



Armed Forces Redundancies

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The Armed Forces are undergoing a dramatic reduction in size and reorganisation. An Armed Forces Redundancy scheme is currently underway to achieve some of the reductions outlined in 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review. Additional reductions for the Army were announced in July 2011 after a 'Three Month Review'. Altogether nearly 30,000 personnel are to leave the services which will be achieved through a combination of redundancy, natural wastage and reduced intake.

So far two tranches of redundancies have been announced with over 6,600 personnel across all three services notified of their selection for redundancy. No further tranches are expected for the Royal Navy or the Royal Air Force but two further main tranches are expected for the Army as it seeks to reduce its regular force to 82,000 by 2020.

Those serving in, preparing to go to, or on leaving having returned from Afghanistan on the notification dates are exempt from selection, unless they apply for voluntary redundancy.

A number of MPs have raised concerns about constituents who have been made redundant close to their qualifying age for their immediate pension. The Ministry of Defence has said the proximity of a retirement point is not a consideration when selecting individuals for redundancy.

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1 Summary

The Armed Forces are undergoing a dramatic reduction in size and reorganisation. Altogether nearly 30,000 posts are to be cut: 5,000 each from the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force and 19,000 from the Army.¹

An Armed Forces Redundancy scheme is currently underway to achieve some of the reductions outlined in 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review and in the subsequent Three Month Exercise'. The reductions will also be achieved through natural wastage and reduced intake.

So far two tranches of redundancies have been announced with over 6,600 personnel across all three services notified of their selection for redundancy.² No further tranches are expected for the Royal Navy or the Royal Air Force but two further main tranches are expected for the Army as it seeks to reduce its regular force by approximately 19,000 to 82,000 by 2020.³ Tranche 3 will be in 2013 and tranche 4 in 2014.⁴ The complete process should be over by the middle of 2015 with approximately 9,500 people expected to be released under tranche 3 and 4, divided relatively equally between the two tranches.⁵

Volunteers for redundancy will serve up to six months notice and those selected for compulsory redundancy will serve up to twelve months notice. Applicants formed 62% of those made redundant in tranche 1 and 72% in tranche 2. Most of those selected in tranche one will have left by the end of September 2012. Successful applicants in tranche two will leave by the end of December 2012 and those selected by June 2013.

Those serving in, preparing to go to, or on leaving having returned from Afghanistan on the notification dates are exempt from selection, unless they apply for voluntary redundancy.

There are separate Voluntary Early Release Schemes for civilian personnel, for whom the MOD is seeking to avoid compulsory redundancy. 32,000 civilian personnel are to be cut, 25,000 of whom by 2015.⁶ This note does not look at civilian personnel.

A number of MPs have raised concerns about constituents who have been made redundant close to their qualifying age for their immediate pension.

2 Background

The Ministry of Defence introduced the Redundancy scheme off the back of the Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR), published in October 2010. The Prime Minister stated his ambition was to "ensure that as many of the job losses as possible are found through voluntary redundancy and retirement, rather than through making people redundant."⁷

The SDSR outlined total reductions of around 17,000 service personnel by 2015:

¹ [MOD top level messages: November 2012](#), MOD website, accessed 4 December 2012

² HC Deb 19 November 2012 c225W

³ ["Ministry of Defence top level messages: September 2012"](#), MOD, accessed 3 October 2012 & HC Deb 19 November 2012 c225W

⁴ Defence Committee, *Future Army 2020*, 5 December 2012 HC 803-i, q67

⁵ Defence Committee, *Future Army 2020*, 5 December 2012 HC 803-i, q67

⁶ ["Ministry of Defence top level messages: September 2012"](#), MOD, accessed 3 October 2012; the first Voluntary Early Release Scheme was launched in spring 2011 and the second in November 2011. 6,000 accepted redundancy in the first scheme.

⁷ HC Deb 19 October 2010 c814-5

- Royal Navy to decrease by around 5,000 to 30,000
- Royal Air Force to decrease by around 5,000 to 33,000
- Army to decrease by around 7,000 to around 95,000⁸

The SDSR envisaged that by 2020 each service will number:

- Royal Navy: 29,000
- RAF: 31,500
- Army: 94,000⁹

Following an internal Three Month Exercise (3ME) the then Secretary of State for Defence, Liam Fox, announced in July 2011 a further reduction in the size of the Army:

By 2020, if the Territorial Army develops in the way we intend, we envisage a total force of around 120,000, with a regular to reserve ratio of around 70:30.¹⁰

This amounted to a further reduction of 12,000 Army personnel.¹¹

The Defence Secretary, Philip Hammond, outlined how the Army is to be restructured to accommodate the reductions in personnel in his statement on *Army 2020* on 5 July 2012.¹² *Army 2020* outlines a division into two distinct elements: a Reaction force and an Adaptable force. It is based on a future Army strength by of 120,000: 82,000 Regular and 30,000 Reserves, totalling 112,000, plus a further 8,000 in training.¹ This is all to be achieved by 2020. In 2010 the trained strength of the Army was 102,200.¹³

2.1 Timeline

October 2010	Strategic Defence and Security Review published
18 July 2011	Liam Fox announces further reduction in size of Regular Army
September 2011 ¹⁴	2,860 personnel notified of their selection for redundancy in Tranche 1
February 2012	Applicants in tranche 1 leave
12 June 2012	3,760 personnel notified of their selection for redundancy in Tranche 2
5 July 2012	Army 2020 announcement
September 2012	Those selected for redundancy in tranche 1 to leave
11 December 2012	Applicants in tranche 2 to leave by

⁸ HM Government, *Strategic Defence and Security Review*, Cm794 8 October 2010, p32

⁹ HM Government, *Strategic Defence and Security Review*, Cm794 8 October 2010, p32

¹⁰ [HC Deb 18 July 2011](#), c644

¹¹ [MOD top level messages: November 2012](#), MOD website, accessed 4 December 2012

¹² [HC Deb 5 July 2012](#), c1085; L. Brooke-Holland, *Army 2020*, House of Commons Library Standard Note SN06396, 26 July 2012

¹³ G. Berman, T. Rutherford, *Defence Personnel Statistics*, House of Commons Library Standard Note SN02183, 15 March 2012, table 2

¹⁴ The Army and RAF gave notice on 1 September, Royal Navy on 30 September

January 2013	Tranche 3 announced ¹⁵
June 2013	Individuals notified of redundancy for tranche 3
11 June 2013	Non-applicants in tranche 2 to leave by ¹⁶

2.2 Next phase

There will be no further tranches for the Royal Navy, Royal Marines and the RAF; although the MOD says a small number of redundancies may be required for senior officers.

Two further main tranches are expected for the Army to achieve the goal of 82,000 personnel by 2020. Tranche 3 will occur in 2013 and tranche 4 in 2014. The tranche 3 announcement is expected in January 2013 – the fields of people, ranks and trades who are liable to be made redundant – with individuals notified if they are to be made redundant in June. Tranche 4 will repeat that timeframe in 2014.¹⁷ General Sir Peter Wall, Chief of the General Staff, expects the complete process to be over the middle of 2015. By the end of tranche 4 he expected the Army to have “released another 9,500 people.” Approximately half of that total will be in tranche 3.¹⁸

The *Mail on Sunday* reported in September that 8,000 personnel will receive redundancy notices in ‘fast-track’ redundancies in the New Year. The paper reported that contrary to previous assumptions that the army faced several waves of redundancies “reports now suggest that the next cuts may be the final wave and will come in early 2013.” The newspaper said it had discovered the MOD “will make a single devastating cut of 8,000 servicemen and women, reducing the Army to 86,000 – its smallest size since the 1700s. A further 4,000 soldiers will go before 2020.” The paper says only the Special Forces will be ring-fenced, all other branches and regiments will be cut. The report highlighted the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers and the Royal Logistics Corps as likely to be “badly hit”. The MOD was quoted in the story: “the size and timing of any future redundancies has yet to be determined, however we aim to remove uncertainty for Army personnel and their families as soon as possible.”¹⁹

The Defence Secretary rejected the suggestion the redundancy tranche in 2013 will be on the scale suggested by the Daily Mail:

There will be a redundancy round in the army next year but it won’t be on that scale and the expectation from the army itself is that the overwhelming majority of redundancy needs will be met by volunteers from within the forces.²⁰

3 Details of the scheme

- Official details of the RAF redundancy scheme were announced on 1 March 2011 and official details of the Army and Royal Navy schemes were announced on 4 April 2011.
- Selection Boards will determine which personnel will be selected for redundancy in order to retain a balanced and sustainable force.

¹⁵ Defence Committee, *Future Army 2020*, 5 December 2012 HC 803-i, q67

¹⁶ “[Ministry of Defence top level messages: September 2012](#)”, MOD, accessed 3 October 2012

¹⁷ Defence Committee, *Future Army 2020*, 5 December 2012 HC 803-i, q67

¹⁸ Defence Committee, *Future Army 2020*, 5 December 2012 HC 803-i, q67

¹⁹ “New year lay-offs: Army to fire 8,000 soldiers in ‘fast-track’ redundancies and sacking of over-45s”, *Mail on Sunday*, 30 September 2012

²⁰ “[New year mass redundancies ‘ruled out’](#)”, *BFBS news*, 8 October 2012

- Although this is a compulsory redundancy scheme, personnel will still be able to volunteer for redundancy. However, only those personnel who are eligible (by rank, branch or trade), will be able to apply. Eligibility is set out in the Defence Instruction Notices (which are not in the public domain). Selection for redundancy will depend upon the overriding requirements of each of the Services and, therefore, it is possible that some applications for voluntary redundancy will be turned down.²¹
- Volunteers for redundancy will serve up to six months notice and those selected for compulsory redundancy will serve up to twelve months notice. Personnel selected for redundancy will be able to request to leave earlier and such requests will be considered in the light of Service requirements.
- All personnel made compulsorily redundant will have the opportunity to apply to transfer to an area of the Service that has shortages.
- Personnel being made redundant will receive assistance from the MOD on their transition back into civilian life. This includes a range of advice covering housing and finance, the civilian jobs market and how transferable their military skills are.
- No injured or wounded personnel will be made redundant unless they decide to apply. Those personnel who have completed their medical care and returned to military duty will, however, be eligible for compulsory redundancy under the scheme.²²

3.1 Exemptions: serving in Afghanistan

No-one serving in Afghanistan in receipt of the operational allowance, no one preparing to deploy to Afghanistan, nobody on post-deployment leave and no-one who is recovering at the point when any compulsory redundancies are made, will be made compulsory redundant, the Secretary of State for Defence has stated.²³ These exemptions do not apply to those who have applied for voluntary redundancy.

It is the date when compulsory redundancies are made that matters for deciding whether a soldier is exempt, or not, from compulsory redundancy.

The post-operational tour leave allowance is one working day for every nine calendar days deployed, which roughly equates to 20 days for a six month deployment. For example, those serving on Operation *Herrick 14* in Afghanistan (April-October 2011) and those who were on notice to deploy as part of Operation *Herrick 15* in October/November 2011 were exempt from compulsory redundancy in tranche 1.

3.2 Appeals process

Any individual selected for compulsory redundancy, and any unsuccessful applicant for voluntary redundancy, can appeal against their selection on the grounds that the Redundancy Selection Boards:

- failed to take into account some fact which should have been considered;
- took into account some factor that should not have been considered;

²¹ "Defence Internal Brief 2011/DIB/11", *Navy Families Federation*, March 2011

²² Ministry of Defence, *Defence in the Media*, 15 April 2011

²³ HC Deb 2 March 2011 c307-8

- Failed to follow proper procedure.

Personnel who wish to appeal have 30 calendar days (not working days) from the date of their notification letter to submit a written appeal through the appropriate channels.

All appeals will be considered by an Appeals Adjudicator, who will be an officer not previously involved in the selection or approval for redundancy of the individual concerned.

The redundancy appeals process does not prejudice an individual's statutory right to make a Service Complaint under Section 334 of the *Armed Forces Act 2006*. However, the appellant would need to demonstrate that the redundancy appeal process had been exhausted before any Service complaint could be considered.

3.3 Support for those made redundant

The MOD says it provides a range of support for those made redundant which is "specifically designed to assist in finding new employment".²⁴ The Minister for Defence Personnel, Rt Hon Mark Francois, said:

All those made redundant will qualify for the level of resettlement assistance associated with their length of service, and the engagement they could have expected to complete had they not been made redundant.²⁵

On a separate occasion, Mr Francois expanded:

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) will provide assistance to all those former military personnel who have been or will be made redundant. Individuals selected for redundancy are entitled to the same resettlement package which they would have received had they completed the whole of their service commitment.

The majority of resettlement provision is contracted out to the Career Transition Partnership. This is a partnering arrangement between the MOD and Right Management Ltd, a leading outplacement company. The Career Transition Partnership assists eligible Service leavers in making a successful transition to civilian life by providing career transition workshops; employment and future career advice; assistance with CV writing and job preparation; vocational training; and a job-finding recruitment facility. This assistance is provided for two years after leaving the MOD.

Furthermore, service leavers are entitled to lifetime job finding support through either the Officers Association or the Regular Forces Employment Association.²⁶

The Full Resettlement Programme, for which the majority of those made redundant will qualify, according to the MOD, comprises:

- a three-day Career Transition Workshop;
- the use of a career consultant;
- access to a job finding service;
- up to 35 days retraining time;

²⁴ HC Deb 10 September 2012 c73W

²⁵ HC Deb 10 September 2012 c73W

²⁶ HC Deb 13 November 2012 c163W

- funding of up to £6,534;
- access to a wide range of accredited vocational training courses and workshops;
- Resettlement support up to two years after leaving.²⁷

Soldiers can register with the [Career Transition Partnership](#) website which is a partnering agreement between the Ministry of Defence and Right Management Ltd. It provides a range of advice for soldiers planning to leave and who have left to transition to a new career. Including [resettlement guides](#) on a range of topics like housing, finance and benefits.

3.4 Costs

The MOD said in early September 2012 that as the Armed Forces Redundancy Programme is ongoing the total costs in respect of redundancy compensation payments will not be known for some time. It said the costs for tranche 1, representing 2,835 personnel, amounted to £102 million.²⁸

4 Redundancy and pensions²⁹

There are two main pension schemes for members of the armed forces. AFPS 75 was closed to new entrants on 6 April 2005. The scheme for new entrants from that date is AFPS 05.³⁰

The earliest age a full career (maximum) pension can be paid from AFPS 75 is 55. However, because members of the armed forces typically do not serve until this age, the scheme therefore provides an Immediate Pension (IP) for those with 16 years' reckonable service (Officers) or 22 years' (Other Ranks). A person who leaves the Armed Forces before the IP point may be entitled to a preserved pension from age 60 (65 for service from 6 April 2006). A leaflet for members of AFPS 75 explains:

GENERAL

You will be entitled to pension benefits provided you have at least 2 years' reckonable service. Your benefits are based on final rank and reckonable service.

FULL CAREER (MAXIMUM) PENSION AT AGE 55

If you retire at age 55 with 34 years' reckonable service (Officer) and 37 years (Other Ranks), you will be entitled to a full career (maximum) pension and a lump sum (normally tax-free) of 3 times the annual rate of pension. These are your "*Terminal Benefits*".

IMMEDIATE PENSION (IP)

If you have completed 16 years' reckonable service as an officer or 22 years' reckonable service other ranks, when you retire, you will be entitled to an Immediate Pension (IP) and a *terminal grant* of 3 times the annual rate of pension. The terminal grant is normally tax-free.

PRESERVED PENSION

If you leave the Armed Forces before reaching the IP Point having completed at least 2 years' reckonable service, you will be entitled to a preserved pension and a terminal grant of 3 times your annual pension, which is payable when you reach the age of 60 for service before 6 April 2006 and at age 65 for service after 6 April 2006. The

²⁷ HC Deb 10 September 2012 c73W

²⁸ HC Deb 10 Sep 2012 c73W

²⁹ Pensions section contributed by Djuna Thurley, Library pensions specialist

³⁰ [Armed Forces Pension Scheme 05, 'Your Pension Scheme Explained'](#) (January 2007)

terminal grant is normally tax-free. You can have all your pension benefits paid at age 60 but they will be actuarially reduced to reflect the early payment.³¹

The Immediate Pension is explained in more detail, as follows:

Immediate Pension (IP)

If you complete a minimum of 16 years from age 21 (or date of entry if later) (Officers) or 22 years from age 18 (or date of entry if later) (Other ranks), you will be entitled to an IP. This pension will be fixed until you reach the age of 55. At this point it will be increased to take account of the total rise in the cost of living since your service ended and will continue to increase in line with annual movements in [prices]. This is known as index-linking and means that your pension keeps its purchasing power over time. You will also receive a one-off terminal grant of 3 times your annual pension. The terminal grant is normally tax free.

Note: Officers who are permitted to leave the Armed Forces at their own request, after reaching the IP Point but before completing their commission or before age 50 are paid *Premature Voluntary Retirement (PVR)* rates of pension, which are lower than the IP rates. Other Ranks who are discharged on grounds of misconduct, unsuitability or inefficiency will receive low rates of pension.³²

When the scheme was reformed and AFPS 05 was introduced, the MOD decided that compensation payments from around age 40 should be retained. However, in order to comply with proposed changes in pension tax rules³³, the Immediate Pension would be replaced by a system of Early Departure Payments.³⁴ The leaflet for members of AFPS 05 explains, for example:

If you leave the Armed Forces before age 55, but having reached at least age 40 AND having served at least 18 years (the EDP 18/40 Point), you will get a tax-free lump sum and an income paid until age 65. (See pages 11-12 for details, including examples.³⁵

In Summer 2012, there have been a number of press reports suggesting soldiers had been made redundant shortly becoming entitled to the Immediate Pension, with the result that they would have to wait until age 60 (or 65 for service from April 2006) to receive their pension.³⁶

In response, the Government has explained that the length of service required for an Immediate Pension can be reduced in cases of redundancy. In August 2012, Defence Secretary, Philip Hammond, said:

You will appreciate that this is a complex topic, not least because there are two Armed Forces Pension Schemes and two Armed Forces Redundancy Schemes in operation.[...]

Soldiers on AFPS 75 normally have to serve 22 years from age 18 to qualify for an Immediate Pension. The requirement to serve for 22 years is reduced to 18 years if a soldier is made redundant. This means that a soldier who is within four years of being

³¹ AFPS75, [Your pension scheme explained](#), (MMP/106, re-issued May 2008), p 10

³² Ibid, p13

³³ Inland Revenue and HM Treasury, Simplifying the taxation of pensions: increasing choice and flexibility for all, December 2002, para 5.15; <http://tinyurl.com/38zkmf>

³⁴ MoD, 'New Armed Forces Pension Scheme. Report on consultation process', September 2003, p4

³⁵ AFPS 05, [Your Pension Scheme Explained](#), (MMP/124, Re-issued Jan 07)

³⁶ Thomas Harding, 'Soldiers sacked days before pension date', *Daily Telegraph*, 18 June 2012; See also, Deborah Haynes, Army pension injustice must be reversed, MPs urge, *The Times*, 6 September 2012

eligible for an Immediate Pension becomes eligible for his or her pension upon being made redundant.

Officers on AFPS 75 normally have to serve 16 years from age 21, or 22 years from age 18, to qualify for an Immediate Pension. The requirement to serve 22 years from age 18 is reduced for redundancy, enabling officers who have a minimum of 18 years service from the age of 18 to qualify for an Immediate Pension. This means that an officer who joined at age 18 and who has completed 18 years service will be eligible for an Immediate Pension one year earlier (i.e. at age 36 rather than at age 37) than an officer who joined at 21 and who has served for 16 years.

Those who do not become eligible for immediate pensions under these reduced criteria receive cash payments on redundancy which, depending on length of service, can be significantly higher than the cash payments that are available under the pension scheme.³⁷

The Government has also said that proximity to a retirement point is not a consideration when selecting for redundancy and that only 1.2% of those selected were within one year of qualifying for their Immediate Pension.³⁸

Mr Jim Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many members of the armed forces made redundant in Tranche 2 of the Armed Forces Redundancy Programme (1) were within (a) one month, (b) two to three months, (c) three to four months, (d) four to five months and (e) five or more months of receiving their pension; (2) were within (a) one, (b) two to three, (c) three to four, (d) four to five and (e) five or more months of receiving their pension; (3) were within (a) one, (b) two to three, (c) three to four, (d) four to five and (e) five or more months of receiving a pension.

Mr Francois [*holding answer 6 September 2012*]: The proximity of a retirement point is not a consideration when selecting individuals for redundancy. As we reduce the size of the armed forces, our priority is to ensure that they maintain the correct balance of the skills and experience, across the rank structures, which are required to deliver operational capability now and in the future, and it is this which has determined the redundancy fields.

The Ministry of Defence has worked hard to ensure that many more individuals have received an immediate income for which they otherwise would not have qualified. Only 1.2% of individuals who have been selected for redundancy are within one year of qualifying for their immediate pension. These personnel will receive a significantly larger tax free sum, which could total over £100,000, and still get all their accrued pension rights at the age of 60 or 65.

The following table lists the total number of personnel selected for redundancy with an exit date of 30, 60, 90, 120 and 150 or more days earlier than an immediate retirement point:

³⁷ [Written evidence from the Secretary of State for Defence to Defence Select Committee, 16 August 2012](#); See also MoD, [Defence News: 24 August 2012](#)

³⁸ [HC Deb, 17 September 2012, c354-5W](#). The redundancy provisions are explained in more detail in MoD leaflet, [Armed forces redundancy schemes](#) (MMP/138) Revised January 2012.

Number of days, on discharge, prior to an immediate pension point	Total
30	6
60	4
90	9
120	0
150 or more	2,624

Like other public service pensions, armed forces pensions have been subject to review. One of the issues considered was the appropriate point from which Early Departure Payments should be made in future.³⁹ On 16 October 2012, the Government announced its final position on the new scheme. This included:

An Early Departure Payment (EDP) Scheme, available to members who leave before Normal Pension Age (NPA), on completion of 20 years service having reached a minimum age of 40 years, comprising an annual income of at least 34% of the value of the deferred pension and a tax-free lump sum of 2.25 times the value of the deferred pension. Service personnel will also have the option to convert their total EDP lump sum into additional monthly income payments.⁴⁰

Further detail on the Armed Forces Pension Scheme is in Library Standard Note SN 5891 [Armed forces pensions – 2012 onwards](#).

5 Redundancies by service

Statistics on the number of applicants and selections for redundancy for tranches 1 and 2 are provided by Defence Analytical Services and Advice (DASA).

Statistics on tranche 1 and 2 redundancies have been compiled by the Defence Analytical Services Agency (DASA) and include information on the number of *applicants* and the number of *selected* redundancies on the basis of Service, branch, age, sex and ethnicity.⁴¹

Service	Tranche One ⁴²	Tranche Two ⁴³
Royal Air Force	920	770
Army	920	2880
Royal Navy	1,020	160
Total	2,860	3760

Further information on Defence Personnel Statistics is in Library Standard Note SN02183 [Defence Personnel Statistics](#), 30 November 2012.

6 Useful Information

- The services are providing FAQ on the redundancy programme. The [Royal Navy](#), for example, provides a FAQ on its website.

³⁹ Ministry of Defence, *The New Armed Forces Pension Scheme. Initial Consultation*, March 2012

⁴⁰ HC Deb, 16 October 2012, WS

⁴¹ "UK Armed Forces – redundancy programme statistics tranche 1", DASA, 10 November 2011 & "UK Armed Forces – redundancy program statistics tranche 2", DASA, 24 August 2012

⁴² "UK Armed Forces – redundancy programme statistics tranche 1", DASA, 10 November 2011

⁴³ "UK Armed Forces – redundancy program statistics tranche 2", DASA, 24 August 2012

- The [Naval Families Federation](#) has compiled a series of useful documents relating to the redundancy programme, including the resettlement process, how to appeal and what charitable support is available:
- The [Army Families Federation](#) has compiled a series of Q&A on issues relating to the redundancy programme, such as the impact on Service housing and the ongoing education of Service children.
- The MOD has made available a [Redundancy Calculator](#), which provides Service personnel with a forecast of their redundancy and pension benefits
- The [Career Transition Partnership](#) provides resettlement support to leavers of the Armed Forces and career transition services to eligible Service leavers as part of their resettlement process.
- British Army, [Transition to Civilian Life](#) booklet – a welfare guide for the Service Leaver