

NATIONAL RESERVES FORCES STATUS FORMAT

UNITED KINGDOM

GENERAL INFORMATION

UK Armed Forces Strengths (includes trained and untrained) as at Mar 06.				
	Navy ¹	Army	Air Force	Total
Regular Armed Forces	40,160	111,910	49,280	201,350
Volunteer Reserves	3,150	32,090	1,825	37,065
Regular Reserves subject to call-out ²	10,520	31,690	8,090	50,300
Regular Reserves subject to recall ³	9,070	61,780	27,290	98,140

BASIC ORGANISATION PRINCIPLES

The UK government has planned and structured the armed forces on the basis that any war fighting operation would draw on support from the Reserve Forces. The use of reservists is a prudent approach to maintain full time armed forces in no greater strength than is needed for normal peacetime activity and to meet a limited range of emergencies. The use of reservists for operations is fully in line with the tenets of the UK Strategic Defence Review, namely having more capable, useable, integrated and relevant reserve forces that support their counterparts on operations overseas.

MAIN LEGISLATION

The Reserve Forces Act 1996 (RFA96) provides the legal framework within which the Reserve forces are formed, the authority to pay members of those forces, the legal mechanism for training and the powers of call-out. The three main powers to call-out Reservists are:

- Section 52. If it appears to Her Majesty that national danger is imminent or that a great emergency has arisen; or in the event of an actual or apprehended attack on the United Kingdom. Length of call-out – up to 3 years in 6 years.
- Section 54. The Secretary of State may make an order authorising call-out if it appears to him that warlike operations are in preparation or progress. Length of call-out – up to 1 year in 3 years.
- Section 56. The Secretary of State may authorise call-out if it appears to him that it is necessary or desirable to use armed forces on operations outside the UK for the protection of life and property; or on operations anywhere in the world for the alleviation of distress or the preservation of life or property in time of disaster or apprehended disaster. Length of call-out – up to 9 months in 27 months.

FUNCTION OF RESERVES

Once called-out, use of Reserves is unrestricted; Reserves are treated as Regulars. Main uses of Reserves are:

- to provide specialist capability not normally available in the Regular Armed Forces.

¹ Includes Marines

² Ex members of Regular Armed Forces who may be called out under RFA 96.

³ Pensioners and members of the Long Term Reserve who may be recalled only under an equivalent power to Section 52 of RFA 96.

- to fill out orders of battle with individuals or units.

Volunteer Reserves also contribute to Civil Contingencies Reaction Forces (CCRFs). 14 CCRFs each provide a pool of approximately 500 trained volunteers in each region to provide assistance to local authorities and emergency services, whether the problem arose from terrorist attack, accident or natural disaster.

CATEGORISATION/READINESS

Notice. There is no stated minimum notice for call-out but policy is to try to give Reservists at least 21 days notice for mobilisation.

Regular Reserve. By nature the Regular Reserve skill-sets match those of the Regular Armed Forces but as Regular Reserves undertake no routine training they may suffer from skill fade. There is no stated readiness state for Regular Reservists.

Volunteer Reserve. Readiness for role for Volunteer Reservists varies by Service and trade. Categorisation within the Volunteer Reserve does not always mirror the Regular Armed Forces; some specialist roles are only filled by Reserves.

High Readiness Reserves (HRR). With their employers agreement, HRR are volunteers who place themselves at short notice for mobilisation, e.g. 5 days notice. HRR are reviewed annually.

Sponsored Reserves. The Sponsored Reserve concept allows for the letting of defence contracts on condition that an agreed element of the contractor's workforce has a reserve liability. This element can be trained for, and called out for, operations to undertake the contracted task as members of the armed forces.

FUNDING

Reserves are funded from the Defence Budget. Reserves are fully integrated with Regular Forces. Identifying the true cost of UK Reserve Forces by breaking out costs of shared assets is impractical.

Employer Support, including the Supporting Britain's Reservists and Employers (SaBRE) campaign – c.£3M.

TRAINING

Volunteer Reserves - 15 days continuous plus 4 periods each not longer than 36 hours plus additional training as required when mobilised. Qualifications obtained are dependent on Branch Trade and Skill of Reservist. Dependent on unit and role some training is carried out with Regular Armed Forces.

Regular Reserves, Long Term Reserves, Pensioners – Nil training unless mobilised⁴.

INTERNET

- For Royal Naval Reserve and Royal Marines Reserve - <http://www.royal-navy.mod.uk/> and click link "Operations and Support".
- For Territorial Army (Army Volunteer Reserve) - <http://www.ta.mod.uk/>
- For Royal Air Force Reserves - <http://www.rafrereserves.com>
- For Employer Support - <http://www.sabre.mod.uk/>

⁴ Legislation exists to call-out Regular Reserves for training but training is not currently funded.