

GREATER**LONDON**AUTHORITY

Work Life Balance and Family

Reserve forces training and mobilisation policy

1 Introduction

This policy sets out our obligations, commitments and support to our employees who are members of the Reserve Forces, also known as reservists.

We recognise the valuable contribution that reservists make to the UK Armed Forces, their communities and the civilian workforce. We acknowledge that the training undertaken by reservists enables them to develop skills and abilities that are of benefit to both the individual and the GLA.

2 Scope

This policy applies to GLA employees. It builds on the obligations and rights of the GLA to employees who are reservists and is governed principally by: The Reserve Forces Act 1996 (RFA 1996) and The Reserve Forces (Safeguard of Employment) Act 1985 (RF(SoE)A 1985).

3 Key principles

We will:

- seek to promote our support for the important role of reservists in GLA recruitment
- support employees who are reservists, or who wish to become one
- commit to release employees to train regularly who have a liability to be redeployed overseas, which is known as “mobilised”, (see section 6 for definition)
- give up to 10 days annual paid leave to enable reservists to attend Operational Capability Training (‘annual camp’) and flexibility to facilitate weekend training commitments where possible, e.g. leaving slightly earlier on a Friday
- support the mobilisation process in all but exceptional circumstances (subject to the provisions set out in section 6)
- commit to our obligation to enable a mobilised reservist to return to their role or a suitable alternative role, once they have completed all parts of their post deployment resettlement known as demobilisation (see section 7 for definition).

We will not:

- disadvantage reservists who notify us of their reserve status or who are made known to us directly by the Ministry of Defence (MoD).

4 What types of reservist are there?

There are two main types of reservist:

- volunteer reservists are civilians recruited into the Royal Navy Reserves, Royal Marines Reserves, Army Reserve and Royal Auxiliary Air Force
- regular reservists are ex-regular servicemen and women who may retain a liability to be mobilised depending on how long they have served in the Armed Forces.

The Reserve Forces Act 1996 also provides for other categories:

- Full Time Reserve Service (those who wish to serve full time with regulars for a predetermined period in a specific posting)
- Additional Duties Commitment (part-time service for a specified period in a particular post)
- Sponsored Reserves (employed by a contractor to provide a service to the MoD)
- High Readiness Reserves (usually with a particular skill set that, with written agreement from their employer, are available at short notice).

5 What training do reservists need to do?

Reservists are typically committed to 24-40 days training per year. Training tends to take place 1 evening per week at a local training centre, over various weekends throughout the year (typically 3-4) and one 2-week training period. The latter is officially called Operational Capability Training but is also known as 'annual camp', and normally takes place within the UK. This may take place at a training establishment, such as an attachment to a Regular Unit, or as a training exercise or maybe a combination of both.

It is recognised that this training provides experiences that can bring important skills for individuals working in the GLA, such as communication and team working.

6 What is mobilisation?

Mobilisation is the process of calling reservists into full time service with the Regular Forces, in order to make them available for military operations. The maximum period of mobilisation will depend on the scale and the nature of the operation and is typically no longer than twelve months.

This could include call ups for non-combat purposes such as peacekeeping, humanitarian and disaster relief operations. While on active service the reservist is paid by the MoD and the GLA treat this period of absence as special leave without pay. However, on return to the GLA, the employee's continuous service will be maintained.

Call-out papers for mobilisation are sent by post to the employer or sometimes delivered in person by the reservist to their line manager. The documentation will include the call-out date and the anticipated timeline, normally giving at least 28 days' notice.

If an employee is called up for mobilisation, their manager with support from HR&OD will refer to the *MoD's Employer handbook: HR guidance/reserve policies* see Appendix 1) for further advice on actions to take pre-mobilisation, and the support and actions to be taken during and after mobilisation to support the return to work. A period of mobilisation comprises three distinct phases:

- medical and pre-deployment training
- operational tour
- post operational tour leave

We will release employees to report for duty unless there are exceptional circumstances, in which case the GLA can apply for an exemption or deferral. Examples (non-exhaustive) include:

- if the call up significantly impairs our ability to provide services, for example where two reservists work in the same team and both are called up for mobilisation or where a reservist called up has exceptional skills which would prove very difficult to replace
- if a reservist does not have satisfactory conduct or attendance, which would be considered on a case by case basis.

7 Demobilisation

At the end of a reservist's deployment they are demobilised. Reservists do not return to work directly from being on operational service. Instead, they undertake a demobilisation process, which involves them undergoing assessments and briefings as well as a period of leave to enable them to adjust to their return to civilian life, including a return to work.

Reservists' return to work

The GLA and reservists both have obligations regarding the return to work process, which is governed by the Reserve Forces (Safeguarding of Employment) Act 1985 (RF(SoE)A 1985) and considered below. The GLA is generally obliged to enable a reservist to return to their role, provided that the reservist was employed within the four-week period immediately before mobilisation (section 2(1), RF(SoE)A 1985).

Reservist applies to return to work

To return to work, the reservist must make a written application to the GLA during the period beginning with the end of their whole-time service and ending with the third Monday thereafter (section 3(1) and (2), RF(SoE)A 1985). They can make an application beyond that time limit where they were prevented by sickness or "other reasonable cause" from applying within the time limit (section 3(3), RF(SoE)A 1985).

The reservist must suggest a date on which they can come back to work (section 4, RF(SoE)A 1985). They can do this when making their written application to return to work, or up to 21 days after the latest date for making that application. The date on which they are ready to return to work cannot be later than the end of that 21-day period. If it is not possible to take the reservist back on the date notified, the GLA must take the reservist back at the first reasonable and practicable opportunity thereafter (section 1(3), RF(SoE)A 1985).

The line manager and reservist are encouraged to informally discuss the reservist's return to work, whether in person or through correspondence.

Minimum length of employment

Reservists must be employed for a certain amount of time, post mobilisation, depending on how long they were employed by the GLA before mobilisation (section 7, RF(SoE)A 1985). However, those minimum times are subject to it being "reasonable and practicable" for the GLA to do so (section 7(1), RF(SoE)A 1985).

Weeks of employment before mobilisation	Number of weeks reservist must be re-employed for:
Up to 13	At least 13
Between 13 and 51	At least 26
52 Weeks or more	At least 52

8 What you need to do

Let your manager know if you are already a reservist and the specific force that you belong to.

Let your manager know if you want to apply to join the Armed Forces. Under the terms of your contract you need to get permission in writing from your director before taking up other employment (paid or unpaid) which includes joining the Armed Forces. Permission to join the Reserve Forces will normally be given.

You need to grant permission for the Ministry of Defence (MoD) to write directly to the GLA. This is known as 'Employer Notification' and ensures the GLA is made aware that you are a reservist and the benefits, rights and obligations that apply as a result.

You should give as much notice as possible of training commitments to allow appropriate planning for absences, sharing your annual training schedule if you have one. We may ask you to avoid attending annual camp during your probation period if there are alternative dates that are suitable for you. Permission to attend training commitments once given will not be withdrawn unless there are exceptional circumstances.

9 What we do for you

We are committed to granting paid time off for public duties. Details of the categories are in para 5.10 of the [Terms and Conditions of Employment](#).

We will give up to 10 days' annual paid leave to enable you to attend 'annual camp'.

In the interests of promoting public duties and citizenship, a director also has the discretion to grant up to an additional 10 days' unpaid leave.

We aim to be flexible regarding requests for short periods of training provided adequate notice is given and where such training cannot be undertaken as part of the 10-day annual entitlement. Attendance at weekend training which cannot be undertaken as part of the 10 days annual entitlement will be subject to the same arrangements. However, any such decisions will be subject to management discretion.

10 Information for line managers

If you are a line manager, your responsibilities are to:

- respond in a supportive way to any member of staff who advises you that they are a reservist or are considering applying to join the Reserve Forces
- advise them of this policy, the GLA's arrangements for time off, and their responsibilities
- have an open discussion to gain an understanding of dates and commitments
- wherever possible facilitate work rosters to allow attendance at annual camp and other training commitments (e.g. weekly or weekend training sessions) unless there are exceptional circumstances
- contact a member of the HR&OD team for if you need further advice on this policy and the procedures to follow, including the process of re-employing a reservist (following demobilisation).

Further information

Details of external sources of information are given in Appendix 1 and further advice and information is available on the intranet [here](#) and from HR&OD. Appendix 2 is a manager checklist for demobilisation.

Version	003
Date	January 2020
Next review date	January 2021
Author	██████████ HR Advisor, Policy
Owned by (Department)	HR&OD

Appendix 1

External sources of information

Employer handbook: HR guidance/reserve policies (MOD)	Employer handbook: HR guidance/reserve policies
Working for the MoD (including information about joining the reserves)	https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-defence/about/recruitment#join-the-reserves
Rights and responsibilities for reservists and employers (clear, practical information)	https://www.gov.uk/employee-reservist
Army website	https://www.army.mod.uk/who-we-are/the-army-reserve/
Royal Navy website	www.royalnavy.mod.uk/the-fleet/maritime-reserves
Royal Air Force website	https://www.raf.mod.uk/recruitment/reserves
Defence Relationship Management Helpline: – 0800 389 5459. A free telephone helpline open during office hours where advice and guidance can be obtained on training, mobilisation and employment issues.	https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/defence-relationship-management
Reservist employer toolkit (useful outline of information, with links to Reservists Employer Handbook 2015, a good practice guide)	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reservist-employers-toolkit/reservist-employer-toolkit
Aftercare Support	<p>Defence Relationship Management www.gov.uk/mod/employer-relations Helpline: – 0800 389 5459.</p> <p>Royal Navy website www.royalnavy.mod.uk/the-fleet/maritime-reserves</p> <p>Army website www.army.mod.uk/territorial</p> <p>Royal Air Force website: www.raf.mod.uk/rafreserves</p>

Appendix 2

Line Manger check list for Demobilisation

Demobilisation		
Respond to informal/formal contact from reservist (or next of kin) regarding returning to work		
Set up meeting and agree reservists return to work date.		
Take forward any actions arising from the meeting including any necessary reasonable adjustments.		
If the reservist does not make contact within 3 weeks, notify HR who should make contact with the reservist.		
Return to Work		
Reservist's return to work: Liaise with HR and Payroll to reconfirm dates		
Identify any transferable skills acquired whilst mobilised and how they can be used back in the workplace.		
Provide on-going support during the transition period.		