



Future Reserves 2020

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The UK's Reserve Forces are changing. Found to be neglected, under-exploited and in decline by an Independent Commission, the Armed Forces are being restructured to make the Reserves an integral element of 'Future Force 2020'. Reservists will be mobilised and deployed on a far wider range of operations than now and will be more closely aligned with Regulars, particularly in the Army. A major recruitment drive is underway to reach a trained Reserve strength of 35,000 by 2018.

The Ministry of Defence laid out its plans in a White Paper in July 2013 entitled *Reserves in the Future Force 2020: Valuable and Valued* promising a new relationship with Reservists, Reservists' families, employers and society. The changes are significant and concerns about the plans have focused on whether the MOD can achieve its recruitment targets; the impact on employers; and whether the Army in particular will be able to fulfil all of its military tasks with a reduced Regular force and greater reliance on Reservists. The Army will be most affected by the changes out of the three Services.

Some of the recommendations require legislation and the Defence Reform Bill currently before Parliament will:

- Formally change the name of the Territorial Army to the Army Reserves
- Expand the range of tasks Reservists can be called out for
- Enable the Secretary of State to make additional payments to employers when Reservists are mobilised
- Provide greater employment protection for Reservists

More information on the Defence Reform Bill can be found in Library Research Paper [Defence Reform Bill](#), RP13/45, 11 July 2013 and [Defence Reform Bill: Public Bill Committee Stage](#), SN06732, 24 September 2013. This note focuses on the detail of the proposed changes to the UK's Reserve Forces and reaction to them.

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1 Summary

The Reserves of the future will be integral to, and fully integrated with, our Regular forces.¹

The Armed Forces are undergoing a period of significant change. The Ministry of Defence's plans to restructure the Armed Forces into what is termed Future Force 2020² first outlined in the 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review, involves a substantial and significant shift in the way in which Reserve Forces will be used. This will be particularly so for the Army, less so for the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force.

The 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review called for a study into the future role and structure of the Reserves.³ An independent commission was subsequently convened, chaired by Vice Chief of Defence Staff General Sir Nicholas Houghton, Julian Brazier MP and Lieutenant General (retired) Sir Graeme Lamb. The Commission published its report, *Future Reserves 2020*, in July 2011. The Commission reached four broad conclusions:

- Our Reserve Forces are in decline
- We have failed to modernise Reservist roles
- We are not exploiting the potential of our Reserves
- We are not using the Reserves efficiently⁴

The Commission made a number of recommendations which were broadly accepted by the Secretary of State for Defence when he outlined his overall vision for the Reserves in July 2012. He pledged an additional £1.8 billion in spending on the Reserves over the next ten years and announced an ambitious plan to grow the trained strength of the Reserves to 35,000 by 2018. A Green Paper outlining the MOD's proposals was published in November 2012 as Command Paper 8475, *Future Reserves 2020: Delivering the Nation's Security Together*. A three month consultation began at the same time.

The MOD subsequently published a White Paper based on the responses to the consultation entitled *Reserves in the Future Force 2020: Valuable and Valued*⁵ in July 2013. Its central theme is the new relationship Defence is seeking to build with Reservists and their families, employers and society. Specifically, the MOD is seeking to make serving as and employing a Reservist more appealing, challenging and financially rewarding.

¹ Secretary of State for Defence, HC Deb 9 November 2012 c1026

² Future Force 2020 outlines the force structure the MOD believes it will need over the next decade and the changes required to deliver them. It is made up of three elements: the Deployed Force; the High Readiness Force and the Lower Readiness Force.

³ HM Government, *Strategic Defence and Security Review*, October 2010, Cm 7948, 2.A.12

⁴ The Independent Commission to Review the United Kingdom's Reserve Forces, *Future Reserves 2020*, July 2011

⁵ Ministry of Defence, *Reserves in the Future Force 2020: Valuable and Valued*, Cm 8655, July 2013

The key changes proposed in the White Paper are:

- New structure – Reserves to play a far greater role as part of an Integrated Force
- Legislative action to enable mobilisation for all types of operations
- Improved benefits and wider support package
- Territorial Army to change name to Army Reserve
- Current Army Reserve to be renamed Regular Reserve
- Investment of £1.8 billion for Reserves across all three services
- More notice of training commitments and mobilisation periods
- Pairing of regular and reserve units in the Army
- Army Reserve to deploy more often as sub-units and formed units
- More command opportunities for Reservists
- Increase Reservists total remuneration through paid annual leave and accrued pension entitlements
- Financial bonus for those leaving the Regular Army to join the Reserves
- Revision of the Proposition for Reserves
- Improve support to reservist families when reservists not-mobilised
- Accredited military training and experience with recognised civilian qualifications
- £500 additional monthly payment for small and medium sized enterprises when an employer is mobilised
- Closure of a number of Reserve bases and training centres
- Greater employment protection for reservists
- No legislation to guard against discrimination in or when seeking employment

The Defence Secretary appointed an External Scrutiny group to provide independent oversight of the Future Reserves 2020 programme. It is led by Lieutenant General Brims and published its first report, covering the six month period up to March 2013, in July 2013.⁶

The changes will be most keenly felt in the Army. This is because the Army is being completely restructured to accommodate the demands of Future Force 2020, the need to cut the numbers of Regular soldiers and to integrate its Reserves. Neither the Royal Air Force nor the Royal Navy are going through such a restructure.

⁶ Ministry of Defence, *Future Reserves 2020: External Scrutiny Report*, 3 July 2013

The MOD unveiled a new Army structure in July 2012. *Army 2020*⁷ envisages an integrated army with Regular and Reserve forces training and deploying side by side. Reserves will be used routinely rather than in extreme circumstances. Philip Hammond, the Defence Secretary, summarised the new structure when he said “in the past, the reserve may have come to be seen by some as an add-on to the Army; in future, the reserve will be a vital integrated component of the Army.”⁸ The size of the Future Army will be 112,000, consisting of 82,000 Regular personnel and 30,000 trained Reservists. To achieve this target, the Army is reducing the Regular Army by 19,500 personnel and actively recruiting to increase the Army Reserve to 30,000, from a current trained strength of 19,000.⁹ There are also significant changes to Army basing. The MOD unveiled a new basing plan for the Regular Army in March 2013¹⁰ and for the Army Reserve in July 2013. 26 Army Reserve units will be vacated and there will be an overall reduction of three major units in the future structure.¹¹

The proposals are not without controversy. Members and commentators have expressed reservations about the ability of the MOD to recruit so many new recruits, particularly for the Army, in such a relatively short-time frame, while also undertaking a major redundancy programme of regular personnel. As the MOD expects to use Reservists more routinely, there are also considerable concerns about the impact on employers, particularly for small and medium sized businesses who may feel the loss of key personnel more keenly than bigger companies.

A note on terminology: The 2010 SDSR outlined a Future Force for 2020 which the Services are currently implementing. Key planks of it are therefore known by that same date, for example Future Reserves 2020 and Army 2020. That date is slightly misleading as the Army, for example, intends to achieve its restructure by 2018.

The ‘Whole Force Concept’ is also in use. This was introduced in the 2011 *Defence Reform Review* (recommendation 11) and adopted by the Independent Commission on the Reserves. The Defence Reform Review recommended the MOD seeks to ensure that Defence supported by the most cost-effective balance of regular military personnel, reservists, MOD civilians and contractors¹² a view endorsed by the Independent Commission.

2 Who are the Reserves?

All three Services have Reserve forces. These are broadly split into two categories:

Volunteer Reserves: Civilians who volunteer to participate in one of the services reserve forces. They attend regular training sessions and may be liable to be mobilised to deploy on operations. These are:

- The Territorial Army (TA)
- The Royal Auxiliary Air Force (RAuxAF)

⁷ See Library Standard Note *Army 2020*, SN06396, 26 July 2012

⁸ HC Deb 5 July 2012 c1086

⁹ In July 2011 the then Defence Secretary, Liam Fox, suggested the trained strength of the TA might be as low as 14,000 HC Deb 2011 c644

¹⁰ See Library Standard Note C Mills, *Army Basing Review 2013*, SN06598, 3 April 2013

¹¹ HC Deb 3 July 2013 c49-52WS; the summary of changes was deposited in the Library as DEP2013-1143

¹² *Defence Reform Review*, June 2011, Recommendation 11, p57; The Defence Reform Review was an independent report into the structure and management of the Ministry of Defence led by Lord Levene.

- The Maritime Reserves:
 - Royal Naval Reserve (RNR)
 - Royal Marines Reserve (RMR)

Regular Reserves: Former members of the Regular Forces who retain a liability to be called up for service for a limited period of time after leaving regular service. They tend only to mobilised if they have volunteered or if volunteer reservists are not available. These are:

- Army Reserve
- Royal Air Force Reserve
- Fleet Reserve

One of the major changes proposed by the White Paper, to be enacted in the Defence Reform Bill, is to rename the Territorial Army as the Army Reserve and the current Army Reserve as the Regular Reserve.

In addition, there are other further categories of reservists, though they tend to be relatively few in number:

High Readiness Reserves	Sponsored Reserves
Individuals trained to a higher standard and are available for military service at an agreed minimum notice. Requires agreement of employer. Few in number: The <i>Future Reserves 2020</i> estimates 70 in the Army and 30 in the RAuxAF.	Nominated employees of a company/organisation with whom the Armed Forces have signed a contract for the delivery of a Sponsored Reserve capability, as a contractual condition. They have special liabilities for reserve service, military training and call out.
Full-Time Reservists	Additional Duties Commitment
Reservists who work for the Armed Forces full time but are not Regulars. The post may be for a fixed period and require deep specialist knowledge or greater continuity than can be provided by regulars. This is different to mobilisation.	Reservists who undertake part-time work with the Armed Forces. More likely to be within a headquarters establishment than a regular or reserve unit.

The White Paper primarily focuses on the volunteer Reserves, although it does outline some plans for the Ex-Regular Reserves, High readiness Reserves and sponsored Reserves.

2.1 Number of Reservists

The Independent Commission concluded that the UK's Reserve Forces are in decline and form too small a part of the overall national military capability. In response, the Defence Secretary, Philip Hammond, has committed to revitalising the Reserve Forces.¹³

The stated goal of the Government is to achieve a trained Reserve strength of 35,000 by 2018:

- Army: 30,000
- Maritime Reserves: 3,100
- Royal Auxiliary Air Force: 1,800

The table shows the current but not the trained strength of the volunteer reserve forces. The trained strength of the Army is considerably lower than that given in the table. Liam Fox, then Defence Secretary, estimated the trained and active strength of the TA in July 2011 as low as 14,000.¹⁴ More recently, Defence Minister Andrew Robathan estimated in April 2013 there were approximately 19,000 trained reserves.¹⁵

New figures on Reserve forces as of April 2013 are expected to be published by DASA towards the end of 2013.¹⁶

UK Volunteer Reserve Forces, at 1 April

	Naval Service ¹	Army ²	RAF ³
1990	7,020	72,500	1,720
1995	3,680	59,690	1,320
2000	4,080	45,610	1,800
2005	3,610	37,260	1,480
2006	3,290	38,460	1,350
2007	2,970	36,790	1,250
2008	2,880	35,020	1,340
2009	2,970	35,320	1,440
2010	2,930	33,130	1,500
2011	2,540	31,420	1,360
2012	2,570	31,160	1,360
2013 ⁴	2,620	30,140	1,370

Notes

1 - Naval Service: RNR and RMR (excl University Royal Naval Unit)

2 - Army includes Non-Regular Permanent Staff (NRPS) and Officer Training Corps, excludes Ulster Defence Regiment and Home Service Forces

3 - RAF excludes University Air Squadrons (UAS)

4 - Figures for 1 April 2013 are provisional whilst the Ministry of Defence reviews the data.

Source: Defence Statistics, Ministry of Defence

¹³ HC Deb 3 July 2013 c924

¹⁴ [HC Deb 18 July 2011 c644](#)

¹⁵ HC Deb 23 April 2013 c286WH

¹⁶ DASA publications are available on its website: [DASA](#)

Recruiting targets

The MOD released annual recruiting targets from 2012 to 2020 in mid-2012, which are summarised in the table below. These may yet be revised. Major General Cullen, Assistant Chief of the General Staff, confirmed in July 2013 that that the target for the current year was 6,000, rising to 11,000 in 2013/14.¹⁷ He told the Defence Committee in July 2013 that achieving the 6,000 target for the current year is “looking tough”.¹⁸

Tri-Service Reserve recruiting targets

Service	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Territorial Army	6,424	9,346	10,223	10,221	9,311	6,823	6,823	6,823
Royal Navy Reserves	671	676	659	708	708	707	565	817
RAF Reserves	720	720	720	720	720	720	720	720
Defence total	7,815	10,742	11,602	11,649	10,739	8,250	8,108	8,360

Source: HC Deb 16 July 2012 c515W

In Parliamentary Questions the MOD has been somewhat more reluctant to state whether they are likely to achieve their annual recruiting targets. Defence Minister Lord Astor of Hever was asked this in September 2013. He refrained from giving a figure, saying it will take time to accurately measure the growth in Reserve Forces following the White Paper’s publication.¹⁹ Philip Hammond pledged in the summer that quarterly recruiting figures and the expected forward trajectory for Reserve forces will begin to be published towards the end of 2013.²⁰ The most recent figures from DASA are from April 2012 in its annual [Reserves and Cadets Strengths report](#). The next edition, for 1 April 2013, is expected to be released in November 2013.²¹

3 Reaction and commentary

The Government is “presiding over a dismantling of our military capability without parallel since 1698” according to military author Allan Mallinson. Concerns about the plans have focused on three particular areas: that the numbers required will not be achievable in the required timeframe; the quality of Reservists in terms of replacing Regulars and the impact on employers. Mallinson put it this way:

(David Cameron) is buying the bullshit that, when the time comes, the reserves can revive the ailing beast. Let me put it unequivocally: the reserves don't have the quality to do this; they will not be able to recruit the numbers; employers/employees will not be

¹⁷ Defence Committee, *Future Army 2020 – corrected evidence*, 10 July 2013, HC576-i 2012-13, Q152

¹⁸ Ibid

¹⁹ HL Deb 23 September 2013 c423WA

²⁰ HC Deb 16 July 2013 c958

²¹ DASA publications are available on its website: Dasa.mod.uk

able to make available for operations the numbers required - some 30% of the deployed force after 24 months.²²

3.1 Can the numbers be reached and will they be good enough?

Ever since the MOD announced its plans to increase the ratio of Regular to Reserve personnel, Members and defence experts have questioned both the ability of the MOD to recruit so many new Reservists and the rationale for doing so while also making so many Regular personnel redundant over the same time period.²³ An Armed Forces Redundancy Programme was launched following the 2010 SDSR and so far three tranches of redundancy have been announced, affecting over 11,000 service personnel.²⁴

John Baron MP has described the Government's policy as 'high risk' and 'flawed'.²⁵ He argued in an article for the Daily Telegraph that replacing "20,000 regular troops with 30,000 reservists will prove a cut too far. It will not produce the cost savings envisaged, but will create unacceptable capability gaps which may yet cost us dear."²⁶ He suggests the Government has yet to make the financial case for favouring Reservists over Regulars and raises the possibility of a capability gap through the loss of experienced regular soldiers for "untested reservist personnel."

25 Conservative backbenchers, led by Mr Baron, wrote to the Defence Secretary in September 2013 asking him to delay the axing of regular battalions (23 units are to be disbanded or amalgamated from the Order of Battle under Army 2020) until there is clear evidence the Army Reserve plan is working.²⁷ Bob Stewart, like John Baron a former soldier, has also expressed his doubts that the numbers are achievable.²⁸ Other concerns raised during a Parliamentary debate on the plans in November 2012 include the one year in five mobilisation commitment putting potential recruits off joining; whether large numbers of ex-regulars would want to join the reserve and whether Reservists might be deployed without sufficient training.²⁹ The Henry Jackson Society has suggested relying on Reservists "will hobble the UK military" and argues "the policy is merely a mechanism to slash defence spending irresponsibly."³⁰

The Liberal Democrats, at their 2013 party conference, expressed concern the proposed changes "have not been adequately thought through and could pose risks."³¹ The *Defending the Future: UK Defence in the 21st Century* policy paper said cutting the numbers of Regulars before recruiting and training sufficient reservists "is not the best approach."³² The party suggested it would be prepared to "modify policy depending on experience. It may prove

²² A Mallinson, "[David Cameron should think about the risks he is taking with cuts to our armed forces](#)" *The Daily Mail*, 23 July 2012

²³ See for example "Ministry of Defence chiefs spend £180 million laying off troops and staff then £750,000 on recruitment drive", *Mirror*, 13 September 2013

²⁴ Ministry of Defence, *Top Level Messages*, October 2013

²⁵ John Baron MP, "[The Government's plans for reservists ring hollow](#)", *Defence Management*, 26 April 2013

²⁶ John Baron MP, "Replacing regular troops with reservists is a cut too far, says MP", *The Daily Telegraph*, 14 September 2013

²⁷ "Tory MPs revolt over Army cuts", *The Daily Telegraph*, 14 September 2013; A press release on John Baron's website states the signatories will remain confidential unless they themselves wish it otherwise

²⁸ HC Deb 3 July 2013 c936

²⁹ HC Deb 8 November 2012 c1037-1039

³⁰ T Libel & D Lewin, "Relying on reservists will hobble the UK Military", *Henry Jackson Society*, 3 September 2012

³¹ Liberal Democrats, *Defending the Future: UK Defence in the 21st century*, Policy Paper 112, 17 September 2013

³² Liberal Democrats, *Defending the Future: UK Defence in the 21st century*, Policy Paper 112, 17 September 2013, 4.3.2

desirable to revert back to something like the pre-1996 policy of calling up the Reserves only in moments of real emergency.”³³ The policy paper argued the MOD is “taking a risk, perhaps an unacceptable risk, to reduce the size of the Regular Army on the assumption that the Reserves can be expanded to compensate, when there is no certainty they can be.”³⁴

The Government has consistently said it believes the target of 35,000 Reservists across all three services is achievable.³⁵ The White Paper acknowledges progress is unlikely to be completely smooth and suggests the trained strength might fall before it rises.³⁶ The MOD also robustly defends its policy of continuing to recruit whilst also making large numbers of service personnel redundant, arguing it needs a constant inflow of new recruits to ensure the right mix of trained and experienced personnel for the future.³⁷ Lieutenant General Sir Adrian Bradshaw has suggested to the Defence Committee that he thinks there is perhaps too much attention on the numbers and too little on the development of capabilities.³⁸ The Chief of the General Staff, Sir Peter Wall, has said it is not the raw numbers that worries him, rather getting the relationship right:

it's a question of us striking the right relationship with employers, the private sector and public sector, getting them to buy into the benefits to them of having those sorts of people who are prepared to serve the country, who are prepared to conform to our ethos and to do that in a way where there's a mutual benefit that doesn't stretch the prospects for the individual out of shape and allows us to get the most out of this very special resource.³⁹

The External Scrutiny Group supports the MOD's position on recruitment, stating that it believes the basic manpower targets are viable.⁴⁰ However they also call for a better management information system to more accurately capture Reservist numbers; states of training; preparedness; availability; and skill sets.⁴¹

Concerns about Capita

The MOD signed a ten year contract with Capita to recruit Army personnel in March 2012. There have been reports of IT difficulties with soldiers drafted in to help process a backlog who should have been freed for other duties by the switch to Capita. Margaret Hodge, chairwoman of the Public Accounts Committee, has said she is keen to investigate the £440 million contract.⁴²

The shadow Defence Secretary, Jim Murphy, was scathing about the recruitment contract in his 2013 party conference speech, saying:

Now it's 20,000 soldiers sacked to be replaced by reserves, only for the private contract in charge of recruiting the reserves to fail and soldiers to be drafted in to

³³ Ibid 4.3.5

³⁴ Ibid 4.3.10

³⁵ HC Deb 23 April 2013 c286WH

³⁶ Ministry of Defence, *Reserves in the Future Force 2020: Valuable and Valued*, Cm 8655, July 2013 para 1.18

³⁷ HC Deb 10 September 2013 c670W

³⁸ Defence Committee, *Future Army 2020 – corrected evidence*, 10 July 2013, HC576-i 2012-13, Q126

³⁹ Ministry of Defence, *Defence in the Media*, 14 June 2013

⁴⁰ Ministry of Defence, *Future Reserves 2020: External Scrutiny Report*, 3 July 2013, para 17

⁴¹ Ministry of Defence, “Future Reserves 2020: External Scrutiny Report”, 3 July 2013, Recommendation 3

⁴² “MPs want to read the small print in £440m Army recruits deal”, *The Times*, 26 September 2013

rescue the contract, which was meant to replace the soldiers the country did not want to be sacked in the first place. Conference. It is ludicrous.⁴³

Defence Minister Andrew Robathan has acknowledged some teething problems but has expressed confidence that Capita will deliver a more streamlined recruitment process including a national recruiting centre administering all applications, a more imaginative approach to marketing and a fully resourced assessment process for the reserves.⁴⁴

3.2 A burden on employers?

A significant focus of the White Paper is Defence's relationship with employers. Specifically, the MOD acknowledges it needs to make a better business case for employers to employ and support Reservists and to provide greater support to employers, particularly when employers are mobilised.

The Daily Telegraph, in an editorial on the White Paper, suggested the extra demands placed on Reservists, including potentially a year away, will be a "heavy burden for employers to bear." In particular it singles out the pressure on those running small businesses where the absence of a single employee can be detrimental and suggests the £500 per month compensation to small businesses is not likely to cover the cost of a key employee.⁴⁵ The editorial also raises the prospect of employees requiring longer absences from the workplace. The MOD has reacted to this by committing to provide a clear training timetable and as predictable a pattern as possible of the likely mobilisation period, barring emergencies.

3.3 An Army on the cheap?

Some critics, including former soldier Bob Stewart, have suggested the MOD is planning on building an army on the cheap by cutting Regulars in exchange for Reserves.⁴⁶ The Defence Secretary rejected that notion in his party conference speech, arguing "we're rebuilding a great British tradition of citizen service within our Armed Forces."⁴⁷ Reservists are cheaper to employ on a long-term basis but more expensive to employ for particular requirements, according to Lt General Sir Adrian Bradshaw, Commander Land Forces. He told the Defence Committee "the restructuring of the Army represents a considerable saving, but in order to realise that saving it is very important to understand that we must be prepared to resource the employment of reservists in circumstances where we would not normally have employed them in the past."⁴⁸

4 The proposed changes in detail

The list below highlights the most notable proposals contained within the White Paper – the ones that suggest a significant change from current practice, require legislative action or have provoked significant commentary or criticism. The relevant section in the White Paper is

⁴³ Jim Murphy MP, Labour's Shadow Secretary of State for Defence, speaking to Labour Party Annual Conference, 13 September 2013

⁴⁴ HC Deb 23 April 2013 c288WH

⁴⁵ "A burden on employers", *The Daily Telegraph*, 4 July 2013

⁴⁶ "Colonel Bob Stewart MP Savages Ministry Of Defence Plans To Increase Reserve Forces", *Huffington Post*, 20 April 2013

⁴⁷ Text of speech by Secretary of State for Defence, Philip Hammond, *Conservative Party Conference*, 29 September 2013

⁴⁸ Defence Select Committee, *Future Army 2020*, 10 July 2013 HC 576-i 2013-14, Q176

included in brackets. A comprehensive list of the proposals is available in the White Paper and the accompanying White Paper Key Facts booklet.⁴⁹

The Defence Reform Bill implements four specific measures which are summarised below and explored in more detail in House of Commons Library Research Paper *The Defence Reform Bill*, RF 13/45. These are:

- Renaming the Territorial Army
- Mobilising Reserve Forces
- Increasing payments to employers
- Exempt reservists from the statutory two-year qualifying period in bringing unfair dismissal claims

House of Commons Library Standard Note [Defence Reform Bill: Public Bill Committee Stage SN06732](#) will track the progress of the Bill through Parliament.

4.1 Renaming the Territorial Army: the Army Reserve

The new name for the Territorial Army will be the Army Reserve. This was the recommendation of the Independent Commission and adopted in the White Paper. The MOD argues it will better reflect the new and enhanced role Reservists will have. The name change requires legislative action and clause 42 of the Defence Reform Bill enacts this change.

The name 'Army Reserve' is currently used to describe ex-Regular service personnel who retain a call-out liability upon leaving the service. To avoid confusion, they will be renamed Regular Reserve.⁵⁰ A more detailed analysis of Clause 42 can be found in House of Commons Library Research Paper *The Defence Reform Bill*, RF 13/45.

4.2 Expanding the role of Reservists

The MOD intends to use reservists in the future for any purpose for which the regular Armed Forces are used. Currently the Reserve Forces Act 1996 limits the range of circumstances Reservists can be mobilised for, for example in response to imminent national danger, if warlike operations are in preparation or progress, or for the protection of life and property outside the UK.⁵¹

Making greater use of the Reserve Forces was one of the Independent Commission's main recommendations. Reservists will now be deployed on a far wider range of military operations, including homeland resilience and standing commitments abroad. The White Paper summarises the range of roles Reservists could be expected to fulfil thus:

⁴⁹ The publications are available on the MOD's website at: [Future Reserves 2020](#)

⁵⁰ The ex-Regular service personnel of the RAF and Royal Navy are respectively known as RAF Reserve and Fleet Reserve

⁵¹ Reserve Forces Act 1996, sections 52, 54 and 56. Section 56 was amended by the Armed Forces Act 2011 to enable reservists to be mobilised in the UK in circumstances short of a great emergency or an actual or apprehended attack to allow mobilisation in the event of "work national importance."

Abroad:	At Home in the UK:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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, UN missions, Iraq and Afghanistan. ● Standing commitments abroad such as the Cyprus garrison and the defence of the Falkland Islands. ● Deployments overseas aimed at Defence engagement, conflict prevention, security sector reform and capability building in priority countries, such as the British Peace Support mission in East Africa and the EU operation in Mali. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Playing a general role in homeland security, including activities such as support to the Olympics and Paralympics, or specialist roles such as cyber. ● Delivering national resilience such as responding to the foot and mouth crisis, flood relief, and communications support to crisis management. ● Standing national commitments, such as defence of the UK's airspace.

Box 3 – Tasks that the Reserves will be Required to Undertake

These changes require legislative action. Clause 43 of the Defence Reform Bill will extend the Secretary of State's powers to call out reservists. A more detailed analysis of Clause 43 can be found in House of Commons Library Research Paper *The Defence Reform Bill*, RF 13/45.

4.3 No change to Ministerial authorisation

The Secretary of State for Defence is empowered by the Reserve Forces Act 1996 to mobilise the Reserve forces, except in response to imminent national danger.⁵² The Green Paper questioned whether this practice should continue bearing in mind that in the future, reservists will be required for almost all types of operation and their mobilisation will become routine. The Green Paper asked if the current practice “over-emphasises the significance of the political act.”⁵³

However the White Paper states that as the consultation did not result in clear views, and in the absence of a compelling reason to change the Ministerial oversight process, existing arrangements will continue.

4.4 Mobilisation period: one in five years

All three services use Reservists differently and the mobilisation changes will have less of an effect on the RAF and the Royal Navy than for the Army.

The RAF and Royal Navy who are expected to continue with their current approach of mobilising personnel individually, or in small teams, for short duration tasks as well as for extended periods, depending on the operational requirement.

⁵² Except in response to imminent national danger, where the power is retained by The Sovereign

⁵³ *Future Reserves 2020: Delivering the Nation's Security Together*, Cm 8475, November 2012, 2.32

Army Reservists can expect one six month deployment in any five year period. This could amount to a maximum of 12 months when pre- and post-deployment training and leave are taken into account.⁵⁴ Army Reserves will move through a training and readiness cycle to give both Reservists and their employers greater clarity on when these mobilisation periods are likely to occur. The MOD intends to give at least a year's notice of when an Army reservist is entering their minimum warning period (when they are liable for mobilisation).

For an enduring operation the White Paper commits to giving nine months notice for Army Reservists and three months notice for Maritime and Royal Air Force Reservists. 28 days notice will be given for unplanned contingency operations, if possible.

These changes require legislative action. Clause 43 of the Defence Reform Bill will extend the Secretary of State's powers to call out reservists. A more detailed analysis of Clause 43 can be found in House of Commons Library Research Paper *The Defence Reform Bill*, RF 13/45.

4.5 Increase in training commitment

The training requirement for Army reservists will increase from around 35 to 40 days per year, while the training commitment for the maritime and RAF reserves will largely stay the same.⁵⁵ Army Reserves will be required to attend certain core training events. Reserve units will train more regularly with their regular counterparts.

In response to employer calls for greater predictability, the MOD intends to inform employers three months before the start of the training year in April of the key training events that their employee is expected to attend (para 4.34).

4.6 Changing the Proposition

The Proposition encapsulates the offer made by Defence to individuals who volunteer for reserve service and what it expects from that individual in return. The White Paper proposes changing the wording of the current Proposition.

The current Proposition is outlined in the *Strategic Review of Reserves 2009*:

Defence will offer the challenge and reward which attracts people to volunteer, and undertakes to train and support them throughout their Service, including when mobilised and recuperating.⁵⁶

The Independent Commission report, *Future Reserves 2020*, recommended revising the Proposition. It argued the current Proposition has markedly declined. As proof, it cited failures to resource recruiting and good training, especially collective training; to offer career progression; to update operational roles; to permit deployment in formed sub-units and therefore offer command opportunities.⁵⁷ The Commission concluded the current proposition

⁵⁴ These periods may be exceeded in times of national emergency or outbreak of war.

⁵⁵ An increase from approximately 35 to 40 days per year for Army Reserves; Training commitments for the Royal Navy Reserve are 24 days, 34 days for the Royal Marines Reserve and 35 for the Royal Auxiliary Air Force.

⁵⁶ "Report on the Strategic Review of Reserves", *Ministry of Defence*, 28 April 2009, para 1.8

⁵⁷ "Future Reserves 2020", *The Independent Commission to Review the United Kingdom's Reserve Forces*, July 2011, para 18.c

“does not encapsulate fully the offer which those who are to be officers and non commissioned officers in the Reserves need.”⁵⁸

The Green Paper acknowledged faults with the current Proposition, noting that it does “not capture fully the mutual obligations that must exist between the individual and Defence.” It proposed a revised Proposition which, following the Consultation, was finalised in the White Paper as follows:

As a serving member of the Armed Forces a volunteer reservist commits to train routinely and mobilise when required. In return, Defence will: offer attractive challenges, high-quality training, leadership and development opportunities and fair rewards and incentives to volunteers; support them throughout their service (including when mobilised and recuperating); treat them as veterans after their service; and, subject to national emergencies, seek to predict training and deployment requirements.⁵⁹

4.7 Improving terms and conditions

The MOD is proposing a number of changes in the offer it makes to Reservists in a bid to make joining the Reserve forces a more attractive proposition. These proposals do not require legislative action. Section 3 of the White Paper details at length the changes, the most notable of which include:

- Access to the same equipment as regulars
- More high quality training
- Increase in total financial remuneration by providing an allowance for paid annual leave and accruing benefits under the future Armed Forces pension scheme
- A restructured training bounty to incentivise commitment
- An Early Commitment Bonus of £5,000 to encourage recruitment of Army Reserve Officers
- A £5,000 commitment bonus offered to Service leavers and ex-Regulars training to the Army reserve (payable over four years)
- Better defined career structures
- Access to Standard Learning Credits and improve the level of accreditation available to reservists completing trade course
- Extend occupational health provision to non-mobilised Reservists
- Increase number of dedicated welfare officers

The Ministry of Defence is currently developing a new package of pay and allowances for all service personnel. The New Economic Model is expected to begin to be rolled out from 2015.

⁵⁸ Ibid para 58

⁵⁹ Ministry of Defence, *Reserves in the Future Force 2020: Valuable and Valued*, Cm 8655, July 2013, Para 3.3

4.8 Increasing payments to Employers and capping the Reservists award

The MOD intends to provide more financial support to employers whose employees are mobilised. This requires legislative action and clause 44 of the Defence Reform Bill makes provision for the Secretary of State to make additional payments to employers. This will be via secondary legislation and will involve revising the *Reserve Forces (Call-out and Recall) (Financial Assistance) Regulations*, currently set down in [SI 2005/859](#)⁶⁰ once the Bill has passed. Proposals include a flat-rate payment of £500 per reservist, per month, when mobilised for employees, targeted at small and medium enterprises.

A more detailed analysis of Clause 44 and the proposals can be found in House of Commons Library Research Paper *The Defence Reform Bill*, RF 13/45.

The White Paper also proposes placing a cap on the level of Reservist Award in non-specialist roles. When a reservist is mobilised additional payments may be claimed to make up the difference between the civilian earnings and the military salary. This is to avoid a civilian being financially disadvantaged by mobilisation. In response to criticism that some reservists in non-specialist roles receiving very high reservist awards, the MOD intends to revise SI 2005/859 to place a cap on the Reservist Award in non-specialised roles. Specialised roles, like surgeons and anaesthetists, are likely to be exempt (Para 3.14-15).

4.9 Greater employment protection from unfair dismissal

The *Reserve Forces (Safeguard of Employment) Act 1985* already protects Reservists from dismissal by their employer for reasons associated with the Reserve service. Currently an individual requires two years of continuous service before raising a claim for unfair dismissal at an Employment Tribunal. As periods of mobilisation do not count towards continuous service, it can take a Reservist longer than two years to gain this protection. The Government proposes amending the Employment Rights Act to exempt Reservists from this statutory two year qualifying period, if the principle reason for dismissal is related to the employee's reserve service.

A more detailed analysis of Clause 43 and the proposals can be found in House of Commons Library Research Paper *The Defence Reform Bill*, RF 13/45.

4.10 Discrimination against Reservists

The MOD has so far resisted calls to legislate to provide additional employment protection measures. The Green Paper asked whether an voluntary Employers' Charter for the Reserve Forces would be beneficial and whether current legislation should be extended to prevent Reservists being deliberately disadvantaged on account of their reserve status.

However the White Paper states although they had received feedback from reservists that they felt they had been disadvantaged at work and when seeking employment as a result of their reserve service, employers were largely against new legislation on the grounds it risked penalising supportive employers and was likely to prove ineffective.⁶¹

As a result, the MOD says it lacks sufficient understanding of the nature of the issue to take legislative action now, but will consider additional measures in the next quinquennial Armed Forces Bill (2015) if evidence justifies it. It has created a web-based portal to gather evidence from reservists of incidents of being disadvantaged at work.

⁶⁰ The relevant piece of primary legislation is sections 83 and 84 RFA96.

⁶¹ Ministry of Defence, *Reserves in the Future Force 2020: Valuable and Valued*, Cm 8655, July 2013, para 4.37

The Opposition have called for legislation to protect Reservists against discrimination by employers when hiring new employees.⁶²

Thomas Docherty MP has sponsored a Private Members Bill, *Armed Forces (Prevention of Discrimination) Bill 2013-14*, which will provide that certain offences committed towards members of the armed forces shall be treated as aggravated; to prohibit discrimination against individuals in terms of provision of goods and services on the grounds that they are members of the armed forces; and for connected purposes.⁶³

5 The impact on each service

The 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review outlined a new structure for the Armed Forces, called *Future Force 2020*. It separates the Armed Forces into three main elements:

Deployed Force: Forces engaged on operations and on permanent operations (e.g. the nuclear deterrent; maritime presence in the South Atlantic; UK air defence)

High Readiness Force: Force elements held at high levels of readiness and can be used to react rapidly to crises.

Lower Readiness Force: Forces who have recently returned from operations and focused on recovery, or those preparing to enter a period of high readiness. These forces support enduring operations. The majority of the forces will be held at graduated levels of Lower Readiness.⁶⁴

Reserve forces will contribute to each element of the future force but to different degrees, with the majority of Reservists expected to be part of the Lower Readiness Force.

Of the three services, the proposed changes will be most felt most keenly in the Army. The Army is undergoing a major restructuring under *Army 2020* and the role and function of the Reserves will be notably different to the historical use of the Territorial Army. The Maritime and Air Reserves are expected to continue to operate largely as before, albeit at greater strength and with continued focus on integration.⁶⁵

5.1 The Army

The integration of Regular and Reserve forces in the Army is a “critical endeavour”, according to the Chief of the General Staff, General Sir Peter Wall.⁶⁶

Army 2020 was the British Army's response to the 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review's expectations of its capabilities, the need to reduce the regular army by 20,000 and accommodate cuts to the defence budget. The Army says the change “is as significant as any seen over the last fifty years.”

In terms of numbers, by 2018 the Army should be 112,000 strong, made up of 82,000 Regular personnel and 30,000 Reserve personnel. With an additional 8,000 in training, the

⁶² HC Deb 25 June 2013 c237

⁶³ The *Armed Forces (Prevention of Discrimination) Bill 2013-14* had its first reading on 24 January 2013 and its second reading is expected on 24 January 2014

⁶⁴ *Strategic Defence and Security Review*, Cm , October 2012, 2.A.2

⁶⁵ Ministry of Defence, *Future Reserves 2020: Delivering the Nation's Security Together*, Cm 8475, foreword

⁶⁶ Ministry of Defence, *Transforming the British Army An Update – July 2013*, July 2013

total strength will be 120,000.⁶⁷ Liam Fox, then Secretary of State for Defence, outlined an adjustment of the regular-reserve balance in the Army to a roughly 70:30 ratio in July 2011.⁶⁸

The full detail of the new structure is available in a booklet published by the Army entitled *Transforming the British Army an update – July 2013*. This provides details of the new basing plan, formations, training plans and pairings between regular and reserve units. Further information is also available in the MOD's written evidence to the Defence Select Committee's for its inquiry into Army 2020.⁶⁹ The Library Standard Note *Army 2020* will be revised and expanded with the new detail on Army Reserves.

Broadly, *Army 2020* reconfigures the Army into two elements: a Reaction Force and an Adaptable Force. Approximately 10% of the Reaction Force is expected to be sourced from the Reserves, mostly as individuals rather than sub-units. Reserves are expected to be predominantly placed in the Adaptable force - the lower readiness force. In enduring operations, Reservists are likely to make up an increasing proportion of deployments in later rather than earlier cycles. Reserves are also likely to be used to fulfil standing commitments, like the defence of the Falkland Islands, and defence engagement tasks.

Summary of significant changes:⁷⁰

- *A new name.* The Government argues renaming the Territorial Army as the Army Reserve will signal that the Reserve is an integral and integrated part of the Army and reflect the new roles the Reserves will be called upon to fulfil;
- *Increase in numbers:* the trained strength will increase to 30,000 by 2018 from an estimated strength of 19,000 in April 2013 from an estimated trained strength of 14,000 in July 2011;⁷¹
- *Regular Army and Army Reserve to be fully integrated within a single chain of command;*
- *Reserve units will be routinely paired with Regular units for training purposes.* The aim is to enhance the experience the army offers to Reservists and work towards integrating the Reserves with the Regulars. Not all units will be paired. The MOD anticipates pairing to be fully implemented by 2020;⁷²
- *Access to same equipment and kit.* Additional money has been pledged to provide Reservists with the same personal equipment as regulars and access to the same equipment and vehicles as regulars. £200 million is to be invested in equipment for the Army reserve;⁷³
- *Reserves to deploy routinely at sub-unit level and also as formed units;*
- *Changes to the Order of Battle.* There will be three fewer major units in the future structure, a reduction from 71 to 68. Nine major units will be withdrawn and a further

⁶⁷ For further details see Library briefing SN06396, *Army 2020*, July 2012

⁶⁸ HC Deb 18 July 2011 c644

⁶⁹ Defence Committee, *Army 2020*, [Written evidence from the Ministry of Defence](#), July 2013, HC 803 2013-14

⁷⁰ Taken from both the White Paper and the Army Reserve (structure and basing) written statement of 3 July 2013

⁷¹ [HC Deb 18 July 2011](#) c644

⁷² *Reserves in the Future Force 2020: Valuable and Valued: Key Facts*

⁷³ *Reserves in the Future Force 2020: Valuable and Valued: Key Facts*

three will be re-roled. Six new major units will be created. The Army anticipates completing the structural changes by 2016;⁷⁴

- *Closure of some bases.* The Army will vacate 35 Reserve Centres and the TA will consolidate its presence in nine existing MOD sites;⁷⁵
- *Increase in training commitment.* The training commitment will increase from 35 to 40 days per year, including a two week training camp. Training will be at weekends and evenings. A number of training days will be mandatory.

5.2 The Maritime Reserves

The Maritime Reserves will increase their trained strength to 3,100. The White Paper states that the Reserves will continue in a similar fashion as before, in that they are currently structured to provide a range of specialist capability and augmentation broadly orientated to support roles. This will expand in depth and breadth. The Defence Secretary said in his July 2012 written statement that key areas of growth will be in a range of command and communication, intelligence and surveillance disciplines, including cyber, support to the Fleet Air Arm and the exploitation of niche capabilities in the role of maritime security. He said “the aim is to build maritime reserves that are fully integrated and able to provide the naval service with a range of flexible manpower, including greater access to civilian skills.”⁷⁶

5.3 The Royal Auxiliary Air Force

The Royal Air Force Reserves will continue to operate largely as now, augmenting the Regular Force with individuals or small groups. There will be a shift from basic generalist roles of force protection and allocate a greater proportion to specialist roles e.g. cyber, intelligence and medical. It will grow to a trained strength of 1,800 by 2016. The Defence Secretary said in his July 2012 written statement the principle area of growth will be in specialist areas of logistics, flight operations, medical, intelligence, media, RAF police and cyber. He also announced the establishment of five new reserve squadrons:

No 502 (Ulster) Squadron will form at JHC Station Aldergrove; 611 (West Lancashire) Squadron will form in Liverpool and 614 (West Glamorgan) Squadron will form in south Wales, most likely at RAF St Athan. These squadrons will be general service support squadrons representing various trades and branches from within the RAF. At RAF Brize Norton in Oxfordshire, 2624 (County of Oxford) Squadron will re-form in the force protection role and 622 Squadron will stand up as the reserve unit for aircrew augmenting the RAF's air mobility force.⁷⁷

6 Key documents, statements and debates

Securing Britain in an Age of Uncertainty: The Strategic Defence and Security Review, Cm 7948, October 2010

6.1 Independent Commission

Future Reserves 2020, The Independent Commission to Review the United Kingdom's Reserves Forces, July 2011

⁷⁴ HC Deb 3 July 2013 c51WS

⁷⁵ Ministry of Defence, *Top Level Messages*, October 2013; Reserves basing statement made HC Deb 3 July 2013 c52WS. The full structure and basing changes were laid in the Library as DEP2013-1122

⁷⁶ HC Deb 5 July 2012 c66WS

⁷⁷ HC Deb 5 July 2012 c66WS

6.2 Green and White Papers

[Future Reserves 2020 \(FR20\): delivering the nation's security together, a consultation paper](#), Cm 8475, November 2012

[Reserves in the Future Force 2020: valuable and valued](#), Cm 8655, 3 July 2013

[Reserves in the Future Force 2020: valuable and valued: Key facts](#), 3 July 2013

Further material relating to the Green and White Papers can be found on the MOD's website under [Future Reserves 2020 \(FR20\)](#).

6.3 Government statements

[Defence transformation](#) – HC Deb 18 July 2011 cc643645

[Reserve Forces statement](#) – HC Deb 3 July 2013 cc922-925

[Army Reserve \(structure and basing\) written statement](#) - HC Deb 3 July 2013 cc50-53WS

[Reserve Basing Statement clarification](#) – HC Deb 4 July 2013 c62WS

[Future Reserves 2020](#) – HC Deb 8 November 2012 c1025-1027

[Future Reserves 2020](#) – HC Deb 5 July 2012 cc65-67WS

6.4 Parliamentary debates

[Reserves \(Westminster Hall Debate\)](#) – HC Deb 23 April 2013 cc265-300WH

[Reserve Service Personnel \(adjournment debate\)](#) – HC Deb 27 June 2013 cc579-584

6.5 Select Committees

The Defence Select Committee is holding an inquiry into *Army 2020*. Written and oral evidence is available on the Defence Committee's [website](#).