women in the Regular Armed Forces was updated and released in July 2004. It includes a provision protecting women from deployment for at least 6 months after childbirth, unless they volunteer otherwise, and a commitment that the Services will endeavour not to deploy both serving parents at the same time where this does not compromise operational capability. A simple, web-based leaflet on maternity provisions will be issued this summer. In addition, the UK Armed Forces is participating in a government wide consultation on national proposals to increase maternity provisions.

Organisation

3. This table¹ shows the total numbers of men and women in the Armed Forces:

	Men	% Men	Women	% Women	TOTAL
Royal Navy	36,470	90.7%	3,730	9.3%	40,200
Army	102,410	92.5%	8,280	7.5%	110,690
Royal Air Force	45,890	88.0%	6,260	12.0%	52,150
TOTAL	184,770	91.0%	18,270	9.0%	203,040

Female personnel make up nearly 9% of the strength of the Regular Armed Forces. It is expected that this proportion will rise because a higher percentage of women have enlisted in the Armed Forces over the past 5 years. Further statistical information is at Annex A.

Employment

4. The UK Armed Forces consist entirely of volunteer Service personnel and today more women are serving in a greater variety of posts than ever before. Women are integrated into the three main Service branches – the Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force (the Medical Services are not a separate Service in the UK Armed Forces) – and serve in all specialisations, except those where the primary duty is “to close with and kill the enemy.” Women are, therefore, excluded from the Royal Marines General Service (as Royal Marine Commandos), the Household Cavalry and Royal Armoured Corps, the Infantry and the Royal Air Force Regiment. The exclusion does not, however, prevent them serving on the establishment of (i.e. as part of) such units in administrative and support roles. For health reasons, service in submarines or as mine clearance divers continues to be precluded. Since the early 1990s, women have taken on an increasingly wide range of roles and tasks, many of them front line. The highest ranking women in the UK Armed Forces in the most recent survey were:

Royal Navy – 2 Commodores and 1 Captain
Army – 2 Brigadiers and 21 Colonels
Royal Air Force – 13 Group Captains

¹ Extracted from Defence Analytical Service Agency statistics, TSP 1: UK Regular Forces Strengths and Changes at 1 February 2005.

5. Royal Navy. 71% of jobs within the RN are open to women. Most women are choosing to enter either the logistics branch or the warfare branch, although they form a very high proportion of the medical branch. Since the first woman took command of a fast training boat more than 5 years ago, 11 have subsequently commanded and at the moment women are commanding 4 of the 14 fast training boats, and one of the mine warfare vessels. Six women have qualified as principal warfare officers and a further 3 women are in training. Currently there are about 1300 women serving in some 53 ships at all ranks and rates, and a further 230 women are serving in other operational or sea-going posts. One of the Royal Navy's most senior officers, a Commodore, has recently taken over as the Base Commander at Faslane, one of only 3 major naval bases in the United Kingdom and a base port for the Trident nuclear deterrent submarine fleet.

6. Army. 71% of posts in the Army are open to women. During the past year female officers have started to fill mainstream command appointments. The Northern Ireland Combat Service Support Regiment, the Staff and Personnel Support Training School and 2 University Officer Training Corps are currently commanded by women. A female officer is due to work in the Joint Military Analysis Centre as part of the UN mission in Liberia and there are currently female personnel in a variety of posts in Iraq (including medical, EOD, communications and intelligence jobs), and filling vital appointments in the Balkans and Afghanistan.

7. Royal Air Force. 96% of posts in the Royal Air Force are open to women. Over recent years female pilots have borne a heavy operational responsibility in Afghanistan and Iraq, and RAF Servicewomen are increasingly serving in command appointments. The operations wings at both RAF Shawbury and Northolt are commanded by women, and a woman is in charge of the engineering wing at RAF Lyneham. Female Group Captains head up the RAF's recruitment organisation, their public relations department and their operational policy staffs at RAF Strike Command. Six flying Squadrons in the Royal Air Force have female flight commanders. Overall, women now comprise 12% of the Royal Air Force's strength.

Recruitment and Retention

8. Percentage intake figures from civilian life for women, for the 12 months up to the date shown, for each of the past six years are set out in the table² below:

Intake to the UK Regular Forces: Women as a % of the Total						
	01 Apr 00	01 Apr 01	01 Apr 02	01 Mar 03	01 Feb 04	01 Feb 05
Royal Navy	14%	14%	15%	16%	14%	13%
Army	11%	9%	8%	8%	9%	8%
Royal Air Force	17%	18%	19%	20%	24%	25%
TOTAL	12%	11%	11%	12%	12%	11%

Figures for the intake of women into the Services have varied by a few percentage points over the last six years.

9. A research study is currently underway to investigate why women typically serve fewer years than their male counterparts. It is hoped that the results of the study will help to identify ways to improve retention.

Training

10. In most situations UK Service men and women continue to train together to the same job-related standard. There is a growing concern that this has contributed to a much higher failure rate among women in initial and basic training mainly through physical injury and subsequent medical discharge. Women generally have to work harder than men on physical training and this creates a greater incidence of injury (mainly lower limb) amongst women.

² Extracted from Defence Analytical Service Agency statistics, TSP 1: UK Regular Forces Strengths and Changes at 1 February 2004.

Following analysis, the Army revised its basic training regimes to take into account that that men and women develop fitness and muscular strength at different rates. There is no intention to lower job related standards. Further work will be undertaken in the near future on gender issues in selection tests and training in all 3 Services.

Deployments

11. The UK Armed Forces are currently operationally deployed in many locations worldwide. Consistent with the UK's policy on the deployment of Servicewomen, women deploy alongside their male counterparts and there are no restrictions on their deployment, unless they are pregnant. Cultural sensitivities of any prospective host nation are, however, taken into account, prior to deploying onto that nation's territory.

Education & Awareness

12. It is recognised that the management of "difference" within the Armed Forces includes gender and is a core leadership responsibility. Equality and diversity have been incorporated into leadership training at all levels within the Services.

Special Interest Items

13. UK MoD is concerned that internal surveys show that the perception that sexual harassment exists in the Armed Forces is greater than the number of people who report experiencing it. On 1 April 2005 they introduced a harmonised harassment complaints procedures (which are the same for the Armed Forces and the Civil Service), and they are actively looking at other ways to tackle harassment in the Armed Forces.

14. The UK MoD is participating in a cross-government working group on implementing UNSCR 1325.

Conclusions.

15. The representation of Servicewomen in the UK military is growing, and we continue to look at ways of improving recruitment and retention. Our challenge is to provide supportive arrangements without making women feel that they are being singled out for special treatment. Our Armed Forces have continued to be involved in a wide range of demanding tasks at home and overseas. The contribution of Servicewomen, alongside their male counterparts has been vital, and it is expected that their role will continue to develop in future operations. Interest in understanding issues of gender in the operational context is growing at both doctrinal and policy-level.

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Service ROYAL NAVY		Year 2005	Representation by Occupational Groups				
		OFFICERS					
Function		TOTAL	%	MEN	% MEN	WOMEN	% WOMEN
Operations (Combat Arms)	Group 1	3,470	44.7%	3,240	93.5%	230	6.5%
	Group 2	740	9.4%	740	21.4%	0	0.0%
	Group 3	10	0.2%	10	0.3%	0	0.0%
Logistics		630	8.3%	490	14.1%	140	22.7%
Engineering		2,280	29.4%	2,150	61.9%	130	5.7%
Support (Admin/Personnel)		80	1.0%	70	2.1%	0	2.6%
Medical/Dental		550	6.7%	400	11.5%	150	26.9%
Professional (Legal)		0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Other		10	0.9%	0	0.0%	10	100.0%
TOTAL		7,760	100.0%	7,100	91.6%	660	8.4%

Service ROYAL NAVY		Year 2005	Representation by Occupational Groups				
		NCOS/TROOPS					
Function		TOTAL	%	MEN	% MEN	WOMEN	% WOMEN
Operations (Combat Arms)	Group 1	9,750	30.0%	8,610	88.3%	1,140	11.7%
	Group 2	6,260	19.3%	6,220	99.4%	40	0.6%
	Group 3	310	1.0%	260	87.4%	50	15.3%
Logistics		3,820	11.8%	2,790	73.0%	1,030	27.0%
Engineering		11,190	34.5%	10,860	97.0%	340	3.0%
Support (Admin/Personnel)		60	0.2%	40	70.9%	20	29.1%
Medical/Dental		1,060	3.3%	590	55.5%	470	44.5%
Professional (Legal)		0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Other		0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
TOTAL		32,440	100.0%	29,370	90.5%	3,070	9.5%

Service ARMY		Year 2005	Representation by Occupational Groups				
		OFFICERS					
Function		TOTAL	%	MEN	% MEN	WOMEN	% WOMEN
Operations (Combat Arms)	Group 1	2,940	20.1%	2,930	99.9%	0	0.1%
	Group 2	3,870	24.8%	3,670	94.8%	200	5.2%
Logistics		1,620	11.0%	1,400	86.5%	220	13.5%
Engineering/Comm		1,840	12.2%	1,670	91.0%	170	9.0%
Support (Admin/Personnel)		980	7.9%	720	74.3%	250	25.7%
Medical/Dental		1,360	9.2%	910	67.0%	450	33.0%
Professional (Legal)		90	0.6%	70	71.7%	30	28.3%
Other (finance)		2,010	14.1%	1,780	88.7%	230	11.3%
TOTAL		14,710	100.0%	13,170	89.5%	1,540	10.5%

Service ARMY		Year 2005	Representation by Occupational Groups				
			NCOS/TROOPS				
Function		TOTAL	%	MEN	% MEN	WOMEN	% WOMEN
Operations (Combat Arms)	Group 1	24,590	26.0%	24,950	100.0%	0	0.0%
	Group 2	25,750	26.8%	24,930	96.8%	830	3.2%
Logistics		15,460	16.1%	13,810	89.3%	1,660	10.7%
Engineering/Comm		19,340	20.1%	18,180	94.0%	1,160	6.0%
Support (Admin/Personnel)		5,970	6.2%	4,420	74.0%	1,560	26.0%
Medical/Dental		3,240	3.4%	1,940	59.8%	1,300	40.2%
Professional (Legal)		0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Other (finance)		1,260	1.3%	1,020	81.0%	240	19.0%
TOTAL		95,980	100.0%	82,240	93.0%	6,740	7.0%

Service ROYAL AIR FORCE		Year 2005	Representation by Occupational Groups				
			OFFICERS				
Function		TOTAL	%	MEN	% MEN	WOMEN	% WOMEN
Operations (Combat Arms)	Group 1	4,180	39.3%	4,020	96.3%	160	3.7%
	Group 2	370	3.4%	370	100.0%	0	0.0%
	Group 3	1,600	15.1%	1,200	75.2%	400	24.8%
Supply		700	6.5%	560	80.4%	140	19.6%
Engineering/Comm		1,870	17.5%	1,770	94.5%	100	5.5%
Support (Admin/Personnel)		1,280	12.0%	900	70.1%	380	29.9%
Medical/Dental		530	5.0%	340	63.8%	190	36.2%
Professional (Legal)		40	0.4%	30	71.8%	10	38.2%
Other (Chaplains, Music)		80	0.8%	80	97.5%	0	2.5%
TOTAL		10,640	100.0%	9,260	87.0%	1,380	13.0%

Service ROYAL AIR FORCE		Year 2005	Representation by Occupational Groups				
			NCOS/TROOPS				
Function		TOTAL	%	MEN	% MEN	WOMEN	% WOMEN
Operations (Combat Arms)	Group 1	1,320	3.2%	1,270	96.1%	50	3.9%
	Group 2	1,960	4.7%	1,960	100.0%	0	0.0%
	Group 3	2,800	6.7%	2,320	83.1%	470	16.9%
Supply		3,250	7.8%	2,770	85.3%	480	14.7%
Engineering/Comm		22,190	53.5%	21,030	94.8%	1,160	5.2%
Support (Admin/Personnel)		7,550	18.2%	5,940	78.6%	1,610	21.4%
Medical/Dental		1,480	3.6%	540	36.3%	940	63.7%
Professional (Legal)		0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Other (Photography, Music)		960	2.3%	800	82.9%	160	17.1%
TOTAL		41,510	100.0%	36,620	88.2%	4,880	11.8%