



**ARMY GENERAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTIONS**

**VOLUME 3**

**CHAPTER 81**

**ARMY WELFARE POLICY**

**The welfare of SP and their families is a key CoC leadership responsibility**

This Chapter is sponsored by Personal Services on behalf of Director Personnel. AGAI 81 promulgates Army Welfare Policy to deliver a key element of the moral component of fighting power and thus contribute to maintaining operational effectiveness. It should be read in conjunction with JSP 770: Tri-Service Operational and Non-operational Welfare Policy. This policy applies to all Army SP including Reserves and Regular Reservists, their families and Army veterans where practicable and manageable.

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1. **Public Sector Equality Duty.** In accordance with ACSO 3252 (The Conduct and Assurance of Equality Analyses for Army Policies and Services), this AGAI 81 (Welfare Policy) has been considered against the Public Sector Equality Duty and whilst it does impact on people, it does not impact adversely on any protected characteristic group and thus an Equality Analysis Impact Assessment was not completed. The initial assessment is archived and available from the author / owner.
2. **Public Sector Accessibility Regulations 2018.** The Army has a legal requirement to comply with the Public Sector Accessibility Regulations 2018. The regulations apply to all online content including documents (PDF, Word, PowerPoint, Excel). The owner of this AGAI 81 (Welfare Policy) confirms they have performed an accessibility check of this document and that it complies with the Public Sector Accessibility Regulations 2018.
3. **Inclusive Language.** As directed by the Executive Committee of the Army Board and Chief of Defence People, all policies and services must where possible use inclusive language. This can usually be done by rephrasing sentences, for example by using 'workforce' instead of 'manpower', and 'they' or 'their' rather than 'his' or 'her'. The owner of this AGAI 81 (Welfare Policy) confirms that it complies with the MOD's inclusive language guidance.
4. **Royal Prerogative.** Queen's Regulations and King's Regulations and their subset Army General and Administrative Instructions are made under prerogative powers. On the death of Queen Elizabeth II, His Majesty King Charles III was able to exercise prerogative rights immediately, and existing prerogative instruments previously issued under the late Queen continue in force until amended or suspended. During 2024, The Queen's Regulations for the Army 1975 will transition to become The King's Regulations for the Army 2024. The Interpretation Act 1889 Section 30 and the Interpretation Act 1979 Section 10 do not extend to legislation made under prerogative powers, therefore, references to the late Queen within this AGAI 81 (Welfare Policy) are to be interpreted reasonably and intelligently until this AGAI is updated.

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**RECORD OF AMENDMENTS**

<b>AEL Number</b>	<b>Amendment Date</b>	<b>Authority</b>	<b>Amendment</b>
AEL 110	March 2019	Pers Cap, Pers Svcs, Pol	Minor amendments to paras 81.015 & 81.064
AEL 120	January 2020	Pers Cap, Pers Svcs, Pol	Restructuring of Parts
AEL 121	February 2020	Pers Cap, Pers Svcs, Pol	Addition of exclusion to SFA/SSFA following reports of DA. Appendix 1 to Annex C (3 Feb). Subsequent revision of paragraph numbering (26 Feb)
AEL 143	December 2021	Pers Svcs, Pers Pol	Restructuring of Parts and revision of paragraphs.
AEL 151	August 2022	Pers Svc, Pers Pol	Addition of Paras 81.005.b and 81.155. New Para 81.231 and renumbering of remaining paragraphs in Part 7.
AEL 153	October 2022	Pers Svc, Pers Pol	Minor amdt to Para 81.021 & 81.047e
AEL 158	17 March 2023	Pers Svc, Pers Pol	Addition of JANIS Pilot Paras 81.004 Point J, 81.047 Point G, 81.152, 81.159 and 81.160 and renumbering of remaining paragraphs in Part 5. Revision of Paras 81.151 and 81.154.
AEL 159	21 April 2023	Pers Svc, Pers Pol	Minor amendments to Paras 221, 224 & 242.
AEL 175	5 August 2024	Pers Svc, Pers Pol	Major restructure and updates.

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**CHAPTER 81**  
**ARMY WELFARE POLICY**

**PART 1 - GENERAL**

## Introduction

**81.001.** This Army General and Administrative Instruction (AGAI) promulgates Army Welfare Policy to deliver a key element of the moral component of fighting power and thus contribute to maintaining operational effectiveness (OE). It should be read in conjunction with [JSP 770 \(Tri-Service Operational and Non-Operational Welfare Policy\)](#).

**81.002. Amendments.** Proposed amendments or new material for incorporation into this AGAI should be submitted for consideration to the Personal Service Policy Team in Army HQs, via the CoC. Updates will be publicised via an Army Briefing Note and the [Welfare Matters Newsletter](#).

## Conceptual Framework

**81.003. Defence Context.** The MOD is responsible for developing and coordinating welfare policies, including those that derive from government legislation. Tri-Service welfare policy provides the framework for welfare delivery by the single Services (sS) and UK StratCom. However, the sS deliver some aspects of welfare policy in a way that satisfies the needs of the particular Service. Within this context, the Army are responsible for the development and delivery of welfare policy that meets its needs. The sS and UK StratCom are responsible for feeding up to the Centre best practice and lessons identified so that tri-Service welfare policy can be formulated or amended.

**81.004.** The Army's Conceptual Framework for the provision of welfare can be found in the [Army Welfare Capstone Document](#). The Capstone expands on the strategic Ends of Army welfare outlined below and should be read in conjunction with this AGAI.

### **81.005. Definitions.**

a. **Welfare.** The provision of a widely recognised and accessible personal and community support structure that secures and improves the wellbeing of Service Personnel (SP) and the Service community, and can adapt to societal, legislative, and operational change to optimise the capability and motivation of all SP.

b. **Service Community.** SP and their immediate and close family<sup>1</sup>.

(1) **Immediate Family**<sup>2</sup>. The following persons are to be regarded as members of the immediate family of a Service person:

(a) Their spouse/civil partner<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> As defined in [JSP 752](#).

<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of UK Immigration policy refer to 'genuine and subsisting relationship.'

<sup>3</sup> Partner includes those who are in a Long-Term Relationship.

- (b) Any dependent child under the age of 18 years (but see paragraphs 02.0110 of JSP 752).
- (c) With the approval of the DBS MIL PERS-MIL OPS PACCC, any dependant son or daughter over 18 and under 21 years not undergoing further education.
- (d) A son or daughter of 18 years and over who is normally resident in the home of the Service person and who is certified by a medical authority to be suffering from physical or mental infirmity.
- (e) An unmarried son or daughter, or one who is not in a civil partnership, over the age of 18 years who is normally resident in the home of the Service person provided that for compassionate reasons (e.g. the death or chronic ill health of the spouse/civil partner) it is necessary for that son or daughter to live with the Service person and act as the housekeeper.

(2) **Close Family.** For the purpose of this AGAI, except where otherwise stated, the close family of a Service person and/or their spouse/civil partner includes those persons listed below which is in addition to those listed as Immediate Family (see paragraph 02.0122 of JSP 752):

- (a) Parent or Step-parent.
- (b) Legal guardian.
- (c) Non-dependant child.
- (d) Grandchild/step-grandchild.
- (e) Grandparent.
- (f) Sibling, including half and step-sibling.
- (g) Person nominated as Emergency Contact.

**81.006. Purpose.** To enhance the OE of the Army by increasing the resilience of SP and their immediate families to mitigate the unique challenges of Service life: mobility, separation, and personal risk.

**81.007. Vision.** Welfare provision that delivers the right outcomes for our people and the Army, by the right people, at the right time.

**81.008. Principles.** The purpose and vision are underpinned by the following principles:

- a. The needs of the Army come first; those of the SP and their immediate family



come a close second.<sup>4</sup>

- b. Welfare provision that is affordable, efficient, and effective, and focuses resource on those functions which are of the most value.
- c. Welfare provision that is accessible, configured for all and truly focussed on the needs of our people.
- d. Welfare provision that supports those most in need, while fostering independence in all.
- e. Welfare provision modernised to reflect the differing needs, aspirations, and expectations of our people now, and in the future.
- f. Welfare provision is interrelated and interdependent to its people and services – it cannot operate in stovepipes.
- g. Welfare provision that is communicated effectively and exploits modern connectivity.
- h. Welfare provision that is driven by targeted data.

**81.009. Outcomes.** The Army seeks the following outcomes from its welfare provision:

- a. OE is enhanced.
- b. The impact of mobility, separation and personal risk is mitigated.
- c. The right people are retained.
- d. Confidence and trust in the system is maintained.
- e. Equality of experience realised by all.
- f. The resilience and resourcefulness of SP, their immediate family and communities is strengthened.

**81.010. Endstate.** The provision of welfare by appropriately selected and trained welfare staff, whenever and wherever required, which enhances OE by increasing the resilience of Army personnel and their immediate family.

## Delivery

**81.011. Welfare Functions.** The welfare functions required by SP and their immediate family include, but are not limited to:

- a. Safeguarding.

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<sup>4</sup> But to be worthy of its pre-eminence the Army must give due consideration to the best interest and preferences of each individual SP.

- b. Support to those enduring Domestic abuse (DA).
- c. Support to Personnel ON Recovery Duty (PRD) SP.
- d. Support during separation and isolation.
- e. Bereavement support.
- f. Housing support.
- g. Support to non-UK SP.
- h. Children and education support.
- i. Disability and additional needs including carers.
- j. Resilience.
- k. Money and financial support.
- l. Overseas supportability.
- m. Support to partner employment.
- n. Estrangement and familial breakdown.
- o. Relationship counselling.
- p. Spiritual and pastoral care.
- q. Fostering and adopting.
- r. Support to under 18s and care leavers.

**81.012. Entitlement to Welfare Provision.** The matrix of entitlement to MOD funded welfare provision is outlined in [Annex A to Chapter 1 of JSP 770](#). It differs based on the level of support required and whether the SP is UK-based or overseas. As a minimum and at all times, welfare provision must directly support all Regular and on-duty Reserve personnel and their immediate family regardless of their length of Service, from attestation to transition, and applies equally to non-UK SP and family members subject to immigration control. Overseas, this entitlement is widened to include MOD civil servants and contractors. Welfare provision for veterans is also a core funded activity delivered centrally by the MOD's Veterans Welfare Service (VWS), supported by the Army's Corps and Regimental Headquarters and the 3rd Sector. In addition, international students and their immediate family who are attending UK based training courses are also entitled to the same welfare provision as their UK counterparts. JSP 510 Pt 2 provides more details.

**81.013. Roles and Responsibilities.** The effectiveness of Army welfare provision is dependent upon the coordination, communication, and balance of responsibility between

the individual, the Chain of Command (CoC) and the Army's welfare support services (each of which are supported by non-organic welfare agencies). Welfare activities are frequently complex, overlapping and performed at multiple levels; optimisation can only be achieved if all elements of this triumvirate work in harmony.

- a. **Individual Responsibilities.** Welfare starts with the SP. It is incumbent upon SP to understand their own welfare needs and those of their immediate family, and to ensure timely communication with the CoC where personal situations may affect resilience, functionality, availability, or OE. To achieve this, SP must be given clear guidance in their responsibilities and the pivotal role they play in communicating effectively with both their family and the CoC in times of need. They must have access to appropriate welfare resources and be empowered to make informed choices to meet their needs. The CoC have an important role in enabling individual responsibility and removing the barriers that prevent the empowerment of our people.
- b. **Command Responsibilities.** Welfare is a function of command. [JSP 770 \(Tri-Service Operational and Non-Operational Welfare Policy\)](#) details the welfare responsibility of Commanders for Army SP and their families. Commanders at all levels in the CoC are responsible for the welfare support of those under their command and within its community. The CoC have a critical role as welfare first responders, providing information and face-to-face guidance. They are supported by specialist advisors and professional welfare workers. Overseas, Commanders should seek to replicate the welfare services provided by the local authorities in England wherever reasonably practicable; this will be informed by the provisions of international agreements and local legal requirements and includes responsibility for the welfare of MOD Civil Servants and contractors.
- c. **Army Welfare Support Services Responsibilities.** The Army's welfare support services are responsible for providing support to the CoC and the provision of services that require specialist staff. These services often assist the CoC with complex issues that cannot be resolved by practical interventions alone or those that require extensive on-going support including personal and emotional support; spiritual and pastoral support; information support; and structural support placing the needs of the Army community within the wider context of civilian society and identifying gaps in provision to target resources effectively.

**81.014. Accountability for Army Welfare.** As the Principal Personnel Officer, the responsibility for personnel capability and Defence Lines of Development coherence rests with the Deputy Chief of the General Staff. In accordance with the Army Operating Model, Army welfare provision responsibilities are split between the Army Headquarters (Army HQ) Directorate of Personnel (D Pers) and Home Command (HC).

- a. **Army HQ.** D Pers is responsible for the development of Army non-remunerative Conditions of Service policy, including welfare. This includes shaping and informing Defence welfare policy, owned by the Chief of Defence People, and setting the policy framework for welfare delivery across the Army.
- b. **HC.** Commander HC is tasked with delivering the Army's personnel and institutional support, including welfare. Welfare delivery is delegated to General Officer Commanding (GOC) Regional Command (RC), who is responsible for the

evaluation of the effectiveness of welfare delivery throughout the Army.

c. **Field Army.** Commander Field Army (CFA) is responsible for the delivery of operationally effective force elements and has a key supporting role in ensuring the effective delivery of welfare support. CFA and Theatre Commanders (TC) are responsible for developing welfare policies specific to their own Commands, which must be in line with this AGAI and tri-Service welfare policy. In overseas commands the TC is responsible, wherever practicable and manageable, for the statutory provision in place of the Local Authority (LA) in England and for ensuring that the Army welfare policies are incorporated into their Command's Local Overseas Instructions and Overseas Legislation where appropriate to do so. Commanders at formation and unit level are to ensure that the instructions promulgated in this AGAI are incorporated into local Standing Orders and instructions and briefed to those to whom they apply.

**81.015. Training Delivery.** Commanding Officer (CO) Army Welfare Service (AWS) is the designated Training Delivery Authority (TDA) for AWS personnel and the Unit Welfare Officer (UWO) courses. In addition, they are to ensure Casualty Notification Officers (CNOs) and Visiting Officers (VOs) are trained to undertake their respective roles which is the responsibility of the Bereavement and Aftercare Support (BAS) team in the Army Personnel Support Group (APSG). Overseas Commands are to deliver in-theatre orientation training where there are differences from that which would normally be expected to be delivered in the UK. Further details of Army welfare training should be sought from HQ AWS.

## Types, Categories and Levels of Welfare

**81.016. Types.** There are two main types of welfare.

a. **Statutory.** Statutory support is defined as the provision of support which is provided by the state/local authorities (LA) because of legislation. Such support would include provision under the NHS and social services. In overseas commands, the Theatre Commander is responsible for the statutory provision in place of the LA in England, wherever practicable and manageable.

b. **Non-Statutory.** Non-statutory welfare provision is in addition to the statutory provision and is provided by the Services. It compensates for the unique circumstances SP and their families are in. Non- statutory welfare includes HIVE, community centres, sporting facilities and messes.

**81.017. Categories.** Within the Army, welfare falls into one of three main categories:

a. **Personal Support.** Personal support encompasses advice and support to a wide variety of individual and family circumstances, such as relationship difficulties, bereavement, addictions, DA, financial problems, and military separation.

b. **Community Support.** Community support is the support provided to individuals, groups and families throughout the military community including MOD employed civilians and their entitled families employed overseas. It may include amenities such as community centres, clubs (including retail, catering, leisure,

educational, recreational, and sporting), childcare and youth activities.

c. **Aftercare.** Aftercare is the provision of support to the ex-Service community of veterans and their families. It is principally delivered by the Statutory provider, Defence Business Services via Veterans Welfare Service (VWS), Defence Transition Service (DTS) and Integrated Personal Commissioning for Veterans (IPC4V).

**81.018. Levels of Welfare.** Welfare is provided by several organisations broken out into three distinct levels of support:

a. **Primary.** Primary support is defined as the provision of support generally available from within unit<sup>5</sup> resources. Primary level support can be given by COs, their CoC and the unit administrative and welfare staff including pastoral and medical personnel. Early identification is key to providing effective and timely support to a SP and their family. Unit specialists will identify, advise, assist, and refer SP and their families based on their welfare needs. Unit specialists include trained:

- (1) Unit Welfare Officer (UWO) and Unit Welfare WO/SNCO (UWWO/UWSNCO) of Regular Army units.
- (2) Regimental Operations Support Officer (ROSO) and Regimental Operations Support Warrant Officer (ROSWO) in Reserve units.
- (3) Regimental Career Management Officer (RCMO).
- (4) Army and/or civilian Chaplain.
- (5) Regimental Medical Officer (RMO).
- (6) HIVE.
- (7) WRVS (where available).

These specialists must be trained and operate within the Army Welfare Code of Confidentiality (see Part 2 of this AGAI), in support of the CO and the CoC. Mandatory unit welfare responsibilities are covered in more detail in Part 3. Primary level support is appropriate for those situations that can be dealt with by practical help, advice, or a one-off listening session. These should primarily be dealt with by the CoC and the SP referred to welfare professionals if required. For example, a SP or family member:

- (1) Who is worried about stress, pay matters or requires debt counselling.
- (2) Who has a sick relative and needs compassionate leave to visit.
- (3) Who wants information about the local community.

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<sup>5</sup> Anybody of members of Her Majesty's forces formed under the command of a person appointed to be the commanding officer of the body as listed in [JSP 830](#).

- (4) Is experiencing homesickness and needs a friendly ear to listen.
- (5) Whose relative or close friend has died and who wants to talk with the Padre or UWO.
- (6) With a welfare need.

Where any doubt exists about the appropriate level of welfare support, unit staff and other first line welfare providers should consult with the AWS. They will advise on issues which may require secondary level welfare provision.

b. **Secondary/Specialist.** Specialist welfare support is defined as that which cannot or should not be dealt with at the primary level based on the training required to address the issue. Such support is usually provided by the AWS and is appropriate to deal with situations involving complex issues that cannot be helped by practical interventions alone, as well as those that require extensive on-going support. Part 5 of this AGAI covers the process for units to request this support.

c. **Tertiary.** Tertiary support is defined as that which is provided by MOD, corporate, charitable, and voluntary organisations.

(1) **MOD.** This level of support includes organisations such as: the Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC), Forces Line (FL), VWS, DTS, IPC4V, [Vets UK](#) and the Defence Children Services (DCS).

(2) **DCS.** DCS sits under Regional Command and is the lead for all issues relating to Service children and young people, whether living in the UK or overseas. DCS incorporates the Service Children's Education (SCE) providing education and children's services overseas, and the Education Advisory Team (UK) and the Overseas Education Support Team, both of which provide information, advice, and support about all aspects of Service children's education. Further information can be found on the [DCS website](#).

(3) **Employee Support Networks.** There are a wide range of employee support networks which support minority groups (eg gender, orientation, and race). These include, but are not limited to, the Army Servicewoman's Network, LGBT Network, and the Army Parents' Network. Further details are available through [DPers' Diversity and Inclusion team](#).

## Public and Non-Public Welfare Funds and Grants

**81.019.** There are many sources of public and non-public funds available to units to support welfare, recreational and sporting projects and activities:

a. **Public Funds.** See [JSP 770](#) for full details. Public funds include:

(1) **CO's Public Fund (COPF) and Enhanced COPF (ECOPF).** ECOPF is intended to allow COs to improve the quality of life for their SP and underpin retention initiatives.

(2) **Sports Equipment Public Fund (SEPF).** The SEPF exists to improve the provision of sports equipment and facilities for SP.

(3) **Accumulated Welfare Fund (AWF).** The purpose of the AWF is to help COs to enhance unit welfare amenities.

(4) **Families Welfare Grant (FWG).** The FWG is designed to assist home/parent units in providing welfare support to families of SP on qualifying deployments where the Deployment Welfare Package (DWP) has been authorised. This also applies to UK operations that have qualified for DWP. The authority to grant DWP and FWG lies with the component command of that operation.

b. **Non-Public Funds.** Most units have non-public, PRI, funds available to them. In addition, several external charities also make grants to units (as opposed to those charities that assist SP on an individual basis) notably:

(1) **Public Gainshare and Excess Income.** Access to funding from both Catering, Retail and Leisure (CRL) Public Gainshare and Excess Income (EI) from Hestia Contracts is available in accordance with [ACSO 3206](#).

(2) **Army Central Fund (ACF) and Nuffield Trust (NT).** All applications for grants from the ACF and NT are staffed through the RPoC to [SO2 Welfare Funds](#) at HQ RC, where they will be considered by the Army Welfare Grants Committee (AWGC) in accordance with Annex F to [ACSO 3206](#). Both charities allocate funds to the AWGC which disburses about £1.3M in grants every year. Those projects that cannot be funded by the AWGC are then referred to the Trustees of the ACF or NT as appropriate:

(a) **ACF.** The ACF is one of the Army's premier charities providing grants for both welfare and sport in support of all ranks and their immediate family. As well as providing annual Command Grants the ACF will also consider Super Grants (above £25,000).

(b) **NT.** The NT is a charity that promotes the welfare and efficiency of the serving members of the Forces of the Crown. The NT makes an annual allocation to all three Services and will also consider Major Grants (up to £40,000) and Capital Grants (£40,000 and above).

(3) **Other Charities.** Details of other charities are contained in Annex E to [ACSO 3206](#) and include; the Berlin Infantry Brigade Memorial Trust Fund, the Ulysses Trust, the Army Sport Control Board (Charitable Fund and Army Sports Lottery), the Team Army Sports Foundation, the Annington Trust, the Services Sound and Vision Corporation Welfare Fund.

**81.020 – 81.029.** Reserved.

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## PART 2 – PROCESSING WELFARE INFORMATION

### Introduction

**81.030. General.** All personnel acting in the provision of welfare must operate within the bounds of the law when processing<sup>6</sup> personal data<sup>7</sup> pertaining to SP and entitled persons (Service Users). Data protection law<sup>8</sup> governs the way in which information must be managed and handled and is an enabler for fair and proportionate data sharing. The [Defence Knowledge and Information Portal](#) provides links to policy and guidance on knowledge management, information management and data management. [JSP 441](#) sets Defence's policy commitments for Information, Knowledge, Digital and Data and what Defence People must do to meet them. This includes the seven key 'data protection principles' relating to processing of personal data and standards for information handling that are set out in [Art. 5](#) of the UK General Data Protection Regime (GDPR), and inform everything that follows.

### Data Protection

**81.031. Legal Basis.** Personal information that can identify SU's must not be used or disclosed for purposes other than the provision of direct welfare support without the individual's explicit consent, some other legal basis, or where there is a robust public interest or legal justification to do so. Explicit consent is a very clear and specific statement of consent written in words. All personnel acting in the provision of welfare must identify a valid [lawful basis](#) under [Art. 6](#) of the UK GDPR when processing personal data. In most circumstances, data will be processed under the legal basis of Public Task; processing is necessary for the performance of welfare provision undertaken in pursuance of the MOD's core activities<sup>9</sup> to Enable and Generate. The boundaries between the categories and levels of welfare support must be fluid in both space and time and mutually supportive, however, the rights<sup>10</sup> of the SU under data protection legislation must also be respected. It is important to note that the lawful basis for processing will affect which rights are available to individuals<sup>11</sup>.

**81.032. Special categories of personal data.** Special category data is personal data that needs more protection because it is sensitive, such as race, ethnic background, political opinions, religious beliefs, trade union membership, genetics, biometrics (where used for identification) health and sex life or orientation. To lawfully process special category data, welfare providers must determine both a lawful basis under [Art. 6](#) of the UK GDPR and a separate condition for processing under [Art. 9](#) of the UK GDPR. These do not have to be linked but should be documented. There are ten conditions for processing special category data in [Art. 9](#) of the UK GDPR. Five of these require welfare providers to meet additional conditions and safeguards set out in UK law, in [Schedule 1](#) of DPA. The UK GDPR also gives extra protection to the personal data of offenders or

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<sup>6</sup> Definition of 'processing' can be found at [Para 2 of Art. 4 GDPR](#).

<sup>7</sup> Personal data are any information which are related to an identified or identifiable natural person.

<sup>8</sup> The [Data Protection Act 2018](#) and [UK General Data Protection Regulation](#).

<sup>9</sup> [How Defence Works: the defence operating model](#)

<sup>10</sup> [Data Protection: rights for data subjects](#)

<sup>11</sup> [A guide to lawful basis | ICO](#)

suspected offenders in the context of criminal activity, allegations, investigations, and proceedings<sup>12</sup>.

## Duty of Confidentiality

**81.033. General.** A duty of confidence arises when one person discloses information to another in circumstances where it is reasonable to expect that the information will be held in confidence. It is a legal obligation that is derived from case law and a requirement established within professional codes of conduct (e.g. doctors, solicitors, chaplains, professional welfare staff). Although personnel staff acting in the provision of welfare are not subject to professional codes of conduct<sup>13</sup> they are expected to adhere to the spirit of such professional codes and must operate within the bounds of the law<sup>14</sup>. SU's entrust welfare providers with, or allow welfare providers to gather, sensitive information relating to their wellbeing and other matters as part of their seeking welfare support. They do so in confidence, and they have the legitimate expectation that staff will respect their privacy and act appropriately.

**81.034. Disclosing and using confidential information.** Information that can identify individual SU's, must not be used or disclosed in ways that do not directly contribute to, or support the delivery of, their welfare without the individual's explicit consent, some other statutory basis, or where there is robust public interest or legal justification to do so. Confidential information should not be included unless it is necessary for the specified purpose(s) for which the information is used or accessed. In contrast, anonymised information is not confidential and may be used with few constraints. The direct care of SU's for welfare purposes includes all activities<sup>15</sup> that directly contribute to the identification, care, and support of an individual and the audit/assurance of the quality of the welfare provided.

**81.035. Welfare case files are for welfare provision.** It is extremely important that SU are made aware of information disclosures that should take place to provide them with high quality care and offered appropriate choices. Whilst SU's may understand that information needs to be shared between the categories and levels of welfare support, this may not be the case and efforts made to inform SU should reflect the breadth of the required disclosure. In order to inform SU's properly, welfare providers must check that SU's have read and understood the respective privacy information<sup>16</sup> at the time they collect their personal data from them, ensuring the SU understands how their information is to be used to support their wellbeing and that they have no objections, concerns or queries about how their information is used. Where this has been done effectively, permission can be implied, providing that the information is shared no more widely and that "need to know" principle<sup>17</sup> is enforced.

**81.036. Right to object.** The SU has a right to object, on grounds relating to their particular situation, at any time to processing of personal data concerning them which is

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<sup>12</sup> [See Schedule 1, Part 3, DPA 18.](#)

<sup>13</sup> The code that applies to professional medical, welfare and chaplaincy staff does not apply to personnel staff who operate the need-to-know / Official Sensitive - Personal principles.

<sup>14</sup> JSP 770, Para 1.1.18.

<sup>15</sup> See Privacy Notices – Why we are collecting and processing your data?

<sup>16</sup> [Primary Welfare Privacy Notice](#) and [AWS Privacy Notice](#).

<sup>17</sup> Access to information is only provided where there is a real requirement to fulfil their role.

based on Public Task. It is the welfare providers responsibility to record details of all the objections they receive, adding an entry to the individuals case file. Welfare providers should no longer process the personal data under Public Task unless they can demonstrate compelling legitimate grounds for the processing which override the interests, rights, and freedoms of the data subject or for the establishment, exercise, or defence of legal claims<sup>18</sup>. Where a welfare provider is satisfied that they do not need to comply with the request they should inform the individual, explain their decision and make a record. The SU should be directed to the Primary Welfare Privacy Notice for more details on the processing of their data including the right to make a complaint. Sometimes, if SU's choose to prohibit information being disclosed to other welfare providers involved in providing care, it might mean that the care that can be provided is limited and, in extremely rare circumstances, that it is not possible to offer certain options. SU's must be informed if their decisions about disclosure have implications for the provision of welfare. Welfare providers may not be able to support SU effectively, nor provide continuity of care, without having relevant information about a SU's difficulty or welfare history.

**81.037. Exemptions from the GDPR.** Welfare providers should respect SU's or third party's<sup>19</sup> decisions to restrict the disclosure or use of personal data, except where the reasons for withholding personal information are not valid, or there might be serious consequences as a result of not disclosing information<sup>20</sup>. The matter should be referred to trained welfare (AWS or UWO), legal, service police and/or medical professionals for advice as necessary and proportionate. Welfare providers should justify and document their reasons for relying on an exemption<sup>21</sup> and inform the SU first, if it is safe and practicable to do so. Where there is any doubt as to whether an exemption has been met, advice should be sought from the Unit Data Protection Advisor or Divisional Legal Branch. The following exemptions can, on a case-by-case basis, relieve welfare providers of their obligations (e.g. the right to inform, right to subject access and the right to object), alongside other provisions of the UK GDPR, where processing of personal information is carried out for the following purposes:

- a. The prevention or detection of crime and the apprehension or prosecution of offenders. This includes concerns relating to adult or child safeguarding issues, DA, stalking and violence.
- b. Disclosure is required by law (including military law) or in connection with legal proceedings (including to obtain legal advice or to defend legal rights). All SP have a duty to inform their CO of any suspected offences under Schedule 2<sup>22</sup> or of the existence<sup>23</sup> or prescribed circumstances<sup>24</sup>, as to enable them to discharge their legal obligation to ensure that the Service Police are aware of the matter.
- c. To protect members of the public against dishonesty, malpractice or other seriously improper conduct, or unfitness or incompetence.

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<sup>18</sup> In accordance with [Art. 21 GDPR](#)

<sup>19</sup> Where the MOD is not the data controller or data relating to others.

<sup>20</sup> You can share data about someone in an emergency if it will save their life or protect them or others from serious harm.

<sup>21</sup> [Schedules 2-4](#) and [Sect. 26](#) of the DPA 2018.

<sup>22</sup> [Schedule 2 of the Armed Forces Act 2006](#)

<sup>23</sup> Which does not all depend on whether it is likely that an offence has been committed

<sup>24</sup> Sections [113](#) and [114](#) and [Regulation 3](#) of the Armed Forces Act. More information can be found in JSP 830: Manual of Service Law, Ch 6.

- d. To secure the health, safety, and welfare of persons at work, or to protect others against risk to health or safety arising out of or in connection with the action of persons at work<sup>25</sup>. The exemption only applies to the extent that compliance with UK GDPR provisions would be likely to prejudice the proper discharge of the function. For example, consultation for medical advice and referral to the Unit VRM Lead is mandatory for any individual deemed to be at risk of suicide or self-harm behaviour<sup>26</sup>.
- e. To safeguard national security or for defence purposes<sup>27</sup>.

The exemptions and restrictions mentioned above are those most likely to apply in practice. However, [JSP 441](#) contains additional exemptions and restrictions that may be relevant.

**81.038. Disclosure prohibited or restricted by an enactment.** There are specific provisions of enactments<sup>28</sup> covering human fertilisation and embryology; adoption; special educational needs; parental orders; and children's hearings, where personal data is prohibited or restricted from disclosure.

## Recording, Retention and Access to Welfare Records

**81.039. General.** Everyone in Defence is responsible for ensuring that the information they hold or have access to, whether physically or digitally, is secured and used appropriately. [JSP 440](#) sets out the requirements for the management of security and [JSP 441](#) also includes the rules for managing data and for managing records. All personnel must understand their responsibilities in handling and managing Defence information according to statutory and regulatory frameworks and undertake mandatory training<sup>29</sup>.

**81.040. Record keeping and Management.** Welfare providers do not require SU consent to capture welfare information in a suitable form in order that it can be managed. The collection of personal information should be limited to what is directly relevant and necessary to accomplish the specified purpose. When a document is created it must be stored in a document library in either the appropriate area of the LTD SharePoint site according to the file plan, or case management system (e.g. JANIS). To structure information effectively, [Structuring information](#) guidance should be followed. At all stages, the Information Manager<sup>24</sup>, should provide advice and guidance on information structures and how to evolve them over time to keep pace with changing information needs. UWO's must liaise with the Site Owner(s) to maintain access controls ensuring permissions are applied correctly in accordance with the file plan and updated when welfare staff join or depart the welfare team. Business (or personal) information should not be saved in personal storage areas (e.g. One Drive). Any holding of any quantity of welfare records of personal data at Army Units, in any format such as paper or electronic, from which an

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<sup>25</sup> When assessing risk, it is essential to consider a SP's fitness for armed duties (i.e. access to or in charge of a firearm) when deciding on disclosure of information to the CoC; any concerns relating to this must be disclosed to the CoC and their LM.

<sup>26</sup> See AGAI 110

<sup>27</sup> [JSP 441 - Defence exemption](#)

<sup>28</sup> See [Schedule 4](#) of the DPA 18.

<sup>29</sup> ['Protecting Personal Data'](#) and ['Records Management Awareness'](#) and ['Information and Knowledge Awareness course'](#).

individual can be identified must be registered as an asset within the Army Information Asset Register<sup>25</sup>. All electronic records must also be named using the [Document and Recording Naming Standard](#).

**81.041. JANIS Pilot Record Keeping and Management.** Unit Welfare Staff undertaking the JANIS pilot are required to maintain a record of their work on JANIS in accordance with [SOI 201](#). The SOI covers the scope and range of notes and JANIS forms to be completed and time frames that SNCO's and above with 1<sup>st</sup> Line Welfare Unit User permissions must adhere to. Units that are new to JANIS must conduct the initial case file input outlined in [SOI 201](#), para 15. When a new case file is opened, the SU's personal details should be checked and updated accordingly. In circumstances where the disclosure of information should not take place (para 81.037) or where the unit user deems a case file to be sensitive in nature; the case file may be hidden from other unit users in accordance with [SOI 201](#), para 20. AWS will gain access to SU records upon receipt of referral and where directed by AWS Head Personal Support to conduct auditing and inspection.

**81.042. Case Record Forms.** AWS have developed a format and a system of recording which unit welfare staff must adopt, including time frames for processing welfare information and a Quality Assurance Review. A threshold for processing welfare information has been established through the application of appropriate categories and categorisations. Further information, including a case file recording guide can be found on the [UWO Training Hub](#) or obtained from HQ AWS.

**81.043. Access to Welfare Records.** The provision of welfare as a supporting service enables Defences Outputs<sup>30</sup> and there is therefore a clear business requirement for unit welfare staff (SNCO and above) to have access to the case files of SP/entitled persons within the unit they are employed and their families. Access should be requested where individuals seek welfare support elsewhere due to geographical separation from their parent unit. SharePoint Online provides the functionality to limit access to this sensitive information to those permitted to see it (set permissions to view only) and staff should be informed how they can obtain access if there is a business reason to do so. It is vital that the relevant permissions on limited access sites are set up correctly and regularly checked. This not only prevents unauthorised users accessing the sites directly, but it also prevents data being shown in the results of searches to sites where they do not have access. Closed/historic case files are an invaluable source of information to improve the effectiveness of current operations and must only be viewed where there is a justifiable business reason in line with the respective privacy notice e.g. to identify patterns of behaviour, establish reoccurring issues and to identify what support has been provided to the individual to assess the suitability of options available.

**81.044. Pilot Access to Welfare Records.** Unit Welfare Staff must inform their Army Professional Welfare Mentor of their Assignment Order date so their JANIS account user permissions can be rescinded in accordance with [SOI 201](#), para 37.

**81.045. Access to Personal Information.** Under the DPA 18, SU's have the right to request access and receive a copy of their personal information. This is commonly referred to as a Subject Access Request (SAR). Information and forms to request personal data

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<sup>30</sup> [How Defence Works \(September 2020\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

held by the MOD for current or former civilian staff or members of the Armed Forces can be found on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

**81.046. Transferring Information.** Welfare records should not be routinely transferred to another unit<sup>31</sup> on posting, detachment or deployment of an SP and their family, except where para 81.047 applies. This is to ensure appropriate security of personal data, including protection against accidental loss or destruction. However, it is both unit's responsibility to ensure the accurate and timely transfer of a welfare summary detailing the contents of SU's records is sent to the receiving unit. Welfare-to-welfare communications must be conducted at all stages of a SP's career to enable the appropriate provision of welfare support. A standardised welfare summary form can be found on the [UWO Training Hub](#). Both units must agree a date when the responsibility for an individual is passed between units and by which time the losing unit will have satisfactorily handed over details of the SP and their family<sup>32</sup>. It is good practice to advise the SU that the transfer summary will be sent. [AGAI 110](#), para's 110.065 – 110.067, provide direction on VRMIS record management during assignment of individuals.

**81.047. JANIS Pilot Transferring Information.** To facilitate continuity of support and ensure personal support activity is tracked and properly handed over, SU case files must be transferred between units on JANIS. The SP case container transfer process is detailed in [SOI 201](#), para 30. It is the receiving UWO's responsibility to ascertain whether the incumbent is posted from another JANIS Pilot Unit<sup>33</sup> by undertaking a JANIS check. A welfare summary must also be transferred to the gaining unit in accordance with [SOI 201](#), paras 27-28. It is good practice to advise the SU that the welfare summary will be sent.

**81.048. Handover/Takeover.** All welfare providers are responsible for conducting a full handover of their role to their successor, providing information regarding the application of welfare procedures within the unit and the welfare case files for which they are responsible for. The losing unit must also engage with specialist welfare support providers already involved in the care of the SP or their family to notify them that the SP is being transferred to another unit.

**81.049. Retention Schedule.** A record must be declared when welfare files/documents are no longer being worked on and are stored according to their retention schedule with read-only access<sup>34</sup>. It is the creator of the file or document who should assume responsibility for declaring the file/document as a record. Records detailing the welfare services or help provided to individuals and their families with any personal or family difficulty are to be destroyed after a minimum of 7 years from date of last action. Certain types of record must be kept for set periods of time to ensure compliance (see paras 81.150 – 81.151). [QRG120 – Records Management in SharePoint Online](#) provides an explanation as to how records must be captured in MODNET. The Unit Welfare Officer is responsible for conducting a review judging the value of the record and establishing the length of time during which they retain this value.

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<sup>31</sup> Including SP moving from ARTIC to LWC and beyond into Fd Army and across Defence

<sup>32</sup> See APSG LFC [Handover Takeover of Personnel](#)

<sup>33</sup> JANIS Pilot Unit List: Annex A to [SOI 201](#)

<sup>34</sup> See [JSP 441](#)

**81.050. Domestic Abuse.** Policy for retention (and sharing) of information when an allegation of domestic abuse has been made may be found in [JSP 913 Part 1](#), paras 12-23.

**81.051. Safeguarding Children Cases.** Cases involving safeguarding children's issues should be retained in line with the direction stipulated in [JSP 834](#). In addition, the case should be retained at its original unit, but a transfer summary will always be sent to the new unit. Unit Welfare staff at the new unit are to advise AWS of the arrival of the service user and the case history, so that appropriate action can be taken. On posting of an individual and family JANIS Pilot Units must transfer all SP Case Containers that involve Safeguarding Children Cases and upload a welfare summary into the SP Case Container of the individual concerned in accordance with [SOI 201](#), para 29.

**81.052. Recording Welfare Interviews.** Welfare proceedings are routinely classified as OFFICIAL – SENSITIVE. It is inappropriate for audio recordings to be made using recording devices (overtly or covertly). Verbatim recordings are not to be made in anything other than exceptional circumstances. If required, they must have the consent of all parties involved.

**81.053. JANIS Pilot System Amendment Requests.** Mistakes made by human error on JANIS can be rectified by sending a system amendment request in accordance with [SOI 201](#), para 41.

**81.054. JPA Welfare Indicator Tracking Tool.** The JPA Welfare Indicator Tracking Tool is designed to ensure SP have continued welfare support from one posting to another. Whilst current practice is for the losing unit's UWO of an SP with ongoing welfare needs to provide a Welfare Summary to the receiving unit's UWO, the JPA Welfare Indicator Tool ensures the timely passage of welfare information by the losing unit on JPA. As every SP will have different circumstances, there is no set criteria for when a JPA Welfare Indicator Tracking Tool should be added. UWOs and the CoC should predominantly rely on their own judgment and knowledge of the SP, however, the list below is not exhaustive and should be used as a handrail only:

- a. If the SP's welfare circumstances are made significantly worse if they were to post to certain geographic locations.
- b. If the SP is unable to meet childcare or career responsibilities if they were posted to a certain geographic location.
- c. If the SP or their family has an open case file.
- d. If the UWO and CoC deem a SP's or their family's circumstances to be severe enough that their next unit should be made aware.
- e. If the SP has been discussed at a VRM Initial Risk Conference, regardless of the outcome.

**81.055.** RCMOs<sup>35</sup> are responsible for managing the assignment of SP between units and they are required to highlight on JPA if a SP has a welfare issue. The tool does not give details of the welfare issue, just that one is ongoing. The flag is visible to SP but will allow the RCMO to see when an individual has a 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> line welfare issue and to inform the UWO. APC will also be able to see the flag and should discuss with the RCMO before finalising the individual's suitability for future assignment. UWOs will need to liaise closely with the RCMO so information is kept up to date on JPA. RCMOs are responsible for checking the JPA records of SP assigned into the unit and informing the CoC/UWO of those with a welfare flag. The JPA 'Welfare Case Tracker' report (MISR 3002784) should be generated by the RCMO at regular intervals to assist with this task. Further guidance can be found in the [JPA Business Process Guide](#) and the Pers Svcs PowerPoint [Step by Step Guide](#).

**81.056. Passage of Information within ARITC/LWC/Fd Army.** To provide effective welfare support to recruits, trainees and junior soldiers and officers, it is essential that the passage of information regarding all welfare issues is effective both within the unit and between training units or stages of training. It is particularly important that the recruit/trainee reports from Assessment Centres through Initial and Trade Training units and then onward to the Field Army are complete. Detail is contained at Para 81.046 for how information should be transferred between Fd Army units and for further details of how information should be passed between ARTIC – LWC and LWC – Fd Army the following SOI can provide detail [LWC Handbook SOI 318](#).

**81.057. Referrals to the Army Welfare Service and Specialist Welfare Requests.** Both processes are detailed in Part 5 of this AGAI.

**81.058 - 81.070.** Reserved.

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<sup>35</sup> Some units may use the Adjutant to manage the assignment of officers.



## PART 3 – PRIMARY LEVEL SUPPORT

### Unit Responsibilities

**81.071. Co-ordination of Army Welfare Support.** The effectiveness of statutory, primary, specialist and third sector welfare support is dependent on the co-ordination of effort. At unit level this is best achieved through a Welfare Management Committee (WMC) that meets at least monthly and brings together the CoC, UWO, Chaplain, Medical Officer, and other relevant staff/organisations, including AWS, which support welfare delivery in the unit. The CO should chair the WMC. The purpose of these meetings is address specific welfare concerns and to identify trends in welfare matters that need to be addressed.

**81.072.** The CoC are encouraged to review the staffing of unit welfare offices to ensure their staff reflect the community they support. The CoC are also encouraged to review the staffing levels prior to unit deployments or moves with a view to increasing them should there be a need to do so.

**81.073. CO and CoC Responsibility.** Welfare support to all unit SP and the Service community is the responsibility of the CO. This responsibility is exercised through the CoC, utilising specialist advisors and welfare workers, and by providing community support assets. COs and the CoC are to:

- a. Where practicable, provide and maintain as a minimum the standard of welfare and community support assets as detailed in Part 2 of this AGAI.
- b. Establish a stigma-free welfare culture that encourages SP to seek advice at the earliest opportunity through the CoC or directly through unit welfare staff.
- c. Provide or ensure access to welfare resources where normal civil society does not meet the need.
- d. Ensure that all appropriate personnel undergo suitable training to meet their welfare responsibilities.
- e. Ensure that all vital information, including full details of welfare and community support services, is communicated effectively to the Service community.
- f. Ensure the welfare needs of parties to a complaint (complainant/respondent) are properly considered and they are assisted with coping with the stresses of their situation.
- g. Seek specialist advice where necessary. Timely advice and guidance should be sought from higher authority (HA) where required. Potentially high profile and contentious cases must be referred to HA before unit action is taken.
- h. Maintain a close working relationship with specialist welfare organisations granting suitable access where required. The CO is to regularly hold formal welfare meetings with unit welfare and specialist staff to address current welfare issues and ensure that a seamless and coherent welfare service is available.

- i. Include welfare requirements in preparations for all exercise and operational deployments; this should apply equally to mobilised reservists attached to the unit.
- j. Publish a Unit Welfare Standing Orders or Instructions that sets out the unit welfare strategy. The document should cover, as a minimum, entitlement, delivery, responsibility, feedback and complaints procedures and funding framework. A framework is at Annex A.
- k. Disseminate, as part of the induction process, and Unit Welfare Information Pack, for SP and their families newly arrived at a unit, the following information as a minimum:
  - (1) Details of the welfare CoC. Personnel should be made fully aware of whom they or their families can contact.
  - (2) Assurances that the unit is a stigma-free welfare environment.
  - (3) The CO's Equality and Diversity policy and the MOD Harassment Complaints Procedures and contact details for the Army's Confidential Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Helpline (Speak Out Helpline) (94391 7922 or 012364 381922 local call charges apply). The Speak Out Helpline is open Mon-Fri: 0830-1730. Messages can be left outside of these times. Or email: [Army-SpeakOut@mod.gov.uk](mailto:Army-SpeakOut@mod.gov.uk)
  - (4) Details of welfare facilities both on and off base. These should include at the very least, the HIVE and community centre; education and sports facilities; social and retail facilities; and youth and childcare facilities and activities.

**81.074.** UWO/ROSO Responsibilities. These include:

- a. Be responsible to the CO for the support, assistance and welfare advice given to SP and families of the unit. This is best done through the development of a Unit Welfare Information Pack (UWIP) that lays out the unit's approach to welfare.
- b. Brief the CO and the CoC, when necessary, on individual cases within the Code of Confidentiality.
- c. Liaise with relevant welfare agencies and social services on behalf of the unit to:
  - (1) Establish working links with local welfare organisations such as the AWS, HIVE, WRVS, AFF, Service Social Welfare Service providers, local welfare charities such as RBL (Royal British Legion); SSAFA (Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association); RELATE; Citizens Advice Bureau and LA representatives where appropriate.
  - (2) Ensure that appropriate and timely referrals are made to relevant agencies when specialist intervention is required, e.g. safeguarding concerns.
  - (3) Establish and maintain links with local pre-school groups (including Early Years Childcare) and schools (particularly where there is a concentration of

children from the unit).

(4) Establish and maintain links with local Service medical staff and local health services and health visitors.

(5) Act as the local Child Support Agency (CSA) Forces Focal Point.

- d. Be aware of other Army Welfare resources such as Forces Line (FL).
- e. Provide the focal point for unit housing and the link with the Housing Allocation Service Centre or Housing and Community Support Staff Officer overseas.
- f. Represent the unit on welfare and Commander's Monthly Case Conferences, where directed to attend, and act as the CO's representative on welfare matters within the unit/station/garrison.
- g. Provide two-way communication and a mechanism for listening to views, feelings and needs of SP and families, such as spouses' forums. Provide feedback to the unit CoC, noting the restrictions of the Code of Confidentiality.
- h. Encourage both SP and families to participate in voluntary activities such as families' support groups, youth and community activities and supporting service charities in service committees.
- i. Establish a local database of support groups, which exist locally, eg CRUSE (bereavement support); SANDS (Stillbirth and Neonatal Death Society); and MENCAP (support to individuals and families with learning difficulties), etc.
- j. Adhere to [SOI 201](#) if undertaking the Joint Army Navy Information System (JANIS) Pilot.
- k. Deliver an annual awareness brief on immigration matters relating to Non-UK SP and their families. [AGAI 50](#) contains more details and a framework brief. If UWOs are unsure on what updates there are to these issues, they should seek advice from Personal Services, Pers Pol, D Pers. HIVE can also be contacted to help deliver the brief.
- l. Capture feedback quickly and anonymously via a Service User Feedback Form (see [Pers Svcs Defence Connect page](#) for guide) to enable continuous improvement of welfare provision.
- m. Ensure that the Primary Level Privacy Notice is provided to all SP and families through a variety of formats e.g. link in signature block and signpost to the electronic copy on the [Pers Svcs Policy Defence Connect Page](#).
- n. Conduct rank ranged welfare workshops in messes or sub-unit lines.

**81.075.** It is strongly recommended that UWOs/ROSOs **do not** form an integral part of the discipline chain or act as Casualty Notifying Officers/Visiting Officers. This is to ensure their availability for core welfare support activities as well as preventing a conflict of

interest through their involvement in both discipline and welfare matters.

**81.076. Conflicts of interest.** Unit Welfare staff should always be aware of the risk of having a personal or previous relationship with an individual requesting welfare support within the unit. It is paramount that if there is any conflict of interest between the Unit Welfare staff and the individual in question, that would prevent the appropriate provision of welfare, that the AWS are contacted and offer support in lieu of the first line provision. This therefore ensures that the conflict of interest is eliminated.

### Key Welfare Activities

**81.077.** Unit key welfare activities are at Annex B.

**81.078. Welfare and Wellbeing.** Welfare is intrinsically linked to the wellbeing of individuals. Therefore, a UWO should ensure that they are also involved in any wellbeing activities, meetings and decisions making processes within the unit. UWOs should ensure they attend the monthly Commander's Monthly Case Review (CMCR) and also any Unit Health and Wellbeing Committees, as detailed in [AGAI 57](#). In addition, UWOs should also ensure they are familiar with MOD wellbeing policy contained within [JSP 661 – Health and Wellbeing policy](#).

### Selection, Training, Employment Checks and Development of Unit Welfare Staff

**81.079.** COs are responsible for ensuring their welfare office staff are appropriately trained and complete the required employment checks in accordance with AGAI 119: Employment Checks on Personnel in Posts Requiring Disclosure Checks. This should take place ahead of the individual(s) taking up their appointment(s).

a. **Selection.** The selection of appropriate unit welfare staff is key to effective welfare support. COs are to ensure that UWOs/ROSOs are selected against the following competencies and personal qualities.

(1) Essential competencies for welfare work are sound interpersonal skills; good verbal and writing skills; well organised administrator; and emotional intelligence.

(2) Personal qualities required for assignment to welfare posts include compassion; understanding; integrity; ability to work in a small closely-knit team; willingness to accept the post; and empathy.

b. **Mandatory Training.** HQ AWS is responsible for the UWO training course that is mandatory for all UWO/ROSOs and UWWO/ROSWOs. UWOs must attend a five-day residential pre-employment training course (Part 1) followed by a 3-day period of residential continuation/confirmation training after four to six months in post (Part 2). The training is delivered under contract with course loading conducted through HQ AWS. The aim of the course is to provide appropriate knowledge, skills, and signposting awareness to enable UWOs to deliver effective first line welfare provision. The course is open to Regular and Army Reserve Welfare Officers, Warrant Officer, SNCOs and equivalent Civil Servants. The UWO course director will

identify personnel who may be either unsuitable for the UWO appointment or who require further training. This information is to be passed to HQ AWS, who are to inform the unit and/or the CoC and, where appropriate APC. Details of these courses and accreditation are published in [2024DIN07-033](#).

c. **Development Training.** UWO/ROSOs are also to attend their LA inter-agency safeguarding children training. Overseas Commands are to run theatre specific welfare courses to ensure compliance with local welfare standing orders and instructions. To develop specialist skills, UWO staff should attend unit welfare office training, seminars and workshops conducted by AWS or LA on issues such as safeguarding children and DA.

d. **Pre-Employment Checks.** See [AGAI 119: Employment Checks on Personnel in Posts Requiring Disclosure Checks](#).

e. **Competency.** The qualification is lified for three years after the completion of the Part 2 course. Refresher training (the first three days of Part 1) must be attended by all those continuing in a UWO role before the three years elapse. Subsequent refresher courses must be attended every three years. If this is not possible, COs are empowered to allow the UWO up to 3 months after their 3-year point to complete their refresher training. This should be noted on the appropriate risk register and the AWS informed as required. If a period greater than three years has elapsed since the completion of Part 2 course both parts of the course are to be re-taken (time between the two parts need not be six months but should not be undertaken back-to-back) to ensure that all involved with welfare provision are suitably trained and informed on the latest policy and processes.

f. **Continuation Training.** AWS support the RPOCs in the provision of annual Welfare Conferences to provide a sustainable continuation training model.

g. **JANIS Training.** Mandatory training for JANIS must be conducted by all users in accordance with [SOI 201](#), para 11, prior to being issued a user account.

## Welfare Management Committee (WMC)

**81.080.** A WMC should be held monthly. It should be chaired by the CO, to discuss individual casework (within the bounds of the code of confidentiality), co-ordinate existing welfare support, capture emerging welfare issues and share best practice. Terms of Reference must be produced; a template and additional guidance can be found in Annex C. In addition to the chair, representation must include the Adjutant, RCMO (or equivalent), sub-unit commanders, the Padre and the RMO. If one of these individuals cannot attend, their absence should be noted in the minutes or record of decisions (RoDs) from the WMC with a set date to inform the absent party. Once the absent party has been informed, this should then be recorded in the associated minutes or RoDs.

**81.081. WMC and CMCRs.** Noting the audiences of both the WMC and CMCR, COs have the freedom to combine these meetings on the basis that those who are mandated to attend both, still do, and those who are not required to attend one of the serials do not attend both. However, COs must ensure that the purpose of each meeting is not lost and the associated data and decisions gained from each meeting is recorded appropriately.

## Communications

**81.082.** There must be regular communication both up and down the unit CoC and between the unit CoC and welfare agencies with the UWO/ROSO as the focal point. Mechanisms for achieving this should include, but are not limited to:

- a. Induction/orientation briefings for a newly arrived SP and their families.
- b. Newsletters. With the permission of the SP, these must be sent to single SP' Emergency Contacts (EC) /Next of Kin (NoK) or nominated partner during deployments.
- c. Monthly WMC.
- d. Unit notice boards and welfare information boards
- e. Unit welfare seminars for both SP and their accompanying families
- f. Information (dedicated welfare pages) on Defence Connect/unit websites
- g. Use of e-mails/Defence Connect ArmySMS text messaging.
- h. Social media (Facebook, X, etc)

**81.083.** The use of formation and garrison facilities such as local Overseas Commands Families' in-country briefing booklets, Army Garrison Community Guides, Garrison news sheets, and local Garrison radio/BFBS should also be considered.

**81.084. Unit Welfare Information Packs (UWIP).** UWO/ROSO should lead in the development of a UWIP for dissemination within the unit. This document should be brief, readable, and concise. The main points to cover are:

- a. A summary of what support the Welfare Office/Support Office can provide to:
  - (1) The CoC in the unit.
  - (2) Married/civil partners of SP and their families.
  - (3) Single SP and fiancées/ future spouse or civil partners and parents or EC.
  - (4) Non-UK SP and their families.
- b. An explanation of the Code of Confidentiality.
- c. Details of how to contact Unit Welfare Staff.
- d. Details of how to contact other Service welfare providers (eg AWS/ HIVE/ DTS/ FL etc).

**81.085. Defence Connect.** This is an MOD-sponsored portal that provides individual SP and their families with access to information about the Defence and the Army as well as providing links to the open Army website. Although the information on the website is unclassified, it does provide SP and their families with access to information that may not necessarily be in the public domain. For example the website includes access to open Regimental and Corps sites, staff lists, Army Briefing Notes, back briefs from CGS' Briefing Team together with welfare information for SP' families within the limits set by [JSP 440: Defence Manual of Security](#) access to the website is through a security gate similar to that used by standard internet banking. The site allows User Groups (Corps, Regiments, etc.) to have a unique customised display and makes the user feel at home within each of the electronic areas. Units are encouraged to have both unit and deployment websites. Units should also have processes in place to ensure SP and their families create accounts to access the information. The use of the SMS texting facility greatly enhances unit welfare staff ability to communicate with those registered.

**81.086. Communication with Families.** As living arrangements for families evolve, the means of communicating directly with them becomes more important. COs and welfare teams should employ a variety of methods to communicate effectively with them. A guide to what might be considered is encapsulated in the matrix at Annex D.

## Resourcing and Administration

**81.087. Resources.** Equipment tables and office infrastructure are the responsibility of the CoC. The following provision is recommended:

- a. **Location and Accommodation.** The needs of the service user, whether they are single SP or families, should be the determining factor in locating a unit welfare office. Specific locations will vary from unit to unit and a balance will have to be struck between accessibility and the need for anonymity. Co-location with other welfare or community support assets such as community centres, HIVE or WRVS should be considered where possible. The accommodation/ office space provided should not normally be in Regimental HQ. It should include an area for confidential interviews and have ready access to suitable toilets. Thought should be given to running two welfare offices; a satellite welfare office accessible to single SP within the barracks and a main office adjacent to Service Families' Accommodation areas for families.
- b. **Office Equipment.** In addition to the normal range of office equipment, welfare offices will require: IT access to both the MOD intranet and the internet; telephones (with military and civilian access); mobile telephone(s); and secure filing facilities.
- c. **Finance.** COs are encouraged to provide their Unit Welfare Office with ready access to a non-publicly funded cash float (COPF, PRI or Garrison welfare funds). In addition, funding for specific welfare projects can be applied for from The RBL, SSAFA In-Service committees, NT, Army Central Fund, Berlin Infantry Brigade Memorial Trust Fund, SSVC and ABF/Corps/Regimental funds in accordance with the appropriate fund's instructions. Where authorised, publicly funded resources are available through COPF and DWP (see [JSP 770](#)), which provides a publicly funded families element (Families Welfare Grant) to support UWO/ROSO activities.
- d. **Welfare Transport.** Welfare staff should have access to a civilian vehicle and,

when required, a driver who is DBS checked. For further information on the support available refer to: [JSP 770](#) and [JSP 800](#). Appropriate insurance cover must be in place when transporting families.

e. **Dress.** Where unit welfare staff are required to wear civilian clothes to undertake their duties, allowances for SP may be claimed in accordance with [JSP 752](#).

f. **HIVE Contact Houses.** The [Directory of Tri-Service HIVE Contact Houses](#) lists all contacts.

**81.088. Welfare Data.** The UWO is the focal point for receiving and compiling data on welfare trends within the unit, which should then be reported, along with other suitable data, at the WMC. Separate reports could be compiled using a summary of the numbers and categories of unit cases being dealt with by the AWS.

**81.089. Welfare Records.** Units are responsible for the recording, retention, and access to welfare records in accordance with Part 5 of this AGAI.

**81.090. Family Mentors.** Units may wish to consider maintaining a list of experienced families who could assist in mentoring newly joined families on arrival in station. In addition, a list of 'reliable families' (also known as a 'trusted friends' scheme) may also be developed to help in crisis situations by providing sympathy, support, and emergency childcare.

**81.091. Reducing Stress on Welfare Staff.** Much of the work unit welfare staff encounter will be new, uncomfortable to deal with and may affect mental wellbeing. To mitigate the additional stresses of their role, unit welfare staff or welfare teams are encouraged to seek independent and specialist support via self-referral, through direct engagement with local Army Welfare Workers (AWWs). This provides welfare staff with the opportunity to regularly discuss any difficulties they encounter, concerns they have and/or express/explore personal distress within a confidential environment. The unit Padre and/or MO can also be used for a similar purpose. Eligible staff should bid for the Care for Carers Course. Further details are available from BAS staff on [APSG-PersSvcs-BAS-SO2@mod.gov.uk](mailto:APSG-PersSvcs-BAS-SO2@mod.gov.uk) or see the latest edition of Welfare Matters.

## Complaints

**81.092. [JSP 831 - Redress of Individual Grievances: Service Complaints](#)** sets out the procedure for Redress of Individual Grievances: Service Complaints and policy which sets out the governing principles. The Service Complaints system is utilised by serving and former SP, however the procedures for the handling of external complaints and alleged maladministration are laid out in [2023DIN01-094](#) and must be implemented across all Service Units. An expression of dissatisfaction with the standards of service provided includes welfare provision. Where practicable and appropriate the complaint should be resolved informally at a local level by the individual concerned or the unit welfare department and a record made. COs are responsible for promulgating an effective recording mechanism to ensure that there is an audit trail should a complaint need to be investigated either as part of an internal maladministration review or by the Parliamentary and Health Ombudsman.



**81.093– 81.110.** Reserved.

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## PART 4 – SECONDARY, MOD AND EXTERNAL LEVEL SUPPORT

### Army Welfare Service (AWS)

**81.111. AWS Mission.** To provide a comprehensive, professional, and confidential welfare service responsive to the needs of individuals and families and the CoC to maximise the operational effectiveness of SP.

**81.112. Welfare Provision.** As Army's professional welfare provider, the AWS is independent of the CoC offering comprehensive and confidential welfare service responsive to the needs of the CoC, SP and families to maximise OE. The AWS' remit includes regular and reserve SP; SP from other Services<sup>36</sup>; their families and, in certain circumstances, veterans and MOD civilians serving overseas. Specialist welfare support to the Service community is provided on a non-statutory basis as statutory services are provided in the UK by LAs and overseas by the contracted British Forces Social Welfare Service, usually supported by the AWS. AWS Welfare Support Officers provide welfare coordination across two key delivery pillars:

- a. **Personal Support (PS).** Provide accessible, independent, confidential, and professional specialist welfare services to SP and their families. PS provides specialist advice to the CoC and outside agencies delivered by military and civilian Army Welfare Workers (AWWs) who are supported by Personal Recovery Unit Social Workers (PRU SWs) where the SP requiring additional welfare support is assigned to, or on a Unit Assist with, a Personnel Recovery Unit (PRU).
- b. **Community Support (CS).** Secure or directly provide CS learning and personal development opportunities for SP and their families wherever they are living. Community, youth and play centres/ projects provide learning and personal development activities to children, young people, and their families throughout the year and across the UK and overseas. CS delivers additional activities during school holidays, including Easter and Summer programmes as well as offsite and residential experiences. Formed Gurkha units in the UK and Brunei are supported by AWS Gurkha Support Workers (GSW).

**81.113. AWS Supporting Activities.** The AWS provides wider support through the following:

- a. **AWS Intake and Assessment Team (AWS IAT).** The AWS IAT is a telephone/[e-mail](#) delivered service which provides an initial triage assessment of welfare needs. Intake and Assessment Team (IAT) in York can be contacted on: Mil: 94777 3053 /or 3054 or Civ: 01904 88 2503 /or 2504.
- b. **Services Cotswold Centre (SCC).** SCC is a tri-Service short-term accommodation facility delivered by HQ AWS. It is managed by a tri-Service Management Board, Chaired by Col AWS, and has capacity for up to 60 families (including two disabled units), as well as having a 37-bed residential unit. It is available to all ranks from all three Services who may require accommodation because of welfare need or emergency evacuation from overseas, be between

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<sup>36</sup> IAW JSP 770 Tri Service Welfare Agreement.

assignments, retiring from the Services, need a family holiday or weekend break or any other legitimate reason. Further information can be found in [2021DIN01-102](#).

c. **WRVS.** AWS sponsors the WRVS Services Welfare staff and, in conjunction with APSPG, coordinates their delivery and operational footprint. WRVS personnel assist the CoC by providing welfare support to single and unaccompanied SP in military establishments in UK, Cyprus, Northern Ireland, and the Falklands Islands. Together with units, they provide leisure facilities in a non-alcohol environment and a place for SP to relax away from the work environment. The current AWS established priority for provision includes initial training establishments, infantry battalions and isolated units.

**81.114. Principles.** The key principles that govern the delivery of welfare by the AWS to the Army include:

- a. It is independent of the CoC in terms of confidentiality but works alongside and is answerable to the CoC when necessary.
- b. All information supplied to AWS staff is to be treated in absolute confidence unless the key criteria are met as outlined in para 81.037.
- c. It must be as comprehensive as practicable so any SP and entitled families are able to access suitable and effective provision to meet their needs.
- d. It requires the development of effective relationships with relevant partners from military, civilian, charitable, and statutory domains. Where necessary, these relationships are to be managed through Service Level Agreements or Memoranda of Understanding, particularly with the leading Service Charities.
- e. It should apply an evidence-based approach, which matches the best practice standards of the wider civilian community and complies with all relevant legislation and guidance. Feedback from service users, the CoC and other stakeholders is to be actively sought and used to inform continuous improvement.
- f. The second-line welfare support provided by AWS must be based upon the assessed needs of individuals and communities.
- g. This assessment of need should be carried out by an appropriately qualified professional but be informed by the stated priorities of the CoC.
- h. AWS support must meet assessed needs within the context of available resources and set priorities.
- i. In most cases, PS provision will be in response to a specific request for assistance. Proactive intervention by PS staff must however take place to respond in the following circumstances:

(1) To support Complex Casualty Cases (CCCs). These are defined as:

(a) Any SP seriously injured whilst deployed on operations, which

requires hospitalisation and eventual repatriation to UK; or

(b) Any SP seriously injured which requires hospitalisation and is likely to have life-altering implications.

(2) To support SP who are subject to the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000. In these cases, proactive intervention will consist of at least the offer of a visit by the relevant team. For CCCs in hospital, an assessment by an AWS professional is mandatory. The Service User is at liberty to refuse the AWS support.

## Training and Mentoring

**81.115. AWW Defence Specialist Welfare Course (DSWC).** AWWs can be either military or civilian (75/25% respectively). Training is conducted on DSWC which is a joint Navy/Army course lasting 8 months, and normally runs April to November. It consists of residential academic classroom-based phase, followed by a similar period where students are attached to AWS teams and operate under supervision. The course finishes with a short period of consolidation with graduation in November. The training is mentally challenging; and is pass/fail. It trains personnel to deal with the most complex of personal issues, including DA, child and adult safeguarding, depression, suicide, and bereavement. Successful students transfer to the AGC (SPS). Details on how to apply to become an AWW can be found in [2021DIN01-031](#).

**81.116. Mentoring.** AWS are to ensure that a face-to-face meeting is conducted with all newly appointed UWOs/ROSOs within the first three months. AWS are also mandated to coordinate the routine mentoring of said individuals (utilising experienced local UWOs) for the first three months in appointment. Any UWO/ROSO that has been identified as a risk candidate is to receive mentoring support from AWS until such time that there is no longer an operational risk (the unit and APC are to be kept informed throughout).

**81.117. Regional Brigade/Garrison Welfare Course.** A 1-day course delivered under contract and facilitated by HQ AWS. The aim of the course is to provide unit welfare staff with appropriate knowledge and skills to carry out their duties.

## Army HIVE

**81.118.** Providing up to date and relevant information to the Service community on behalf of the CoC. Working from across a network of HIVE Information Centres (UK and overseas) plus Regional Hubs in the UK it delivers information both face to face and online with an additional International HIVE ([iHIVE](#)) covering the rest of the world. HIVE provides access to a range of sources of information including education, employment, accommodation, immigration policy for non-UK SP and families subject to immigration control, health, and local information. It also provides specific information packs to all units including HIVE Deployment (see Annex E) and delivers information online via HIVE Blogs, social media, Army Web and via MOD SharePoint.

## MOD Level Support

**81.119. DBS Transition and Welfare Services for the Armed Forces Community.** Full details of the services offered and the procedures for requesting this support can be found in [JSP 100 – Defence Holistic Transition Policy](#).

**81.120. Forcesline (FL).** The SSAFA-provided FL is a free and confidential service in support of SP and their families. COs are to ensure that SP and their families are made fully aware of FL by widely advertising it throughout the unit. The FL telephone number should be included in the list of useful telephone numbers issued to all. FL can be reached by telephone from anywhere in the world Monday to Friday and most Bank Holidays, from 09:00 to 17:30hrs UK local time using the following numbers:

- a. From UK and Germany 0800 260 6767
- b. From Cyprus 080 91065
- c. From Falklands #6111
- d. Rest of World +44(0) 207 463 9292
- e. Operational Theatre use Paradigm phone system, dial appropriate access code then \*201 at PIN prompt.
- f. Online at <https://www.ssafa.org.uk/help-you/forcesline/forcesline-email-enquiry>

## Charitable Support

**81.121. AF Charities.** The Army Benevolent Fund is the Army's National charity and units are encouraged to raise funds to support it. There are many other Service charities; a list of those with a formalised relationship with the Army is contained within Annex A to [AGAI 100](#). For information on the wider AF charities ecosystem see the [Cobseo<sup>37</sup> Membership Directory](#).

## Clubs and Hostels

**81.122. The Union Jack Club.** All serving members of the AF below commissioned rank are automatically full members. Upon leaving the AF, those who were never commissioned but who completed two years of service can apply for Ex-service membership. Those who have left active service but who do not wish to apply for ex-service membership may also use the Club through Temporary Honorary Members (THM) status. For more information, please go to the Club's [website](#).

**81.123. The Victory Services Club (VSC).** Membership is open to all serving and retired members of the AF. SP are not required to take out membership to use the Club's facilities. They can gain entry by production of their identity cards. More information can be found on the [VSC website](#).

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<sup>37</sup> The Confederation of Service Charities.

**81.124. Rothiemurchus Lodge - The Tri-Service Adventurous Training and Leisure Centre.** Rothiemurchus Lodge is a Joint Service Recreational Centre offering year-round, affordable, self-catering accommodation in the Cairngorm Mountains. The Lodge is open to SP, veterans, MoD civilians and Cadet Forces (the families of these groups are also welcome). It can also be used by the Scout Association, Girl Guide Association and other recognised youth organisations including schools outside the MoD family. More information cost can be found on the [Rothiemurchus website](#).

**81.125. Douneside House.** Eligible military guests are invited to join the Douneside Military Club, Tarland, Aberdeenshire which offers significant discounts throughout the year, along with other membership benefits. To join, applicants must complete the registration details on this [Douneside House website](#).

**81.126. The Nuffield Centre – Joint Service Mountain Training Centre.** The Nuffield Centre at the Joint Service Mountain Training Centre Indefatigable provides affordable accommodation for Serving British Military Personnel and their immediate family (partner and children), situated on the banks of the Menai Strait in North Wales. Further details can be found [Nuffield Centre website](#).

**81.127. - 81.140.** Reserved.

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## PART 5 – REFERRALS TO THE AWS AND REQUESTS FOR SPECIALIST WELFARE RECOMMENDATIONS

### Referrals to the AWS

**81.141. General.** Referrals to the AWS are the formal procedure for units to request specialist welfare support from the Second Line provision. By making a referral, the AWS can offer an increased level of support and guidance to units on the welfare considerations of SP or their families. A process guide for sharing information can be found at Annex F and should be referred to when making a referral to the AWS.

**81.142. Must vs Should.** UWOs have the freedom to refer any circumstance to the AWS if they feel the situation is serious enough and it is in line with the direction in Part 2 of this AGAI. Equally, the AWS has the right to refuse a referral if it is deemed that First Line provision is sufficient to offer support. There are certain circumstances and situations where UWOs must refer a case to the AWS and other times when it should be. A summary of the difference between the two is detailed below:

a. **Must referral.** There is a lawful basis<sup>38</sup> to pass on the details of these incidents and personal information of the SU to the Second Line provision. Therefore, even if a SU exercises their right to object to their information being passed on, the referral must be made regardless. UWOs should note the objection on the SU's case file. In the following emergency situations where there is a safeguarding risk a referral must be sent to the Army Welfare Service to help mitigate the risk of serious harm to human life. All Army Welfare Workers are trained in social care theory and managed by qualified social care workers<sup>39</sup> to provide practical and emotional support to help protect and promote people's wellbeing. As the safeguarding lead AWS are responsible for the delivery of safeguarding policy and are the Army SMEs in this area. Situations where a referral **must** be made include:

- (1) Matters or situations where there are safeguarding,<sup>40</sup> child(ren) protection and adult at risk<sup>41</sup> concerns.
- (2) Any situation involving Domestic Abuse (DA)<sup>42</sup>.
- (3) Any situation involving sexual violence.
- (4) Any situation involving stalking or similar allegations.
- (5) Any complex casualty cases.
- (6) Any situation where an adult is under risk of serious harm.

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<sup>38</sup> Public Task

<sup>39</sup> Area personal support officers

<sup>40</sup> [JSP 834 - Safeguarding](#) should be consulted in the first instance.

<sup>41</sup> An individual who has care and support needs, is experiencing, or is at risk of abuse, neglect and as a result of those needs is unable to protect themselves against the abuse or neglect, or the risk of it.

<sup>42</sup> This is not just restricted to situations occurring in SFA, it applies to all situations.

b. **Should referral.** There are situations where Second Line provision should be sought to provide the individual with the appropriate level of care/support. In these circumstances, the SU should be consulted and if the SU exercises their right to object to the processing of their personal data the referral should stop. This objection should be noted on the SU's case file. Situations where a referral **should** be made include:

- (1) A SP who has experienced abuse in the past and who is finding the resultant issues have re-surfaced.
- (2) A SP who is alleging bullying, harassment or discrimination, even when the appropriate bullying, harassment and discrimination or criminal procedures have been instigated.<sup>43</sup>
- (3) A SP who has experienced incidents of suicide ideation or made a suicide attempt. This referral should only be made in conjunction with the risk conference process detailed in [AGAI 110](#).
- (4) A Care Leaver who is or has been looked after by a LA. In this situation, the individual may be entitled to LA support and resources which the AWS can help them access.
- (5) Situations where the CoC and UWO judge that the SP's or family's welfare circumstances are serious enough to require specialist welfare support.

**81.143. Making the referral.** Whenever unit welfare staff or the CoC are informed of a welfare consideration, SP must be advised of the availability and value of AWS support. The AWS referral form can be found on the [AWS SharePoint site](#). Unit staff should engage with the local AWS team when completing this form. Completed forms should be sent to RC-AWS-IAT-0Mailbox@mod.gov.uk.

**81.144. Self-Referral.** SP have the ability to self-refer to the AWS at all times. SP should make a self-referral if they do not want their CoC or UWO to know about their circumstances and feel more comfortable only informing a specialist welfare worker. However, the ability to self-refer must not take away any responsibility from the UWO and CoC. The process to make a self-referral are:

- a. Email: RC-AWS-IAT-0Mailbox@mod.gov.uk
- b. Phone number. 01904 882053

**81.145. Interaction with other welfare or medical processes.** There will be instances when, due to the circumstances and situation, multiple agencies are engaged (e.g a referral made to the medical chain). When other agencies have been engaged with, this should not stop the CoC or SP making a referral to the AWS. A referral to the AWS is a supportive and complimentary function and should be considered regardless of whether other agencies are involved.

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<sup>43</sup> SP should be referred, in the first instance, to their Unit Equality and Diversity Adviser for first line support.

## Specialist Welfare Recommendation

**81.146.** The purpose of a Specialist Welfare Recommendation (SWR) is to support the CoC by providing advice and information when making a decision on the welfare support that can be given to a SP. A SWR should only be made if the CoC have exhausted all other options to support the SP and therefore require additional information from the AWS to support them and the SP. The SWR provides details of the options available to the CoC, along with a recommendation on the action considered most appropriate and the timescales within which this should take place. A SWR is a tool for the CoC, and as such, should be generated with the best interests of the Service as its focus, whilst also reflecting the needs and wishes of the SP. However, an SWR **must not** be considered an alternative to standard administrative/operating procedures and must not be used simply to 'rubber stamp' foregone conclusions. The forms to be used in producing the recommendation can be found on the [AWS SharePoint site](#). A process guide can be found at Annex G.

**81.147.** Examples of when a request for an SWR would be appropriate include:

- a. A SP seeking discharge on compassionate grounds.
- b. Unit considering retention in the UK on compassionate grounds.
- c. Unit has been through standard administrative procedures in processing a SP's application regarding assignment, but there remain personal/family issues that may have had a bearing on the management decision but have not been fully explored or considered.

**81.148.** Examples of when a request for a SWR would not be appropriate include cases:

- a. In which the outcome is already determined between the unit and the Military Secretariat Branch.
- b. That are more appropriately dealt with by disciplinary or administrative action.
- c. Where the outcome is to be determined entirely or predominantly on medical grounds.
- d. That have not first gone through the usual administrative processes (e.g. requesting a SWR on receipt of an assignment order simply because the SP has 'welfare issues').

## SWR Process

**81.149. Submission.** Units are to submit requests for a SWR in writing to the Senior AWW (SAWW) of the AWS Intake and Assessment Team using SWR Form 1 and AWS Referral Form.

**81.150. Acknowledgement.** The AWS will acknowledge receipt of a request in writing, advising that the AWS will undertake an assessment, and if appropriate, aim to complete the subsequent recommendation within 20 working days.

**81.151. Assessment.** Assessments to support the production of a SWR include the following:

- a. **Sift.** As the Army's main provider of secondary welfare support, AWS has a remit to respond to all *appropriate* requests for a SWR from the CoC. Where assessment indicates a SWR is *not* appropriate, the referrer will be advised of this in writing and the case will be closed.
- b. **Extended Timelines.** Where the requirement for a recommendation is indicated but it cannot be completed within the stated timescale, the SAWW will liaise with the referrer and agree a time scale for providing a completed recommendation. If for operational reasons, the request is deemed urgent, and a recommendation is required before full independent verification of the circumstances can be obtained, the Unit may elect to receive a 'Situation Report' instead, in the form of a letter, which will outline the circumstances known at that time and which must detail the limitations of the assessment.
- c. **Consent.** The SP must give consent to a SWR being produced and to AWS approaching agencies or individuals for information, and this consent is to be obtained using SWR Form 3. Where an agency or individual subsequently provides information their consent to AWS using this is to be obtained on SWR Form 4. It is the responsibility of the AWW writing the report to ensure all necessary consents have been obtained before using any information provided.
- d. **Information Gathering.** The AWS will gather relevant information from appropriate civilian and military agencies, or individuals, to formulate a thorough assessment. It is acceptable for information to be gathered verbally and recorded on SWR Form 2. A record of all information gathered will be retained on SWR Form 2s and kept on the AWS case file. As part of the information gathering process, an AWS team may request another AWS team or another appropriate Welfare Agency visits the SP's family to establish or evidence certain matters. In this case, the AWS team must put the request in writing, using SWR Form 5, to the relevant other AWS team or Welfare Agency clearly stating the requirement and enclosing a completed SWR Form 3 (with names of other individuals blanked out) and a prepared SWR Form 4, which will need to be completed and returned with the reply. When one AWS team is asked to gather information, which will be used as part of another AWS teams SWR, it will be sufficient for the reply to be in letter form.
- e. **Conclusion.** SWR Form 2 and SWR Form 2a is the format to be used for all SWRs. An assessment of the situation is to be made, using all relevant information obtained, including the views of parties approached and the wishes of the SP and their family where appropriate.

- (1) Where this assessment indicates there are no extenuating welfare issues pertinent to the management decision requiring to be made, a letter will be sent

to the referrer advising of this and stating that no recommendations will subsequently be made.

(2) Where the assessment indicates there are pertinent welfare issues, this will generate a SWR. This assessment is to be recorded in full on SWR Form 3 and cross-referenced with information recorded on SWR Form 2. This will provide essential information to the CO to enable them to recognise the validity of the recommendation being made. This will include details of the range of options considered, along with a brief explanation as to why the preferred option was selected over any other options presented. SWR Form 2 will be retained by the CO and not shared with other Agencies, without the consent of the SP. SWR Form 2a will constitute the formal SWR. This will detail the recommendation being made by AWS, along with suggested timescales and priority classification. It is permissible for the CO to detach this form and provide it to other Agencies such as MS Branch and DE as evidence of the SWR.

f. **Completion.** When complete and approved by the specialist supervisor, the SWR should be signed by the SP indicating that they have read the document. SP are also to be offered a copy of the recommendation. Should they decline to sign the recommendation can still be shared with the CoC. Once signed the SWR is to be forwarded to the CO of the SP's Unit. The recommendation can be dispatched 'attention' the requestor (who may be either the CO or UWO), but must be addressed to the CO. A covering letter in the format of SWR Form 6 should be included, drawing attention to the requirement for receipt of the recommendation to be acknowledged within 10 working days, and for an outcome to be recorded at serial 7 of the SWR Form 2 and returned to the author within 1 month.

## Notification of Outcome

**81.152.** The covering letter requests the Unit to notify AWS of the outcome of the situation for which the SWR was written within one month. To monitor the effectiveness and the validity of the Report, it is important this information is available to AWS. If not received within this timescale, the Unit is to be approached for this information. The case file will remain open until the outcome has been notified. If the Unit choose not to follow the SWR, or are unable to do so, they are to inform HQ AWS.

## Complaints

**81.153.** Any complaints about the quality or content of SWRs are to be staffed through the normal AWS complaints procedure. If the Service User has a concern about the decision taken by the CO, the Service User must address this through the internal redress procedure.

## Practice Standards

**81.154.** The specialist supervisor (SAWW, equivalent or above) is responsible for quality assuring the SWR and the 'Additional Information for the CofC. The following standards are to be applied to every SWR completed:

a. Completed within timescale unless appropriate justification provided.

- b. Consent forms completed. Sources of information acknowledged.
- c. Appropriate consultation with sources of relevant information.
- d. Content to be focussed and concise and based on relevant, factual information.
- e. No use of 'jargon'. Military abbreviations kept to a minimum. If recommendation is tri-service, relevant Service abbreviations used.
- f. Individuals referred to by title/rank and surname, or title/position, not solely by forename.
- g. Contents to reflect awareness of equality and diversity principles and issues.
- h. Pertinent references to be included.
- i. Options to be clearly stated and realistic in terms of preferences and priorities given, reflecting the needs of the Service, balanced with needs of the individual, and reasons for *Preferred Option* to be substantiated and included. Any risk of recommendation(s) not being followed is to be clearly articulated.
- j. Report to be signed by supervisor prior to release. Only SAWW, equivalent or above are to quality assure SWRs.

**81.155. - 81.170.** Reserved.

## PART 6 – SUPPORTING POLICIES FOR SERVING PERSONNEL

### Army Welfare Sources of Information, Guides and Facilities

**81.171.** A list of useful publications and sources of support is at Annex H. Pers Svcs also promulgate a termly [Welfare Matters Newsletter](#) to the CoC. In addition. The following provide useful sources of information:

- (1) Army Welfare & Support ([www.army.mod.uk](http://www.army.mod.uk)).
- (2) [Army HQ Personal Policy Open Site](#).
- (3) Army Intranet – [Army Personnel Support Group](#)
- (4) [Defence Discount Service](#).
- (5) [Army HIVE Blogs](#).
- (6) [Service Cotswold Centre](#)
- (7) [Unacceptable Behaviours Hub](#)
- (8) [Armed Forces Families - Health and Wellbeing - Home \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

### Supporting Policies

**81.172. Leave Policy.** [JSP 760](#) contains the Tri-Service leave policy. Annual Leave is granted to SP for reasons of relaxation, personal recreation, and family union with the intention of keeping the SP fit for further duty. It remains the CO's responsibility to ensure that a SP's leave is correctly managed, and that all SP take their full leave entitlement. Further information on the management of leave can be found in [ACSO 3204](#).

**81.173. Accommodation Policy.** [JSP 464](#) contains the Tri-Service Accommodation Regulations including policy on the use of Service Families Accommodation as part of a support package.

**81.174. Stress Management.** All personnel need some degree of pressure or stimulation to achieve best performance, but when the pressure becomes excessive work performance, and the health of individuals can be adversely affected. 'Stress in the Workplace' policy can be found in [JSP 375, Vol 1, Ch 17](#). Army guidance is contained in [ACSO 3218](#) (Army Stress Management and Resilience Training).

**81.175. Operational Stress Management (OSM).** The Army's policy in [ACSO 3209](#) (Land Post Operational Stress Management (POSM)) sets out the framework of action to be taken by the CoC and supporting agencies in order to provide appropriate and effective personal support to all individuals returning from operational deployments, in order to minimise the likelihood of adverse post operational stress. This applies to all SP, Regular and Reserve, and their families, and to all operations (including Non-Combatant Evacuation Operations and disaster relief), whether deployed as part of a unit, or as an Individual Augmentee (IA). Care must be taken to ensure those returning early are not

excluded. The Army has a corporate responsibility for the psychological welfare of its SP whilst on and post any operational deployment.

**81.176. Vulnerability Risk Management (VRM).** The Army VRM policy can be found in AGAI 110. It provides guidance to Commanders by assisting them to identify those in their unit who are likely to be more vulnerable and signposting them to appropriate responses and management tools to mitigate identified risk, in order that they may make a judgement as to how to actively manage vulnerable personnel. At the Initial Risk Conference, the decision taken by the CO to place or not place an SP onto the VRM Register must be recorded on the SP's case file, in a Diary Entry. If the SP is placed on the VRM, the Diary Entry should note the CAP lead. If a referral is made to the AWS, this information is to be recorded on the referral form.

**81.177. Support to Transgender SP.** The [Equality Act 2010](#) places a duty on public sector authorities to: eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Act; to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. This duty includes protection for gender reassignment which includes SP who are proposing to undergo, undergoing, or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the individual's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex. [JSP 889](#) sets out Defence policy for the recruitment and management of Transgender SP in the Armed Forces. The CoC should familiarise themselves with this JSP, specifically Annex B which covers the recruitment of Transgender SP and Annex C which covers managing and supporting Transgender SP.

**81.178. Command and Care of Wounded Injured and Sick (WIS) Service Personnel.** [AGAI 99](#) provides policy and direction for COs and unit staff on the management of Army SP who are WIS.

**81.179. Welfare Support to those Subject to Intense Media/Press/Public Interest or Service/Civilian Police Investigation.** From time-to-time SP may be subject to intense media/press/public interest, or Police or other forms of investigation or awaiting trial. COs are to ensure that individuals and their families are reminded or made aware of the welfare support that is available to them. Furthermore, COs are responsible for coordinating appropriate welfare support to those affected or where they consider it is required.

**81.180. Welfare of SP in Custody and Support to their Families.** The Policy on providing on-going welfare support to those SP in custody either at a unit detention holding facility or the Military Corrective Training Centre is within [JSP 837 \(Service Code of Practice – Custody and Detention and Committal to Civil Prison\)](#). Families should also be signposted to the appropriate sources of support.

**81.181. Care of SP Under the Age of 18.** All U18 SP are protected by the [Children's Act 2004](#). [JSP 834 \(Safeguarding\)](#) and [AGAI 109 \(Care for SP Under the Age of 18\)](#) provide policy and best practice guidelines for the care of U18 SP. Whilst much of the advice could be applicable to older SP new to the Army, there are additional legal requirements associated with U18 SP. Although maturity and experience vary considerably between individuals, U18s may be more vulnerable than others, and their care will require thought. To that end, COs of training establishments must follow the policy set out in [JSP](#)



[822, Part 1 \(Defence Direction and Guidance for Training and Education\)](#) and the [ARITC Handbook](#), in discharging their duty of care to trainees U18, paying specific attention to the needs of U18s as they pass from recruitment through training to the Field Army. In addition, though this would not generally be relevant to those under training, restrictions are applied to the operational deployment of U18s, in accordance with the UK's obligations under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

**81.182. Care Leavers (CLs).** There will be recruits joining the Army who are subject to the provisions of The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000, which seeks to ensure that young people 16 yrs or over, who have had any period of care from a LA, continue to receive advice, support and befriending for a period of time after they cease to be formally looked after full time by that LA (to the age of 25). CLs may not have the family support that others enjoy, and this may make their welfare circumstances more bespoke. Whatever processes are put in place to meet the needs of CLs, sensitivity is required to ensure they do not feel embarrassed or singled out from their peers.

a. **Action for Commanders.** The CoC must ensure the following processes are in place:

- (1) **Declaration of being a CL.** CLs are under no obligation to declare to the CoC if they are in fact a CL. However, the CoC should encourage newly arrived SP to declare formally that they are a CL, on the basis that more support can be afforded to the SP from the CoC. This process should be applied to new recruits at Initial and Subsequent Trade Training Establishments, but also when new SP are posted to Fd Army units. Work Induction Programmes (WiP) and initial interviews from the CoC are some of the methods that can be used to ensure this process is carried out. If a CL does not declare themselves to the CoC, they are still able to access support from the AWS by making a self-referral detailed in Para 81.144.
- (2) **Referrals to the AWS.** When units are made aware that a SP is a CL, a referral should be made to the AWS. Where the CL does not want a referral to be made to AWS, Unit Welfare staff should seek generic advice from AWS in relation to the issues and procedures around CLs in order that they may best respond to their needs.
- (3) **Recording CL status.** The following processes should be conducted depending on the age of the CL. If SP wish to declare they are a CL, they can do so on JPA by following this [process guide](#).
- (4) **Sharing if someone is a CL's.** In line with Part 2 of this AGAI, a CLs status should only be passed onto other units if the SP has been informed. The SP can at any time, request their status is not passed on.
- (5) **CL interaction with the Local Authority (LA).** If they request it, a CL must be given access to the responsible LA's services to which they are entitled. The unit must facilitate this contact and access. As far as possible, CLs should not be disadvantaged by the inevitable moves that they will experience during their career up to the age of 25.

(6) **Local Authority interaction with the CL.** Where the LA has a statutory requirement to carry out visits to CLs on MOD property, units should offer every assistance to the LA to enable this access whilst making it clear that the unit is not able to compel a CL to attend any such meetings or visits. Where a LA wishes to meet a CL on an MOD establishment and the CL indicates that they do not want to participate (potentially to avoid CL confidentiality being compromised with their peer group) the unit may also offer to facilitate a meeting between the CL/LA at an appropriate location and time that ensures that CL confidentiality is not compromised. This may, for instance, be at the CL's own home or in LA premises during leave. Head Personal Support at HQ AWS would also be the point of contact for a LA wishing to discuss issues relating to a specific CL.

(7) **Local Authority responsibility.** In recognising a LA's statutory responsibility to take reasonable steps to keep in touch, or to re-establish contact if lost, with their CL (up to the age of 25), units are to affect a mail forwarding system for correspondence from the LA to the SP concerned. They are also to encourage CLs to maintain contact with their responsible LA.

b. **Guidance for Units and SP.** As a CL, there are certain provisions and additional support that can be accessed. The most up to date communications for CL can be found on the [Care Leaver website](#).

(1) **Care Leavers Internship Scheme.** The cross-government scheme gives Care Leavers the chance to undertake a 12-month paid internship in a central Government department or agency with the possibility of extension or conversion to a permanent role. This could be accessed once a Care Leaver has left the service.

(2) **Care Leavers Bursary.** The bursary is for eligible apprentices who are in care or are care leavers. It will help remove financial barriers to accessing and completing apprenticeships.

(3) **Care Leavers Covenant.** The Covenant is a promise made by the private, public and voluntary sectors to provide support for care leavers aged 16-25 to help them to live independently.

(4) **Charitable support.** The Rees foundation is a bespoke civilian charity and support network with the aim to help and guide CLs throughout their lives.

(5) **CLs awareness presentation.** A useful go to document to increase the awareness of CL experiences and policies which has been developed by CDP's team.

(6) **CLs Guide.** This document that provides Information for Care Leavers joining, serving or leaving the Armed Forces.

**81.183. Care experienced.** These are SP who are over the age of 25 who have been in the care of a local authority but are no longer entitled to LA provided support. Although these SP are no longer entitled to statutory support (unlike Care Leavers) they might still have specific welfare considerations and therefore the CoC and Unit Welfare Staff should still afford additional support to these individuals (such as making a referral to the AWS) as required.

**81.184. A 'looked after' child.** These are children currently under the care of a LA. The CoC should seek to understand if SP have at any point been a 'looked after' child and consider offering additional support as required (referral to the AWS etc).

**81.185. Catering, Retail and Leisure (CRL).** In-barrack CRL services are primarily delivered under contracts managed by the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO). At present, the contracts within the UK are shared between several industry partners. As with all contractual arrangements, the level of engagement at site level between the CO and the industry partner is crucial to ensure delivery standards are maintained. Profit share through 'Gainshare' or 'Excess Income' continue to provide a welfare funding stream.

**81.186. Personal Financial Management and Mitigating Debt.** All SP are expected to manage their own financial affairs responsibly. Where appropriate, the CoC should signpost SP to the following sources of information and guidance:

- a. [Forces Mutual Military Foundation \(FMMF\)](#). The FMMF offers advice to SP and briefings in units. The FMMF is working in partnership with PayPlan to offer free debt advice services. A dedicated team will deliver confidential financial education and debt awareness presentations free of charge and separate from the CoC. The FMMF can also assist by offering one to one counselling and advice through a network of trusted partners.
- b. [RBL Money Force](#). The RBL Money Force Benefits and Money Advice Team can help SP manage their finances and support them if they are experiencing financial problems.
- c. [Credit Unions \(CU\)](#). The MoD supports three of the UK's leading CU that have joined forces to make saving simple and loans more affordable to the SP and veterans. The CU can provide advice to SP directly or conduct surveys in units to identified issues and trends. The CU can then follow up on the survey results with bespoke advice and briefings as required by the unit.
- d. [Cost of Living Resources Pack](#). This booklet has been designed to help SP deal with personal debts and regain control of their financial situation.
- d. [The Service Insurance and Investment Advisory Panel \(SIAP\)](#). SIAP consists of companies that have specialist knowledge and experience in the provision of financial services to individual members of HM Forces.

**81.187.** Personal financial matters are regarded as private and personal. However, first and foremost any financial difficulties that the SP or their family experiences should be treated as a welfare consideration, rather than a disciplinary or administrative one. The CoC and UWOs should encourage SP who are experiencing financial difficulties to seek

support from First or Second line provision. In exceptional circumstances where the level of debt has become so unmanageable that an individual poses a security risk or where it adversely impacts on performance and OE, administrative or disciplinary action may be taken.

**81.188.** It is not Army practice to intervene in the recovery of private civil debts except in the case of Judgment Orders or where it is considered that the reputation of the Army may be at stake. Any individual who has a receiving order in bankruptcy made against them, files a petition of bankruptcy, receives a Judgment Order or is unable to meet their financial commitments must inform their CO, who has a responsibility to help and advice.

**81.189. Supporting Suspended SP.** There will be individuals in units and that, because of certain situations, will be suspended from duty (be that blameworthy or non-blameworthy). Although these SP will be prohibited from contacting certain members in the unit, this does not restrict their access to welfare support, both First and Second line. The SP may also be prohibited from entering the camp due to certain terms of their suspension, but the CoC and UWO/ROSO must ensure the suspended SP still has access to welfare support. Supporting suspended SP will differ from SP to SP, but as a handrail, the following process and considerations must be implemented by the CoC and UWO/ROSO:

- a. The unit must keep in regular contact with the SP (whilst remaining in line with the parameters of their suspension). Best practise, the SP should have a face-to-face visit and at a minimum, a phone call.
- b. The unit must be in a position to assess the welfare needs of the SP. AGAI 99 - Annex G can be used as a handrail. And report the welfare needs at the WMC.
- c. The unit must ensure the SP has access to welfare support. If the SP is separate from the unit, the CoC and UWO should liaise with closer units, or the AWS if appropriate. The SP should also be reminded that they can self-refer to the AWS if required.
- d. Despite the circumstances surrounding the SP, any visit or contact with the SP must be conducted in a fair and caring manner. The focus of the visit or contact must be to support the SP is their welfare and their associated incident that led to their suspension, kept separate.

**81.190 – 81.200.** Reserved.

## PART 7 – SUPPORT TO FAMILIES

### Introduction

**81.201.** The Army recognises that supporting SP's families contributes directly to OE. The Army is therefore committed to ensuring that all Army families are provided with additional support when a SP is deployed away from home and in the event of a family emergency. In addition, there is a wider obligation on the Nation to ensure Army families receive continuity of public services wherever they are based and whenever they are obliged to move, this is covered in greater detail and supported by the AF Covenant.

**81.202. Armed Forces Families Strategy.** Army life places considerable pressure on a family in terms of separation, mobility, and welfare. Army SP could not deliver what is required of them by Defence without the support of their families. The [Armed Forces Families Strategy](#) seeks to recognise the essential contribution of Service families and ensure they have the respect and support they deserve. The aim of the strategy, therefore, is to provide both the context and the framework for the delivery of a range of practical interventions designed to strengthen and improve policies and service provision across the Service families' agenda, leading to improved retention and enhanced operational effectiveness.

### Supporting Accompanied and Non-Accompanied Families

**81.203.** The provision of accompanied service, wherever possible, is a key tenet in supporting Army families. The Army recognises how individuals choose to live and serve is a personal choice and varies according to how they wish to provide familial stability. There is a package of allowances, benefits, and educational and welfare support to address, as far as practicable, those disadvantages associated with the impact of Army service on family life. These include factors such as [subsidised housing, Forces Help to Buy, Continuity of Education Allowance, and Get You Home allowances](#).

**81.204.** It may be more difficult for a CO to provide a comprehensive welfare support package to those families who, whether by choice or for Service reasons, are not co-located with the unit. This includes support to families of mobilised members of the reserve and the regular reserve and deployed members of the regular army not in fully formed units. COs are to ensure such families<sup>44</sup> are presented with support with a comprehensive welfare information package including as a minimum, contact details of the relevant welfare specialists, the unit's local [HIVE](#) centre and advice on what to do in given circumstances. Where a specific welfare problem arises from dispersed families and the CO finds it difficult to manage or assist with that problem due to the geographical separation, the CO may either seek assistance from AWS staff local to the family or apply to the RPoC G1 staffs which cover the postal code for the family's address. The Bde Staff should then delegate that matter to a unit local to the family address directing them to assist. SP and their families may also seek welfare support from their nearest Regular or Reserve welfare facility rather than their parent unit. The [People Welfare](#) page has been established on the British Army website to enable parity of access to welfare information and support irrespective of location. In these circumstances it is imperative that the

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<sup>44</sup> This should include the parents or nominated Emergency Contacts/NOK of single SP in addition to the families of SP married or in a civil partnership.

nominated staff (AWS, RPOC G1 or local unit welfare staff) continue to update the parent CO of progress with the problem. Provision of support may be delegated; responsibility may not. Further useful information can be found on [Armed Forces Families - Health and Wellbeing - Home \(sharepoint.com\)](#).

**81.205. Support to the non-serving partner.** Within unit there will be SP who will have partners who, although are not serving, are still part of the Army community and should therefore be supported. Direction and guidance such as information on Long Term Relationships, partner employment and other elements of support to the non-serving partner can be found on the [Non-serving partner support webpage](#).

## Army Non-UK Citizens and Families

**81.206.** Direction on the administration of non-UK SP and families is contained in [AGAI 50 \(Supporting Non-UK Army Personnel\)](#). Pers Svcs produce supporting information and guidance in the [Guide For Non-UK Nationals and Unit Support](#), which is in three parts:

- a. **Part 1.** Information for Individuals from Overseas Considering a Career in the British Army.
- b. **Part 2.** Information for Non-UK Soldiers and Non-UK Spouses/ Civil Partners.
- c. **Part 3.** Information for Regular and Reserve Units on Administration of Non-UK Nationals Serving in the British Army and Non-UK Spouses/ Civil Partners.

These publications are to be used by G1 staff, COs, and unit personnel support staff to provide support to the Army's non-UK SP personnel, and Part 2 of the Guide should be promoted to non-UK SP<sup>45</sup>. The guide directs the CoC to engage with the immigration and cultural challenges faced by SP and their entitled family members who enter the UK under the [Immigration Rules Appendix HM AF](#) as they manage their Regular service life, establish a family life and [transition through to civilian life](#) on discharge. The guide does not replace policy or instructions covered in existing tri-Service or Army publications, which already apply to all SP and their entitled families regardless of their nationality and should always be consulted in the first instance. Units must also contact RC Non-UK Support for guidance on immigration status and immigration rules where a welfare case/referral involves a non-UK SP or family member subject to immigration control.

**81.207.** These publications also contain useful information and advice on naturalisation, settlement (commonly known as Permission to Enter or Stay and Permission to Settle) and the procedure for discharge of non-UK SP. Importantly, it is the responsibility of the discharging unit to inform the Home Office when an SP is discharging from Service.

**81.208.** The CoC and Career Managers (CM) should be aware that all non-UK national personnel who are to be discharged and need to regularise their immigration status should apply to the Home Office **eighteen weeks prior** to their discharge date to guarantee the grant of settlement (where they meet all the criteria) shortly after discharge. On discharge,

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<sup>45</sup> This guide contains advice and support for Non-British nationals and Non-British immediate family including those married to a British Citizen. Where there are differences between Commonwealth citizens and Gurkhas these are highlighted in the guide.

non-UK National personnel will not have recourse to public funds or the right to work until such time that their settlement is granted. Therefore, notification of discharge dates for non-UK National personnel must be made sufficiently in advance to allow units to relocate the soldier to UK if overseas, notify the Home Office of the discharge and for the soldier to start the application process both for themselves and any entitled immediate family.

## Army SP and their Families in Tri-Service or Joint Units

**81.209.** The application of sS policies in each joint location is not always reasonably practicable or manageable and may not offer best value for money. [JSP 770 \(Tri-Service Operational and Non-Operational Welfare Policy\)](#) outlines the following:

- a. **Joint Units under sS Command.** These units follow the policy of the sS command or established welfare practices of the unit. However, subject to agreement, sS may make additional arrangements at their own expense. Nevertheless, sS should be prepared to offer specialist support as required. Commanders of Joint units are to ensure that their policy is disseminated to all personnel through induction briefs and unit orders.
- b. **Units under Joint Command / Joint User sites.** Provision of primary welfare is a function of the CoC, delivered through the J1 element of the unit / site, the structure of which will vary across locations and organisations. Secondary or specialist welfare will usually be provided through the relevant Service welfare agency unless another single-Service welfare provider is better placed to meet the needs of the case or service user, in accordance with the tri-Service Specialist Welfare Agreement.

## Support to Relationship Breakdown and Estrangement

**81.210.** The breakdown of a relationship is a private matter<sup>46</sup> but that is not to say the Services cannot and should not offer help and support. Legal relationship breakdown can be a traumatic and stressful experience for those involved and has a significant impact, socially, financially and in terms of entitlement, on the individuals, the Army and the Services' aftercare organisations. Aside from any compassionate considerations, the need to maintain OE provides the justification for the Army to mitigate the adverse effects of relationship breakdowns. It is important to ensure that a properly co-ordinated approach is adopted, involving the CoC, the in-Service welfare staff, professional welfare and relationship agencies, the Home Office<sup>47</sup> and the aftercare community to provide an effective level of support to such families. A record of interview, to support those who may be going through estrangement, is at Annex I. This must be completed by the CoC or welfare staff and, wherever possible, signed both parties (SP and spouse /civil partner) prior to the change of an SP's Personal Status Category (PStatCat). Where one or both parties refuse to sign the document, action must still be taken to inform them of the consequences of the change in PStatCat and their options prior to the change taking place. In such instances, guidance should be sought from AWS as to whether there are

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<sup>46</sup> Domestic Abuse is NOT to be considered a private matter. Para 81.213. covers this in more detail.

<sup>47</sup> For non-UK spouses/partners on a route to settlement.

any underlying issues eg when there is suspicion of coercive and controlling behaviour. This action should then be noted on the record of interview form.

**81.211.** Support should be provided throughout estrangement to both parties, but welfare concerns are often precipitated by either partner leaving the family home and moving into Single Living Accommodation (SLA) or other private accommodation. The role of unit welfare staff is crucial at this point. The CO can authorise the SP to move into SLA while maintaining the family home if it is considered that a cooling off period may assist with a possible reconciliation. This would normally be for a 90-day period. As soon as it becomes apparent that reconciliation is unachievable, the SP should change their PStatCat, noting that the day this happens will initiate the 93-day 'Notice to Vacate' for the SFA. It must be made clear to the SP and spouse/civil partner/partner in a long-term relationship that should they remain in the SFA past the 93-day 'Notice to Vacate' period, they will be classed as 'Irregular Occupants' and charges amended accordingly. The SP should not return or enter the SFA unless specifically invited to do so by their spouse/civil partner/partner in a long-term relationship. Any return to collect belongings etc must be coordinated and authorised by the UWO and AWS advice sought if difficulties prevail. Further detail can be found in [JSP 464 \(Tri-Service Accommodation Regulations\)](#). If the family is subject to immigration control (non-UK) the unit must follow the instructions in [AGAI 50 \(Supporting Non-UK Army Personnel\)](#). The timeframe of support offered to estranged partners and irregular occupants will vary from case to case but should not normally exceed more than three months past the PSTAT change of the SP. If a unit can balance the needs of this cohort against the needs of the wider community for longer than three months, then they can continue to offer support as required. Otherwise, any support over three months the AWS should be consulted for advice.

**81.212. Overseas.** In the case of estrangement occurring overseas, the CO should give the family the opportunity to return to the UK before the start of the 93-day 'Notice to Vacate' period. This move is to be publicly funded and the spouse/civil partner can move either into available SFA, the [Services Cotswold Centre](#), [SSAFA Stepping Stone Homes](#) or private accommodation. Note: estranged spouses/civil partners cannot claim for the final move out of SFA and into private accommodation.

## Counselling

**81.213.** Counselling is provided under contract and can be obtained through referral from the AWS. Contractor supplied counselling via AWS referral is publicly funded and not restricted to relationship counselling. AWS is available to provide advice to SP or family members on the potential sources of support available to them for any of the above needs.

## Domestic Abuse (DA)

**81.214.** DA is a complex issue, on which the CoC is unlikely to have a detailed understanding or knowledge. Any DA reported in relation to Army SP is not to be condoned, dismissed or ignored under any circumstances. Nor should it be treated as a purely private matter. MOD DA policy is covered in [JSP 913 \(Whole Force Policy on Domestic Abuse\)](#). Further guidance and support for the AF community can be sought from



the [AWS](#), or the AF [DA website](#)<sup>48</sup> while the Pers Pol Public [SharePoint site](#) contains many resources to raise awareness, along with sessions from key partners.

**81.215.** ALL suspected or actual incidents of DA, including patterns of coercive and controlling behaviour, must be reported to AWS via a referral, who will advise on whether further coordination with other statutory agencies is required and of other support options. If the CofC feels that the victim/survivor, or another family member, is in immediate danger the relevant Police force should be contacted, even if the victim/survivor's consent is not given. Where a child is or would normally be present, or where the victim/survivor or perpetrator is pregnant, the abuse is also to be reported immediately to the LA Children's Social Care Services.

**81.216.** Where an incident of DA has been reported and the alleged perpetrator is the SP living in SFA/SSFA with the victim/survivor, the CO may order the alleged perpetrator to leave the SFA/SSFA and be excluded from it on a temporary basis where it is necessary and proportionate to do so<sup>49</sup>. An example letter to inform the SP of this decision can be found at Annex N (this template does not negate the need to seek legal advice as required). Such an exclusion is not to exceed 28 days, and SLA is to be provided for the use of the alleged perpetrator. Where an exclusion has been ordered and to ensure the safety of the victim/survivor, the CO must engage with AWS (or the social work provider overseas) and the civilian or Service Police so that safe and informed decisions can be made regarding allowing that SP to re-enter the SFA/SSFA/SLA. This action would normally be taken when a Domestic Violence Protection Order/ Notification Order (DVPO/DVPO) is not feasible, or for situations where the victim/survivor is not prepared to report incidences to the Police but there remain concerns about victim/survivor safety. The better course of action for cases arising in the UK where a crime has been committed is to report the matter to the civilian Police so that the case can progress rapidly to the Magistrates Court and appropriate bail conditions can be imposed.

**81.217.** Where it is not possible for a victim/survivor to remain on the Defence estate (e.g., it is not deemed safe), AWS with support from the CofC should assist in securing alternative accommodation.

**81.218.** All UWOs and their staffs must be trained and have unit instructions in place to ensure they respond appropriately to a suspected or an actual case of DA. This must include what practical assistance can be offered to the victim, such as:

- a. Informing AWS via a referral (and the local civilian or Service Police in cases of immediate danger) if an offence is suspected; UWOs should be instructed that the civilian police have primacy over DA incidents that occur in the UK and the presumption is that they will deal with criminal offences arising in a DA case.
- b. Informing the statutory Social Care Authority for the area of any incidents in a household that includes children (even if only visiting occasionally) or any adult with vulnerabilities.

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<sup>48</sup> Definitions vary across devolved administrations as does legislation. Units should familiarise themselves with the variations for the AOR they are operating in.

<sup>49</sup> The CO retains this power where the alleged Serving perpetrator is from another Service.

- c. Providing confidential means of seeking help, for example permission to use facilities to contact help lines or services if the individual does not feel safe to do so at home.
- d. Providing information about internal and external organisations that can help.
- e. Where appropriate, allowing time from work to obtain medical, counselling, or legal assistance.
- f. Where appropriate, enabling workplace relocation.
- g. Ensuring that the victim has access to information and help in developing a safety plan.
- h. Encouraging the reporting of DA to the police in order that appropriate safety planning and consideration for bringing the perpetrator to account is given; in many cases there will also be a duty to make the Service Police aware.

**81.219.** Guidance to the CoFC on disciplinary/criminal aspects of DA, where the alleged perpetrator is the SP, may be found in [AGAI 62](#). Other than in extreme cases where there is an overriding operational imperative, the CoC should support and prioritise the attendance of behaviour change programmes for perpetrators of domestic abuse.

**81.220.** Where either the victim/survivor or perpetrator are serving, consideration must be given to placing them on the Unit Vulnerability Risk Management Register, in accordance with AGAI 110, Annex C, para 4v.

## **Employment and Deployment of Serving Parents or Carers**

**81.221.** [QR\(Army\) Para 9.260](#) states that SP must be available for world-wide assignment at any time. This applies to all Service parents, single or dual serving couples.

**81.222.** All parents and carers have a legal responsibility to make appropriate arrangements for their children and any adults (if appropriate) if they are absent, for example during an early shift, carrying out a 24-hour duty or during a six-month deployment. Whilst SP often rely on their spouse, civil partner, or partner in such circumstances, when a SP is a single parent or has a spouse or civil partner who is also a SP the situation becomes more complex. The Army has an interest in helping serving parents balance the needs of family life against the needs of the Service and the MOD provide a number of schemes promulgated in [JSP 750 \(Centrally Determined Terms of Service\)](#), and in [JSP 760 \(Tri-Service Regulations for Leave and Other Types of Absence\)](#) including Career Intermissions, Enhanced Leave, Parental Leave, Flexible Working and Flexible Service.

**81.223.** The final decision on employment or deployment lies with the SP's CoC. However, SP must be encouraged to engage with their CoC at the earliest stage to resolve any issues or frictions in balancing their obligations to deploy with the care of their children or immediate family. There are several avenues Serving Parents or Carers can utilise to enable this, ranging from altering their working hours or even the contract type they are on. If these avenues are not able to mitigate any issues with Serving Parents or Carers, the

CoC must weigh the demands of the operational requirement against the circumstances of the SP. If required, the CoC should actively seek advice from specialist welfare organisations to ensure the Serving Parent or Carer who is deploying, is provided with the most relevant support whilst deployed.

**81.224. Working Patterns.** Guidance and policies exist to enable serving parents or carers to request flexible working arrangements. This includes the following:

a. **Leave Types.** SP, under law, are not entitled to the statutory provision of time off for immediate family. However, military leave regulations replicate this provision and support the principle of reasonable time off to deal with an emergency involving immediate family. Where time off is needed for immediate family, the issue can be dealt with using one, or a combination of the following leave types including Compassionate Leave, Special Unpaid Leave, Enhanced Leave, Parental Leave, and Transfer of Leave Between Spouses/Civil Partners. Details of each leave type can be found in [JSP 760 \(Tri-Service Regulations for Leave and Other Types of Absence\)](#).

b. **Flexible Working Arrangements (FWA).** While flexible working is not a right in the AF, all SP are entitled to request FWA so they may better balance the demands of personal life and Service commitments. There are currently two FWA options available to SP:

(1) **Flexible Working Policy.** This option allows a SP to amend their working hours, for example to work compressed hours, vary start and finish times or working from home. Line Managers (LM) must consider FWA where it does not impinge on operational capability. It may not always be possible for non-standard hours to be worked due to the ways in which a unit operates. Implementation of FWA is on a temporary basis and is subject to review. Further details can be found in [JSP 750 \(Centrally Determined Terms of Service\)](#).

(2) **Flexible Service (FS).** FS is the overarching policy name for temporary working arrangements. Principally, they are: Part-Time Working (PTW), Restricted Separation (RS), or a combination of both. The default service for Regular Army SP continues to be a full commitment engagement/commission, involving full-time unlimited service and liability for duty (so-called 24/365 liability). SP cannot be forced to change their Commitment Type or to enter into a FS arrangement, equally they do not have the right to change. Further details can be found in [AGAI 44 \(Army Flexible Service Including Career Intermissions\)](#).

c. **Deployments/Exercises.** The Army assists in helping SP balance the needs of their family against their unlimited liability where possible. The following guidance is offered to the CoC:

(1) If a CO determines that it is operationally imperative for a SP to deploy, then they should do so.

(2) No two sets of circumstances will be identical; the CO should weigh the demands of the operational task against morale of the team and the specific

circumstances of the individual. In some circumstances the balance will lie with the operational imperative and in others with the individual. The AWS can be approached for impartial advice.

(3) Individuals should be given as much notice as possible of deployments, exercises, or other changes in working practices to allow serving parents or carers to put the necessary arrangements to enable them to meet their commitments.

(4) Where individuals are repeatedly unable to carry out their military duties, the CO may have to consider administrative action on the grounds of inefficiency. Administrative Action is intended to address *professional* shortcomings and [AGAI 67 \(Administrative Action\)](#) should be consulted in the first instance.

d. **Pre-Empting Potential Challenges.** Much can be done by units to pre-empt potential challenges by identifying individuals with care responsibilities on their arrival in units and advising, where necessary, on the preparation of both short- and long-term Care Plans (see para 81.226). Individuals should also be provided with information on local Service or civilian childcare facilities and facilitating private fostering arrangements.

**81.225. Advice for Serving Parents.** Serving parents should ensure that their CoC and CM are aware of their personal circumstances. All SP can include personal circumstances on their Posting Preference Proforma (PPP) and can use the 'Employee Domestic and Welfare Considerations tab' on JPA to highlight any personal circumstances which may need to be considered during the assignment process.

a. **Dual Serving Parents.** Dual serving parents should note that whilst the Army will endeavour to meet geographical and assignment preference, there is a risk it may not be possible for them to be co-located. Both parents should engage with their CoC and CM to determine the best possible outcomes for their family. See also paras 81.239 to 81.246.

b. **Declaring Supportability.** All SP are reminded that Part 8 of this AGAI requires them to inform their CoC and CM as soon as they are aware that a family member has a supportability need. This is to allow the CoC to ensure responsive career management which meets the needs of the Army and when informed, takes account of any additional family supportability needs that may have an impact on future assignments.

c. **Parental Leave.** The aim of Parental Leave is to allow SP unpaid leave to look after their child. Parents may take up to 4 weeks per year for each child. It is unpaid and can be taken by either parent until a child is 18. See [JSP 760 \(Tri-Service Regulations for Leave and Other Types of Absence\) Part 1 \(Chapter 28\)](#)

## Children and Young People

**81.226. Children and Young Peoples' Service.** Defence Children's Services (DCS) act as the tri-Service professional lead for all issues related to Service Children and Young

People (SCYP); the MOD SCYP Trust Board, chaired by Commander HC who holds tri-Service responsibility for SCYP matters and the MOD Safeguarding Children Board under an independent chair. In overseas locations, the MOD acts in lieu of a LA, including the provision of children's services, and subordinate Children's Boards and Safeguarding Boards exist in all major Commands. Within the UK, where responsibility remains with LA and equivalents, DCS ensures that the unique needs of Service CYP are met and seeks to identify and mitigate disadvantage. DCS includes the MOD Schools and Settings Service, which is responsible for the provision of high-quality education and care in MOD funded schools and nursery settings overseas for Service children and children of eligible MOD personnel. The organisation formerly known as CEAS has divided into two teams – the Education Advisory Team (UK) and the Overseas Education and Supportability Team, who both provide information, advice, and support about all aspects of Service children's education. Emails are as follows:

- a. [RC-DCS-HQ-EAT@mod.gov.uk](mailto:RC-DCS-HQ-EAT@mod.gov.uk)
- b. [RC-DCS-HQ-OES@mod.gov.uk](mailto:RC-DCS-HQ-OES@mod.gov.uk).

**81.227. Childcare.** Ensuring that children are properly cared for remains a parental responsibility. It is recognised that Service parents like all parents, need access to appropriate childcare and that, where appropriate, this childcare needs to be properly regulated.<sup>50</sup> Policy for delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in overseas settings is in [JSP 342 \(Education of Service Children and Young People\)](#). In the UK, commanders are to ensure that garrison or unit childcare settings are registered with the appropriate authority and are complying with the [Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage](#). This framework is mandatory for all early years providers.

- a. **Use of the Defence Estate for the Delivery of Childcare.** Where, due to a lack of access and availability to childcare services operating in a local community, it is determined that there is an operational capability need for a setting to be provided at a Unit location, the use of Defence Estate accommodation may be considered. More information on can be found in [JSP 850](#) and in [2021DIN01-076](#).

**81.228. Tax Free Childcare (TFC).** The AF Childcare Voucher Scheme and other Government Childcare voucher schemes closed from Oct 18. If SP were a member or joined prior to 4 Oct 18 they can continue to receive childcare vouchers. All other SP should visit the [Government's Childcare Choices website](#) more information on what childcare support is available to them. TFC is not accessible in all overseas locations.

**81.229. Wraparound Childcare (WAC).** WAC (also known as Out of School Care in Wales and School Age Childcare in Scotland) is an HMG funded scheme to help towards childcare costs for children aged between 4-11 for Service families. Details on the scheme can be found on [GOV.UK](#).

**81.230. Boarding School Finder.** SP and families thinking of placing their children into boarding school should refer to the [MoD Boarding School Finder](#) (BSF). The BSF provides information on schools across the UK to enable SP to make informed decisions on the

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<sup>50</sup> DCS are the policy lead for childcare and are producing an Early Years Childcare Study which will inform MOD childcare policy.

school options for their children.

a. **The Duke of York's Royal Military School (DOYRMS).** DOYRMS is a co-educational catering for 500 boys and girls, aged 11 – 18 years. The school itself is unique as it is not only sponsored by the MoD, but it is also the country's only state full boarding school based on an independent school model with high quality education, unrivalled extra-curricular activities, and outstanding facilities, yet with fees that make it a very affordable boarding option. More information can be found on the [school's website](#).

b. **Queen Victoria School (QVS), Dunblane.** This school provides affordable education and pastoral care (within a fully boarding environment) to the children and young people of Service families on behalf of the Secretary of State for Defence. Tuition, boarding, ceremonial uniform, books, and many other costs are met by the Ministry of Defence. It is open to children of serving Scottish SP or those SP who have served in, or are currently still serving in, Scottish units or units in Scotland and is open to the children of SP of any rank. Priority is given to children whose parent has been killed or has died whilst in service; other compassionate cases; and length of remaining service. The main entry point is the last year of Scotland and Northern Ireland primary education (P7), or Year 6 in England and Wales. Vacancies arise from time to time for later years. Further information on the school can be found on the [Application for Admission](#).

**81.231. Safeguarding Children.** The introduction of the [Children Act 2004](#) (CA04) in England led to significant change in the way in which the safeguarding of children and young adults is delivered. The Act defines a child as "a person under the age of 18". Section 11 of the Act places a duty on key people and bodies to decide to ensure that, in discharging their functions, they have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. Within the MOD this duty is therefore taken to include all people under the age of 18. If commands, units, and COs are unsure about their duty they should seek clarification from the AWS or DCS.

**81.232. Care Plans.**<sup>51</sup> To plan for and manage potential difficulties, the CoC should identify those Serving parents and carers who may have difficulty meeting their full commitment obligation to carry out shift work, guard duties or full deployments. Such individuals should be engaged in advance and encouraged to produce both short term and long-term robust care plans detailing how their children/immediate family members will be looked after on those occasions when they will be required to conduct either out of normal working hours duties or a full deployment. The CoC should note that no-one can be ordered to complete a Care Plan however, doing so is highly encouraged.

**81.233.** An example Care Plan can be found at Annex J. Care Plans should cover parents or carers intended arrangements for the provision of short-term care (eg to cover a 24-hour duty) along with long term plans (eg arrangements for an extended deployment). Care Plans could include powers of attorney for temporary and long-term guardians, certificates of acceptance of guardianship/care and financial support arrangements. Those identified as needing guidance should be interviewed. Discussion topics include:

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<sup>51</sup> SP cannot be forced to complete the plan and Commanders should consider this plan applies to all parents.

- a. Confirm that the SP is aware that Service parents or carers are liable for duty or deployment always without restriction though special note will be taken where a SP has registered immediate family under Part 8 to this AGAI.
- b. Confirm that the SP is aware that they are responsible for arranging appropriate care for their children or immediate family and for meeting the costs involved.
- c. Establish the names and whereabouts of the children or immediate family for which the SP is responsible.
- d. Discuss the short-term/long term arrangements that the SP has made for: childcare, care, food, housing, transportation, and emergency needs of their family members.
- e. Discuss the arrangements that the SP has made for transferring care responsibilities (legal, educational, financial, and religious) should the need arise.
- f. Discuss with the SP who will be their children's/immediate family nominated guardian or carer.
- g. Confirm that the SP has made the necessary arrangement to transport their family member(s) to their nominated guardian/carer.
- h. Remind the SP that they need to ensure that any parental responsibility documentation, acceptance of guardianship/carer responsibilities and or power of attorney documents are kept up to date.
- i. In the case of guardianship/change of career, potentially resulting in a child changing schools during a deployment, SP should be advised to seek advice and discuss the implications with the EAT or OEST as appropriate before taking any action to remove a child from school.
- j. For Non-UK personnel, advise the SP that Home Office rules preclude them from bringing a family member or friend from their country of origin to provide care.

**81.234. Child Protection Plans.** When a child is made the subject of a Child Protection Plan (CPP) following an Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC) any disruption to that plan (operational deployments or military exercises) need to be carefully considered to ensure there is no impact to the outcome or effectiveness of the CPP. As directed in [JSP 834 \(Safeguarding\)](#), upon receipt of the ICPC minutes that have formalised a CPP, AWS are to inform the SP's workforce authority and the CO. This information should be shared using the letter template at Annex K. Once the child is removed from the CPP by the LA and the AWS has received formal confirmation, the letter template at Annex L should be used.

**81.235. Pregnancy, Maternity, and Return to Work (RtW).** [Pregnancy, Maternity, and Return to Work Guide](#) brings together aspects of policy<sup>52</sup> which relate to SP who are pregnant or, on maternity, shared parental or adoption leave. It collates and summarises

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<sup>52</sup> [JSP 760 \(Tri-Service Regulations for Leave and Other Types of Absence\)](#). Chapters 24, 25 and 27.

extant policy and guidance to support the CoC and LMs in the management of pregnant SP and those returning from maternity leave. It is broken down into 3 parts: Pregnancy Related Issues, the Maternity Passport, and Returning to Work. Specifically:

- a. Support to SP on maternity leave is the responsibility of the parent unit even though SP on maternity leave are assigned to the Resilience Margin as directed in [AGAI 39 \(The Resilience Margin\)](#).
- b. The CoC are required to interview SP upon formal or informal notification of pregnancy. The interview should be based on a HARDFACTS assessment to identify any potential issues that may arise prior to and during maternity leave, and on the SP's return to work. Details of the HARDFACTS assessment can be found in Annex G to AGAI 39 (The Resilience Margin (REM)).
- c. The CoC and SP should work through the Maternity Checklist ([Annex A to Pregnancy, Maternity and Return to Work Guide](#)) as required.

**81.236. Employment of New Mothers.** [AGAI 78 \(Army Medical Employment Policy PULHHEEMS Administrative Pamphlet \(PAP\)\)](#) states that new mothers RtW from maternity leave are to be graded MLD(T) A4L4M4E3 for a period of six months from their RtW date. Medical policy outlines that after pregnancy, consideration should be given for a rehabilitation or remedial exercise programme to enable them to attain the necessary fitness and functional capacity. Additionally, health and safety policy require that a risk assessment be conducted upon the new mother's RtW to ensure they are employed appropriately taking into account whether the SP is breastfeeding.

**81.237. Supporting the Non-Birthing Parent.** Support is available to a SP who: is the father of the child; the spouse, civil partner or partner of the birthing parent or adopter; or the intended parent if having a baby through a surrogacy arrangement. The principle support mechanism is the AF Occupational Paternity Leave Scheme (Paternity Leave). Paternity Leave (PL) is given to recognise the birth or the adoption of a child (where the SP applying for Paternity Leave is not taking Adoption Leave) and to enable the SP to care for the child or support the birthing parent or adopter. PL provides for two weeks paid leave. Research by the UK Government Equalities Office has indicated this two-week period is important not only for the non-birthing parent-child relationship, but also in promoting greater stability in the relationship between the parents. In addition, commanders are encouraged to show greater empathy in circumstances where the birthing parent requires greater post-natal support. This may include instances where there have been complications during the birth, a caesarean section has been required or pre-planned support arrangements have fallen through at short notice. The [JSP 760: Tri Service Regulations for Leave and Other Types of Absence](#) is clear that compassionate leave should be used in these circumstances. The default settings for these circumstances is, as a minimum, two weeks compassionate leave in addition to the two weeks PL. The CoC remains the authority to grant this provision and to increase the provision of compassionate leave based on an assessment of the circumstances of each case on its merits.

**81.238. Assisted Conception Services.** Defence policy on assisted conception and fertility services can be found in [2021DIN01-020](#). It is in a SP's best interests to inform their CoC of their intent to access assisted conception or fertility services for the family to



make best use of the provisions outlined in Defence policy relating to career management and separated service.

**81.239. Adoption and Fostering.** There are many SP who consider adopting or fostering children and there is a great demand for placements for children in the UK; Defence policy can be found in [2018DIN01-130](#). The MOD has an agreement with SSAFA to deliver an adoption service through SSAFA's Voluntary Adoption Agency. While SP may use an adoption service provided by an appropriate LA, the occasional lack of understanding from LAs regarding service life and the demand of military employment means they may choose the SSAFA adoption service instead. The SSAFA Adoption Agency can work directly with SP or assist them to access a service via other adoption agencies. Once adopted, a child will be classed as immediate family. Additional information can be found on AFFS SharePoint site: [Adoption, Fostering and Kinship](#).

**81.240. Private Fostering Arrangements (PFA) and Guardianship.** A PFA is one that is made privately, without the involvement of a LA, for the care of a child under the age of 16 (under 18 if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative (eg grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, or stepparent) with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more. **Any period more than 28 days constitutes a guardianship arrangement and must be notified to the LA.** Legislation and guidance relating to private fostering has been established by the UK Government, the Scottish Parliament, and the Welsh Assembly. The intention of the legislation and guidance is to ensure that children who are being looked after under PFA will be safeguarded by the supervision of an appropriate authority. Individuals with queries on PFA or Guardianship Arrangements should be signposted to the [Fostering and Private Fostering SharePoint](#) page and referred to their local AWS team who will provide the appropriate advice and guidance. Overseas Commands should consider establishing both short term and long-term foster carers from volunteers within the existing Service community in conjunction with the British Forces Social Work Service.

**81.241. Maintenance of Families.** SP have a moral responsibility to support their spouse or civil partner (or former spouse or civil partner) and any children. Army policy encourages all individuals to meet their obligations voluntarily, and as SP have the same obligation as any civilian, to comply with child maintenance. Equally, it is Army policy that child and spousal maintenance orders should be determined by the courts or Child Maintenance Service (CMS). Further guidance can be found on the [GOV.UK](#) site. A [Child Maintenance Calculator](#) is available and further advice can be found at [Child Maintenance Service](#). SP and their families should be reminded that they may also seek legal advice at their own cost. If Child Support Agency orders or CMS orders are not paid voluntarily, they may be enforced by the MOD in accordance with the MoU between the Department for Work and Pensions Child Maintenance Group (DWPCMG) and the MOD. The DWPCMG recognises that the nature of Service life can cause additional difficulties for SP in their dealings with the DWPCMG and as such have established a Forces Focal Point to support SP, ensuring that they receive a consistent, accurate, timely and cost-effective service for the assessment, calculation, collection, and payment of child maintenance. The Forces Focal Point can only be accessed through military welfare or finance staff. Where an SP is required to pay maintenance<sup>53</sup> for a child or to a former spouse/partner then the Defence Business Service may take those payments from a SP's pay at source.

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<sup>53</sup> In accordance with a CEA, CMS, or UK Court Order.

**81.242. Foreign Maintenance Orders (FMO).** Save for exceptional circumstances, an FMO should be registered with a UK Court before the DBS will enforce it against a SP's pay at source. An application to register an FMO with a UK court can be made through the relevant Central Authority in the country of origin to the UK Reciprocal Enforcement of Maintenance Orders (REMO) Unit. If there is no Central Authority (for example, Fiji has none), an application can be made through a local court in the country of origin and that local court should then liaise directly with the [REMO Unit Helpline](#).

**81.243. Support Networks.** There are several additional support networks which can provide impartial advice and guidance to the CoC and SP including:

- a. **Army Families Federation (AFF).** AFF are the independent voice of Army families. They offer support, information and guidance to individuals and Army communities on issues that impact on the quality of their lives and have several specialists in areas such as education and housing.
- b. **Forces Additional Needs and Disability Forum (FANDF).** FANDF is a non-publicly funded body supported by SSAFA to keep Service families with additional needs and disabilities in touch with issues that affect them both inside and outside Service life. It is directed by a Full Members' Committee who represent the Forum, and whose membership is made up of Service parents of children with an additional need and/or disability and adults with an additional need and/or disability. Service families are encouraged to engage with FANDF.
- c. **The Army Parents' Network.** The aim of the Army Parents' Network is to support Serving Army Parents and the Chain of Command by providing access to information, advice and peer support. The page promotes information on relevant topics (including policy updates and useful articles) and acts as a forum for individuals to ask questions for other members to provide advice – all questions asked can be posted anonymously. The group is predominantly accessed through its Facebook page (search for "Army Parents' Network") but also has a web page <https://www.army.mod.uk/people/live-well/family-support/army-parents-network/> and an e-mail address [armypers-parents-network@mod.gov.uk](mailto:armypers-parents-network@mod.gov.uk).
- d. **The Defence Breastfeeding Network.** The Defence Breastfeeding Network is a peer support network that supports SP (including Civil Servants) and their families throughout their pregnancy and breastfeeding journey. They have over 50 trained peer supporters who are able to advise on specific breastfeeding queries, alongside Dr Wendy Jones (pharmacist) from the breastfeeding network to advise on medication related queries. They are also able to advise on any policy questions that may arise. It should be noted that the SP does not have to be exclusively breastfeeding and the network's peer supporters are trained to assist on infant feeding journeys no matter the route they take. They do however ask that the breastfeeding person is the one who joins the network. The network can be found on their Facebook and Defence Connect Pages (search for "Defence Breastfeeding Network") and questions can be e-mailed to [ArmyPers-Pol-BF-Network-Mailbox@mod.gov.uk](mailto:ArmyPers-Pol-BF-Network-Mailbox@mod.gov.uk).

e. **The Defence Child Bereavement Network.** The Defence Child Bereavement Network is a support group to help Quad service serving personnel, veterans and spouses who have experienced child loss. This child loss can include, but is not limited to, miscarriage, stillbirth, TFMR, ectopic pregnancy, neonatal death and child loss. The aim of the network is to provide peer support from fellow loss parents and medical / welfare professionals and provide help through signposting. The page provides a listening ear in times of extreme grief. The group organises small self-care packages when requested to help enable a loss parent to look after themselves during this emotionally turbulent time. The network can be found on their Facebook page (search for “Defence Child Bereavement Network”) and questions can be e-mailed to [armypers-Pol-DCB-Network@mod.gov.uk](mailto:armypers-Pol-DCB-Network@mod.gov.uk).

f. **The Defence Fertility Network.** The Defence Fertility Network exists to provide individuals, couples and their civilian partners across Defence (Quad service) who are considering, are on or have been on a fertility journey a welcoming and confidential support group. It functions primarily as a private Facebook group where members can provide and receive peer support, signposting to relevant resources and the benefit of collective experience when navigating NHS and MoD policies. The Defence Fertility Network can be found on Facebook, and for those who want more information (and access to support resources without having to join) we can be found on Defence Connect. The Network’s Service Leads can be e-mailed to [Army-Pers-DF-Network@mod.gov.uk](mailto:Army-Pers-DF-Network@mod.gov.uk).

g. **Service Couples Network.** The aim of the Service Couples Network is to support SP who are in a relationship (legal or otherwise) with a fellow Service Person. The Service Couples Network is a tri-Service network designed to connect people, inform policy and raise awareness of dual-serving couples’ specific issues. The page acts as a forum for individuals to ask questions and for other members to provide advice – all questions asked can be posted anonymously if required. The group is predominantly accessed through its Facebook page (search for “Service Couples Network”) but also has an e-mail address [AFNetworks-SvcCouples-0Mailbox@mod.gov.uk](mailto:AFNetworks-SvcCouples-0Mailbox@mod.gov.uk).

**81.244. Non-UK personnel.** Serving parents intending to arrange childcare support in the UK, or during an overseas assignment, using individuals, relatives, or friends subject to UK immigration controls will need to take account of UK immigration rules or Service Standing Orders or Instructions applicable to their overseas assignment. This needs to be done well in advance. Home Office rules preclude them from bringing a family member or friend from country of origin to the UK to provide childcare. Those planning on returning children to their country of origin during an extended deployment will need to satisfy any safeguarding children requirements required by legislation in their country of origin. See the [Guide For Non-UK Nationals and Unit Support](#).

**81.245. Deployment of New Parents.** Whilst it is the responsibility of parents to make suitable arrangements for the care of their child(ren), it is recognised that deployment may have a particular impact on new parents returning to work immediately following Shared Maternity or Parental Leave (ShPL)<sup>54</sup>. New mothers will be graded L4 E4 MLD(T) for a

<sup>54</sup> [AGAI 44: Flexible Service including Career Intermissions](#) and [JSP 760: Tri-Service Regulations for Leave and Other Types](#) gives details of the policy for Maternity Leave, Shared Parental Leave, Adoption Leave, Paternity Leave and Parental Leave.

minimum period of 6 months from their return to work (RtW) date<sup>55</sup>. This grading should not prevent individuals completing career courses where they volunteer to do so and occupational health assessment, where relevant, is that it is safe for their health to do so.

**81.246. Flexible Service.** There will be occasions where single parents and DSPC require greater freedoms than which are provided within this policy. Where appropriate Flexible Service (JSP 760) should be considered in this instance.

### **Separation of Single and Dual-Serving Parents with Children (DSPC)**

**81.247. Separation.** Wherever possible, it is in the interests of the Service to avoid concurrent deployment<sup>56</sup> of dual-serving parents where they hold joint responsibility for children<sup>57</sup>. This is also the case for single SP with parental responsibility. DSPC policy aims to ensure the impact of separation for single and dual-serving parents of above two weeks is given appropriate consideration at a suitable level. Separation includes:

- a. **Operational Tours.** Operational tours are mandated by a CDS directive and include both PJHQ-led operations or operations delivered by Land Operations Command. For the purposes of this policy this also includes Defence Activity Other than Operations (DAOTO) such as Short-Term Training Teams etc.
- b. **Military Aid to Civil Authorities.** Assistance provided by the Armed Forces to other Government Departments on urgent work of national importance in maintaining supplies and services essential to the life, health and safety of the community.
- c. **Unaccompanied Postings or Temporary Detachments.** Assignment Orders issued to SP in a dual-serving couple that do not permit family members to accompany them such as Defence Engagement posts in Iraq or Somalia. Shorter term temporary detachments such as Temporary Staff at BATUK or in the Falkland Islands may be included.
- d. **Collective Training.** Collective training for contingent or current operations, at home or abroad. This may also include theatre specific specialist individual courses, IPDT and training support tasks.
- e. **Individual Courses.** All residential Branch/trade and employment courses, pre-employment training and command courses.
- f. **Readiness Activities.** R0 – Immediate NTM<sup>58</sup>, R1 – 24hrs or 48hrs NTM, and R2 – 5 days NTM activities.

**81.248. Affected Cohorts.** The types of family structures in scope to be considered DSPC include, but are not limited to:

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<sup>55</sup> As detailed in [JSP 760: Tri-Service Regulations for Leave and Other Types](#) and [Pregnancy, Maternity and Return to Work Guide AC64647](#) to give the SP time to regain their fitness after childbirth.

<sup>56</sup> The term deployment in the context of this policy refers to the attendance of the SP on any activities listed in para 81.242 a – f.

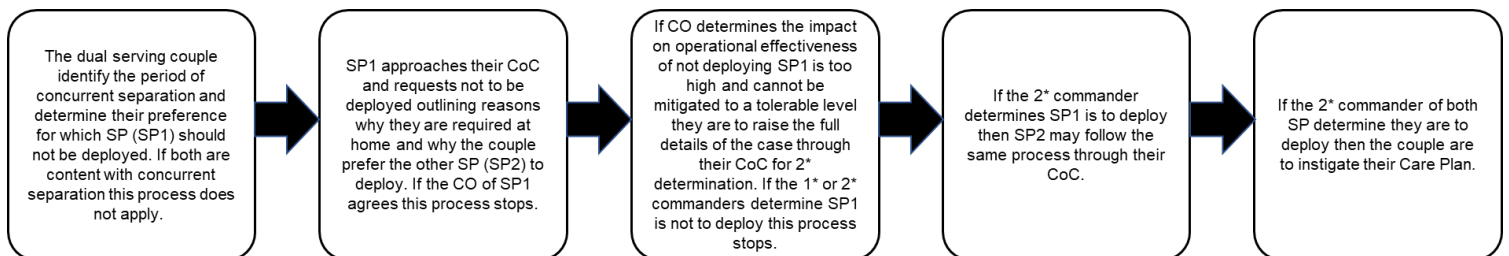
<sup>57</sup> A child, who is below the age of 18, is defined as a legitimate or legitimated child or stepchild of a SP; a child statutorily adopted by a SP; a child of the family from a previous relationship of a SP; a fostered child of a SP, an intended child of a SP, or a child under a specific court order of a SP.

<sup>58</sup> FE ready to deploy from their home base or current location.

- a. **Married.** A legally or formally recognised union of two people.
- b. **Civil Partnerships.** A civil partnership is a legal relationship which can be registered by two people who aren't related to each other.
- c. **Long-Term Relationships.** As defined in [2024DIN01-061](#).
- d. **Special Guardianships.** A court order that places a child or young person to live with someone other than their parent(s) on a long-term basis.
- e. **Separated Parents.** Where two SP have undertaken separation (physically or legally), divorce or dissolution, but are jointly responsible for a child(ren), including those where a visitation court order is in place.
- f. **Single Parents.** PStat Cat 2 SP as defined in JSP 752 Para 02.0203b. For deployments, due consideration must be given to the needs of single SP with primary carer responsibilities which must be balanced against the impact on operational effectiveness. This policy, as detailed in Paras 81.243 – 81.247 therefore applies equally to single SP that are primary carers/parents.

**81.249. Dual-Serving Parents with Children (DSPC) Status.** It is the responsibility of both SP to confirm their status as a DSPC on JPA through their APC CM. DSPC status identifies the SP as holding a legal responsibility for a child within their immediate family. DSPC status ensures that family considerations are factored into career and assignment management decisions. Respective CMs are to be informed soonest if there is a change in personal circumstances that impact on DSPC status of either SP.

**81.250. Deciding Authority.** Concurrent separation for periods of less than 2 weeks are to be managed at unit level. The decision to concurrently deploy both SP must balance the needs of the Service against the impact on the SPs' family. If circumstances arise where both SP are required to deploy concurrently for a period of greater than 2 weeks, the following process is to be followed. Resolution at the lowest level should be aimed for but is only possible if the decision is made not to deploy the DSPC<sup>59</sup>:



**81.251. Engagement with another MOD TLB<sup>60</sup>.** Occasionally there may be a requirement to discuss the concurrent deployment of DSPC across TLBs. Where this is the

<sup>59</sup> The 2\* Deciding Authority for boarded OCE tours is MS. For OCE FGen fails the DA is ACOS Ops as the STA.

<sup>60</sup> Consistent with RN policy listed in [Chapter 58 – Management of Career, Para 5807\(e\)](#) and [Air Publication 3392 Vol 2 Para 6e](#) (Google Chrome only).

case the process above is to be followed. Where necessary, discussions should take place at the lowest appropriate level and only escalated to 2\* where not resolved.

**81.252. Care Plans.** Where the Deciding Authority has determined that the SP is to deploy, the Care Plan should be reviewed with the CO for implementation by the SP. An example Care Plan can be found at Annex J.

**81.253-81.260.** Reserved.

## PART 8 – SUPPORTABILITY, DISABILITY, ADDITIONAL NEEDS & CARERS

### Introduction

**81.261. Scope.** This is the Army policy on supporting SP and their entitled family members who have supportability, additional needs and caring responsibilities. The overarching tri-Service policy for support overseas is set by: MOD Policy on [Assessment of Support Needs for Accompanied Assignments Overseas Policy](#) and [JSP 342 Education of service Children Overseas](#). JSP 820 Supportability and Additional Needs has been rescinded.<sup>61</sup> Each of these policies provides specific guidance for supporting families with additional needs and disabilities on overseas assignments. MOD have developed a [Policy and Guidance Portal](#) on Share Point to access all key policy and guidance and plan to introduce a SP Carers Passports and supporting policy for Carers<sup>62</sup>. The aim of this AGAI is to set the sS Supportability, Additional Needs and Carers policy. These documents provide direction, guidance, and advice on the support available and application processes to be followed to record SP and family supportability and caring need. This policy is supported by an Army Chain of Command, SP and Families Supportability, [Additional Needs and Carers Policy Guide](#)<sup>63</sup>, signposting Army and tri-Service policies, differences in supportability policy and processes across the Devolved Government Administrations, Local Authorities, Charities and other supporting organisations. Additional information can also be found at the [AF Families Health and Wellbeing Hub](#).

**81.262. Employment.** The underlying principle for employment in the Army is the ability of SP to be available for worldwide deployment or assignment at any time. [AGAI 60 \(Service Overseas\)](#) sets the policy for Service Overseas. The Army can only take account of a SP's and their family needs if the CoC and respective APC CM are aware of changes in personal circumstances. The SP must register details of their immediate family or person that they have a direct caring responsibility for on JPA in order to be eligible for Carers Leave allowance<sup>64</sup>. This includes additional needs, disabilities or SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) support requirements. Where practicable, employment will be found that can meet the needs of the family and enable the SP to continue to develop and progress their career.

**81.263. National Legislation.** The MOD has a duty to ensure that national legislation is adhered to within the UK. It is MOD practice to implement the spirit of UK legislation outside the UK wherever it is appropriate and practicable to do so. The principal Acts which place obligations upon the Services regarding Additional Needs are contained in [Assessment of Support Needs for Accompanied Assignments Overseas Policy and MOD provision for Carer's Leave](#)<sup>65</sup> within JSP 760 policy as an entitlement under Compassionate Leave which is implemented on JPA as Time Off for Dependents.

**81.264. SP's Responsibility.** SP are fully responsible for their immediate family and must be made aware that whilst the MOD will try to provide the necessary support for their immediate families' health, education, and social welfare needs, this may not be possible

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<sup>61</sup> Rescinded by AFFS in Mar 23

<sup>62</sup> Expected publication Dec 24.

<sup>63</sup> Guide under review and due publication Sep 24.

<sup>64</sup> In accordance with JSP 760 Compassionate Leave.

in every location either in the UK or overseas. It is mandatory for SP to register an immediate family member's supportability and additional need on JPA to ensure that the SP's assignments are appropriate and safe for them. Early discussions between SP, APC CM, RCMO and unit Welfare staff will enable the SP to list the most appropriate positions for consideration by a Board. SP must report any changes in family circumstances that may require an additional supportability or caring need. In the event of an immediate families' clinical or psychological assessment, the SP does not need to wait until formal diagnosis is given before submitting a Career Management Notification Proforma (CMNP) at Annex M. This proforma also includes a Unit Supportability Action Plan to ensure transparency and accountability between the SP and CoC and allow both parties to balance the needs to the SP's immediate family against OE. It must be completed and reviewed by the Line Manager in consultation with the SP. Where a SP has carer responsibility these must be recorded on JPA Self Service, selecting Extra Information Types and entering details into the Employee Domestic and Welfare Considerations area. Completing these JPA fields does not replace the mandatory requirement for SP to complete the CMNP; it acts as additional guidance for APC CM. SP will not be eligible to apply for the new Carers Leave<sup>66</sup> unless they have recorded their caring responsibility details on JPA.

**81.265. Unit Responsibility.** Units must routinely inform SP of their responsibilities to update the CoC where there is a family' supportability, additional needs or caring requirement. This is to be completed biannually as part of [General Routine Orders, or equivalent orders](#). The CoC are responsible for providing appropriate career management for SP who have registered an additional need, disability, SEND issue, or carer responsibility and take full account of Service and individual needs for supportability prior to advising on an assignment location, especially if the assignment is outside the UK.

**81.266. Career Management.** SP who have family with additional needs, disabilities or caring responsibilities are to be considered for promotion, career courses and advancement in competition with their peers without reference to their family's specific circumstances. SP should be briefed by their CoC and APC CM that any self-imposed restriction for attendance on career courses or opportunities to gain further relevant training or experience may adversely affect future employability and career prospects. The assignment process on the [MS Web](#) should be used to determine the correct assignment action for the SP and family.

**81.267. Posting Preference Proforma (APP).** In addition to completing a CMNP (Annex M), SP are to use the comments box on their APP to declare any supportability, SEND or carer responsibilities that may have a bearing on their future assignment. Failure to insert this information on the APP may lead to a refusal of an assignment outside the UK, or an early repatriation of the SP and their family from an assignment outside the UK<sup>67</sup>, which may be at the SP's own expense, dependant on circumstances.

**81.268. Annual Appraisal Reports.** Reporting Officers are responsible for ensuring that at the appraisal report interview, SP are advised of their options for future employment and training. Reporting Officers (RO) should not comment on family circumstances that could impact on SP career development.

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<sup>66</sup> [JSP 760](#) Ch 23 Compassionate Leave para 23.5 Carer's Leave and Support for Carers.

<sup>67</sup> Unit to take "Removal from Appointment" action under AGAI 67.



**81.269. Carer's Leave.** The Carer's Leave Act 2023 amended the Employment Rights Act 1996, which does not apply to Service personnel. MOD has made provision for Carer's Leave within JSP 760 policy as an entitlement under 'Compassionate Leave' which is implemented on JPA as 'Time Off for Dependants.' Details on eligibility and entitlement can be found in [JSP 760 Tri-Service Regulations for Leave and Other Types of Absence](#)<sup>68</sup>.

## Support in the UK

**81.270.** In the UK, all SP and their immediate family, who are UK citizens, or are eligible through their immigration status, are entitled to access the same services and facilities as any other UK citizen; this includes medical, educational, social services, or facilities provided by the responsible Local Authority (LA) and Integrated Care Boards ([ICGs](#)) and Clinical Commissioning Group ([CCG](#)). The Army does not replicate these services, but the MOD accepts that where differences occur because of service in the AF, appropriate assistance may be provided where possible. The Education Advisory Team (EAT) (UK) is part of DCS and provides professional information, advice, and guidance regarding the education of Service Children in the UK. They can advise on how to manage a move between Local Authorities, where the provision may vary and advocate on your behalf with Local Authorities to remove barriers. They can be contactable at RC-DCS-HQ-EAT@mod.gov.uk. Additional information is available in the Army's quarterly publication of [Welfare Matters](#), the [MOD AF Covenant Microsite](#), the [Army Families Federation](#) and [Defence Connect Guidance | The British Army \(mod.uk\)](#). The [Army HIVEs](#) and iHIVEs website also contains links to Army HIVE blogs (which provide information) as well as contact details for all HIVE locations (UK and overseas).

## Support Overseas

**81.271.** Immediate family members must undergo an assessment of supportability for all assignments outside the UK in accordance with [Assessment of Support Needs for Accompanied Assignments Overseas policy- GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).

**81.272. Support Outside the UK.** Commands outside the UK are to implement the spirit of UK legislation, wherever it is possible to do so, noting that, it may not always be possible to replicate the level of support normally available in the UK. Therefore, an individual may be refused an accompanied assignment if the supportability needs of the immediate family members cannot be met.

**81.273. Supportability Information.** When considering an assignment outside the UK SP and their family should check the in-country guides for supportability information in the location they are interested in. This is critical as the MOD cannot support every additional need in all locations. The in-country guides should be available from their receiving unit or Command HQ, plus additional in country information can be found on the [iHIVE Blog. In addition the Rest of the World - AFF](#) website provides useful guidance for families on Overseas Postings, including living in remote locations and non-routine postings. This supporting information may help SP and their family to better understand whether their supportability needs can be met in that location, but it does not replace the requirement for

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<sup>68</sup> JSP 760 Ch 23 Compassionate Leave para 23.5 Carer's Leave and Support for Carers.

the SP and immediate family members to complete the necessary overseas assessment set out in the MOD's [Assessment of Support Needs for Accompanied Assignments Overseas Policy](#). This includes an assessment requirement for any children, young adults in boarding, specialist schools, higher educational settings who will visit during holidays, or partners getting married to SP during an overseas assignment.

**81.274. APC Overseas Assignment Checklist.** SP are to complete this checklist when considering an overseas assignment to identify what support services are in place in country. This checklist is held on the [MS Web](#) as well as [Defence Connect Guidance | The British Army \(mod.uk\)](#).

**81.275. Assignment Notification outside the UK.** Subject to the overriding needs of the Army, APC assignment boards will take account of any additional supportability needs reported to them via the CMNP (Annex M), PPP, registered Supportability/Carer Support Plans and JPA Domestic and Welfare entries, when deciding whether to assign the SP overseas. APC CMs where possible, will give as much advance notification of an overseas assignment in order to allow the mandatory Assessment of Needs to take place (in accordance with [Assessment of Support Needs for Accompanied Assignments Overseas policy- GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)).

**81.276. Assessment of Supportability.** SP and families must complete the following:

- a. **Self-Declaration of Supportability Need<sup>69</sup>.** On selection for an overseas assignment and on receipt of an assignment order from APC, the SP and their immediate family members are to complete [Annex B to Assessment of Support Needs for Accompanied Assignments Overseas policy- GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) This will initiate a full supportability assessment to confirm whether or not the immediate family members can proceed on an accompanied assignment. Families should not proceed to travel before a decision has been made. The decision must support the Service need whilst striving to support SP and family aspirations. Each case is judged on its individual merits but where essential support is not available, and cannot practicably be made available, then the family will not be authorised to accompany the SP. Subject to any appeal process and final decision APC CM will decide as to whether the assignment is cancelled, or the SP is able to undertake the assignment overseas unaccompanied.
- b. **Family Travel F/Mov 564e Application.** Available via the [Global Removals and Family Services webpage](#). This must be completed not less than **8 weeks** prior to departure date regardless of the method of travel. It contains the forms necessary to arrange family travel to the overseas destination and includes essential information about family visa and status stamp requirements.
- c. **Family Pack.** Once Movement Support Services (MSS) receive a completed F/Mov 564e the Families Section will automatically dispatch the Family Pack containing travel, medical screening, and education guidance. Further information is available from the Families Section by e mailing: UKSTRATCOM-FamSec@mod.gov.uk.

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<sup>69</sup> JSP 770\_Chapter 2A\_Annex A.

**81.277. Unit Arrival outside UK.** If a family arrives in a new location outside the UK without having completed the 'Assessment of Supportability' including completing the self-declaration, a retrospective assessment must be conducted in accordance with [Assessment of Support Needs for Accompanied Assignments Overseas policy- GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/assessment-of-support-needs-for-accompanied-assignments-overseas) and APC CM warned of the potential for reassignment if the needs cannot be met. If an SP fails to declare a known supportability, or additional need that cannot subsequently be met, the SP may be held liable to meet the repatriation costs for their family back to UK.

**81.278. Emerging or New Supportability Need During Assignment.** An additional 'Assessment of Supportability' in accordance with [Assessment of support needs for accompanied assignments overseas - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/assessment-of-support-needs-for-accompanied-assignments-overseas) must be completed where an SP or immediate family members has been identified with an emerging or new supportability need, or where a SP marries and spouse has a supportability need. If SP and immediate family members must return early from an overseas assignment because of an emerging additional supportability need that cannot be supported, APC CM will identify an appropriate alternative assignment. Where SP are waiting on a diagnosis for an immediate family member the SP should notify their APC CM through their CoC so the circumstances can be considered in any future career managed move, or extension in post.

## Appeals Process

**81.279. Army Supportability Appeals Process.** Army Overseas' Assignment Suitability and Supportability Appeals Process Map is hosted on the [MS Web](#).

**81.280. Medical Screening Appeals Process.** Tri-Service policy [Assessment of support needs for accompanied assignments overseas - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/assessment-of-support-needs-for-accompanied-assignments-overseas) sets the appeals process for those that wish to challenge a non-supportability decision. The process has three steps:

- a. **Step 1.** Where a SP wants to appeal a notification of a non-supportability decision for an immediate family member, they are to submit this in writing within 10 working days of receipt of that notification.
- b. **Step 2.** On receipt of the appeal, an appeal review will be undertaken and completed within 40 working days by the Consultant Adviser in General Practice and AH Professional Standards and Regulation (Army HQ) as the appeal body for the Army. APC CM Ops Occ Health Team will provide the conduit between APC and the appeal body in accordance with the process set out in the Army Overseas' Assignment Suitability and Supportability Appeals Process Map hosted on [MS Web](#).
- c. **Step 3.** Where the appeal review at step 2 upholds the non-supportability decision previously made, the SP can request step 3 in the appeal's process. This is a multi-disciplinary 3rd party review conducted by the Overseas Comd (OS Comd) concerned, which is to be completed within 10 working days once initiated. This will enable the OS Comd to balance the risk appetite, medical supportability, and the overall business requirement to fulfil the role with that individual. It will also allow

articulation of the risk and record keeping of the acceptance via formal RoDs. This process can be undertaken simultaneously to step 2. The requirement for an OS Comd review can most likely be pre-empted through early conversations with DGP and Consultant Advisor in General Practice as the review body.

## Wider Supportability Policies

**81.281. Supporting Children's Education Overseas.** The policy and guidance for the education of Service children is contained in [JSP 342 \(Education of Service Children and Young People\)](#). As in the UK, parents overseas are responsible for the education of their children and are strongly advised to research education provision overseas in their prospective assignment/transfer location. Information on education overseas is accessed at the DCS's pages on the [gov.uk website](#) and personnel are strongly advised to contact DCS for advice and guidance on their child's education as early as possible in the assignment/transfer process. Parents are also advised to contact the head teacher of the relevant MOD school in the prospective location.

**81.282.** The MOD Assessment of Supportability Overseas (MASO) process includes a DCS assessment of educational supportability which applies to all Defence children. This process is to be followed for all assignments/transfers and in any circumstance where there is a change to a child's education or educational needs (for example, where parents choose to electively home educate or where a specific and or additional need emerges whilst a child is overseas). Parents need to be aware that schools overseas may not always be able to meet the needs of children with SEND or additional needs. It is therefore crucial that parents who have children with SEND/ additional needs seek advice from DCS at the earliest opportunity by e mailing: [RC-DCS-HQ-OEST@mod.gov.uk](mailto:RC-DCS-HQ-OEST@mod.gov.uk).

**81.283.** SP who are being assigned/transferring to overseas locations are to complete the DCS First Contact form included in the Families Section 'Travel Pack' or provided on request from DCS. Completion of this form enables early contact with DCS and begins the process of educational supportability assessment. MOD civilians transferring overseas are also directed to Civilian HR Policy for Overseas Transfers, which details policy specific to their terms and conditions of Service. DCS provides the following services to Defence families:

a. **MOD Schools.** In overseas locations where the number and age profile of children justify it, and where there is no equivalent/appropriate local provision, the MOD will provide dedicated schools. The role of MOD schools is to provide an educational service to meet the needs of Defence children outside the UK which, as far as possible, conforms in type, scope, and standard to that required by statute in England. Information and points of contact for individual schools is accessed on the [MOD Schools page of GOV.UK](#).

b. **The Overseas Education and Supportability Team.** This team has access to a wide range of educational expertise to provide information, advice and support related to the education of Defence children. This information, advice and support is available to Service families, entitled MOD Civilians, the MOD CofC at all levels, schools, and local authorities. The team can be reached by emailing: [RC-DCS-HQ-OEST@mod.gov.uk](mailto:RC-DCS-HQ-OEST@mod.gov.uk).

c. **Educational Psychology and Advisory Specialists (EPAS).** EPAS are a multi professional team made up of Educational Psychologists, Specialist Advisory Teachers (SEND and Transitions), Speech Therapists, a Nurse Advisor (Public Health) and business support. As experienced senior practitioners with specialist qualifications in professional areas, the EPAS team seeks to apply specialist knowledge to support children and young people, schools, and families overseas, particularly in areas where there are MOD schools but also in the wider Service population. The EPAS team is contacted by emailing: [DCYP-EPAS-GPMailbox \(MULTIUSER\)](mailto:DCYP-EPAS-GPMailbox@mod.gov.uk)

**81.284. Accommodation Adaptation.** The policy for SP with immediate family who have additional needs or disabilities that require accommodation adaptation is set out in Annex C (DIO Adaptation Process Guide) to [JSP 464 \(Tri-Service Accommodation Regulations\)](#). Adaptation to living accommodation can take a considerable time to agree and complete. Therefore, SP are to inform housing authorities of any requirement for adaptation as soon as possible. To determine the provision of suitably adapted accommodation the MOD will assess and consider each case on its merits

**81.285. Unit Welfare Staff.** Unit welfare staff are to ensure that once a supportability requirement has been identified, the SP and their family are aware that the assessment of needs process is complex and may take longer than expected to ensure that an individual's unique circumstances are fully considered. Unit welfare staff are to ensure that SP and their family remain engaged and are made aware of the support available to them.

**81.286. Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) SP.** The support of SP with SpLD can be found in [JSP 898 \(Defence Direction and Guidance on Training, Education and Skills\)](#). Essentially SpLD is a term that is used to describe a range of learning difficulties that are inherent to an individual and which have the potential, to varying degrees, to affect an individual's ability to function effectively within the workplace. A diagnosed SpLD can hinder learning and progress but can be mitigated through appropriate coping mechanisms and other learning support strategies.

**81.287. Isolated Detachments (ISODETS) and Extra Command Areas (ECA).** SP and family with dependent children who have been offered an assignment to an ISODET or ECA have difficult decisions to make regarding the continuing education of their children especially if they have SEND. Given the diverse locations to which some SP are assigned, SCE provision is not always available, and the nature of educational provision will vary enormously. SP should consult the Overseas location guides and engage with the ISODET or ECA administrative support teams to understand the education options available to make an informed decision on whether to utilise schooling in the UK via Continuity of Education Allowance or the school provision in the location.

**81.288. Medical Equipment.** In the UK, special medical equipment for SP's immediate family should be supplied by the Local Health Authorities. Overseas it is the responsibility of the Service medical authorities to ensure the provision of mobility and other aids to SP and their immediate family with additional needs and disabilities. Authority for the purchase of mobility or other aids, when supported by the clinician concerned, will

normally be granted where it can be confirmed that the NHS or LA would have provided them if the person concerned was in the UK.

**81.289. Contracted Community Health and Social Services.** The MOD provides a contracted Community Health and Social Work Service to families serving overseas. This service is made up of health visitors, community midwives and social workers<sup>70</sup> all of whom are professionally qualified. Social Workers provide serving and entitled personnel and their families with a professional, comprehensive, and confidential service relating to children and families, including children in need, children with disabilities and adoption and fostering matters.

**81.290. UK Strategic Command (UKStratCom).** UKStratCom currently holds responsibility for 3 areas in which a bespoke Social Work Service operates: Cyprus, Gibraltar, and the British Forces South Atlantic Islands (BFSAI) - Incorporating Ascension Island and The Falkland Islands:

- a. **Cyprus.** Within the Sovereign Base Areas (SBAs), SSAFA provides the LA Social Work Service and has statutory obligations and authority where Additional Needs supportability is concerned. SSAFA Social Work operates in partnership with other Command HQs; public organisations; the voluntary sector; members of the Services and their families; and the wider MoD community in Cyprus.
- b. **Gibraltar.** The Joint Social Work Service (JSWS) provides a quasi-statutory and non-statutory social work service in Gibraltar. The constituent social work organisations, SSAFA and RNRMW share the lead on providing specialist personal welfare and support. JSWS operates in partnership with the Command HQ, wider community, and government agencies within.
- c. **BFSAI.** SSAFA provides the LA Social Work Service through a designated social worker, located in the Falkland Islands, However, the Falkland Islands Government has statutory obligations and authority in respect of supporting welfare and Additional Needs. SSAFA Social Work operates in partnership with the wider community, local social work teams and Falkland Island governments across BFSAI.

**81.291. – 81.300.** Reserved.

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<sup>70</sup> Provision may vary between locations due to contracting arrangements.

## PART 9 – CASUALTY AND COMPASSIONATE

### Introduction

**81.301.** The Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC) is the single focal point within the MOD for all Casualty and Compassionate cases affecting SP worldwide. Specifically, JCCC is responsible for ensuring that the families of all notifiable casualties are informed as quickly and as sensitively as possible; tasking the appropriate sS Notifying Authority (NA); monitoring any changes in the status of notifiable casualties; and, for all post-death administration. The policy for the management of casualties and the support provided to bereaved families, through the Casualty Notification Officer (CNO) and the Visiting Officer (VO), is laid down in [JSP 751 \(Joint Casualty and Compassionate Policy and Procedures\)](#).

### Duty of Care

**81.302.** The Army has a duty of care to support bereaved families, to assist them in moving on and adjusting to their loss, and to ensure they have a channel of communication for any issues they wish to raise. This support extends beyond the immediate Next of Kin (NOK) to the wider family, and is determined, on a case-by-case basis, by family relationships, notably estranged parents, partners, and girl/boyfriends. It is grounded in the regimental system, but co-ordinated in the first instance through the RPOC structure and overseen by the Bereavement and Aftercare Support (BAS) Team in the Army Personnel Services Group (APSG). JCCC is a critical element in the notification and administration of casualties, but the lead for all aspects of welfare, in respect of families, remains the responsibility of the Army. A JCCC Virtual Contact Card can be downloaded onto smart phones and can be shared with your family and friends. The link to the card can be found at Para 81.308 below.

### Responsibilities

**81.303. RPOC Responsibilities.** Routine management and appointment of CNOs and VOs is delegated to the RPOCs by BAS under the authority of ACSO 3220. . BAS deals directly with JCCC as a single point of contact for Notification of Army personnel in the UK, and liaises closely with the other designated NAs in the UK and overseas. RPOCs are responsible for ensuring that there are adequate numbers of suitable and trained personnel available at short notice at any time of the day or night in their AORs to carry out notification (CNO) and to be appointed as VOs, to support families of SP who have died, are missing or Very Seriously Ill (VSI). Where there is a known shortage of regular units in an RPOC AOR, BAS will co-ordinate the appointment of CNOs and VOs with other RPOCs and if necessary, with other Services. The following practices supplement the guidance and policy contained in [JSP 751](#).

- a. RPOCs must ensure they have set in place robust direction and guidance for their silent hours duty staff.
- b. The appointment of a VO to the family of a VSI SP is not mandated and must be decided on a case-by-case basis, often determined by the respective locations of the Emergency Contact (EC)/ NoK and the casualty. In many cases family support

can be better organised by unit welfare resources, without tasking a trained VO through the NA. RPoCs must monitor all VSI cases, coordinating with BAS and the SP's unit.

c. DILFOR (UK) is a unit responsibility to administer, requesting funding authority from JCCC, unless it is an aero-medevac direct to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH) in Birmingham, where authority for the travel of families has been delegated to Royal College of Defence Medicine (Patient Support Services). As a rule, VOs should be appointed for VSI cases, and CNO-trained Escorting Officers (EO) for all other notifiable casualties. DILFOR (Overseas) will always be managed by JCCC in conjunction with the unit. [JSP 751, Vol 1, Chapter 6](#) contains the detail.

d. Where the civilian police notify the EC/NoK in cases of death, it is imperative that a military representative visits the family as soon as possible afterwards, to prevent the family feeling abandoned or neglected. As CNOs are on a roster at one-hour NTM, it will often be easier to deploy a CNO, as a VO might not be immediately available. **RPoCs must be alert to this issue.**

**81.304. Bereavement and Aftercare Support (BAS).** email: [APSG-PersSvc-BAS-Group@mod.gov.uk](mailto:APSG-PersSvc-BAS-Group@mod.gov.uk). BAS is responsible for the three key functions: Notification, Aftercare and Training. Its specific functions and tasks are as follows:

- a. Act as the primary Army NA for the UK, ROI, Nepal, and Brunei.
- b. Direct, oversee and co-ordinate with the RPoCs the appointment and deployment of all CNOs and VOs.
- c. Organise and deliver the training of CNOs and VOs as required.
- d. Ensure that the RPoCs maintain rosters of adequate numbers of trained CNOs and VOs.
- e. Monitor and support, as necessary, CNOs and VOs relating to Army SP in other NAs including RN, RAF, DSF, BFC, Stratcom, EJSU, High Commissions and Embassies.
- f. Ensure that the Army Duty Officer (ADO) is supported by BAS staff during silent hours.
- g. Provide an enduring focus for all bereaved families, working with the RPoCs and VOs as necessary, leading as required in high profile and/or sensitive cases.
- h. Co-ordinate and control the passage of information to families for all inquiries and investigations, working with Defence Inquest Unit (DIU), DSA, SI Branch and PM(A). Facilitate the attendance of families at inquests, liaising with the DIU.
- i. Provide advice to NAs, RPoCs, VOs and units when required.
- j. Co-ordinate the stand-down of VOs.



## Reporting, Notification, and KINFORMING

**81.305. Casualty Reporting.** Regardless of how JCCC is initially informed of a notifiable casualty (eg by police, hospital, NoK, overseas G1/J1 Branch, BATUS, BATUK, AT or the unit), it is the SP's current unit which is responsible for completing the NOTICAS and sending it to JCCC in accordance with [JSP 751 Vols 1 and 2, Ch 2](#). If possible, this should be preceded by a warning order phone call, but units must realise that INCREPS do not replace the need for a NOTICAS, and JCCC will not initiate the notification process without a hard copy. Having been informed of a notifiable casualty, JCCC will direct the appropriate NA to stand up a CNO, and VO if necessary. Units are also responsible for sending updates and progress reports for all listed casualties.

**81.306. Notification and KINFORMING.** JCCC co-ordinate notification, and once appointed, the CNO must ring JCCC for an update on the situation, and then again before they knock on the door. For dead, missing, VSI and Seriously Injured (SI) casualties, the CNO is to be accompanied by an assistant (ACNO). Notification is to be carried out on a 24/7 basis, with a target time of three hours from when the CNO is appointed, noting that each case will be dependent on individual circumstances. There are several variables depending on the circumstances:

- a. As a default setting smart civilian clothes should be worn, so as not to draw undue attention to the situation.
- b. Notification should only be delayed if the EC or NoK cannot be located, in which case the CNO should discuss the matter with JCCC.
- c. When the civvy police carry out Notification, there is likely to be some delay if responsibility must be passed to a different Constabulary.
- d. In cases where it is necessary to deploy several CNOs, either resulting from family dynamics (eg for split families or estranged parents), or where more than one family is involved in an incident, the NA is responsible for co-ordinating their deployment in conjunction with JCCC and the RPOCs.
- e. In exceptional circumstance, and only as directed by JCCC, such as where the EC is not in the vicinity of the location, or is urgently needed at the bedside, then notification may be made by telephone. The NA may consider that notification of Ill or UL cases can be conducted over the telephone.
- f. It is not appropriate to conduct any casualty notification via a smart doorbell, and the CNO must find an alternative way such as arranging to meet the EC/NOK elsewhere, if they are not physically at the address. If this is not possible, the CNO is to seek guidance and authority from JCCC to notify by other means i.e. telephone.

**81.307. Unit Notification.** Units will have to undertake notification themselves when the incident occurs in barracks or locally, and the EC/NoK lives in SFA or nearby. When this happens JCCC should be informed immediately, with the NOTICAS annotated as KINFORMED. JCCC will then inform the NA, and the RPOC will nominate a VO if the unit

has not already done so. In cases of death, it is better if notification can be undertaken by a different unit than the deceased's, as this causes less emotional trauma.

## Personnel and Family Briefs

**81.308.** JCCC have developed two briefs which cover Service Personnel and Families. They can be found at this link, which also contains a link the JCCC Virtual Contact Card: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/joint-casualty-and-compassionate-centre-jccc#families-and-loved-ones>

- a. **SP Brief.** Designed to give SP confidence that there is a dedicated organisation responsible for the immediate management of casualties and compassionate cases 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. It includes unit responsibilities in passing information to JCCC regarding notifiable casualties and compassionate cases.
- b. **Families Brief.** Designed to explain to families the role undertaken by JCCC, when incidents occur involving SP or their families.

These briefs are also available on DVD and can be obtained by unit welfare staff from: [DBS-JCCC-OIC@mod.gov.uk](mailto:DBS-JCCC-OIC@mod.gov.uk) or 01452 519951 or [dbs-jcccgrouppmailbox@mod.gov.uk](mailto:dbs-jcccgrouppmailbox@mod.gov.uk) and postal address: JCCC, Innsworth House, Imjin Barracks, Gloucester, GL3 1HW.

## Selection, Appointment and Training of CNO, ACNO, EO and VO

**81.309.** SP involved in the Cas & Comp process should be:

- a. Suitably qualified through age and experience, both of life and the Army. A mature, patient, and sympathetic listener who has been assessed as suitable by their CoC, with no immediate personal or emotional problems.
- b. The CNO should not be the UWO or Padre or a personal acquaintance of the casualty.
- c. Be within not more than 90 minutes' drive of the EC/NoK.
- d. On rosters at one-hour Notice to Move (NTM).

**81.310. CNO.** CNOs should be able to carry out notification as quickly, accurately, and compassionately as possible, within a maximum of three hours of being stood up. RPoCS should ensure that CNOs have a vehicle allocated, which is easily accessible for immediate use. The length of the notification visit cannot be determined but is likely to be between 30 and 90 minutes. Selection criteria for CNOs are:

- a. Mandatory attendance on the one-day CNO training course.
- c. Should normally be a Major, Captain or Warrant Officer. Younger and more junior ranks may struggle and are probably better suited to being an ACNO. SNCOs (SSgts or Sgts) may be suitable, but careful selection is essential.

**81.311. ACNO.** The CNO must be accompanied by an Assistant. CNOs must personally identify suitable ACNOs to avoid delay in deploying. ACNOs can remain with the EC/NoK after notification, if necessary, take notes and generally assist in supporting both the CNO and the family. Selection criteria for the ACNO are:

- a. Must have completed the one-day CNO course.
- b. Experience has indicated that diversity in the team is sought so that both the CNO and ACNO complement each other.
- c. Minimum rank should be full Corporal, providing the individual has the necessary maturity, sensitivity, and awareness.
- d. Civil Servants may act as ACNOs providing they are volunteers, have completed the one-day CNO course and have their LM's approval. They should only be appointed during their normal working hours.

**81.312. EO.** The term EO is used only for accompanying families of SI, III and UL (Unlisted) Aeromed casualties to QEH, or any other hospital to which they may be taken. Supporting families of casualties admitted to other hospitals in the UK is normally the responsibility of the soldier's unit. EOs must have completed the 1-day CNO training.

**81.313. VO.** Selection of the VO is critical to the Army's duty of care, they do not have to be of the same cap badge, despite some strongly held tribal beliefs. The criteria below are more important and must be adhered to:

- a. Must have completed the 3-day VO training package.
- b. Should normally be a Major, Captain, WO, or SSgt. Some Sgt and Young Officers will be suitable, if specially selected, although experience shows that most are not.
- c. The VO must be fully briefed on the personal details and circumstances of the Service casualty by the RPOC casualty staff, as well as getting an update from JCCC before the first visit. The CNO must also brief the VO on the family's circumstances and any questions they might have. Ideally this should be a face-to-face meeting, but depending on geography, might have to be by telephone.
- d. It is not possible provide definitive policy on whether it is appropriate for the CNO to introduce the VO to the EC/NoK because personal experiences and opinions differ. There can therefore be no black and white guidance as every family is different, and every case must be judged on its own merits. The decision must lie with the CNO, who is able to assess whether their association with the VO is likely to have an adverse effect on the VO's relationship with the family.
- e. The VO's proximity to the EC/NoK is a more important consideration than being from the same cap badge as the casualty. It is also better if the VO is not a close family friend, as their own grief is likely to impede their effectiveness.

- f. Have at least six months to serve until the next posting.
- g. VOs should not be tasked to look after two separate families at the same time unless both are related to the deceased and get on together.
- h. Once a VO has officially ended formal contact with a bereaved family, there should be at least nine months separation before another VO assignment.

**81.314. Training.** It is mandatory that CNOs and VOs complete the respective training before being appointed, to be professional in carrying out the duty.

a. **CNO Training.** This is a one-day course conducted at regional level by the RPoC or BAS. The following structure has been developed by BAS to achieve consistency:

- (1) **Introduction.** What the course is all about, to include: content, aims and objectives, target audience.
- (2) **Understanding the Process.** Notification: Who, What, When and How, followed by the role and responsibilities of the key players. This includes JCCC, NA, Bde, Army Inquiries and Aftercare Support Cell (AIASC) and Pers Ops.
- (3) **The Notification Visit.** Actions before, during and after. This includes preparation, getting in the door, breaking the news, gathering information, reactions, media, and reporting.
- (4) **DILFOR and Accompanying Families to QEHB.** This covers the procedures and organisation of supporting the patient group at RCDM and is specifically related to Aeromedevac.
- (5) **Soft Skills.** Loss and bereavement, family reactions and relationships, looking after yourself. This is a very much shortened version of the VO course below and is expanded for overseas detachments and training establishments.

b. **VO Training.** This is a 3-day course run monthly by BAS at the The HawkHills Training and Conference Centre, Easingwold, York, YO61 3EG. This is the Government Emergency Planning College (EPC) run by the Cabinet Office and managed by Serco, with additional courses run by request in Cyprus, Scotland, NI, and other isolated Garrisons. The VO training package is designed to provide potential VOs with a comprehensive overview and understanding of the key issues, which will confront them, when dealing with bereaved families. It is not designed to turn them into bereavement counsellors, nor does it attempt to cover the detail of all the various problems which the families might have, but it does show where the answers can be found. It covers casualty administration, VO duties and responsibilities, the difficulties they will face, the Inquiry and investigation process, financial issues, and an overview of the characteristics of grief and bereavement. Completion of the CNO course is a mandatory requirement prior to attendance. The VO course consists of:

- (1) **Introduction.** What the course is all about, and includes content, aims and objectives.
- (2) **Understanding the Process.** Notification and Reporting – Who, What, When and How, followed by the role and responsibilities of the key players. This includes JCCC, NA, BAS and the RPoCs.
- (3) **Role and Responsibilities of the VO.** First visits, family dynamics, passage of information, media, VWS, Veterans UK, Padres and AWS.
- (4) **Role Play.** With professional actors.
- (5) **Practical Matters.** Repatriations, funerals, return of personal effects, Coroners & Inquests, accompanying families to RCDM.
- (6) **Soft Skills.** Voice of experience, the first meeting and listening skills, loss and bereavement, the grieving family, coping with stress and looking after yourself.

c. **Qualifications and Competencies.** Qualification for CNO and VO is lifed for four years. Competencies are entered on to JPA centrally by BAS or the relevant RPoC. After three years, individuals should re-qualify as a CNO by attending another course, whilst for VOs there is a day's refresher course which will be run regionally by the BAS team, together with the RPoC. The only exception being if individuals have carried out the appointment within the past two years prior to the competence end date.

## Management of the CNO and VO

**81.315. CNO and VO Numbers and Availability.** RPoCs are responsible for ensuring there are sufficient numbers of trained CNOs and VOs in Brigade and Garrison areas, in accordance with the quotas recommended in the [Compendium of Mandated Course Trained Personnel within an Army Unit](#). Brigades and Garrisons are expected to be able to deploy a CNO and ACNO within one hour of being informed, to achieve KINFORMING within three hours of being warned off by JCCC. The target time for the deployment of a VO should be between six and ten hours after notification, although the CNO should be consulted over the family's wishes, as to when the VO should make their first visit. This is considerably shorter than the 24 hours given in [JSP 751](#), which should be treated as an absolute maximum in exceptional circumstances.

**81.316. Corps and Regimental HQs.** Responsibility for the welfare of Army casualties and bereaved families is predicated on the 'Regimental System' as a matter of policy. However, geographic constraints often prevent an officer of the same cap badge being appointed as the VO, and consequently the responsibility for their provision has been centralised through the regional CoC and JCCC. It is, therefore, incumbent on VOs of a different cap badge to the deceased, to liaise with Regiments/Battalions/Corps, or their rear parties/RoGs, over repatriations and funerals, and to co-ordinate any contact and communication from them to the family. In such circumstances the unit or the rear

party/RoG should nominate a Liaison Officer, which in most cases will be the UWO. The following points are relevant to the appointment of VOs:

- a. If Regiments/Corps/RHQs wish to provide their own cap badged officers as the VO, they should let the relevant RPoC know, and ensure that the individual is trained and within not more than a 90-minute drive.
- b. Regimental/Corps Association members are not suitable as CNOs or VOs, but may be used as assistants to VOs, providing they have completed the one-day CNO course at minimum, and are in close contact with the VO.
- c. There are likely to be several occasions where public funds cannot be used in support of bereaved families, and Association funds must be used; such as additional transport for family to funerals, incidental expenses including alcohol, when accommodation is booked under DILFOR, and Travel and Subsistence for cathartic events. In such circumstances the VO must liaise with the deceased's unit.

**81.317. Tenure of the VO.** Even though there is no specified tenure for the appointment of a VO, it is Army policy that the target is six to nine months, and VOs should use their monthly reports to assess progress on how the family is adjusting, and what support they need. Every bereaved family has different needs, and adjusts to their new circumstances in different ways, but there is always a danger that some become over-dependent on the support which the VO provides, thereby hindering their ability to move on. The decision, therefore, to stand the VO down must be judged against family dynamics and the complexities and sensitivities of the case, not slavishly waiting until the conclusion of the inquest. BAS will co-ordinate the withdrawal of the VO with the RPoC, confirming the decision in writing to the family and the appropriate Corps or Regimental HQ. If the VO has stood down before the inquest, BAS will arrange for a unit representative to attend.

**81.318. Supporting the VO.** VOs are inevitably subjected to pressures and stress from the family they are supporting, their own family and their regular job. They therefore need support themselves, and it is the CO's responsibility to ensure that their commitment is properly recognised, and that they receive both emotional and practical assistance. In the first 6 to 8 weeks, a VO cannot be expected to perform all the functions of their regular job, as well as support a bereaved family. As time goes on, they will be able to disengage more and more:

- a. COs must satisfy themselves that a VO has delegated as many of their responsibilities as practical to subordinates.
- b. COs must ensure that the demands on a VO are made clear in OJARs and SJARs, so that their careers do not suffer.
- c. The CoC must ensure that a VO provides updates on their work with the family, so that the emotional burden can be shared, and assistance provided where necessary.
- d. The AWS and/or Padre should be asked to get involved if the stresses become too apparent.

- e. NAs should ensure that RPOCs run formal debrief/decompression workshops, where CNOs and VOs can exchange experiences in a relaxed environment.

**81.319. Debrief/Decompression Workshops.** All VOs, and CNOs who have been appointed in cases of death or VSI (injury) must attend a two-day workshop. Details can be found in [2024DIN07-051](#), but the SO3 Training in BAS will write to all recent VOs and CNOs with course invitations copying in unit Adjutants. This invitation will be sent out for three successive courses after which a statement from the individuals OC will be required for non-attendance.

**81.320. Unit Support to Bereaved Families.** It is important that VOs work with unit welfare staffs in supporting bereaved families, but in the immediate aftermath of a fatality or serious injury, when a VO has been appointed, all contact with the family, particularly from the SP's parent unit, **must** go through the VO. This will ensure that the family is not overwhelmed by a myriad of well-motivated individuals, all with their own agenda.

**81.321. - 81.340.** Reserved.

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## PART 10 – TRANSITIONAL WELFARE SUPPORT

### Welfare Support to those Leaving the Army

**81.341.** [JSP 100 \(Defence Holistic Transition Policy\)](#) is the source policy document for welfare support to those leaving the Army, including Early Service Leavers, those identified as vulnerable and those medically discharged with severe physical or mental disablement. [JSP 100](#) will provide full details of the structure and support provided by the DTS and VWS.

**81.342.** SP being discharged prematurely from the Army often leave at extremely short notice without having had the opportunity to plan their transition to civilian life. This is especially true for those being compulsorily discharged and those being demobilised post operations. Consequently, both the individuals being discharged, and their families could be more vulnerable to a range of social and welfare difficulties which, if left unattended, could lead to: homelessness or hostel living; indebtedness; relationship difficulties; drink/drug dependencies; unemployment or job transience; crime; or gambling addiction.

**81.343.** The Army has a duty to these SP, and it must ensure that all Vulnerable (VSL)<sup>71</sup> and Early Service Leavers (ESL) are identified prior to discharge/demobilisation and made aware of support available to them. COs are to ensure that all VSL and ESL have a one-to-one transition interview prior to their discharge, to explore/identify potential vulnerability and enable details to be passed to DTS with the completion of the Defence Transition Referral Protocol Form 1 (DTRP1) for post discharge support. This referral should be made at the earliest opportunity. The interview is to be conducted by the UWO or UWWO, using HARDFACTS as a template<sup>72</sup>.

**81.344.** The Army makes specific provisions for welfare support to those SP who are medically discharged with severe physical/mental disablement. The aim of this work is:

- a. To identify, register and contact those SP deemed to be most vulnerable due to their severe disablement and imminent medical discharge.
- b. Where transitional support needs are identified, make a referral via DTRP1 for support from VWS/DTS through the period of transition and beyond.
- c. For the VWS to maintain contact with the medically discharged veteran for at least 24 months beyond the discharge date, and further if required.

**81.345. Service Leavers.** Support from DTS, VWS and IPC4V is summarised above. Where needs are identified, Service leavers should be referred to VWS or DTS via DTRP1 which is available via Help for service leavers from Defence Transition Services - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)). Service leavers and/or their families are also able to self-refer for support using a DTRP2 form available at the same website. Referrals should be made as soon as a need is identified to allow DTS or VWS to work together with the chain of command and

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<sup>71</sup> It is essential that Units are aware that any individual on the VRM register at time of discharge is classed as a Vulnerable Service Leaver (VSL) and the necessary DTRP that apply to ESLs and SILs are followed.

<sup>72</sup> Using the HARDFACTS template as explained in AGAI 99 Command and Care of Wounded Injured and Sick personnel.

in-service welfare teams to support through discharge. Referrals will be triaged internally to the most appropriate team for support. Those referred will receive holistic support, guiding and facilitating access to the most appropriate services to address their needs. Full details, including guidance on making a referral, categories of need and levels of ongoing contact and support beyond discharge provided by each team, are available in [JSP100](#) Chapter 2. For Non-UK SP, units must also contact RC Non-UK Support to advice on any impacts to the service leavers immigration status, or that of their family subject to UK immigration control.

**81.346.** In addition to the provision for those SP leaving the service prematurely, all Army Service leavers must be signposted to the Transition Information Sheets on the [Army Website](#).

**81.347 - 81.400.** Reserved.