

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

Army Reserve: Structure and basing

Secretary of State for Defence (The Rt Hon Philip Hammond MP): The Government has today published a White Paper on Reserve Forces, “Reserves in the Future Force 2020: Valuable and Valued”. The White Paper sets out our vision for the future of the Reserve Forces following the consultation I launched last October, and the detail of how we will make Reserve Service more attractive to individual reservists, their families and their employers. It also confirms our intention to change the name of the Territorial Army to the Army Reserve.

In order to deliver our vision for the Reserves as part of the “Whole Force”, it is necessary to make some changes to the Reserve structure and, in some cases, the basing lay-down. While the Maritime Reserves and Royal Auxiliary Air Force structures will see only minimal changes, the Army has had to undertake a fundamental re-design of its Reserve force structure to deliver the reserve component of the integrated Army 2020.

Against the backdrop of the revised offer to the Reserve Forces set out in the White Paper, the Army has developed a plan for the structure and basing of the Army Reserve, consistent with the recommendations of the Independent Commission’s review of the UK’s Reserve Forces¹ led by General Sir Nicholas Houghton, Vice Chief of the Defence Staff, in 2011. It follows the July 2012 and March 2013 announcements on Regular Army structure and basing, and completes the announcements on the Army 2020 design. The plan provides clarification on the future purpose, roles and locations of Army Reserve units and, in doing so, generates the level of certainty needed to support the major recruiting drive we are undertaking to expand the Army Reserve. The restructuring will have impact across the United Kingdom and to assist right Hon. and Hon. Members in understanding the effect of these changes on their constituencies, documents setting out the detail have been placed in the Library of the House.

To achieve the Future Force 2020 design of a fully integrated, trained Army of 112,000, comprising around 82,000 regular personnel and around 30,000 reservists, with an additional 8,000 reservists in training, the Army Reserve will need to be restructured. The Territorial Army’s current structure was put in place in 2007 and based on some 36,500 posts. It was never fully resourced or manned,

¹ Future Reserves 2020. The Independent Commission to Review the United Kingdom’s Reserve Forces. London, July 2011.

it is no longer consistent with Defence policy, and it would not fulfil the roles and capabilities required of the Army Reserve under Army 2020.

We will increase the trained strength of the Army Reserve from about 19,000 to 30,000, but at the same time, we will decrease the number of posts in the structure to match the 30,000 target – delivering a fully manned force structure, for the first time in many years.

The revised Army Reserve structure of around 30,000 will no longer exist simply to supplement the Regular Army in times of national conflict but, as part of an integrated whole force, will be ready and able to deploy routinely at sub-unit level, and in some circumstances, as formed units. To deliver this effect, the Regular Army and the Army Reserve will, for the first time outside of the two world wars, be fully integrated within a single chain of command. Army Reserve units, like their Regular counterparts, will be distributed in varying proportions across the adaptable force brigades, the specialist brigades forming force troops and, to a lesser extent, the reaction force brigades. Most importantly, this structure will be properly resourced both in terms of equipment and training and, as spelled out in the White Paper, will be enabled by Terms and Conditions of Service more relevant to the future requirements of Reserve service.

This change is already underway, and the last 15 months have seen significant investment in personal and unit equipment, in the vehicle training fleet, and in UK and overseas training exercises for formed Reserve sub-units.

To ensure that formed Reserve units and sub-units can operate effectively alongside their Regular counterparts, Regular and Reserve units will be formally paired. Pairing will optimise the use of training and equipment resources, increase the capability of the integrated force, and will ensure force elements are available at appropriate readiness to deliver the Army's outputs to Defence. While the majority of Army Reserve units will be at lower readiness than Regular units, the investment planned over the coming years will broadly align the equipment levels and training in Reserve units to those of Regular units.

Decisions on how to re-balance the Army Reserve structure have been based on military judgement taking account of the capabilities required from the Reserves in the integrated Army, the need to achieve full manning by 2018, and the greater efficiencies in training and equipment resulting from formal pairing between Regular and Reserve units. While some of the changes may be unwelcome by the units affected by them, they are necessary to deliver the effective, modern and integrated

Army Reserve of the future and to enable us to deliver on our commitment to reservists of better training, better equipment and a fully integrated role.

These changes will involve the re-rolling of some units, the raising of new units and the withdrawal of others from the Army Order of Battle. The capabilities which will make up the future Army Reserve will be different from today, and this change will also be reflected in the number of units and sub-units held under each cap-badge. The current Territorial Army structure supports 71 major units; overall it will reduce to 68 major units in the future structure:-

Nine major units will be withdrawn, and their sub-units will either be withdrawn, re-rolled or re-subordinated to another unit in the Army Reserve's Order of Battle. They are: 100 (Yeomanry) Regiment Royal Artillery; 72 and 73 Engineer Regiments; 38 Signal Regiment; and from the Royal Logistic Corps 88 Postal and Courier Regiment; 160 Transport Regiment; 165 Port Regiment; 166 Supply Regiment and 168 Pioneer Regiment.

A further three major units will be re-rolled within the Royal Logistic Corps: 152 Transport Regiment will become 152 Fuel Support Regiment, 155 Transport Regiment will become 165 Port and Enabling Regiment, and 156 Transport Regiment will become 156 Supply Regiment.

Six new major units will be created: in the Corps of Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, 101 Battalion, 104 Battalion, 105 Battalion and 106 Battalion, and in the Military Intelligence Corps, 6 Military Intelligence Battalion and 7 Military Intelligence Battalion. A number of existing sub-units will either be re-rolled or re-subordinated to these new units.

Decisions on withdrawal, re-rolling or re-subordination of a sub-unit are completely separate from those regarding the sites each currently occupies, which are addressed later in this statement.

Additionally, there will be changes to structures at minor unit and sub-unit levels. Key details of these changes are contained in the documents that have been placed in the Library of the House.

With the exception of the Royal Mercian and Lancastrian Yeomanry, none of these decisions involves a cap-badge change. The Regimental HQ of the Royal Mercian and Lancastrian Yeomanry will move to Edinburgh where it will be closer to its paired Regular unit, The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards, which will be based at Leuchars. It will assume command of existing Yeomanry sub-units across Scotland and Northern Ireland. To better reflect its new geographical

focus, it is planned to re-name this Headquarters; 'The Scottish and North Irish Yeomanry'. A, C and D Squadrons of the RMLY will remain in their current geographical locations (respectively Dudley, Chester and Wigan), but will come under command of other Yeomanry regiment headquarters, improving their ability to train effectively, and draw on support from their formal pairing with Regular units; a troop will also remain in Telford, which will be subordinated to A Squadron in Dudley. We expect that those Squadrons will carry the RMLY cap-badge preserving it for the future, in addition to the antecedents they currently carry.

We will implement this structural re-balancing in a phased manner, and complete it by 2016, in order to ensure that those capabilities that the Army Reserve must deliver in the earliest phases of future operations, are available from 2017.

This restructuring will require changes to the current basing lay-down of the Army Reserve. The Army has taken the opportunity to review the lay-down not only to reflect the structural changes, but also to address the need to optimise recruitment and to facilitate effective training in the future.

The Territorial Army currently occupies 334 individual sites around the United Kingdom, including a number of locations with small detachments of fewer than 30 personnel – the approximate size of an infantry platoon. Some of these sites are seriously under-recruited. To maximise the potential for future recruitment, and particularly to capitalise on existing areas of specialist skills in the national workforce, the Army has determined that it should increase and rationalise the presence of the Army Reserve in urban areas, by merging small, and/or poorly recruited sub-units, into larger sites already occupied by other units in local or neighbouring communities. As well as improving recruitment opportunities the greater concentration of Reserve units in fewer locations, and their increased proximity to their paired Regular units, will enable more effective use to be made of manpower, infrastructure and equipment. As part of this exercise, the Army Reserve will open or re-open nine additional Reserve sites.

Because the Army will be delivering a focussed recruiting drive over the next couple of years, we have decided to retain a significant number of small and under-recruited sites, where long term viability is considered possible. The units on those sites will be challenged to recruit up to strength in the years ahead. From 2016, the Army's Regional Chain of Command will gradually rationalise and consolidate any sites which remain persistently and seriously under-recruited and/or unable to generate effective Army capability.

Overall, the changes being announced today will result in the net vacation of 26 Army Reserve sites across the United Kingdom in the period up to 2016. The Army Reserve's future lay-down will maintain the broad pattern of activity in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and England.

Further work will be undertaken to better define how those sites being vacated by the Army Reserve will be managed in the future and how retained sites will be improved and expanded where they are required to accommodate larger numbers following consolidation of Army Reserve units. We expect to invest around £80 million in improvements and expansion across the Army Reserve estate, as part of a £120 million overall investment in Reserve Estate.

Where Cadets are co-located on Army Reserve sites for which there is no longer a Defence requirement, we will pursue re-provision of facilities for the cadet unit to ensure that a local cadet presence is maintained.

Overall the structural changes to the Army Reserve and the changes to lay-down set out above will deliver a more efficient and effective structure which will allow the Army Reserve to develop in full its planned role in Army 2020. This announcement gives certainty to the Army Reserve as it embarks upon the twin challenges of recruiting and training to grow to a fully manned and fully trained establishment of 30,000 and restructuring the force to deliver the outputs required of it under Army 2020.