

ARMED FORCES CONTINUOUS ATTITUDE SURVEYS

2008 MAIN RESULTS



Deputy Chief of Defence Staff
Personnel

1 June 2009

ARMED FORCES CONTINUOUS ATTITUDE SURVEY**2008 RESULTS****FOREWORD BY DCDS(Pers)**

The ability to monitor and understand the attitudes and experiences of Service personnel is a high priority for the Department. One of our main methods of doing this is the Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey (AFCAS) which is used to collect information on the attitudes, opinions and circumstances of serving personnel. The findings of the survey enable policy staff to be informed of the current attitudes of personnel, allowing them to take necessary action in a timely manner.

This is the main report for the 2008 AFCAS which was conducted during the Spring and Autumn across all the Services. In terms of the major influences during this period, operational commitments continued at a high level with no indication of any immediate respite despite the anticipation of a draw-down in Iraq; the responses must also be viewed against the context of the emerging down-turn in the economic climate that was emerging at the time.

The AFCAS provides a consistent method of collecting information from Service personnel. As this is the second AFCAS some trend analysis has been possible, and this capability will grow in significance and utility as AFCAS matures; however, for now, trends have only been analysed where they can be shown to be statistically significant. Results are reported separately for Officers and for Other Ranks to reflect the often considerable differences between their roles, experiences and Terms and Conditions of Service (TACOS) and this report also identifies where statistically significant differences in AFCAS responses indicated different patterns of attitudes and opinions between Services. Details of the key findings can be found in the Executive Summary which provides the information on the similarities and differences across the Services and between ranks.

**DCDS(Pers)**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- i. This report presents the results from the second (2008) Tri-Service Continuous Attitude Survey of Serving Personnel – the Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey (AFCAS). It should be noted that although questions in the AFCAS are broadly similar to those asked in the previous single-Service Continuous Attitude Surveys (CASs), the majority of the results obtained by AFCAS and the CASs are not directly comparable due to the different sampling and analysis methods used, and the different contexts within which questions were asked.
- ii. In total just under 10,500 usable responses were received and analysed for AFCAS 2008. The overall response rate was 32% which is in line with last years survey and other paper based survey of military personnel.
- iii. The results from the 2008 AFCAS are compared with those of the 2007 survey. The majority of questions use a five point scale to grade responses (e.g. Very satisfied, Satisfied, Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, Dissatisfied, Very dissatisfied). It should be remembered that the selection of ‘Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied’ means just that, and should be read as a neutral response rather than as an indication of dissatisfaction, for example.

Data presentation

- iv. In this report data are presented by individual Service (RN, RM, Army and RAF) as well as in total. Due to differences in Terms and Conditions of Service, ethos and culture between the Services it may not always be valid draw conclusions from aggregated UK Armed Forces figures.
- v. A summary of the main results of the survey is given below under the section headings used in the questionnaire.

Pay and allowances

- vi. Opinions of basic pay amongst the 2008 AFCAS respondents did not differ significantly from those of their 2007 counterparts. For Officers there was prevailing satisfaction with basic pay but opinion was divided amongst Other Ranks (ORs).

The majority of the 2008 AFCAS respondents disagreed that the 14% X-Factor compensated for Service lifestyle, working conditions and expectations, although 24% of Officers and 15% of ORs did consider that it was sufficient compensation. In 2008 the amount of X-Factor paid increased by 1 percentage point since the 2007 survey took place and the overall proportion considering it sufficient also increased.

Just over a quarter of respondents were satisfied with Specialist Pay and around a quarter were dissatisfied.

The majority of 2008 AFCAS respondents gave positive responses regarding their pension benefits.

Opinions of allowances amongst the 2008 AFCAS respondents were divided with around a third satisfied, a third dissatisfied and a third neutral.

Just over half of all respondents were satisfied with access to JPA, whilst around a third of respondents were satisfied with their ability to do all the admin tasks required on JPA. Compared with the 2007 AFCAS there had been a significant increase in satisfaction with both access to JPA and ability to do all the admin tasks required.

Aspects of Service life

vii. About half of personnel were satisfied with Service life. Satisfaction had improved amongst RN personnel and amongst Soldiers. Three-fifths of personnel who had joined within the last five years found that Service life was the same or better than they expected when they joined. Over 40% of personnel reported their morale as high compared to less than a quarter reporting it as low. Morale had improved amongst RN and RAF Officers and amongst Soldiers. Reports of own morale were more positive than reports of service morale, as is consistently found in surveys of UK military personnel.

Overall team working was reported positively by more than three quarters of respondents. The RM were the most positive regarding how well their team get on with each other, and have confidence in each other. The RM and RAF were most positive with regards to pulling together to complete tasks, and having a shared understanding of the tasks that must be done.

Commitment to the Service varied. Pride, wanting to make a positive contribution and willingness to put themselves out were reported very positively (over 70% positive). Approximately half were reluctant to leave, would recommend joining the Service to others and would miss the benefits if they left. However, less than a third felt valued. In general, responses to the commitment items were the most positive amongst RM and Army personnel. In comparison with last year the responses for Ratings, Soldiers and Airmen were more positive.

Over two-thirds considered the military discipline system to be fair.

Ethos and values were reported positively by about three-quarters of personnel. Responses were the most positive amongst RM and Army. The Soldiers were more positive than in 2007.

Over half of personnel were satisfied with their job in general, the sense of achievement that they get from their work, the amount of responsibility they have, the challenge in their job, and the extent to which they can use their abilities. Less than half were satisfied with their workload and the variety in their work. Just over half of personnel reported their workload as about right. Officers were less positive than ORs about their workload. More Officers than

ORs marked it as too high. In comparison with 2007 more Army Officers reported their workload as too high.

Less than half of respondents were satisfied with the standard of their personal equipment and less than a third were satisfied with the standard and amount of major equipment. Comparisons cannot be made with 2007 due to changes in the wording of these questions.

Operational tours/deployment and assignments

viii. Over three-quarters of respondents had undertaken an operational tour/deployment within the last three to four years. Around half of respondents were given 11 weeks notice or more of the operational tour/deployment and the more notice they were given the more satisfied they were with the notice period.

Around two thirds of respondents were satisfied with the pre-operational tour/deployment training they had received but less than half of RM ORs were satisfied. Less than half of the respondents were satisfied with the support they received when they returned from operational tour/deployment.

Just over half of the respondents felt the frequency of operational tours/deployments was about right and a third felt they were too often. RM Officers and ORs were more likely to say that they are too often, when compared with the findings in 2007.

Over three quarters of respondents felt that the length of operational tours/deployments was about right.

In general Officers received more notice of their next assignment than ORs did. In general respondents were satisfied with the notice they were given but those who were given the most notice were the most satisfied. Officers were more likely to agree than ORs that their views are taken into account when assignments are planned.

Around half of Officers and ORs had been away from home in the last year for between one and six months. ORs were more likely to be dissatisfied with time spent away from home than Officers were. For short periods away from home (up to three months) dissatisfaction was fairly low at less than 10% but increased to 61% for absences of nine to twelve months.

Leadership

ix. The majority of personnel respected their senior leaders, but less than half felt that the senior leaders kept them informed of issues that affected them. Approximately a quarter considered that their senior leaders understood and represented their interests, inspired them, and were keen to get their views on key decisions. In these instances a third responded neutrally. Responses were more positive amongst Officers than ORs. Responses for

RM ORs had on some issues been more negative than in 2007. Amongst Soldiers and Airmen the responses tended to be more positive than 2007. Overall approximately 60-70% responded positively regarding their immediate superior on issues including support in their job, setting a positive example, giving them feedback on their performance and being supportive over work/life balance issues. Responses were mostly more positive for Officers than for ORs. The responses for Ratings, Soldiers and Airmen were generally more positive than in 2007.

Career plans and personal development

x. Retention intentions: 63% of Officers planned to stay at least until the end of their current engagement, including the 30% who were planning to stay as long as they could; this latter figure was an increase of 4 percentage points over the 2007 proportion. For ORs the corresponding proportions were 61% and 35%, with the latter figure being 6 percentage points greater than in 2007.

Factors influencing retention: for each of Officers and ORs, 'Pension' was the factor with the highest proportion of personnel rating it as an influence to stay in. 'Healthcare provision' also received a high proportion of retention-positive ratings. Career and development opportunities were also frequently rated by both groups as influences to remain in the Services. 'Excitement', 'Job satisfaction' and 'Continuity of Education Allowance' had stronger retention-positive influences for Officers than for ORs, whilst 'Financial Retention Incentives' were more retention-positive for ORs than for Officers.

Where influences to leave the Service were concerned, the same factor was the most influential for Officers and for ORs: 'Impact of (Service) life on family and personal life'. Also frequently rated as influential for both groups were 'Effect of operational commitment and stretch', 'Frequency of operational tours/deployments', and 'Service accommodation'. 'Spouse/partner's career' and 'Opportunities outside the (Service)' were relatively more influential for Officers than for ORs, whilst 'Pay' and 'Management in my unit' were more influential for ORs than for Officers.

There was a marked increase in the responses to three retention influences between 2007 and 2008: 'Opportunities outside the Service', 'Amount of pay' and 'Amount of allowances'. The former was less retention negative and the latter were more retention positive. This finding was consistent with the deepening economic recession at the time of the 2008 survey affecting perceptions of the security and benefits of civilian employment; also the 2008 Armed Forces Pay Award had included an increase in the base X-Factor from 13% to 14%, and increased X-Factor for more senior Officer ranks.

Amongst Officers higher proportions were satisfied than dissatisfied with Service career management apart from RAF, where the reverse was the case.

Satisfaction with Service training and development opportunities: Higher proportions of each of Officers and ORs were satisfied than were dissatisfied

with their opportunities for personal development, the training they had received for their Service jobs and the extent to which they were doing the job for which they had been trained.

Accommodation

xi. Forty-five percent of respondents (74% of Officers and 39% of ORs) owned a home; Officers were more likely to own a home than were ORs, and Army personnel were less likely to own homes than were their counterparts in the other Services. Over half of those who had bought homes did so to obtain stability for themselves and their families. Dissatisfaction with aspects of Service accommodation was listed as the most important reason for only 8% of purchases.

Seventy-seven percent of respondents lived in accommodation provided by the Service during the working week: 37% of Officers and 39% of ORs lived in Service Families Accommodation (SFA), and 27% of Officers and 33% of ORs in land-based Single Living Accommodation (SLA). Whilst they reported prevailing satisfaction with the standard and the value for money of their accommodation, there was prevailing dissatisfaction with the efforts made to maintain and improve it.

One third of respondents used Pay As You Dine (PAYD); they reported prevailing dissatisfaction with the quantity and quality of the food provided.

Personal life

xii. Approximately half of the respondents were married and a further quarter of respondents were in a long term relationship. Over half of the partners/spouses were in full time employment. Approximately half of respondents had children whom they supported financially.

Overall less than 50% of personnel were satisfied with the impact of Service life on their personal life. The highest areas of dissatisfaction (over half dissatisfied) were the impact of Service life on spouse/partner's career and the ability to plan their own life in the long term. Approximately 40% were dissatisfied with their ability to plan their life in the short term, separation from friends and family, the support that their spouse/partner gets when they are absent and the impact of Service life on their children's education. Over 20% were dissatisfied with the Operational Welfare Package. Satisfaction was highest amongst RAF personnel.

Married personnel were the more satisfied with their ability to plan their own life in the short and long term and with separation from friends and family compared with those in long term relationships. However those who were married were more dissatisfied with the impact of Service life on their children's education and spouse/partner's career.

Leave

- xiii. Eighty-three percent of Officers and 66% of ORs were satisfied with their overall leave entitlement (Officers and ORs have the same basic annual entitlement of 30 days). The majority of Officers (56%) and about half of ORs were satisfied with the amount of leave they had been able to take in the 12 months before completing AFCAS.

There were differences between the Services in the proportions able to take all of their annual leave in the last leave year: overall, 71% of RM respondents, 46% of RN, 39% of Army and 26% of RAF had been able to take their full allowance; paradoxically this was inversely related to between Service differences in satisfaction with opportunity to take leave when personnel wished to. The most common reason for leave not being taken was workload, followed by undermanning and other Service commitments.

Health, well-being and fitness

- xiv. High proportions of AFCAS respondents were satisfied with the Service medical and dental treatment they had received in the 2 years before completing the survey. There were also high levels of satisfaction with Service medical and dental treatment received by family members amongst the minority whose families had received this.

There was prevailing satisfaction with the sport, exercise and fitness facilities offered by the individual Services, and 57% percent of Officers and 66% of ORs considered that they had enough opportunity to pursue fitness activities.

Equality and diversity

- xv. Officers held positive views about fairness and equality across the Services. Although ORs were less positive than Officers over half held positive views on all aspects of fairness and equality. Compared with the 2007 AFCAS results, ORs' views were more positive in 2008. Officers were more likely to say that the provision of equal opportunities had remained unchanged over the last two years, whilst ORs felt that there had been some improvement.

A relatively small proportion of respondents had experienced discrimination, harassment or bullying in a Service environment in the last 12 months.

Most respondents knew where to get information about the complaints procedure for unfair treatment, discrimination, harassment or bullying. However, only a relatively small proportion who had experienced this type of behaviour made a complaint.

Working with Volunteer Reserves

- xvi. About half of the 2008 AFCAS respondents had been in working contact with their Services' Volunteer Reserves (VRs) during the two years before completing the survey. Higher proportions of Officers than of ORs, and higher proportions of Army and RM than of RN and RAF had experienced contact.

The AFCAS respondents with recent contact with VRs were asked to rate the following: the value of the VRs' contributions to their Services; how well integrated they are with the Regular Services; and the VRs' professionalism. For each of these, and across all groups of respondents, the responses were predominantly positive.

INTRODUCTION

Background

The Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey (AFCAS) was conducted for the first time in 2007. Prior to this each individual Service had historically conducted their own continuous attitude surveys (CASs). Although these provided high quality information to inform Service Policy development, it was difficult to compare data across the Services. Following direction from Under Secretary of State for Defence, the Deputy Chief of Defence Staff (Personnel) [DCDS(Pers)] was tasked to deliver a single attitude survey across the Armed Forces. AFCAS is a joint project involving individual expertise from single Service Occupational Psychologists as well as statisticians and researchers from Defence Analytical Services and Advice (DASA).

The aim of the AFCAS is to assess and monitor the attitudes of Service personnel across the Royal Navy (RN), Royal Marines (RM), Army and RAF in key personnel management areas. The data are used to identify where measures are needed to influence motivation and retention in the Armed Forces and to inform policy development and assessment. The continuous nature of the survey allows for attitudes to be tracked over time.

The Service Chiefs and the Ministry of Defence (MOD) place a high value on attitude data gathered from Service personnel. They are a vital means of understanding how our people feel about key issues. The information is used to inform the Defence Management Board (as of April 2008 the Defence Board) and the Armed Forces Pay Review Body, as well as many other individual policy areas.

The 2008 AFCAS report

This is the main report for the 2008 AFCAS, the second iteration of this survey. This report includes all of the 2008 results as well as comparisons with the 2007 results.

The survey itself is divided into eleven sections on the following topics:

1. Pay & allowances
2. Aspects of Service life
3. Operational tours/deployments and assignments
4. Service leadership
5. Career plans & personal development
6. Accommodation
7. Personal life
8. Leave
9. Health, well-being and fitness
10. Equality & diversity
11. Working with volunteer reserves

The report consists of:

An executive summary – a high level summary of findings for each of the 11 sections of the survey

An introduction - *outlining the background and methodology of the survey*

The main report – *a detailed summary of findings for each of the 11 sections of the survey*

Annexes to the main report – *including*

Annex A: more detailed information on the methodology

Annex B: tables of results for each question of the 2008 survey with significance tests against 2007 results

Annex C: copies of the 2008 questionnaires.

Definitions

Throughout this report the term “Officers” refers to all regular trained officers of NATO ranks OF1 to OF10 and the term “ORs” is used to refer to all other ranks of NATO ranks OR1 to OR9.

Additional terms and definitions are defined in table A below:

Table A: Terminology used within the report

Term	Definition
RN	Royal Navy
RM	Royal Marines
RAF	Royal Air Force
Ratings	RN Other Ranks (OR1-OR9)
RM ORs	RM Other Ranks (OR1-OR9)
Soldiers	Army Other Ranks (OR1-OR9)
Airmen	RAF Other Ranks (OR1-OR9)

In most tables and graphs responses have been grouped to allow easier interpretation of results. Five point satisfaction scales have been grouped as follows:

- Satisfied – combines “Very satisfied” and “Satisfied” responses
- Neutral – refer to “Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied”
- Dissatisfied – combines “Very dissatisfied” and “Dissatisfied” responses

Five point agreement scales have been grouped as follows:

- Agree – combines “Strongly agree” and “Agree” responses
- Neutral – refer to “Neither agree nor disagree”
- Disagree – combines “Strongly disagree” and “Disagree” responses

Methodology

The AFCAS 2008 survey consisted of a confidential paper surveys distributed over two waves. The first wave took place from late May until mid August and the second from mid October until the end of December. A stratified random sample totaling just under 33,000 regular, trained Service personnel for the two waves was selected. The sample was stratified by Service and the following rank groups:

- 2* Officers and above (OF7-OF10)
- Other Officers (OF1-OF6)
- Senior Ranks (OR6-OR9)
- Junior Ranks (OR1-OR4).

The survey was designed to yield sufficient numbers of responses from each of these groups for each Service to allow statistically valid conclusions concerning each group's prevailing opinions. In total just under 10,500 responses were received and included in the 2008 results. This gives an overall response rate of 32% which is comparable to other paper based surveys of military personnel. Table B below shows response rates for each of the Services for Officers and other ranks.

Table B: Response rates by Service and rank group

Service		Number of recipients	Surveys returned	% Response rate
Royal Navy (RN)	Officers	1,920	940	49%
	Ratings	6,930	1,820	26%
Royal Marines (RM)	Officers	640	320	51%
	Other ranks	5,020	1,190	24%
Army	Officers	1,810	1,010	56%
	Soldiers	7,030	2,220	32%
Royal Air Force (RAF)	Officers	1,940	950	49%
	Airmen	5,380	2,040	38%
Total	Officers	6,310	3,220	51%
	Other ranks	24,350	7,270	30%

Note that all numbers have been rounded to the nearest 10 and percentages to the nearest whole % for ease of interpretation

Respondents' rank distribution both across and within strata did not reflect that of the total Armed Forces population. As such weightings were used to correct for over or under-representation.

SECTION 1: YOUR PAY & ALLOWANCES

Key Findings

Opinions of basic pay amongst the 2008 AFCAS respondents did not differ significantly from those of their 2007 counterparts. For Officers there was prevailing satisfaction with basic pay but opinion was divided amongst ORs.

The majority of the 2008 AFCAS respondents disagreed that the 14% X-Factor compensated for Service lifestyle, working conditions and expectations, although 24% of Officers and 15% of ORs did consider that it was sufficient compensation. In 2008 the amount of X-Factor paid increased by 1 percentage point since the 2007 survey took place and the overall proportion considering it sufficient also increased.

Just over a quarter of respondents were satisfied with Specialist Pay and around a quarter were dissatisfied.

The majority of 2008 AFCAS respondents gave positive responses regarding their pension benefits.

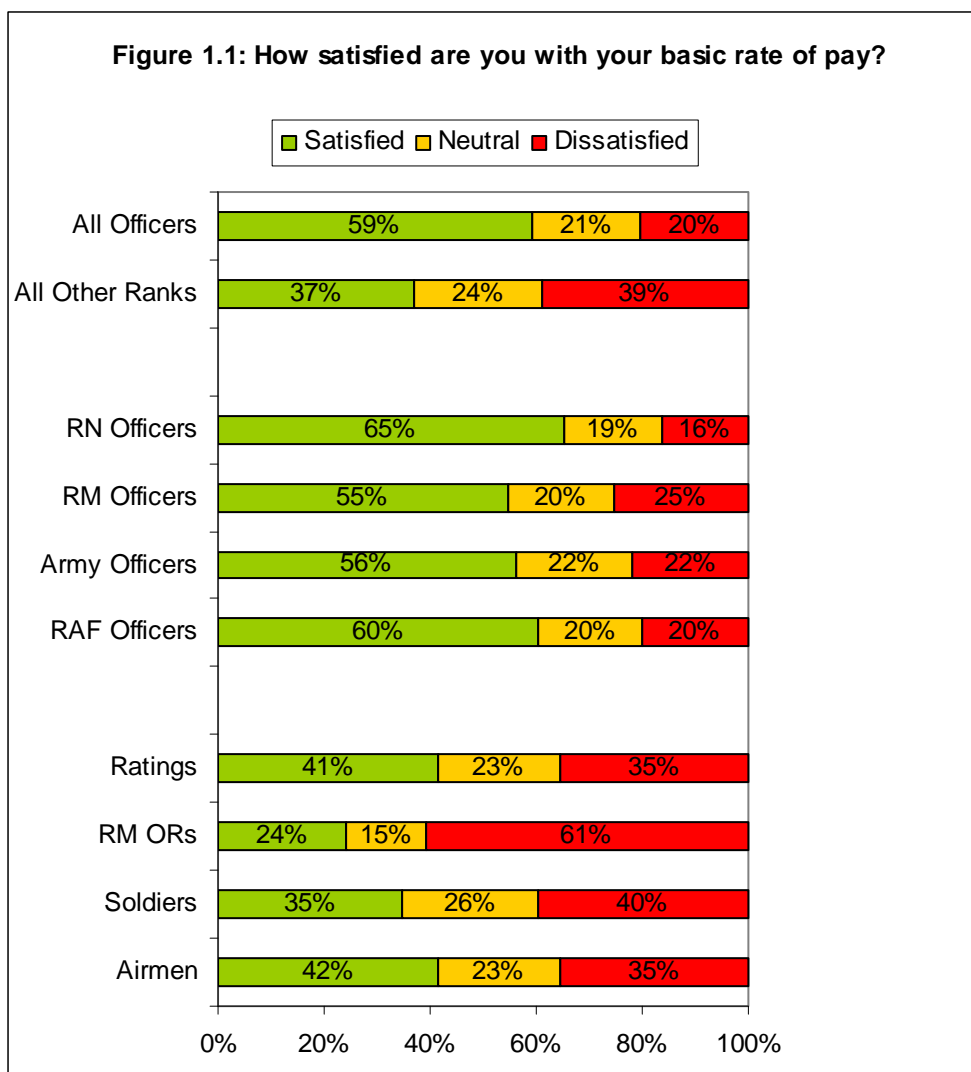
Opinions of allowances amongst the 2008 AFCAS respondents were divided with around a third satisfied, a third dissatisfied and a third neutral.

Just over half of all respondents were satisfied with access to JPA, whilst around a third of respondents were satisfied with their ability to do all the admin tasks required on JPA. Compared with the 2007 AFCAS there had been a significant increase in satisfaction with both access to JPA and ability to do all the admin tasks required.

Basic pay

1.1. Figure 1.1 shows how satisfied respondents were with their rate of basic pay. In all Services Officers (59%) were generally satisfied with their basic pay whereas ORs (37%) were less likely to be satisfied.

1.2. Compared with the 2007 AFCAS there was an increase of 6 percentage points in satisfied responses from Ratings and an 8 percentage point decrease in dissatisfied responses from RM Officers.



X-Factor

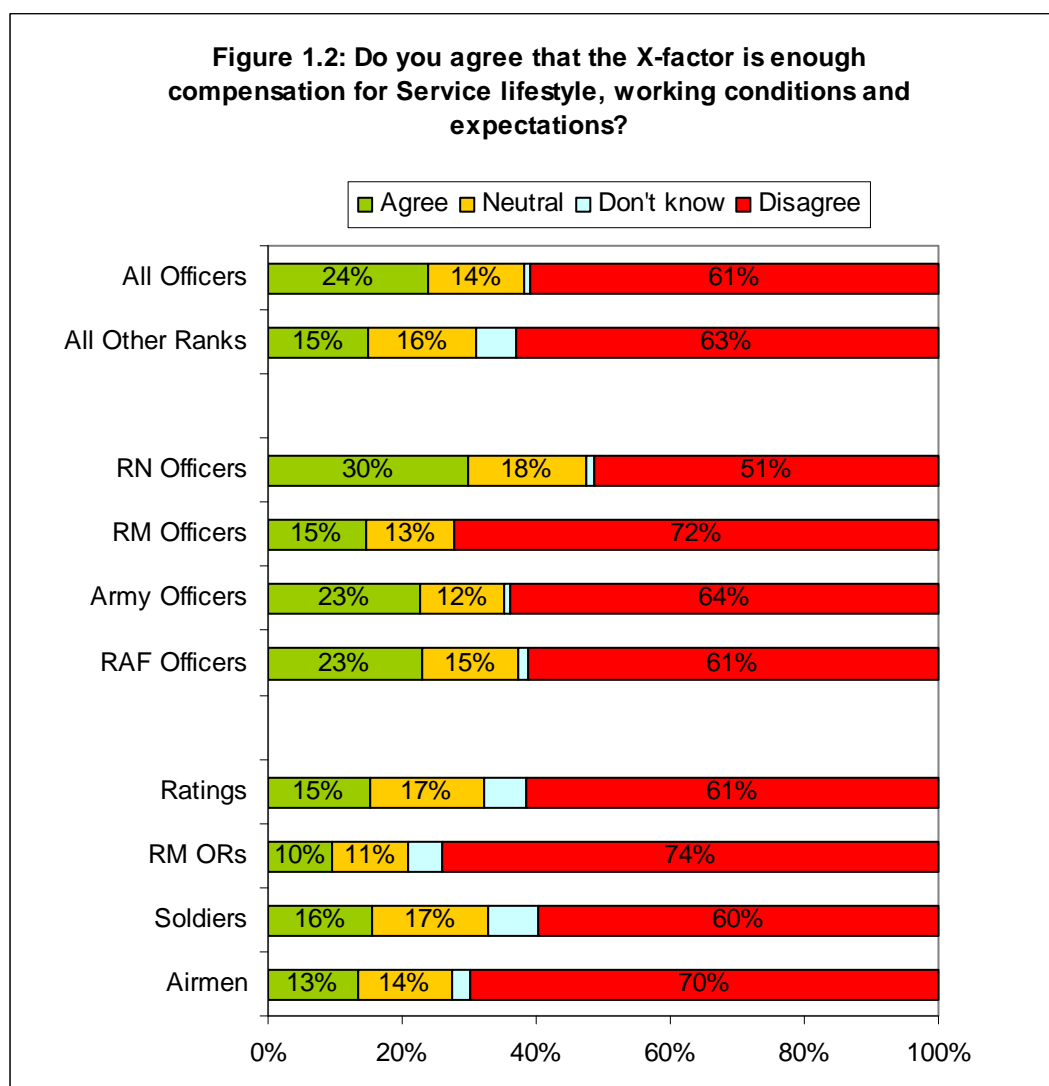
1.3. Personnel were informed in the survey that to compensate for differences in lifestyle, working conditions and expectations between Service personnel and their civilian equivalents, Service salaries are increased by 14%¹, known as the X-factor. They were then asked whether they knew about the X-factor and the extent to which they agreed that it was enough compensation for Service lifestyle, working conditions and expectations.

1.4. Figure 1.2 shows the level of satisfaction with the X-factor. The vast majority of Officers (94%) were aware of the X-factor but there was less awareness amongst ORs (58%). The majority of respondents (62%) did not believe the X-Factor was enough compensation for Service lifestyle, working conditions and expectations, although 24% of Officers and 15% of ORs did consider it to be sufficient.

¹ The X-factor payment increased from 13% to 14% in April 2008.

1.5. Compared with the 2007 AFCAS there was a significant increase (3 percentage points) in agreement that the X-factor was enough compensation and a significant decrease (5 percentage points) in negative responses. This could be related to the 1% increase in X-factor.

1.6. Positive significant single Service changes were found for RN and RAF Officers compared with the 2007 AFCAS. There was a 9 percentage point increase in positive responses for RN Officers and an 8 percentage point increase in positive responses for RAF Officers. There was also a significant increase (3 percentage points) in positive responses for Ratings compared with the 2007 AFCAS.



Specialist Pay

1.7. Specialist Pay is paid in addition to basic pay at Departmental discretion to meet short or long term recruitment or retention requirements. Examples of Specialist Pay are Flying Pay, Diving Pay, Submarine Pay and Parachute Pay. On 1 April 2008, in acceptance of the recommendations

made in the Armed Forces Pay Review Body (AFPRB) 2008 report, all rates of Specialist Pay were increased by 2.6%.

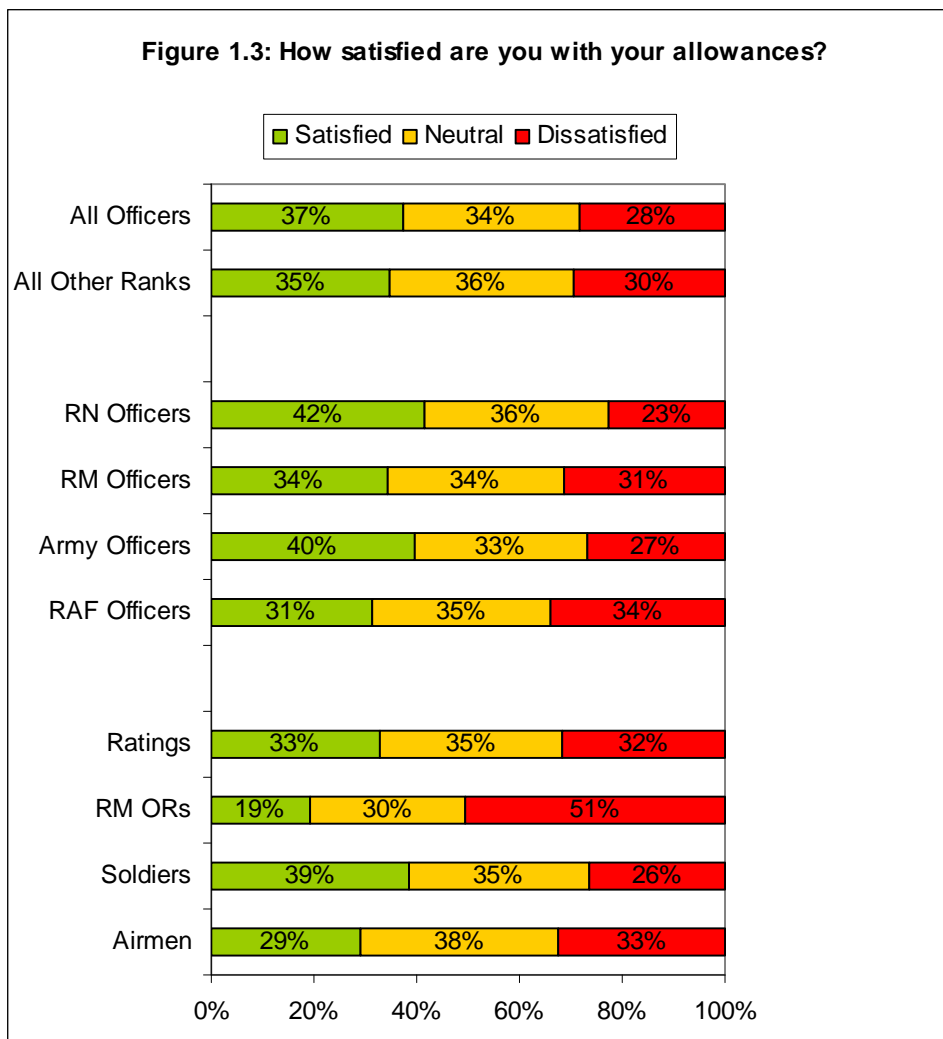
1.8. Respondents were asked how satisfied they were with their Specialist Pay. Results were similar to the 2007 AFCAS with 28% of respondents satisfied, 50% giving neutral responses and 23% dissatisfied.

1.9. Compared with the 2007 AFCAS, in 2008 RM ORs were more dissatisfied with their Specialist Pay (up 8 percentage points). The opposite was true for Ratings where there was a decrease in negative responses (down 9 percentage points).

Pension

1.10. Satisfaction with pensions had remained stable between the 2007 and the 2008 AFCAS. Officers were generally satisfied with their pension benefits with 76% responding positively. The majority of ORs (56%) were also satisfied.

Allowances



1.11. Respondents were asked how satisfied they are with their allowances (e.g. Longer Separation Allowance and Get You Home). As shown in Figure 1.3, opinions were generally divided (35% positive, 36% neutral and 30% negative for ORs). Compared with 2007, ORs were this time less dissatisfied with allowances.

1.12. Significant single Service changes were identified for the RAF with an increase (6 percentage points) in positive responses and a decrease (7 percentage points) in negative responses from Officers with respect to satisfaction with their allowances. Airmen were also significantly less dissatisfied (5 percentage points) with their allowances compared with 2007.

Information about allowances

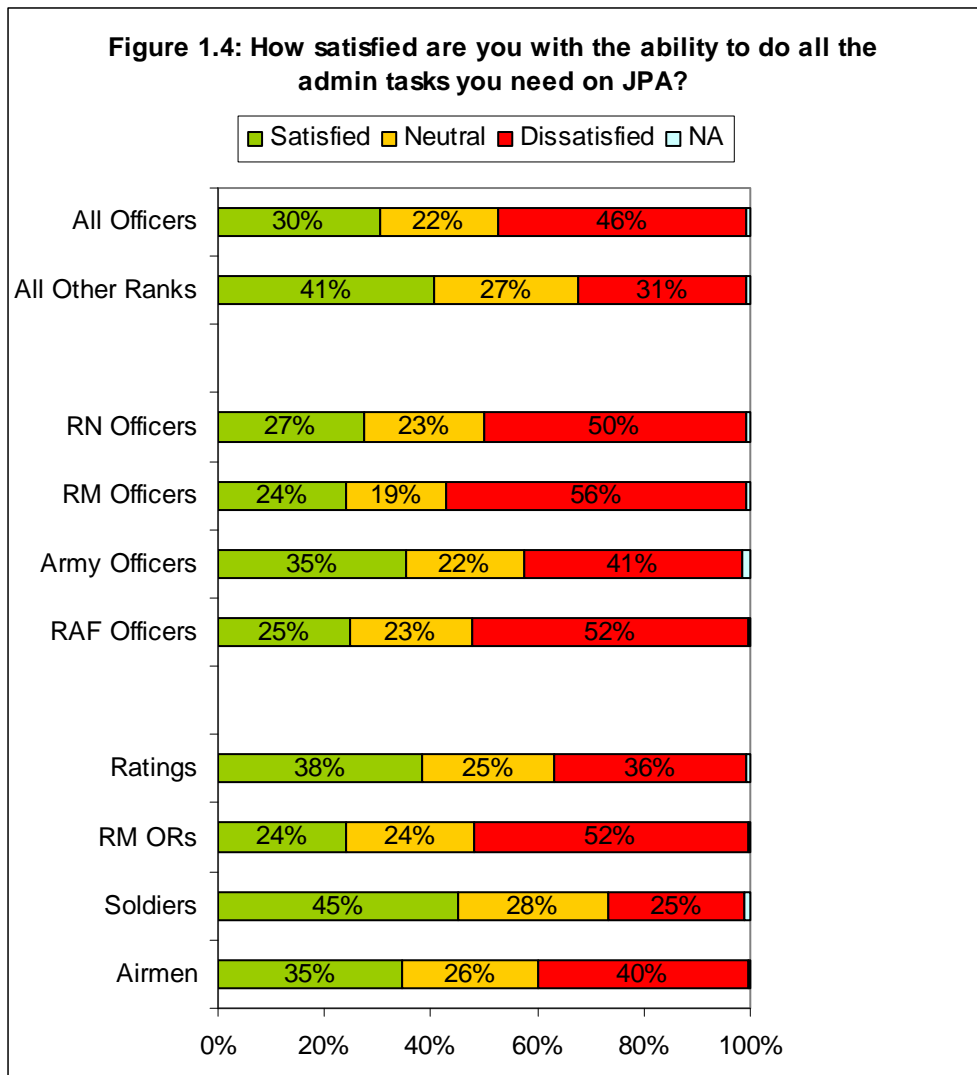
1.13. Respondents were also asked how satisfied they were with information about pay and allowances (e.g. from the Defence Intranet, Defence Instruction Notices (DINs) and brochures). Forty-three percent of respondents were satisfied. Levels of satisfaction were similar for Officers and ORs.

1.14. Compared with the 2007 AFCAS, RM ORs were significantly more dissatisfied this time (12 percentage points) with the information about pay and allowances. The opposite was true for Ratings where a significant increase of 7 percentage points in positive responses was apparent.

Joint Personnel Administration (JPA)

1.15. Respondents were asked how satisfied they were with access to JPA (e.g. ability to connect to JPA) and the ability to do all the admin tasks they need to do on JPA. JPA was introduced at different time points across the Services (RAF Mar 06, RN/RM Oct 06 and Army Mar 07). Therefore all Services would have been using JPA for at least one year prior to responding to the 2008 AFCAS.

1.16. Figure 1.4 shows the level of satisfaction with using JPA to undertake admin tasks. Overall 39% were satisfied with this (34% dissatisfied and 26% neutral) but Officers less so than ORs (30% and 41% respectively). Compared with the 2007 AFCAS there had been a significant increase in satisfaction (11 percentage points) and significant decrease in dissatisfaction (5 percentage points) with the ability to do all the administrative tasks required on JPA. Significant positive single Service changes were also identified with increases in satisfaction for the RN (7 percentage points), Army (14 percentage points) and RAF (8 percentage points).



1.17. Respondents were generally satisfied with access to JPA, with 56% responding positively. Compared with the 2007 AFCAS, satisfaction with access to JPA has increased significantly for Officers and ORs. Positive significant single Service changes were also identified with increases in satisfaction for the RN (7% points), Army (17% points) and RAF (8% points).

SECTION 2: ASPECTS OF SERVICE LIFE

Key Findings

About half of personnel were satisfied with Service life. Satisfaction had improved amongst RN personnel and amongst Soldiers. Three-fifths of personnel who had joined within the last five years found that Service life was the same or better than they expected when they joined. Over 40% of personnel reported their morale as high compared to less than a quarter reporting it as low. Morale had improved amongst RN and RAF Officers and amongst Soldiers. Reports of own morale were more positive than reports of service morale, as is consistently found in surveys of UK military personnel.

Overall team working was reported positively by more than three quarters of respondents. The RM were the most positive regarding how well their team get on with each other, and have confidence in each other. The RM and RAF were most positive with regards to pulling together to complete tasks, and having a shared understanding of the tasks that must be done.

Commitment to the service varied. Pride, wanting to make a positive contribution and willingness to put themselves out were reported very positively (over 70% positive). Approximately half were reluctant to leave, would recommend joining the Service to others and would miss the benefits if they left. However, less than a third felt valued. In general, responses to the commitment items were the most positive amongst RM and Army personnel. In comparison with last year the responses for Ratings, Soldiers and Airman were more positive.

Over two-thirds considered the military discipline system to be fair.

Ethos and values were reported positively by about three-quarters of personnel. Responses were the most positive amongst RM and Army. The Soldiers were more positive than in 2007.

Over half of personnel were satisfied with their job in general, the sense of achievement that they get from their work, the amount of responsibility they have, the challenge in their job, and the extent to which they can use their abilities. Less than half were satisfied with their workload and the variety in their work. Just over half of personnel reported their workload as about right. Officers were less positive than ORs about their workload. More Officers than ORs marked it as too high. In comparison with 2007 more Army Officers reported their workload as too high.

Less than half of respondents were satisfied with the standard of their personal equipment and less than a third were satisfied with the standard and amount of major equipment.

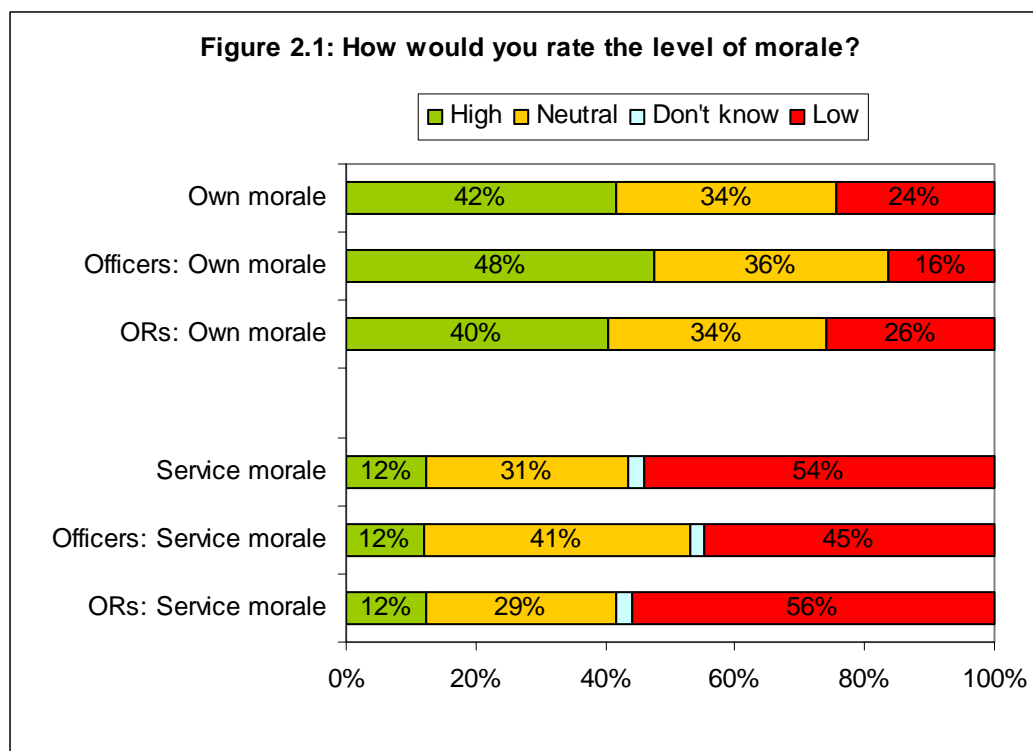
Satisfaction with Service life and morale

2.1. Responses to the AFCAS items concerning satisfaction with Service life and morale are shown Tables B2.1 to B2.4 of Annex B. Figure 2.1 represents results on morale.

2.2. Overall 51% of personnel were satisfied with Service life. Sixty-four percent of Officers were satisfied and 17% were dissatisfied. Amongst ORs 49% were satisfied and 28% were dissatisfied. The responses were more positive than 2007 for RN Officers and Ratings and for Soldiers (each by 6 percentage points).

2.3. Those who had joined within the last five years were asked how their life in the Service compared with what they expected when they joined. Overall 22% reported that Service life was better than they had expected, 38% reported it as about the same and 40% reported it as worse. Amongst Officers 22% reported it as better, 54% reported it as the same and 23% reported Service life as worse than expected. Amongst ORs 22% thought it was better, 36% thought it was the same and 42% thought that service life was worse than they had expected when they joined. The meeting of expectations of a job ('psychological contract') has been identified in theory and research as a predictor of motivation and turnover². Those who have a more realistic understanding of what a job entails on joining, have been found to be more motivated and more likely to stay with the organisation.

² E.g. Rousseau, D. (2001). Schema, promise and mutuality: the building blocks of the psychological contract. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 74, 511-541.



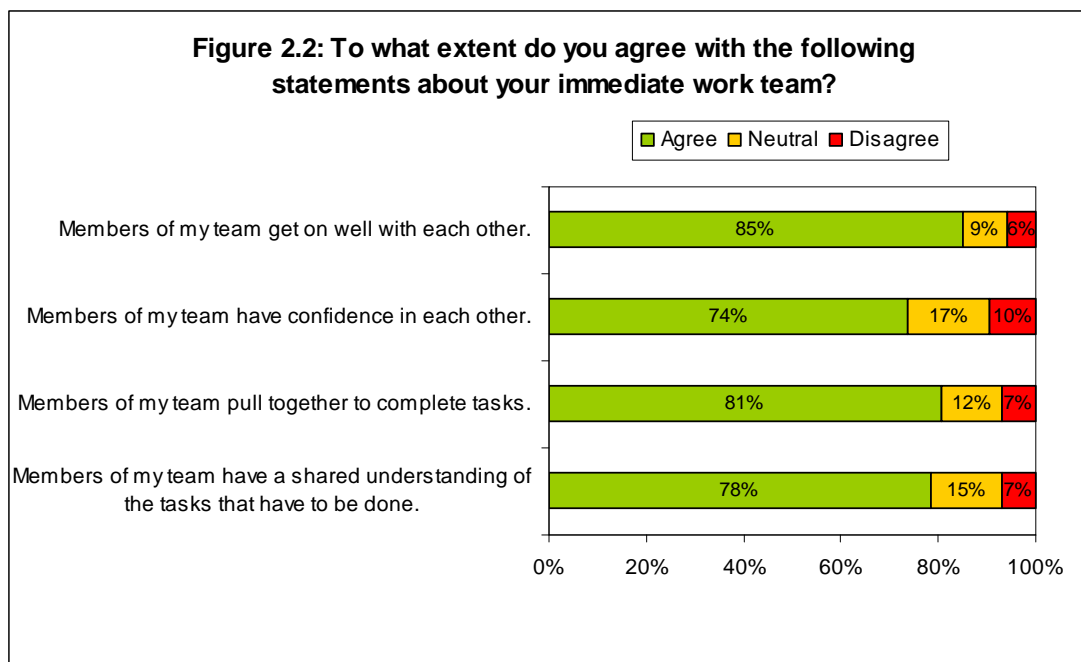
2.4. In total 42% reported their own morale as high, 34% reported it as neutral and 24% reported it as low. Amongst Officers 48% reported it as high, 36% neutral and 16% low. Amongst ORs 40% reported it as high, 34% neutral and 26% reported it as low. In comparison with 2007 the results were more positive for RN and RAF Officers and for Soldiers.

2.5. Personnel were asked to report on the morale of their Service as a whole. Overall 12% reported it as high, 31% reported it as neutral and 54% reported it as low. Surveys of UK military personnel consistently find reports of Service morale to be lower than reports of own morale. Wider research into social comparisons has found that people report their own attitudes and perceptions as more positive than those of the wider population³. The findings for morale from the AFCAS are in line with this research. Amongst Officers 12% reported the morale of the Service as high, 41% reported it as neutral and 45% reported it as low. Amongst ORs 12% reported it as high, 29% reported it as neutral and 56% reported it as low. Morale of the Service was reported most positively amongst RM personnel and least positively amongst RN and RAF personnel. In comparison with 2007 the responses were more positive for RN Ratings and for Army and RAF personnel. The responses were less positive for RM ORs (high Service morale fell by 6 percentage points).

³ E.g. Keillor, G. (2000). In Search of Lake Wobegon. *National Geographic Magazine*, December 2000, and Festinger, L. (1954). A theory of social comparison processes. *Human relations*, 7(2), 117-140,

Team working

2.6. Responses to the AFCAS items on team working are shown in Figure 2.2. Overall there was a high level of positive response for all aspects of team working. Responses tended to be most positive amongst RM personnel with regards to the team members getting on well with each other and having confidence in each other. RM and RAF were most positive for pulling together to complete tasks, and having a shared understanding of the tasks that have to be done.



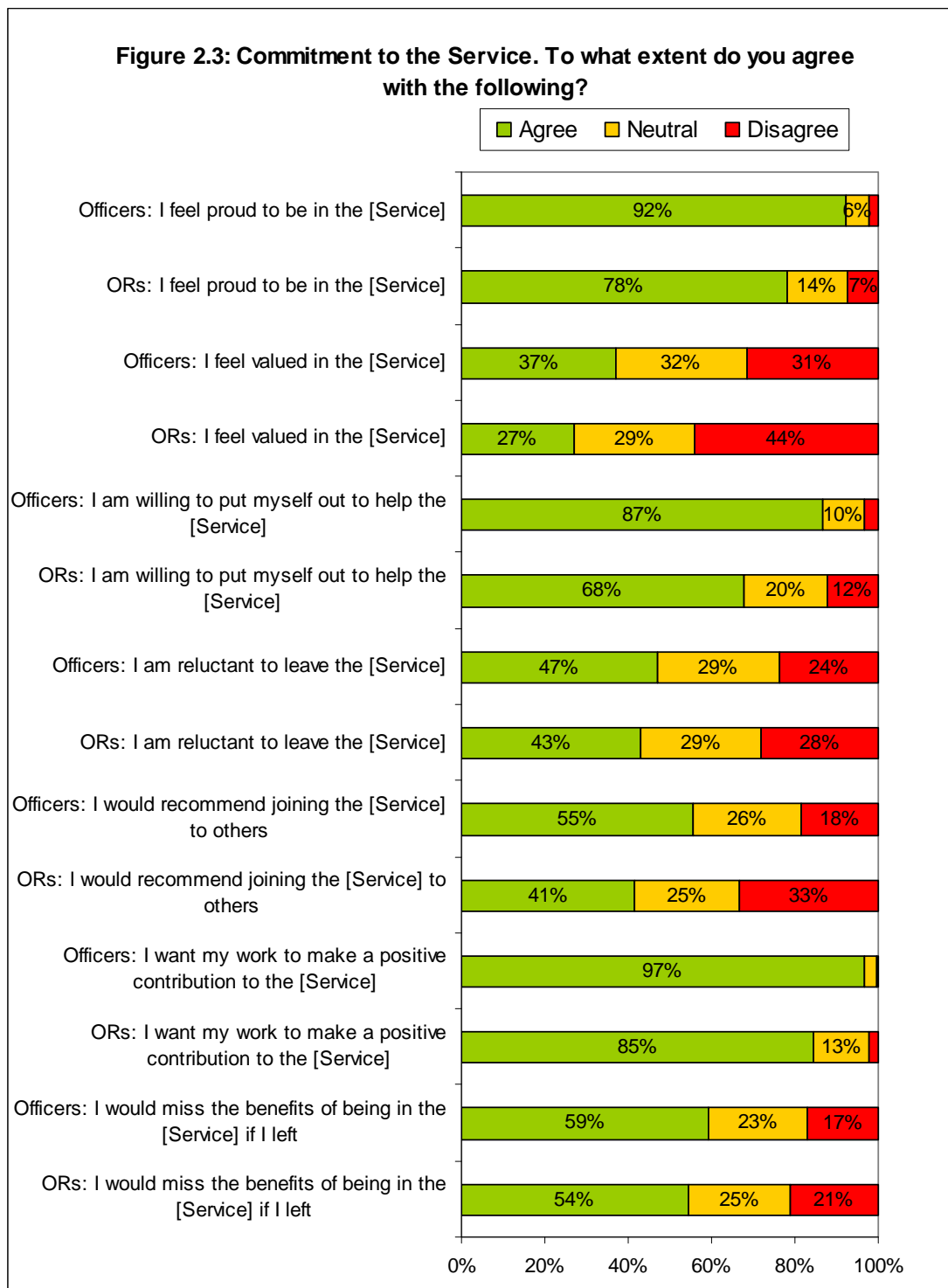
Commitment to the Service

2.7. Responses to the AFCAS items on commitment to the Service are shown in Figure 2.3. Organisational commitment is a measure of how affiliated people are towards the organisation that they work for. Those with high commitment are more likely to demonstrate positive organisational behaviours including higher motivation towards work goals and being prepared to 'go the extra mile', and are more likely to stay in the organisation⁴. Commitment is also a key component of engagement⁵.

2.8. Overall 81% agreed that they felt proud to be in their Service. Amongst Officers 92% agreed and 2% disagreed. Amongst ORs 78% agreed and 7% disagreed. Responses were most positive amongst RM (92% agreed) and Army (83% agreed) personnel and least positive amongst RN personnel (72% agreed). In comparison with 2007 the responses were more positive for Ratings, Soldiers and Airmen.

⁴ Meyer, J., Stanley, D., Herscovitch, L. and Topolnytsky, L. (2002). Affective, continuance, and normative commitment to the organization: A meta-analysis of antecedents, correlates and consequences. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 61, 20-52.

⁵ Robinson, D., Perryman, S., and Haydays, S. (2004). *The Drivers of Employee Engagement*. Institute of Employment Studies, Report 408.



2.9. In total 29% of personnel felt valued. Amongst Officers 37% agreed that they felt valued and 31% disagreed. Twenty-seven percent of ORs agreed and 44% disagreed. Responses were most positive amongst RM (35% agreed) and Army (32% agreed), and least positive amongst RN (25% agreed) and RAF personnel (22% agreed). In comparison with 2007, RM ORs' responses were more negative and Soldiers' and Airmen's responses were more positive.

2.10. In total 71% agreed that they were willing to put themselves out to help their Service. Amongst Officers 87% agreed and 3% disagreed. Amongst ORs 68% agreed and 12% disagreed. Responses were least positive for RN personnel (62% agreed). In comparison with 2007 the responses were more positive amongst Ratings and Soldiers.

2.11. Respondents were asked whether they were reluctant to leave their Service. Overall 44% agreed. Forty-seven percent of Officers agreed and 24% disagreed. Amongst ORs 43% agreed and 28% disagreed. In comparison with 2007 the responses were more positive for Ratings, Soldiers and Airmen and for RM Officers.

2.12. Forty-four percent agreed that they would recommend joining the Service to others. Amongst Officers 55% agreed and 18% disagreed. Forty-one percent of ORs agreed and 33% disagreed. Responses were most positive amongst RM (50% agreed) and Army personnel (48% agreed) and were least positive amongst RN (36% agreed) and RAF personnel (39% agreed). In comparison with 2007 the responses were more positive for Ratings, Soldiers, RAF Officers and Airmen.

2.13. In total 87% wanted to make a positive contribution to their Service. Amongst Officers 97% agreed and less than 1% disagreed. Eighty-five percent of ORs agreed and 2% disagreed. In comparison with 2007 the responses were more positive for Soldiers.

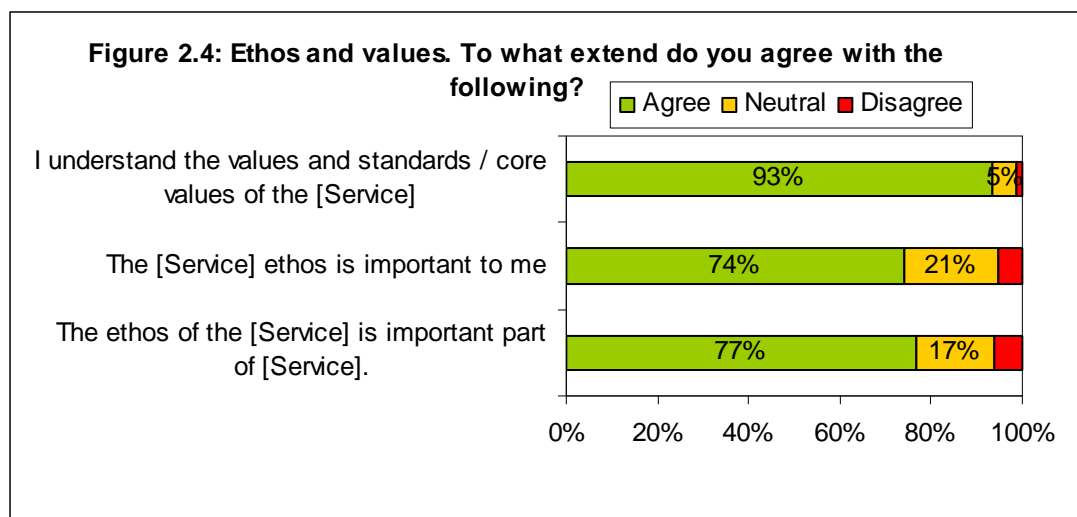
2.14. Finally, 55% agreed that they would miss the benefits of their Service if they left. Fifty-nine percent of Officers agreed and 17% disagreed. Fifty-four percent of ORs agreed and 21% disagreed. Responses were most positive amongst Army personnel (59% agreed). In comparison with 2007 the responses for Ratings and Soldiers were more positive.

Military discipline

2.15. Personnel were asked how fair they considered the military discipline system to be. Overall 69% reported it as fair. Amongst Officers 91% reported it as fair and 3% reported it as unfair. Amongst ORs 65% reported it as fair and 13% reported it as unfair. The responses for Ratings and Soldiers were more positive than in 2007.

Ethos and values

2.16. Responses to the AFCAS items on ethos and values are shown in Figure 2.4.



2.17. Overall 93% of respondents agreed that they understood the values and standards/core values of their Service. Amongst Officers 97% agreed and less than 1% disagreed. Amongst ORs 93% agreed and 2% disagreed. Responses were most positive amongst RM (97% agreed) and Army personnel (96% agreed) and were least positive amongst RN personnel (87%) agreed). In comparison with 2007 Airmen were more positive.

2.18. Seventy-four percent agreed that their Service ethos was important to them. Ninety-one percent of Officers agreed and 2% disagreed. Seventy percent of ORs agreed and 6% disagreed. Responses were most positive amongst RM (85% agreed) and Army personnel (79% agreed) and were least positive amongst RN (62% agreed) and RAF personnel (68% agreed). In comparison with 2007 Soldiers were more positive.

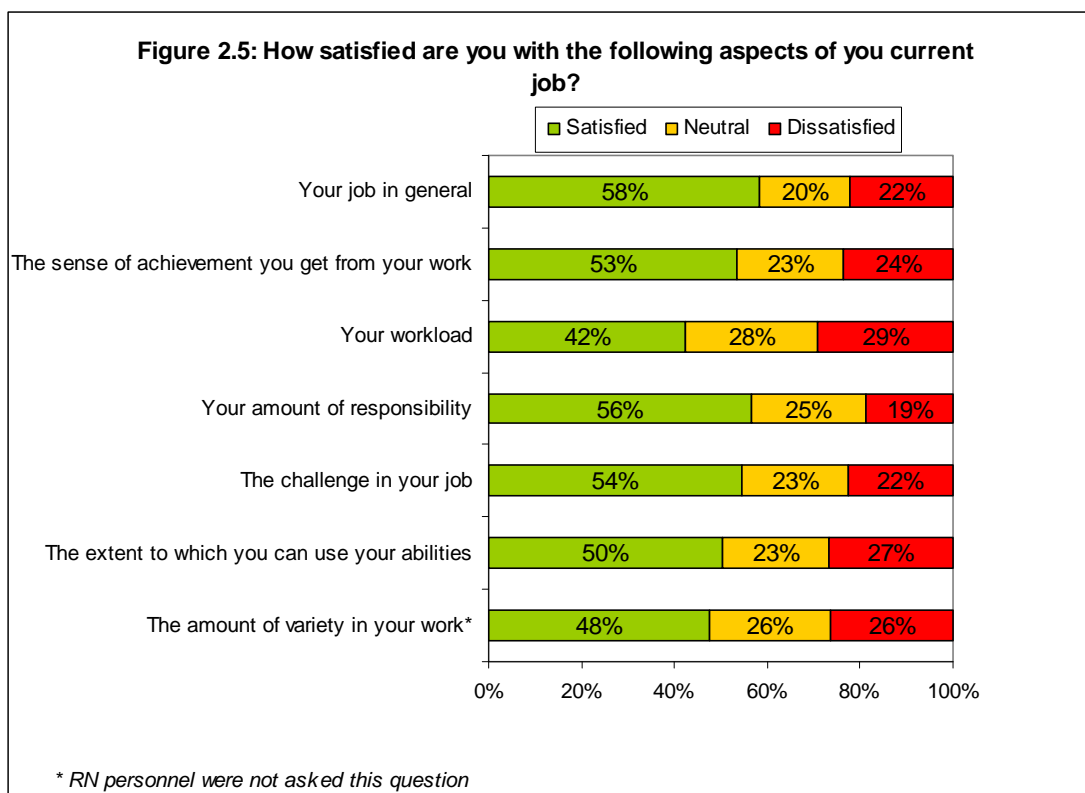
2.19. Overall 77% agreed that the ethos of the Service was an important part of their Service life. Ninety percent of Officers agreed and 3% disagreed. Seventy-four percent of ORs agreed and 7% disagreed. Responses were most positive amongst RM (86% agreed) and Army personnel (82% agreed), and were least positive amongst RN and RAF personnel (for both 68% agreed). The responses for Soldiers were more positive than in 2007 whilst responses from RM Officers were less positive.

Satisfaction with their job and workload

2.20. Responses to the AFCAS items on job satisfaction and workload are shown in Figure 2.5. Job satisfaction is defined as “the individual’s subjective evaluation of different aspects of their job”⁶. Research indicates that those with higher job satisfaction perform better at work⁷.

⁶ Locke, E. (1976). The nature and causes of job satisfaction. Cited in M. D. Dunnette (Ed.), *Handbook of Industrial and Organisational Psychology*, Rand-McNally, Chicago.

⁷ E.g. Ostroff, C. (1992). The relationship between satisfaction, attitudes and performance: An organizational level analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 77, 963-974.



2.21. Overall 58% were satisfied with their job in general. Amongst Officers 71% were satisfied and 14% were dissatisfied. Amongst ORs 56% were satisfied and 24% were dissatisfied.

2.22. In total 53% were satisfied with the sense of achievement that they gained from their work. Sixty-six percent of Officers were satisfied and 16% were dissatisfied. Amongst ORs 51% were satisfied and 25% were dissatisfied. Responses were the least positive amongst RM personnel (46% were satisfied).

2.23. Overall 42% were satisfied with their workload. Amongst Officers 44% were satisfied and 30% were dissatisfied. Amongst ORs 42% were satisfied and 29% were dissatisfied. In comparison with 2007, RM ORs were less satisfied (6 percentage point fall in satisfaction).

2.24. Fifty-six percent were satisfied with the amount of responsibility in their job. Amongst Officers 70% were satisfied and 13% were dissatisfied. Amongst ORs 54% were satisfied and 20% were dissatisfied. In comparison with 2007 the level of satisfaction amongst RM OR fell from 54% to 47%.

2.25. In total 54% were satisfied with the amount of challenge in their job. Sixty-nine percent of Officers were satisfied and 13% were dissatisfied. Amongst ORs 51% were satisfied and 24% were dissatisfied.

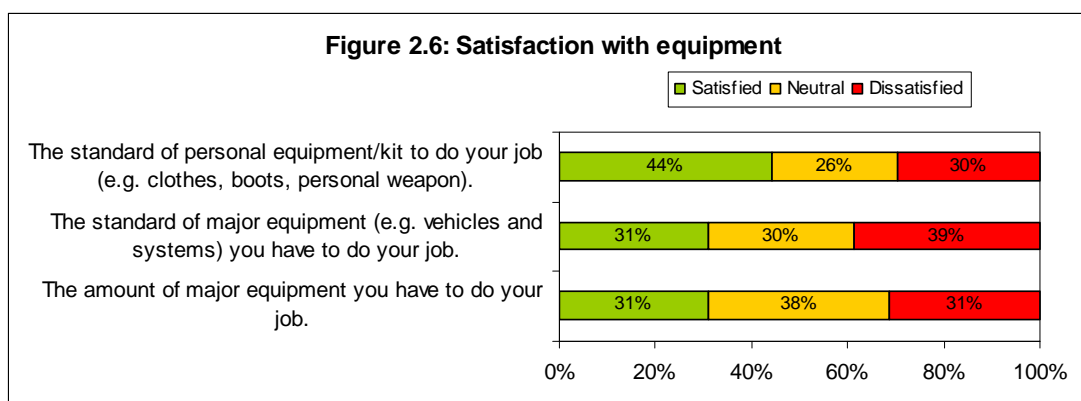
2.26. Half of the respondents were satisfied with the extent to which they can use their abilities in their job. Amongst Officers 61% were satisfied and 20% were dissatisfied. Amongst ORs 48% were satisfied and 28% were dissatisfied.

2.27. Respondents were asked to indicate how satisfied they were with the amount of variety that they had in their job⁸. Overall 48% were satisfied. Amongst Officers 67% were satisfied and 13% were dissatisfied. Amongst ORs 44% were satisfied and 29% were dissatisfied. Responses amongst RM personnel were the least positive (40% were satisfied). RN were not asked this question.

2.28. In total 55% reported their workload as about right. Amongst Officers 49% reported it as about right, 46% reported it as too high, and 5% reported it as too low. Amongst ORs 56% reported it as about right, 34% reported it as too high and 10% reported it as too low. In comparison to 2007, the proportion of Army Officers reporting their workload as too high had increased by 12 percentage points.

Equipment

2.29. Responses to the AFCAS items on equipment are shown in Figure 2.6 and in Tables B2.27 to B2.29 in Annex B. Due to changes in the wording of the questions no comparison has been made with previous year's data.



2.30. Overall 44% were satisfied with the standard of personal equipment/kit to do their job. Fifty-six percent of Officers were satisfied and 16% were dissatisfied. Forty-two percent of ORs were satisfied and 32% were dissatisfied.

2.31. In total 31% were satisfied with the major equipment (e.g. vehicles and systems) to do their job. Thirty-four percent of Officers were satisfied and 33% were dissatisfied. Amongst ORs 30% were satisfied and 40% were dissatisfied.

2.32. In total 31% were satisfied with the amount of major equipment that they have to do their job. Amongst Officers 33% were satisfied and 28% were dissatisfied. Amongst ORs 30% were satisfied and 32% were dissatisfied. Responses for RM personnel were the least positive (20% were satisfied).

⁸ RN data are not included in this question.

SECTION 3: OPERATIONAL TOURS/DEPLOYMENT AND ASSIGNMENTS

Key Findings

Over three-quarters of respondents had undertaken an operational tour/deployment within the last three to four years. Around half of respondents were given 11 weeks notice or more of the operational tour/deployment and the more notice they were given the more satisfied they were with the notice period.

Around two thirds of respondents were satisfied with the pre-operational tour/deployment training they had received but less than half of RM ORs were satisfied. Less than half of the respondents were satisfied with the support they received when they returned from operational tour/deployment.

Just over half of the respondents felt the frequency of operational tours/deployments was about right and a third felt they were too often. RM Officers and ORs were more likely to say that they are too often, when compared with the findings in 2007.

Over three quarters of respondents felt that the length of operational tours/deployments was about right.

In general Officers received more notice of their next assignment than ORs did. In general respondents were satisfied with the notice they were given but those who were given the most notice were the most satisfied. Officers were more likely to agree than ORs that their views are taken into account when assignments are planned.

Around half of Officers and ORs had been away from home in the last year for between one and six months. ORs were more likely to be dissatisfied with time spent away from home than Officers were. For short periods away from home (up to three months) dissatisfaction was fairly low at less than 10% but increased to 61% for absences of nine to twelve months.

Operational tours/deployments

3.1. Eighty-five percent of all respondents had been on an operational tour/deployment during their career. Compared with 2007 single Service changes were identified in the number saying that they had been on an operational tour/deployment for Ratings (3 percentage points increase to 93%) and RM ORs (9 percentage points increase to 85%). Seventy-eight percent of respondents reported that their last operational tour/deployment was within the last three to four years.

- 3.2.** Most Officers (58%) and ORs (57%) were given 11 weeks or more notice for their current or last operational tour/deployment, an increase of 4 percentage points for both rank groups compared with 2007. Across the Services less than ten percent said that they received between one and two weeks notice.
- 3.3.** Respondents who were given at least 11 weeks notice were more likely to be satisfied with the noticed period (88%) compared with those who received 1-2 weeks notice (21%).
- 3.4.** Most respondents were satisfied with the pre-operational training that they received (Officers, 69%, ORs 66%). Here there was a 5 percentage point increase for Officers compared with 2007 results. For RM ORs compared with 2007 AFCAS there was a 13 percentage point decrease (46%, 2008) in satisfaction and they now have the lowest level of satisfaction across the Services.
- 3.5.** Forty-five percent of Officers and 42% of ORs said that they were satisfied with the support they received when they returned from their last tour. Compared with 2007, single Service changes in satisfaction were identified for RM Officers and ORs who were less satisfied (Officers down 13 percentage points to 57% and ORs down 13 percentage points to 42%).
- 3.6.** Sixty-three percent of Officers and 56% of ORs felt that the frequency of tours was about right. Compared with 2007, single Service changes in the percentage saying 'about right' were identified for Ratings (up 8 percentage points to 69%) but down for RM Officers and ORs (Officers down 11 percentage points to 57% and ORs down 6 percentage points to 51%).
- 3.7.** Eighty-two percent of Officers and 76% of ORs felt that the length of operational tours was about right which was a 4 percentage point increase for ORs compared with last year. More specifically there was a 5 percentage point increase in Soldiers saying this compared with 2007 results.

Assignments (Postings)

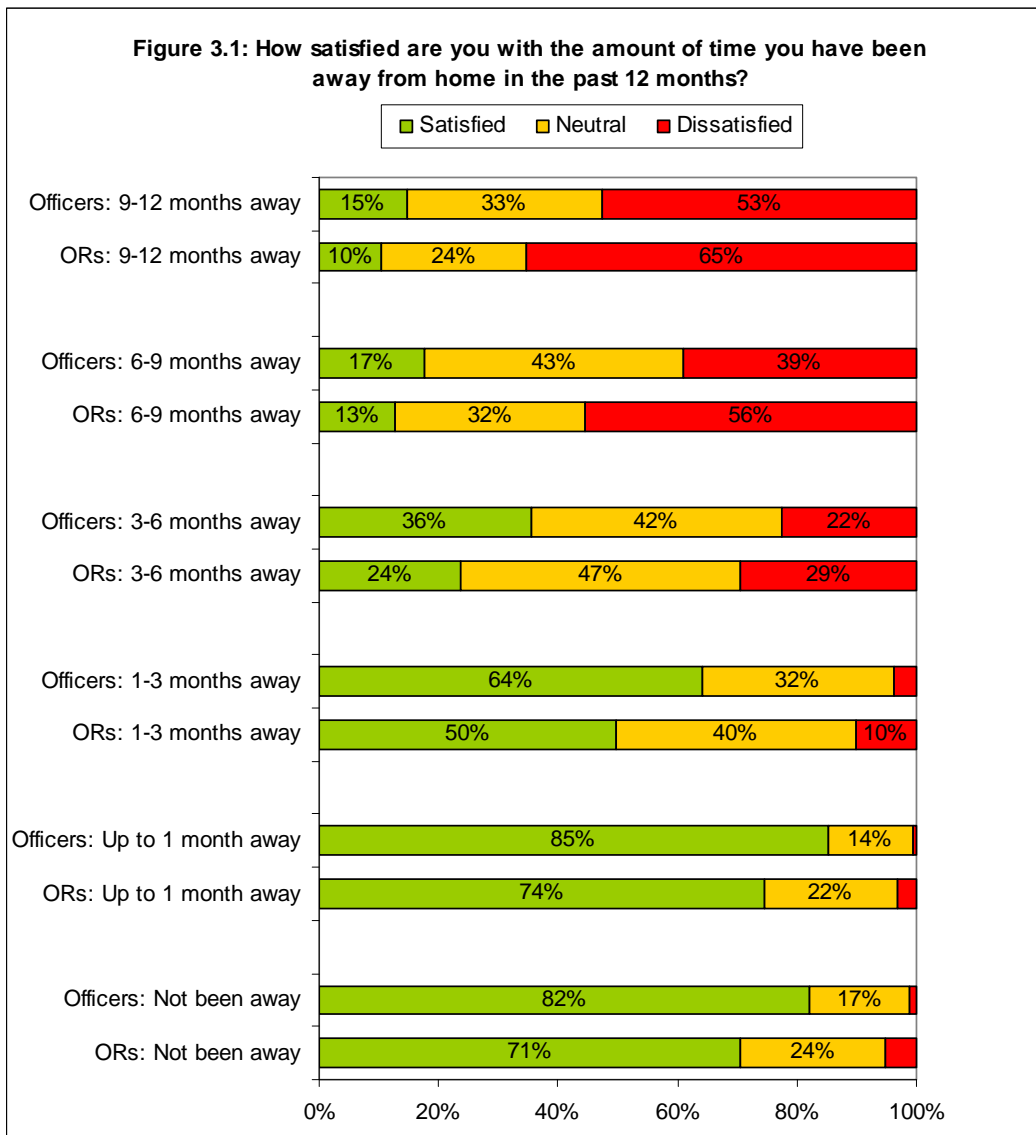
- 3.8.** Fifty-eight percent of Officers had received 11 weeks or more notice for their current assignment but the figure for ORs was much lower at 32%.
- 3.9.** Seventy-three percent of Officers and 64% of ORs were satisfied with the amount of notice that they were given. Respondents who were given more notice were more satisfied than those who were given less notice (11 weeks or more 89% satisfied, 1-2 weeks 27% satisfied).
- 3.10.** When asked if their views were taken into account when assignments are planned 60% of Officers and 41% of ORs felt that they were and 20% of Officers and 29% of ORs felt that they were not.

Separation

3.11. Respondents were asked how often they had been away from home for Service reasons in the last 12 months, here 30% of Officers and 24% of ORs said between one and three months and 20% of Officers and 26% of ORs said between three and six months.

3.12. Fifty-four percent of Officers and 38% of ORs were satisfied with the amount of time they spent away from home. Levels of dissatisfaction with time away from home were higher for ORs (26%) than for Officers (15%).

3.13. Figure 3.1 shows levels of satisfaction by time spent away from home. Dissatisfaction responses were less than 10% where time away from home was three months or less. For time away of between three and six months the proportion dissatisfied was 29% and increased to 55% for absences of six and nine months and to 61% for absences of nine to twelve months.



SECTION 4: LEADERSHIP

Key Findings

The majority of personnel respected their senior leaders, but less than half felt that the senior leaders kept them informed of issues that affected them. Approximately a quarter considered that their senior leaders understood and represented their interests, inspired them, and were keen to get their views on key decisions. In these instances a third responded neutrally. Responses were more positive amongst Officers than ORs. Responses for RM ORs had on some issues been more negative than in 2007. Amongst Soldiers and Airmen the responses tended to be more positive than 2007.

Overall approximately 60-70% responded positively regarding their immediate superior on issues including support in their job, setting a positive example, giving them feedback on their performance and being supportive over work/life balance issues. Responses were mostly more positive for Officers than for ORs. The responses for Ratings, Soldiers and Airmen were generally more positive than in 2007.

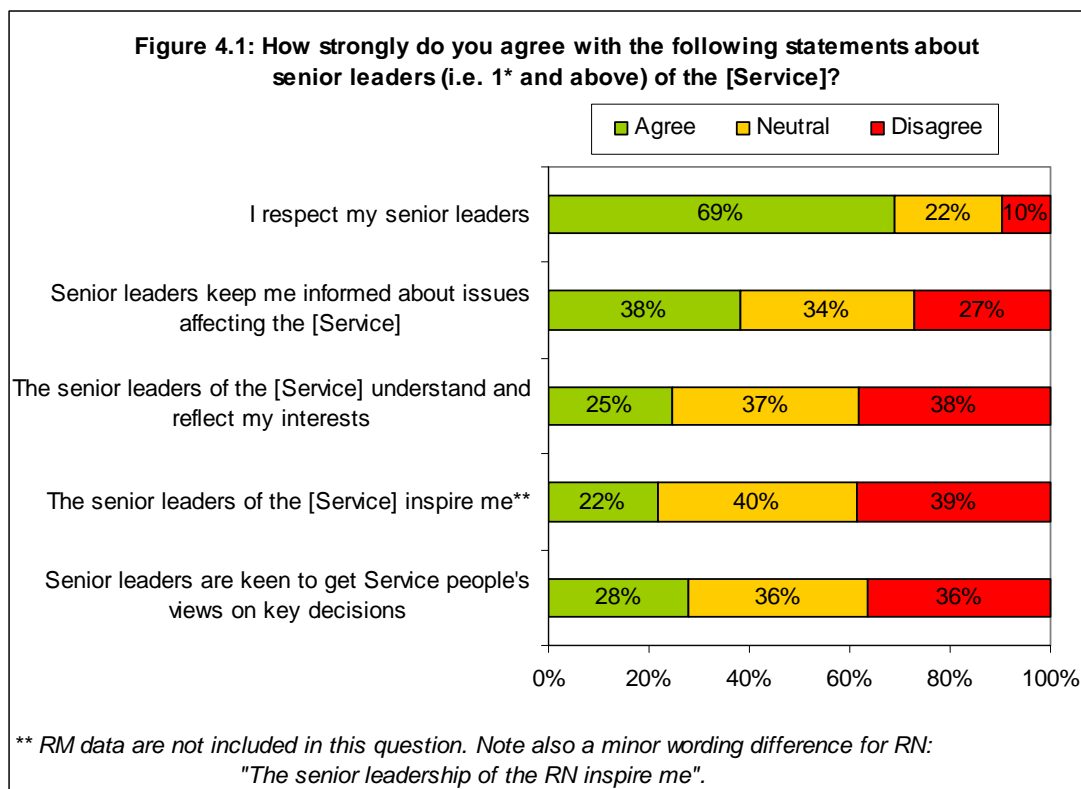
4.1. The questions relating to leadership are split into two sections, relating respectively to senior leadership (defined as 1* and above) and to the immediate superior (i.e. First Reporting Officer). The responses for immediate line management were more positive than the responses for the senior leadership. This split in responses is comparable with other similar working life survey responses from a range of organisations⁹. Social theory suggests that people consider those with whom they are in closer contact more positively than those people whom they have less day to day contact with¹⁰.

Senior leadership

4.2. Responses to the AFCAS items concerning senior leadership are shown in Figure 4.1.

⁹ Truss, C., Soane, E., Edwards, C., Wisdom, K., Croll, A., and Burnett, J. (2006) *Working life: employee attitudes and engagement*. Research report. London: CIPD.

¹⁰ E.g. Festinger, L. (1954). A theory of social comparison processes. *Human relations*, 7(2), 117-140,



4.3. Overall 69% of personnel agreed that they respected their senior leaders. Seventy-six percent of Officers agreed and 7% disagreed. Sixty-seven percent of ORs agreed and 10% disagreed. Agreement was highest amongst Army (75%) and RM (72%) personnel and lowest amongst RAF personnel (56%).

4.4. In total 38% of personnel agreed that their senior leaders kept them informed of issues that had affected their Service. Fifty-seven percent of Officers agreed and 16% disagreed. Thirty-four percent of ORs agreed and 30% disagreed. In comparison with 2007, the results were less positive for RM ORs and more positive for Soldiers and Airmen.

4.5. Twenty-five percent of personnel agreed that the senior leaders of their Service understood and represented their interests. Thirty-four percent of Officers agreed and 29% disagreed. Twenty-three percent of ORs agreed and 40% disagreed. Agreement was highest amongst the Army (31%) and the RM (29%) and lowest amongst the RN (17%) and RAF (15%). Soldiers and RAF Officers responded more positively than in 2007 whilst RM ORs were more negative.

4.6. Personnel were asked to report the degree to which they felt that their senior leaders had inspired them¹¹. Overall 22% of personnel responded positively. Amongst Officers 29% agreed and 29% disagreed. For ORs 20% agreed and 41% disagreed. Comparisons with 2007 data could not be made due to changes in the question wording.

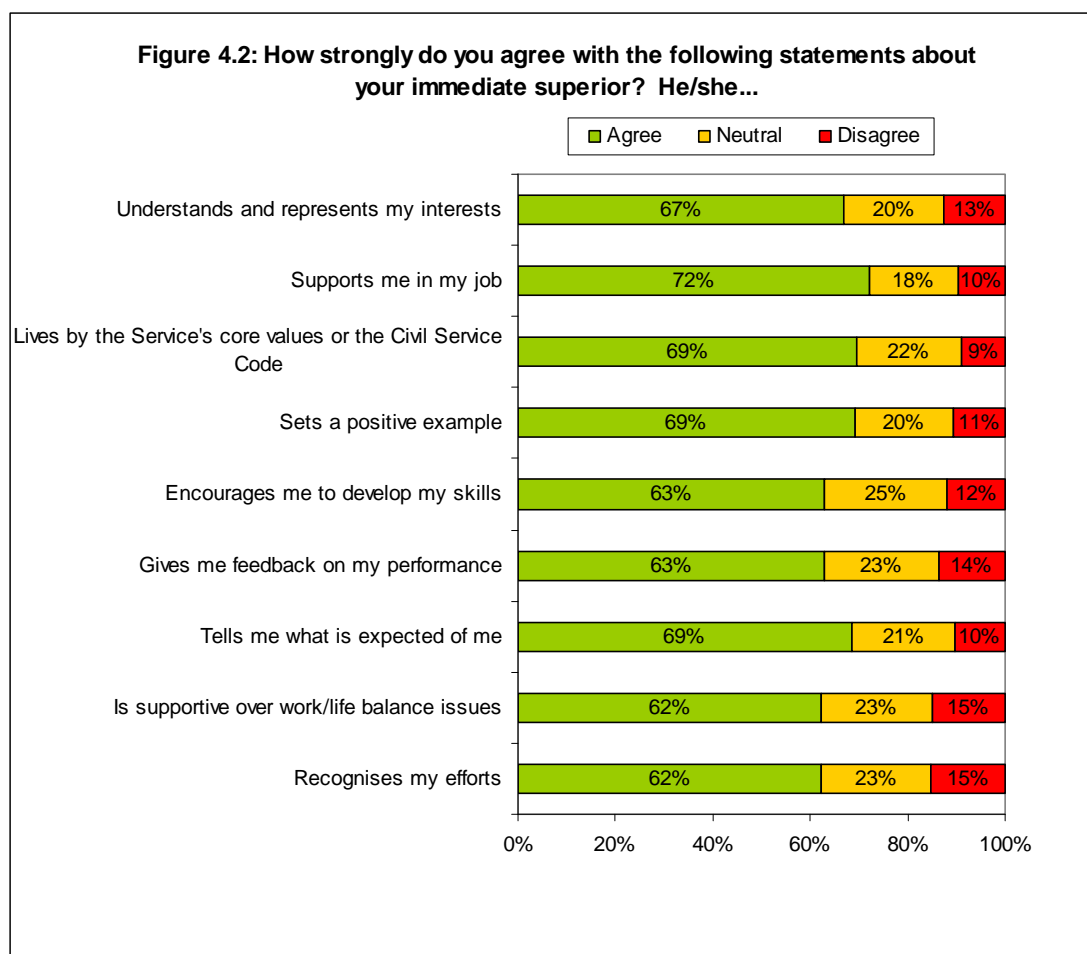
¹¹ RM data for this question was unavailable.

4.7. Overall 28% agreed that senior leaders had been keen to get Service people's views on key decisions. Forty percent of Officers agreed and 25% disagreed. Amongst ORs 26% agreed and 39% disagreed. Agreement was highest amongst Army (32%) and RM (29%) and lowest amongst RN and RAF (both 22%) personnel. Responses were more positive for RN Officers, Soldiers, RAF Officers and Airmen than in 2007.

Immediate superiors

4.8. Responses to the AFCAS section on immediate superiors are in Figure 4.2. The leadership of immediate superiors is highly influential in an individual's behaviour at work. Immediate line management has been found to be predictive of employee satisfaction, perceptions of fairness, motivation and retention¹².

4.9. The majority of respondents' immediate supervisors were from their own Service (88%). A further 9% were from another Service and 3% were civilian. A higher percentage of ORs than Officers had an immediate supervisor from their own Service (89% for ORs and 80% for Officers).



¹² E.g. Likert (1967), cited in Andriessen, E., and Drenth, P. (1998). Leadership: Theories and Models. In P. Drenth, and H. Thierry, and C. Wolff, (Eds) *Organizational Psychology*. East Sussex; Psychology Press Ltd.

- 4.10.** Overall 67% agreed that their immediate superior had understood and represented their interests. Seventy-six percent of Officers and 65% of ORs agreed. Ratings and Airmen responded more positively than in 2007.
- 4.11.** In total 72% agreed that their immediate superior supported them in their job. Eighty-one percent of Officers and 70% of ORs agreed. In comparison with 2007 the results were more positive for Ratings, Soldiers and Airmen.
- 4.12.** Sixty-nine percent agreed that their immediate superior lived by the Service core values or the Civil Service Code. Eighty-two percent of Officers and 67% of ORs agreed. The responses were more positive than in 2007 for Ratings, Soldiers and Airmen.
- 4.13.** Sixty-nine percent agreed that their immediate superior had set a positive example. The responses indicated a positive increase for Ratings, Soldiers and Airmen compared with 2007.
- 4.14.** Overall 63% agreed that their immediate superior had encouraged them to develop their skills. Amongst Officers 69% agreed, and amongst ORs 62% agreed. Due to changes in the wording of the question no comparison can be made with previous responses.
- 4.15.** In total 63% agreed that their immediate superior had given them feedback on their performance. Sixty-six percent of Officers and 62% of ORs agreed. The responses for RM ORs were less positive than in 2007, and the responses for Airmen were more positive.
- 4.16.** In total 69% of respondents agreed that their immediate superior had told them what was expected of them. The responses were more positive for Soldiers and for Airmen than in 2007.
- 4.17.** Sixty-two percent agreed that their immediate superior had been supportive over work/life balance issues. Seventy-one percent of Officers agreed and 60% of ORs agreed. In comparison with 2007 the responses had improved for Ratings, Soldiers and Airmen. Conversely results for Army Officers were less positive compared with 2007.
- 4.18.** Overall 62% agreed that their immediate superior had recognised their efforts. Amongst Officers 71% agreed and amongst ORs 60% agreed. Responses were most positive amongst RAF and RN (for both 66% agreed) personnel and least positive amongst RM (59% agreed) and Army personnel (60% agreed). The responses for Army Officers and RM ORs were more negative than in 2007 whilst the responses for Soldiers and Airmen were more positive.

SECTION 5: CAREER PLANS AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Key Findings

Retention intentions: 63% of Officers planned to stay at least until the end of their current engagement, including the 30% who were planning to stay as long as they could; this latter figure was an increase of 4 percentage points over the 2007 proportion. For ORs the corresponding proportions were 61% and 35%, with the latter figure being 6 percentage points greater than in 2007.

Factors influencing retention: for Officers and ORs, 'Pension' was the factor with the highest proportion of personnel rating it as an influence to stay in. 'Healthcare provision' also received a high proportion of retention-positive ratings. Career and development opportunities were also frequently rated by both groups as influences to remain in the Services. 'Excitement', 'Job satisfaction' and 'Continuity of Education Allowance' had stronger retention-positive influences for Officers than for ORs, whilst 'Financial Retention Incentives' were more retention-positive for ORs than for Officers.

Where influences to leave the Service were concerned, the same factor was the most influential for Officers and for ORs: 'Impact of (Service) life on family and personal life'. Also frequently rated as influential for both groups were 'Effect of operational commitment and stretch', 'Frequency of operational tours/deployments', and 'Service accommodation'. 'Spouse/partner's career' and 'Opportunities outside the (Service)' were relatively more influential for Officers than for ORs, whilst 'Pay' and 'Management in my unit' were more influential for ORs than for Officers.

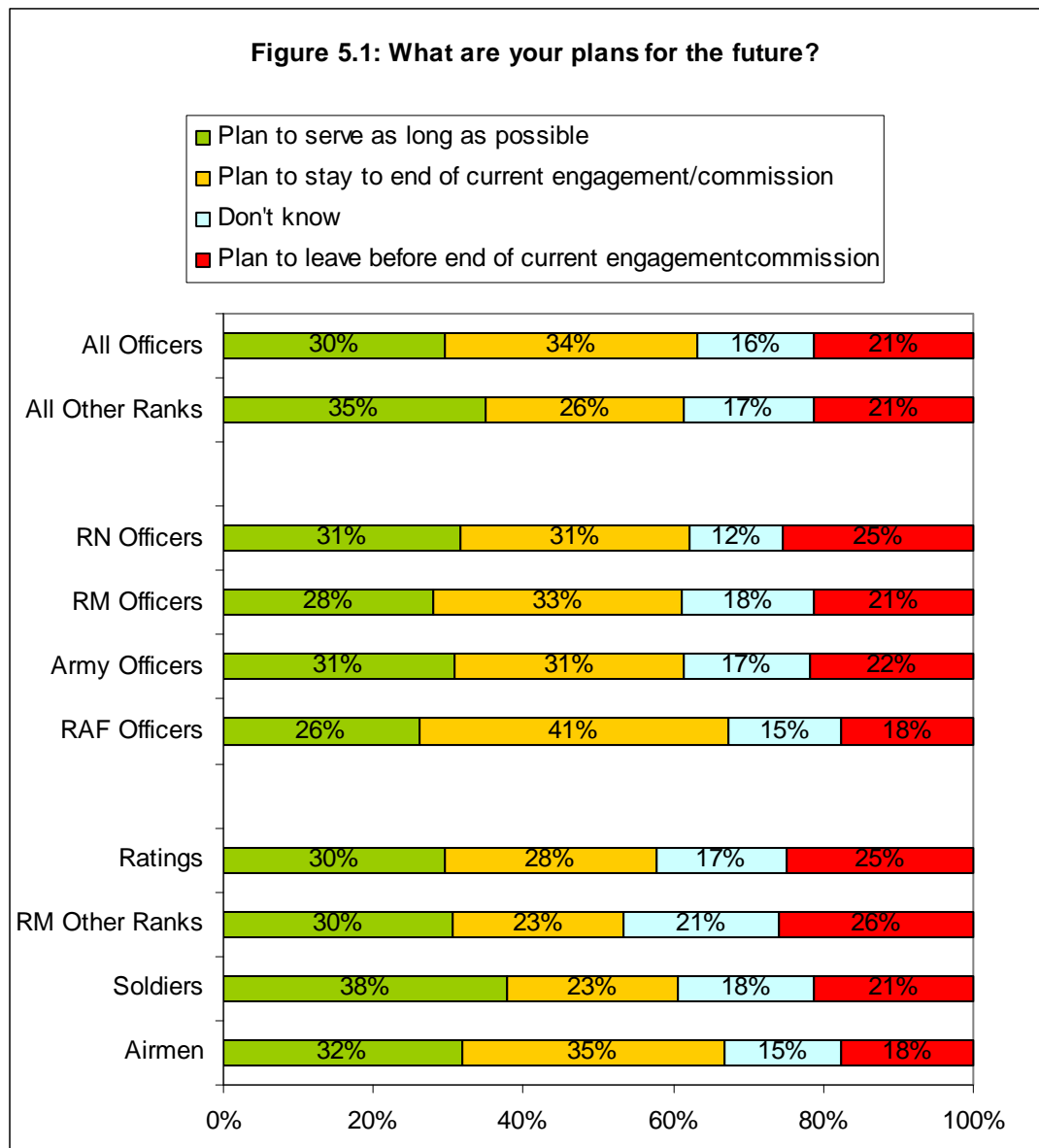
There was a marked increase in the responses to three retention influences between 2007 and 2008: 'Opportunities outside the Service', 'Amount of pay' and 'Amount of allowances'. The former was less retention negative and the latter were more retention positive. This finding was consistent with the deepening economic recession at the time of the 2008 survey affecting perceptions of the security and benefits of civilian employment; also the 2008 Armed Forces Pay Award had included an increase in the base X-Factor from 13% to 14%, and increased X-Factor for more senior Officer ranks.

Amongst Officers higher proportions were satisfied than dissatisfied with Service career management apart from RAF, where the reverse was the case.

Satisfaction with Service training and development opportunities Higher proportions of each of Officers and ORs were satisfied than were dissatisfied with their opportunities for personal development, the training they had received for their Service jobs and the extent to which they were doing the job for which they had been trained.

5.1. This section is in 4 parts; retention intentions; factors influencing retention (overall, Service comparisons and comparisons between 2007 and 2008 AFCAS results) satisfaction with Service career management; and satisfaction with Service training and development opportunities.

Retention intentions



5.2. Responses to the AFCAS item concerning plans for the future are shown in Figure 5.1. Sixty-three percent of Officers planned to stay at least until the end of their current engagement, including the 30% who were planning to stay as long as they could; this latter figure was an increase of 4 percentage points over the 2007 proportion. For ORs the corresponding proportions were 61% and 35%, with the latter figure being 6 percentage

points greater than in 2007. Twenty-one percent of each of Officers and ORs intended to leave their Service before the end of their engagement, whilst 16% and 17% respectively responded 'don't know' when asked about their intentions for the future.

5.3. Compared with 2007 the proportions of Ratings and Soldiers who intended to stay in as long as they could increased by 8 percentage points, and RM ORs increased by 6 percentage points.

Factors influencing retention - overall

5.4. The AFCAS questionnaire listed 23 factors and asked respondents to indicate whether each increased their intentions to stay in their Service, increased their intentions to leave or did not affect their intentions. The data obtained are summarised in Figures 5.2 and 5.3, for all Officers and all ORs respectively.

5.5. In total, for both Officers and ORs, 'Pension' was the factor with the highest proportion of personnel rating it as an influence to stay in. 'Healthcare provision' also received a high proportion of retention-positive ratings. Career and development opportunities were also frequently rated by both groups as influences to remain in the Services. 'Excitement', 'Job satisfaction' and 'Continuity of Education Allowance'¹³ had stronger retention-positive influences for Officers than for ORs, whilst the reverse was true for 'Financial Retention Incentives'¹⁴.

¹³ For personnel supporting a child or children financially.

¹⁴ Financial Retention Incentives are available to a higher proportion of ORs than of Officers.

Figure 5.2: All Officers: Factors influencing retention intentions

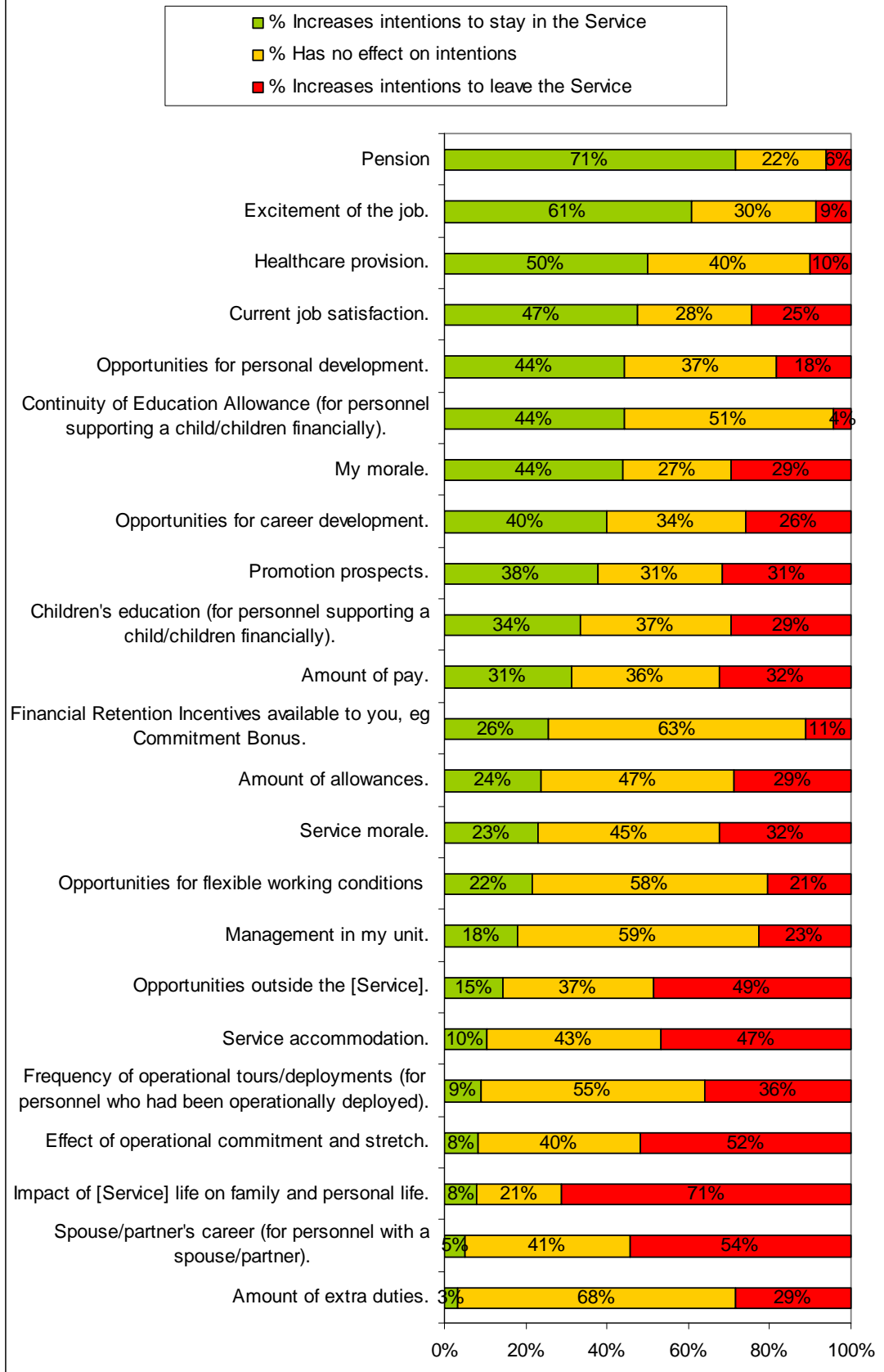
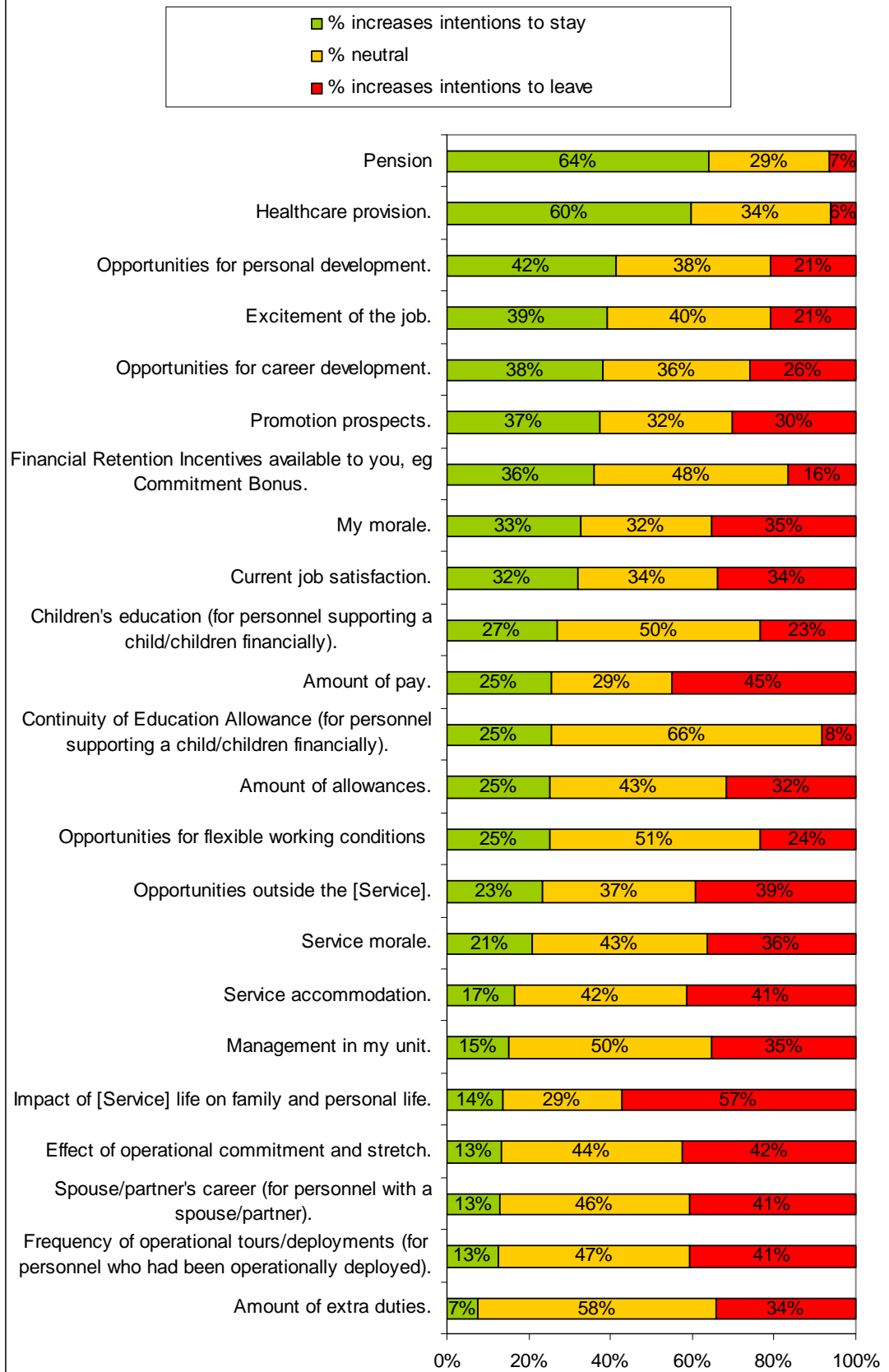


Figure 5.3: All Other Ranks: Factors influencing retention intentions



Factors influencing retention – Service comparisons

5.6. Tables 5.1 and 5.2 at the end of this section show that the ‘Top Ten’ factors most frequently rated as influences to stay were very similar across Services. For each of Officers and ORs ‘Excitement of the job’ had more relative influence for the RM and Army than for the RN and RAF, whilst amongst Officers, compared with the other Services, ‘Service morale’ had most relative influence for the RM, ‘Amount of pay’ for the RN, ‘Continuity of Education Allowance’ for the Army, and ‘Financial Retention Incentives’ for the RAF¹⁵.

5.7. Where influences to leave the Service were concerned, Tables 5.3 and 5.4 at the end of this section show that overall the same factor was the most influential for Officers and for ORs: ‘Impact of (Service) life on family and personal life’. Also frequently rated as influential for both groups were ‘Effect of operational commitment and stretch’, ‘Frequency of operational tours/deployments’¹⁶, and ‘Service accommodation’. ‘Spouse/ partner’s career’ and ‘Opportunities outside the (Service)’ were relatively more influential for Officers than for ORs, whilst the opposite was true for ‘Amount of pay’ and for ‘Management in my unit’.

5.8. There were more differences between the Services in their ‘Top Ten’ influences to leave than there were in the ‘Top Ten’ influences to stay in. For Officers, ‘Service morale’ was a ‘Top Ten’ influence to leave for RN and RAF but not for RM and Army, whilst the opposite was true for ‘Amount of pay’. ‘Service accommodation’ and ‘Spouse/partner’s career’¹⁷ were relatively more influential for Army and RAF. Amongst ORs, ‘Service morale’ was a ‘Top Ten’ influence to leave for RN and RAF but not for RM and Army, but the reverse was true for ‘Management in my unit’. For RM ‘Amount of pay’ was the factor most frequently rated as an influence to leave, and the RM ORs were the only non-commissioned group to have ‘Amount of allowances’ in their ‘Top Ten’.

Factors influencing retention – comparison between 2007 and 2008 AFCAS results

5.9. Table 5.5 at the end of this section summarises the statistically significant differences in factors’ scoring as retention influences between the 2007 and 2008 AFCAS surveys. Consistent with the more positive retention intentions expressed in the 2008 AFCAS than in the 2007 survey (see paragraphs 5.2 and 5.3), the vast majority of the differences were more positive in 2008, i.e. higher proportions of respondents rating them as influences to stay in and/or lower proportions rating them as influences to leave. The only instances of 2008 results being less positive, were for ‘Effect of operational commitment and stretch’ and ‘Frequency of operational

¹⁵ Possibly due to the incentives targeting aircrew.

¹⁶ For those who had been operationally deployed.

¹⁷ For those who were married, in a civil partnership or in a long-term/established relationship.

tours/deployments'¹⁸ for RM ORs, and 'Financial Retention Incentives available to you' for Officers and for RN personnel.

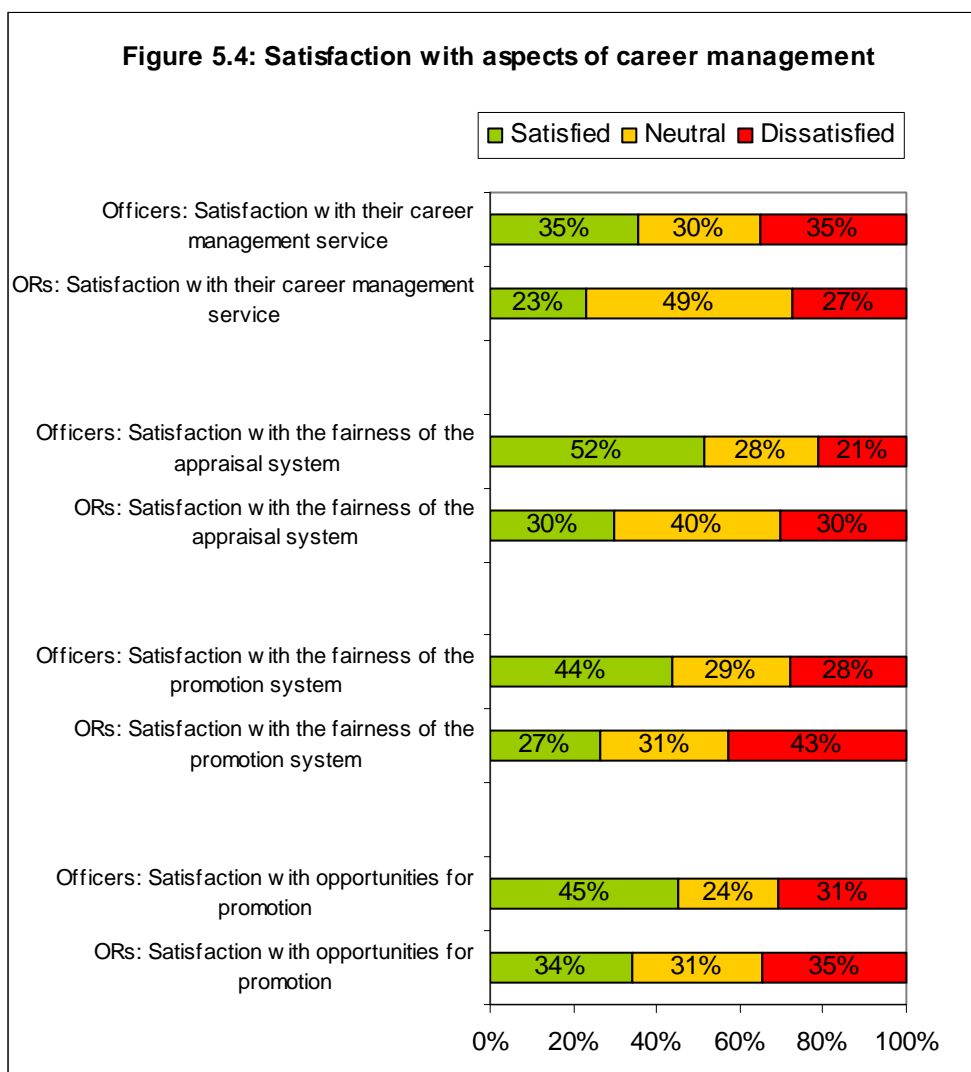
5.10. The positive differences in responses between the 2007 and 2008 surveys which were the greatest, and the most prevalent across groups, were for 'Opportunities outside the Service', followed by the differences for 'Amount of pay' and 'Amount of allowances'. This finding was consistent with the deepening economic recession at the time of the 2008 survey affecting perceptions of the security and benefits of civilian employment; also the 2008 Armed Forces Pay Award had included an increase in the base X-Factor from 13% to 14%, and increased X-Factor for more senior Officer ranks.

5.11. Other notable results were positive trends in scoring of the retention influences of the following: 'Service morale' and 'My morale' amongst RN personnel and respectively Army Officers and Soldiers; 'Frequency of operational tours/deployments'¹⁹ and 'Effect of operational commitment and stretch' amongst all Army personnel and Soldiers respectively; 'Management in my unit' amongst ORs in total; 'Career development opportunities', 'Personal development opportunities' and 'Promotion prospects' amongst Ratings and Soldiers; 'Healthcare provision' amongst RM personnel, Ratings and RAF Officers; and 'Amount of extra duties' amongst RN Officers, RM ORs and Soldiers.

¹⁸ For those who had been operationally deployed.

¹⁹ For those who had been operationally deployed.

Satisfaction with aspects of Service career management



5.12. Figure 5.4 shows that in total similar proportions of Officer respondents were satisfied and were dissatisfied with their career management service; however only 20% of RAF Officers were satisfied (albeit an increase of 5 percentage points compared with 2007) as opposed to 48% dissatisfied.

5.13. Forty-nine percent of ORs reported themselves 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' with their career management service. Fewer Soldiers reported themselves to be dissatisfied in 2008 than in 2007 (down 5 percentage points) and Airmen were more satisfied (up 6 percentage points), although still only 16% of Airmen were satisfied compared with proportions ranging from 24% to 28% for the other Services' ORS. Ratings were the only group to show a positive balance of opinion with 28% satisfied compared with 22% dissatisfied.

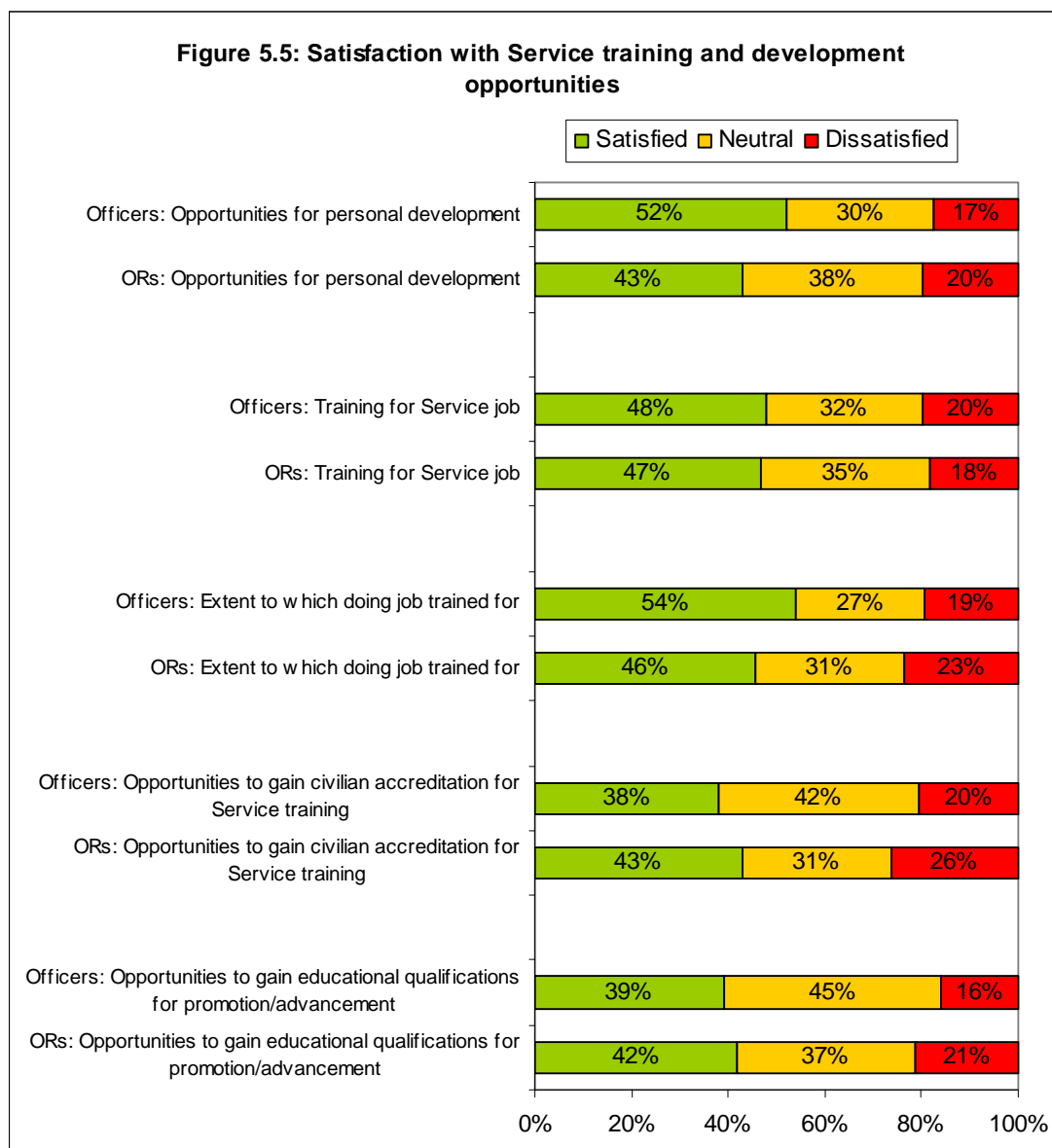
5.14. The AFCAS questionnaire asked respondents to indicate their satisfaction with the fairness of their Service's appraisal and promotion systems. The results obtained are shown in Figure 5.4.

5.15. Fifty-two percent of Officers were satisfied and 21% dissatisfied with the fairness of their appraisal systems. Overall there had been an increase of 3 percentage points compared with 2007 in the proportion of Officer respondents dissatisfied, and amongst Army Officers a decrease of 6 percentage points in the proportion satisfied. Where the fairness of promotion systems was concerned, the largest proportions of Officers described themselves as 'satisfied' for all Services except RAF, for whom the largest proportion (38%) was dissatisfied.

5.16. For ORs overall, the largest proportion (40%) was neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the fairness of their appraisal system; this was the case for all groups except Airmen, for whom the largest proportion (44%) was dissatisfied. The proportion of Soldiers dissatisfied had decreased by 7 percentage points compared with 2007. ORs' ratings of satisfaction with the fairness of promotion systems showed the largest proportion (43%) to be dissatisfied here; compared with the 2007 AFCAS results 6 percentage points fewer RM ORs were satisfied and 7 percentage points more dissatisfied, but 5 percentage points fewer Soldiers were dissatisfied.

5.17. Figure 5.4 shows that although overall the largest proportion of Officers (45%) was satisfied with their promotion opportunities, for RN and RAF Officers the largest proportions were dissatisfied, although the proportion of RN Officers who were dissatisfied was 7 percentage points lower in 2008 than in 2007. Amongst ORs in total similar proportions were satisfied and dissatisfied with their promotion opportunities, but at the individual Service level although the largest proportion of Soldiers (39%) was satisfied, for the other Services the largest proportions of respondents were dissatisfied. The proportion of RM ORs dissatisfied was 7 percentage points higher in 2008 than in 2007. For the RN in total the proportion of personnel satisfied with their promotion opportunities was 4 percentage points higher in 2008 than in 2007.

Satisfaction with Service training and development opportunities



5.18. Respondents' ratings of satisfaction with their opportunities for personal development are shown in Figure 5.5. Overall 52% of Officers were satisfied and 17% dissatisfied. The proportions for ORs were 43% and 20% respectively. The RM ORs' results were the least positive, and the proportion satisfied was lower than in 2007 and the proportion dissatisfied was higher. Fewer Soldiers expressed dissatisfaction than in 2007.

5.19. Figure 5.5 shows respondents' level of satisfaction with their training for their Service jobs. Forty-eight percent of Officers were satisfied and 20% dissatisfied. Fewer Officers were satisfied than in 2007, with the proportion for Army Officers being 7 percentage points lower. For ORs overall the proportions were similar to those for Officers. The RM ORs' results were less positive than in 2007, with 8 percentage points fewer satisfied and 6 percentage points more dissatisfied.

5.20. Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with the extent to which they were doing the job for which they were trained. Figure 5.5 shows that 54% of Officers were satisfied and 19% dissatisfied, with the corresponding proportions for ORs being 46% and 23%.

5.21. Responses to the item 'How satisfied are you with your opportunities to gain civilian accreditation for Service training e.g. NVQs and in-service degrees?' are shown in Figure 5.5. The largest proportion of Officers (42%) responded 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied', whilst for ORs overall the largest proportion (43%) was satisfied, although for RM ORs the largest proportion (38%) was dissatisfied. The proportion of RM Officers who were satisfied was 10 percentage points lower than the corresponding figure for 2007, whilst amongst Soldiers fewer were dissatisfied in 2008 than in 2007.

5.22. Figure 5.5 shows responses to the item 'How satisfied are you with your opportunities to gain educational qualifications for promotion/advancement?' Overall 45% of Officers gave neutral responses to this item. Amongst the remainder, there was a positive balance of opinion with 39% of Officers satisfied as opposed to 16% dissatisfied. Amongst ORs overall 42% were satisfied and 21% dissatisfied, although for RM ORs opinion was more equally split. Differences between the 2007 and 2008 AFCAS results were: a 10 percentage point increase in the proportion of RM Officers giving a neutral response; a 7 percentage point increase in the proportion of RM ORs responding 'dissatisfied'; and a 5 percentage point increase in the proportion of Soldiers satisfied combined with a 4 percentage point decrease in their proportion dissatisfied.

Table 5.1: Officers' 'Top Ten' retention-positive factors
(in terms of proportions rating them as influences to stay in the Service)

Total		RN		RM		Army		RAF	
Factor	%	Factor	%	Factor	%	Factor	%	Factor	%
Pension	71	Pension	72	Pension	74	Pension	72	Pension	70
Excitement of the job	61	Excitement of the job	53	Excitement of the job	65	Excitement of the job	65	Excitement of the job	60
Healthcare provision	50	Healthcare provision	51	Healthcare provision	56	Continuity of Education Allowance ¹	55	Current job satisfaction	48
Current job satisfaction	47	Current job satisfaction	46	My morale	51	Healthcare provision	51	Healthcare provision	46
Opportunities for personal development	44	Opportunities for personal development	43	Current job satisfaction	49	Current job satisfaction	47	Opportunities for personal development	43
Continuity of Education Allowance ¹	44	My morale	43	Opportunities for personal development	45	Opportunities for personal development	46	My morale	41
My morale	44	Opportunities for career development	39	Service morale	44	My morale	46	Continuity of Education Allowance ¹	38
Opportunities for career development	40	Amount of pay	37	Promotion prospects	44	Opportunities for career development	43	Opportunities for career development	36
Promotion prospects	38	Promotion prospects	30	Continuity of Education Allowance ¹	39	Promotion prospects	43	Financial Retention Incentives available to you, e.g. Commitment Bonus	34
Children's education ¹	34	Continuity of Education Allowance ¹	29	Opportunities for career development	38	Children's education ¹	40	Promotion prospects	34

1. This factor has been filtered to only include respondents who indicated they had children whom they supported financially.

Table 5.2: ORs' 'Top Ten' retention-positive factors

(in terms of proportions rating them as influences to stay in the Service)

Total		RN		RM		Army		RAF	
Factor	%	Factor	%	Factor	%	Factor	%	Factor	%
Pension	64	Pension	63	Pension	60	Pension	65	Pension	63
Healthcare provision	60	Healthcare provision	59	Healthcare provision	59	Healthcare provision	60	Healthcare provision	59
Opportunities for personal development	42	Opportunities for personal development	39	Excitement of the job	51	Excitement of the job	42	Opportunities for personal development	45
Excitement of the job	39	Financial Retention Incentives available to you, e.g. Commitment Bonus	37	Financial Retention Incentives available to you, e.g. Commitment Bonus	36	Opportunities for personal development	42	Financial Retention Incentives available to you, e.g. Commitment Bonus	37
Opportunities for career development	38	Opportunities for career development	37	My morale	35	Promotion prospects	41	Opportunities for career development	36
Promotion prospects	37	Promotion prospects	36	Opportunities for personal development	34	Opportunities for career development	40	Excitement of the job	35
Financial Retention Incentives available to you, e.g. Commitment Bonus	36	Current job satisfaction	32	Promotion prospects	33	Financial Retention Incentives available to you, e.g. Commitment Bonus	35	Current job satisfaction	33
My morale	33	Excitement of the job	31	Opportunities for career development	30	My morale	35	My morale	29
Current job satisfaction	32	My morale	30	Current job satisfaction	30	Current job satisfaction	32	Promotion prospects	29
Children's education ¹	27	Amount of pay	28	Opportunities for flexible working conditions	29	Children's education ¹	30	Continuity of Education Allowance ¹	26

1. This factor has been filtered to only include respondents who indicated they had children whom they supported financially.

Table 5.3: Officers' 'Top Ten' retention-negative factors
(in terms of proportions rating them as influences to leave the Service)

Total		RN		RM		Army		RAF	
Factor	%	Factor	%	Factor	%	Factor	%	Factor	%
Impact of [Service] life on family and personal life	71	Impact of [Service] life on family and personal life	66	Impact of [Service] life on family and personal life	73	Impact of [Service] life on family and personal life	72	Impact of [Service] life on family and personal life	74
Spouse/partner's career ¹	54	Effect of operational commitment and stretch	56	Effect of operational commitment and stretch	59	Spouse/partner's career ¹	59	Effect of operational commitment and stretch	59
Effect of operational commitment and stretch	52	Opportunities outside the [Service]	53	Opportunities outside the [Service]	54	Service accommodation	52	Spouse/partner's career ¹	57
Opportunities outside the [Service]	49	Promotion prospects	44	Amount of pay	43	Effect of operational commitment and stretch	46	Service accommodation	52
Service accommodation	47	Spouse/partner's career ¹	42	Frequency of operational tours/deployments ²	42	Opportunities outside the [Service]	45	Opportunities outside the [Service]	51
Frequency of operational tours/deployments ²	36	Service morale	38	Amount of allowances	40	Amount of pay	36	Frequency of operational tours/deployments ²	42
Service morale	32	Frequency of operational tours/deployments ²	33	Spouse/partner's career ¹	40	Frequency of operational tours/deployments ²	34	Service morale	41
Amount of pay	32	Amount of extra duties	31	Service accommodation	37	Children's education ³	30	Children's education ³	37
Promotion prospects	31	My morale	30	Promotion prospects	29	My morale	28	Promotion prospects	36
My morale	29	Opportunities for career development	30	Opportunities for career development	26	Amount of allowances	27	Amount of extra duties	36

1. This factor has been filtered to only include respondents who indicated they were married/ in a civil partnership or in a long term/ established relationship.

2. This factor has been filtered to only include respondents indicated that they had been deployed at some point in their career.

3. This factor has been filtered to only include respondents who indicated they had children whom they supported financially.

Table 5.4: ORs' 'Top Ten' retention-negative factors
(in terms of proportions rating them as influences to leave the Service)

Total		RN		RM		Army		RAF	
Factor	%	Factor	%	Factor	%	Factor	%	Factor	%
Impact of [Service] life on family and personal life	57	Impact of [Service] life on family and personal life	64	Amount of pay	62	Impact of [Service] life on family and personal life	54	Impact of [Service] life on family and personal life	61
Amount of pay	45	Effect of operational commitment and stretch	50	Impact of [Service] life on family and personal life	62	Amount of pay	46	Effect of operational commitment and stretch	57
Effect of operational commitment and stretch	42	Frequency of operational tours/ deployments ¹	45	Amount of allowances	51	Spouse/partner's career ²	42	Frequency of operational tours/ deployments ¹	52
Service accommodation	41	Amount of extra duties	43	Opportunities outside the [Service]	46	Service accommodation	41	Service accommodation	51
Frequency of operational tours/ deployments ¹	41	Opportunities outside the [Service]	42	Effect of operational commitment and stretch	46	Management in my unit	38	Service morale	50
Spouse/partner's career ²	41	Service morale	42	Frequency of operational tours/ deployments ¹	42	Opportunities outside the [Service]	36	Amount of pay	44
Opportunities outside the [Service]	39	My morale	40	Service accommodation	41	Frequency of operational tours/ deployments ¹	35	Opportunities outside the [Service]	44
Service morale	36	Amount of pay	39	Current job satisfaction	38	Effect of operational commitment and stretch	35	Spouse/partner's career ²	42
Management in my unit.	35	Spouse/partner's career ²	36	Management in my unit	37	Current job satisfaction	34	Promotion prospects	42
My morale	35	Current job satisfaction	32	My morale	36	My morale	32	My morale	42

1. This factor has been filtered to only include respondents indicated that they had been deployed at some point in their career.

2. This factor has been filtered to only include respondents who indicated they were married/ in a civil partnership or in a long term/ established relationship.

Table 5.5: Summary of statistically significant differences (1% level) between AFCAS07 and AFCAS08 ratings of factors' retention influences

Retention-positive trend

Retention-negative trend

Retention-neutral trend or no significant trend

Factor	TOTAL			RN			RM			ARMY			RAF		
	Officers	ORs	Total	Officers	ORs	Total	Officers	ORs	Total	Officers	ORs	Total	Officers	ORs	Total
Impact of [Service] life on family and personal life															
Effect of operational commitment and stretch.		L -4	L -3					L +6	L +6		L -5	L -4			
Opportunities outside the [Service]	S +6 N +4 L -10	S +8 N +3 L -11	S +8 N +3 L -11	S +6 L -12	S +9 L -13	S +9 N +4 L -13	S +10 L -10	S +11 L -11	S +11 L -11	S +9 L -12	S +8 L -11	S +8 L -11		S +8 L -8	S +6 L -8
Management in my unit		S +2 L -3	S +2				S +9 N -11	N -8	S +4 N -9						
Current job satisfaction					S +6 N -5	S +6 N -4									
My morale	L -4	L -4	S +3 L -4	S +8 L -7	S +4	S +5 L -5					L -5	L -4			
Service morale	N +4 L -6	L -3	S +2 L -4	L -6	L -5	S +3 L -5				L -6		L -5			
Amount of extra duties	S +1 N -4	S +3	S +3	S +2 N -6		S +2		S +3	S +3		S +4	S +3			
Amount of pay	S +7 L -5	S +5	S +6 N -2 L -3	S +8 L -6	S +8 L -9	S +8 L -8		S +6	S +6	S +7 L -6	S +6	S +6	S +8		S +3 N -3
Amount of allowances	S +6 L -4	S +6 L -5	S +6 L -5	S +7	S +8 L -8	S +8 L -7		S +6 N -8	S +6 N -8	S +6	S +8 L -6	S +7 L -6	S +5		
Opportunities for career development		S +6 N -3	S +5 N -3		S +7 L -4	S +6 L -4	S +8				S +7	S +6			
Opportunities for personal development		S +5 L -3	S +4 L -3		S +5	S +5					S +6 L -5	S +6 L -5			
Promotion prospects		S +3	S +3		S +5 L -5	S +5 L -5					S +5				
Healthcare provision	S +4 L -3	S +4 N -3	S +4 N -3 L -1		S +9 N -6 L -3	S +8 N -5 L -2	S +14 N -12	S +9 N -8	S +10 N -8					L -5	
Pension		S +4 N -4	S +4 N -3		S +5	S +4 N -4		N -6	N -6						N -4
Opportunities for flexible working conditions															
Excitement of the job		S +4	S +4								S +5	S +5			S +4
Children's education ¹	N +5 L -6	L -6	N +4 L -6							N +8	L -10	N +6 L -10			
Financial Retention Incentives available to you	S -5 L +3				N -5	L +3									
Spouse/partner's career ²							S +5								
Continuity of Education Allowance ¹		S +4													
Frequency of operational tours/ deployments ³	N +5 L -5		N +3 L -4					S -8 L +7	S -6 L +7	N +7 L -7	L -5	L -6			
Service accommodation					S +4 L -6	S +3 L -5									

Notes

S denotes percentage rating a factor as increasing their intentions to stay in their Service
 N denotes percentage rating a factor as having no effect on their intentions to stay in their Service
 L denotes percentage rating a factor as increasing their intentions to leave their Service

Examples: 'S +4' denotes a statistically significant increase of 4 percentage points of the proportion of personnel indicating the factor increases their intention to stay. Whilst, 'L +4' denotes a statistically significant increase of 4 percentage points of the proportion of personnel indicating the factor increases their intention to leave.

1. This factor has been filtered to only include respondents who indicated they had children whom they supported financially.
2. This factor has been filtered to only include respondents who indicated they were married/ in a civil partnership or in a long term/ established relationship.
3. This factor has been filtered to only include respondents indicated that they had been deployed at some point in their career.

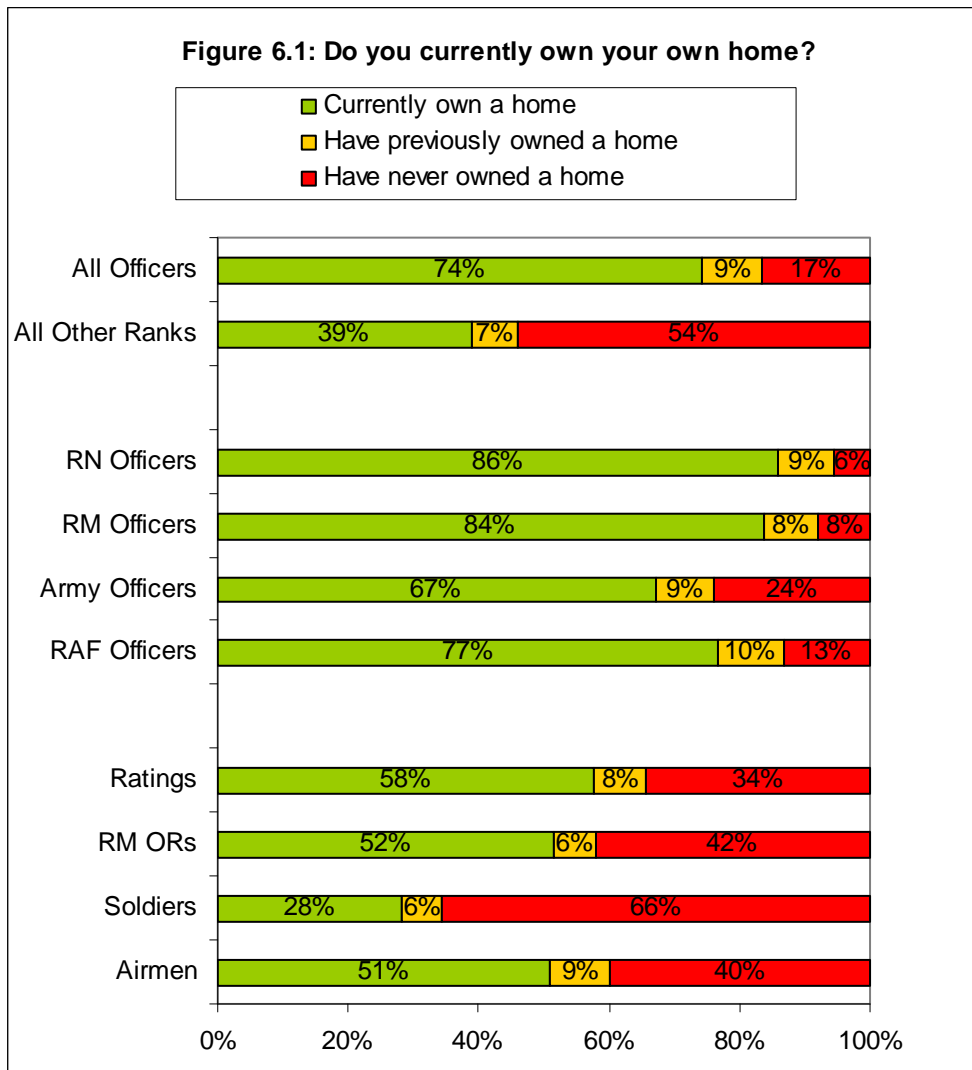
SECTION 6: ACCOMMODATION**Key Findings**

Forty-five percent of respondents (74% of Officers and 39% of ORs) owned a home; Officers were more likely to own a home than were ORs, and Army personnel were less likely to own homes than were their counterparts in the other Services. Over half of those who had bought homes did so to obtain stability for themselves and their families. Dissatisfaction with aspects of Service accommodation was listed as the most important reason for only 8% of purchases.

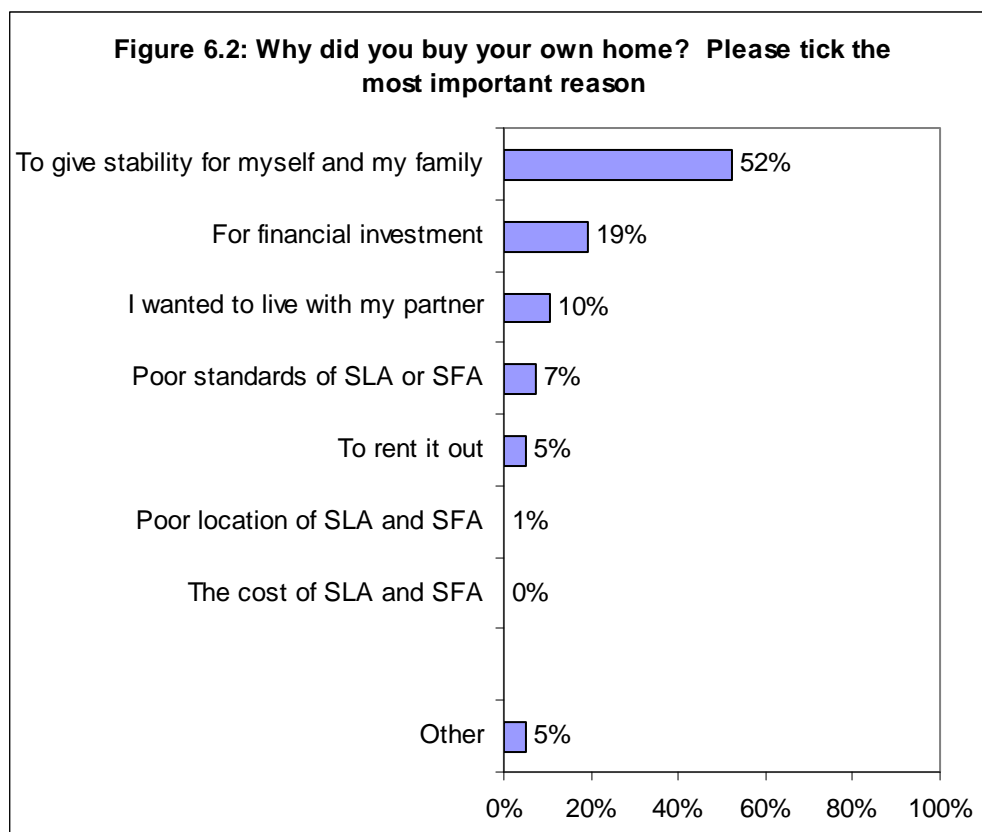
Seventy-seven percent of respondents lived in accommodation provided by the Service during the working week: 37% of Officers and 39% of ORs lived in Service Families Accommodation (SFA), and 27% of Officers and 33% of ORs in land-based Single Living Accommodation (SLA). Whilst they reported prevailing satisfaction with the standard and the value for money of their accommodation, there was prevailing dissatisfaction with the efforts made to maintain and improve it.

One third of respondents used Pay As You Dine (PAYD); they reported prevailing dissatisfaction with the quantity and quality of the food provided.

Home ownership



6.1. Overall, 45% of the 2008 AFCAS respondents (74% of Officers and 39% of ORs) reported that they owned a home (whether they lived in it or not). Figure 6.1 shows that there were rank and Service differences in the proportions of current home owners. Officers were more likely to own a home than were ORs, and Army personnel were less likely to own homes than were their counterparts in the other Services.

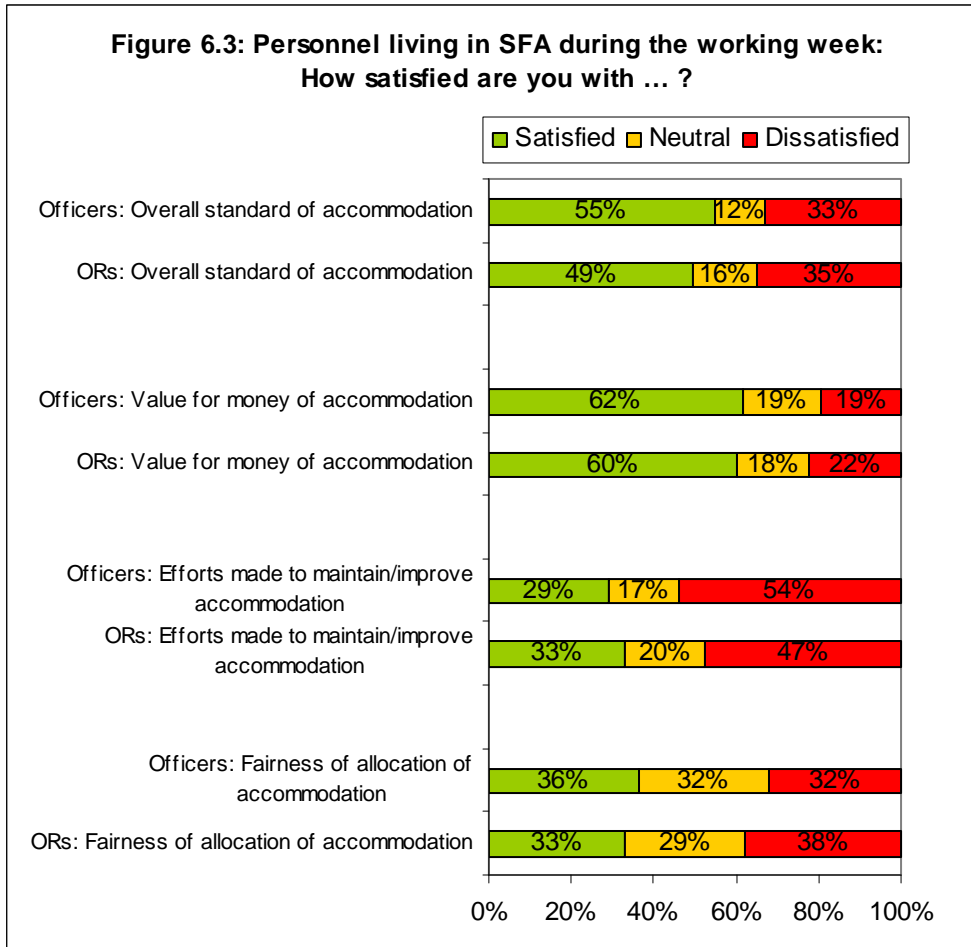


6.2. Figure 6.2 shows that over half of the respondents who had bought homes (52%) did so to obtain stability for themselves and their families. Financial investment (19%) was the next most frequently quoted reason for home ownership. Dissatisfaction with aspects of Service accommodation was listed as the most important reason for only 8% purchases.

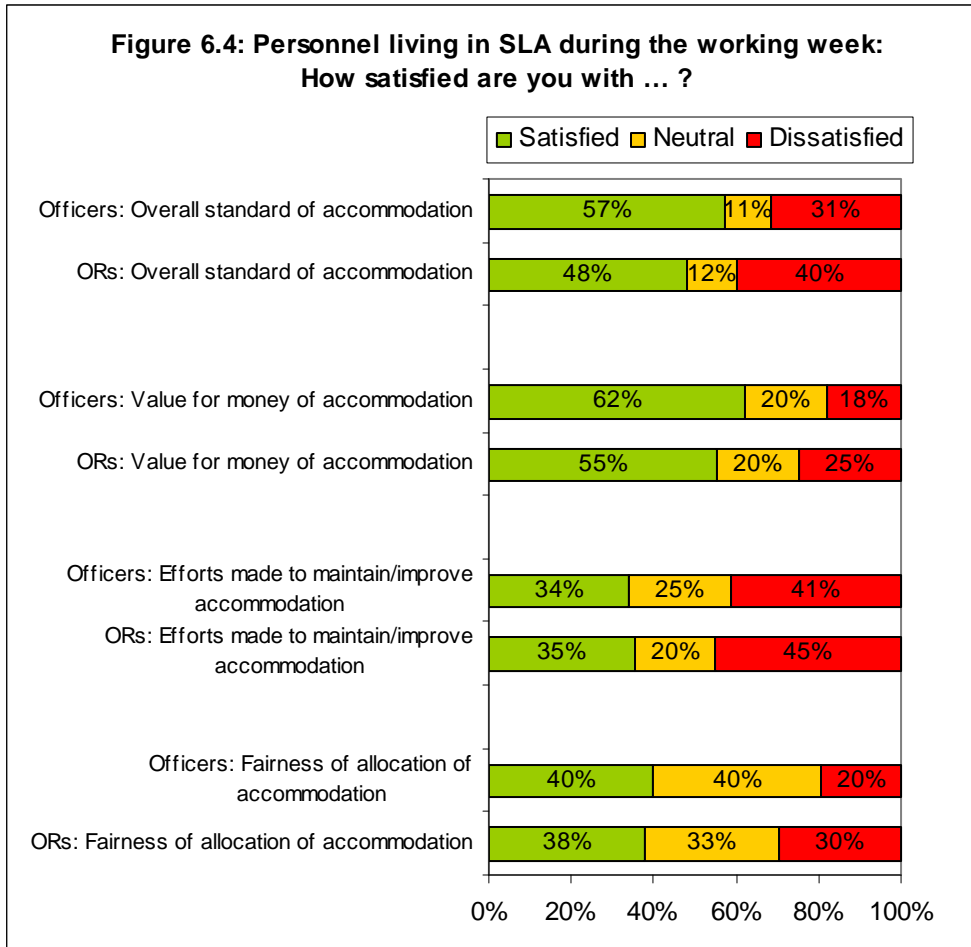
Service accommodation

6.3. Table B6.3 of Annex B shows that 77% of the 2008 AFCAS respondents lived in accommodation provided by the Service during the working week. Thirty-seven percent of Officers and 39% of ORs lived in Service Families Accommodation (SFA), and 27% of Officers and 33% of ORs in land-based Single Living Accommodation (SLA).

6.4. AFCAS explored satisfaction with aspects of Service accommodation; due to the small numbers occupying other types of Service accommodation only the results from those living in SFA and land-based SLA are reported here.

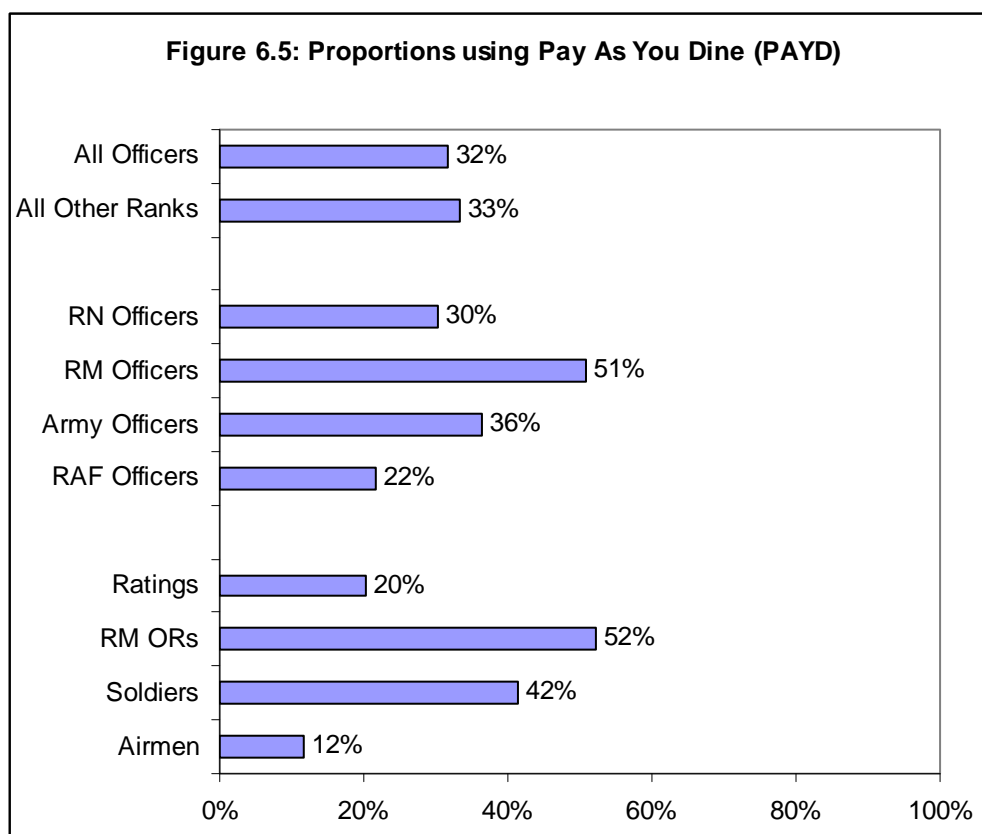


6.5. Figure 6.3 shows data from personnel who lived in SFA during the working week. Whilst there was prevailing satisfaction with the standard and the value for money of SFA, opinions were divided about its fairness of allocation and there was prevailing dissatisfaction with the efforts made to maintain and improve it. Compared with the 2007 AFCAS more Soldiers were dissatisfied (increase of 6 percentage points) with the value for money of SFA, but fewer RAF Officers were dissatisfied (decrease of 10 percentage points).



6.6. Figure 6.4 shows data from personnel who lived in shore-based SLA during the working week. There was prevailing satisfaction with the standard, the value for money and the fairness of allocation of SLA, but prevailing dissatisfaction with the efforts made to maintain and improve it. Compared with 2007, Ratings were more satisfied with the standard of their SLA (by 14 percentage points) and with its value for money and efforts to improve it (each by 10 percentage points).

Pay As You Dine (PAYD)



6.7. Figure 6.5 (base data Table 6.7 of Annex X) shows the rank and inter-Service differences in the proportions of AFCAS respondents who used Pay As You Dine (PAYD): RM had the highest proportions, and RAF the lowest. There was prevailing dissatisfaction with the quantity and quality of the food provided for all Services and for each of Officers and ORs: overall 35% were satisfied and 47% dissatisfied with the quality, with the comparable figures for the quantity being 31% and 50%.

SECTION 7: PERSONAL LIFE

Key Findings

Approximately half of the respondents were married and a further quarter of respondents were in a long term relationship. Over half of the partners/spouses were in full time employment. Approximately half of respondents had children whom they supported financially.

Overall less than 50% of personnel were satisfied with the impact of Service life on their personal life. The highest areas of dissatisfaction (over half dissatisfied) were the impact of Service life on spouse/partner's career and the ability to plan their own life in the long term. Approximately 40% were dissatisfied with their ability to plan their life in the short term, separation from friends and family, the support that their spouse/partner gets when they are absent and the impact of Service life on their children's education. Over 20% were dissatisfied with the Operational Welfare Package. Satisfaction was highest amongst RAF personnel.

Married personnel were the more satisfied with their ability to plan their own life in the short and long term and with separation from friends and family compared with those in long term relationships. However those who were married were more dissatisfied with the impact of Service life on their children's education and spouse/partner's career.

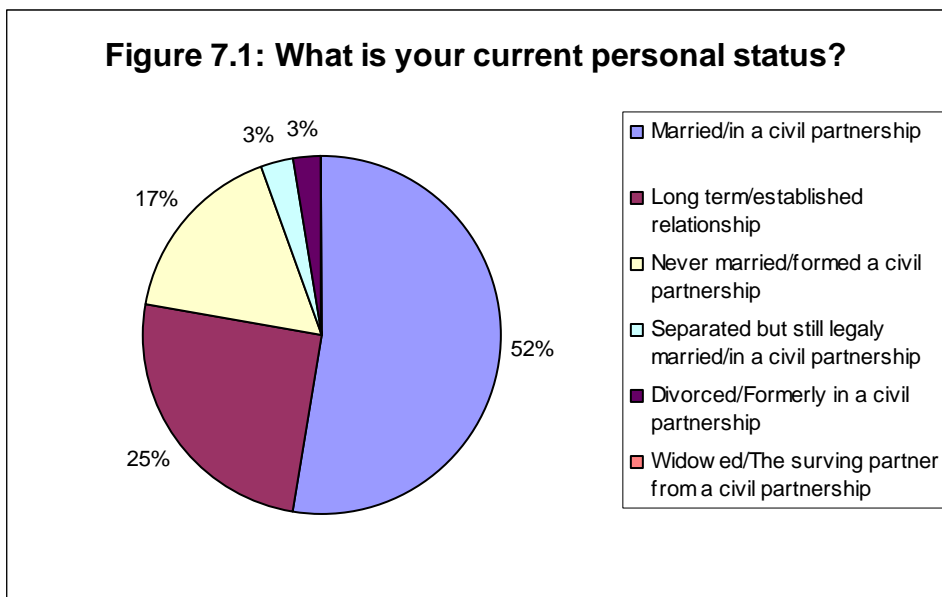
7.1. This section reports the results from the AFCAS items asking about personal life. Due to the unique nature of a career in the Services it has a substantial impact on the personal lives of serving personnel. Imbalance between work and personal life impacts on individual health and job satisfaction, but also on key organisational behaviours including motivation, performance and turnover. Conversely work-life balance is associated with individual job satisfaction and motivation^{20, 21}.

Personal status of respondents

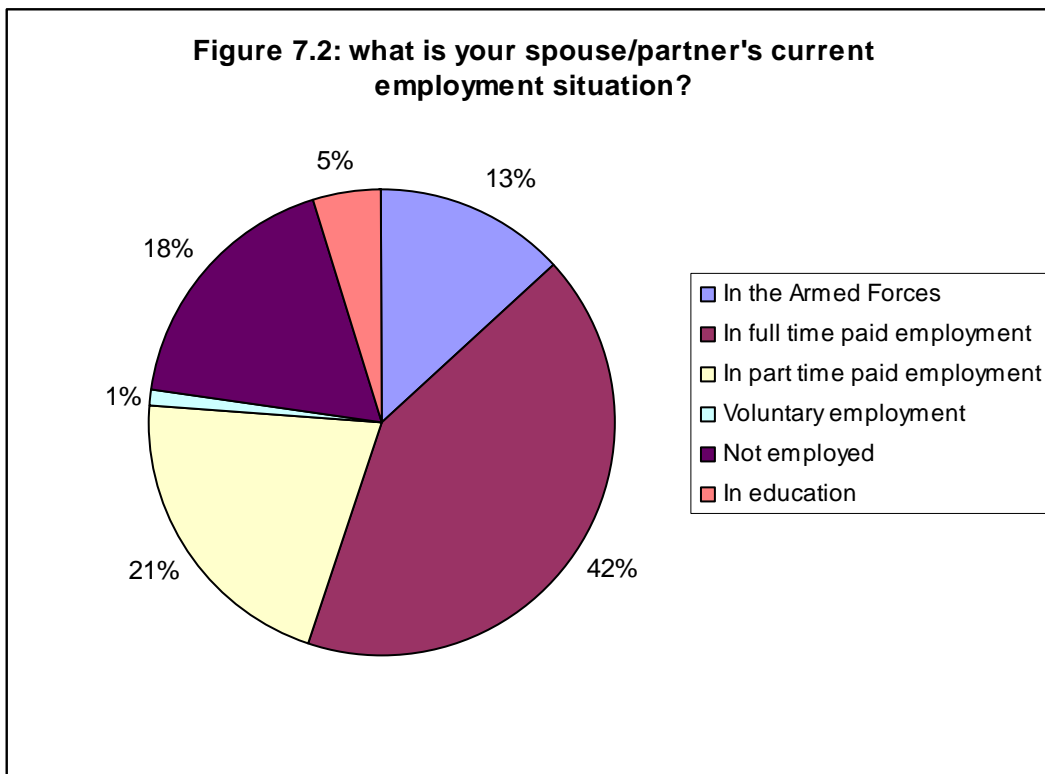
7.2. Responses to the AFCAS items concerning personal status are shown in Figures 7.1 & 7.2.

²⁰ Klein, D. (2008). Business impact of flexibility: An imperative for working families. In Marcus-Newhall, A., Halpern, D., and Tan, S. *The Changing Realities of Work and Family*. Wiley-Blackwell; West Sussex.

²¹ Drago, R., Colbeck, C., Hollenshead, C. and Sullivan, B. (2008). Work-family policies and avoidance of bias against care giving. In Marcus-Newhall, A., Halpern, D., and Tan, S. *The Changing Realities of Work and Family*. Wiley-Blackwell; West Sussex.



7.3. Overall 52% of personnel were married/in a civil partnership, and an additional 25% were in a long term relationship. Seventeen percent had never been married or in a civil partnership (single). Amongst Officers 69% were married/in a civil partnership, 15% were in a long term relationship and 12% had never been married or in a civil partnership. Amongst ORs 49% were married/in a civil partnership, 27% were in a long term relationship and 18% has never been married/or in a civil partnership.



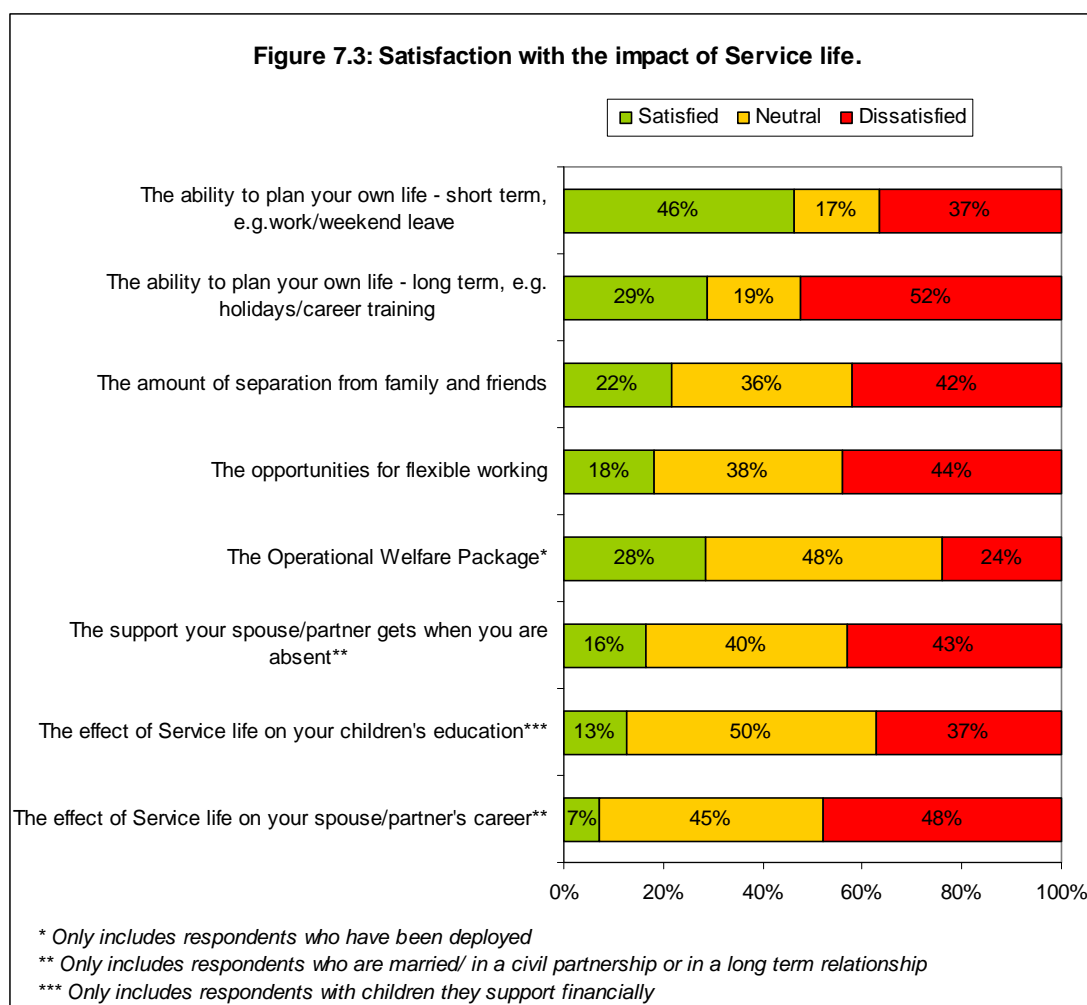
Only includes respondents who are married/ in a civil partnership or in a long term/ established relationship.

7.4. Of those who had a spouse or partner over half were in full time employment either within or outside the Armed Forces. A further 21% were in part time employment. Amongst Officers' spouses/partners 50% were in full time employment (12% in the Armed Forces), and 24% were in part time employment. Twenty-one percent were not employed. Amongst ORs 56% had spouses/partners who were in full time employment (14% in the Armed Forces), and 20% were in part time employment. Eighteen percent were not employed.

7.5. In total 48% of respondents had children whom they financially supported (Officers 54% and ORs 47%). Of those who had children 52% had children under the age of 5 years old (Officers 34%, ORs 56%), 60% had children of school age (5-16 years) (Officers 62% and ORs 60%) and 16% had children over the age of 16 years (Officers 30% and 12%). Seventy-nine percent of those with children lived with them (Officers 83% and ORs 78%), and a further 5% lived with them sometimes (Officers 8% and ORs 5%).

The impact of Service life on personal life

7.6. Responses to the AFCAS items concerning the impact of Service life on personal life are shown in Figure 7.3.



Ability to plan their own life

7.7. Overall 46% of personnel were satisfied with their ability to plan their own life in the short term (work/weekend leave). Amongst Officers 66% were satisfied and 21% were dissatisfied. Amongst ORs 42% were satisfied and 40% were dissatisfied. Satisfaction was lowest amongst RM (36% satisfied and 48% dissatisfied) and Army (40% satisfied and 41% dissatisfied) respondents and highest amongst RAF respondents (61% satisfied and 23% dissatisfied). When the results were broken down by marital status, satisfaction was higher amongst those married/in a civil partnership (52% satisfied, 31% dissatisfied) compared with those in a long term relationship (36% satisfied, 48% dissatisfied).

7.8. In total 29% of respondents were satisfied with their ability to plan their own life in the long term (holidays/career training). Forty-two percent of Officers were satisfied and 39% were dissatisfied. Amongst ORs 26% were satisfied and 55% were dissatisfied. Satisfaction was highest amongst RAF personnel (38% satisfied and 40% dissatisfied). When the results were broken down by marital status satisfaction again was higher amongst those married/in a civil partnership (33% satisfied, 47% dissatisfied) compared with those in a long term relationship (21% satisfied, 64% dissatisfied). In comparison with 2007, satisfaction amongst Soldiers had improved.

7.9. When asked how satisfied they were with the amount of separation from family and friends, 22% of respondents replied positively. Amongst Officers 31% were satisfied and 35% were dissatisfied. Amongst ORs 20% were satisfied and 44% were dissatisfied. Satisfaction was highest amongst RAF personnel (26% were satisfied and 34% were dissatisfied). When satisfaction was broken down by marital status those who were married were more satisfied (25% satisfied and 40% dissatisfied) than those in long term relationships (15% satisfied and 53% dissatisfied). Satisfaction had improved amongst Soldiers since 2007. Differing levels of satisfaction may be accounted for by the additional support provided to married personnel.

Flexible working

7.10. Eighteen percent were satisfied with the opportunities available for flexible working. Amongst Officers 22% were satisfied and 35% were dissatisfied. Amongst ORs 17% were satisfied and 46% were dissatisfied. The responses were more positive amongst Soldiers and Airmen than in 2007.

Operational Welfare Package

7.11. In total 28% were satisfied with the Operational Welfare Package. Amongst Officers 33% were satisfied and 16% were dissatisfied. Amongst ORs 27% were satisfied and 26% were dissatisfied. In comparison with 2007 the responses were more positive amongst Ratings, RM ORs, and Army personnel.

Support when away

7.12. Those with a spouse/partner were asked how satisfied they were with the support that their spouse/partner had received from their Service when they were absent. Overall 16% were satisfied. Amongst Officers 19% were satisfied and 36% were dissatisfied. Amongst ORs 16% were satisfied and 45% were dissatisfied. The responses were more positive for Soldiers and Airmen than in 2007.

Impact on children's education

7.13. Those with children were asked how satisfied they were with the effect of Service life on their children's education. In total 13% were satisfied. Amongst Officers 16% were satisfied and 44% were dissatisfied. Amongst ORs 12% were satisfied and 36% were dissatisfied. In comparison with 2007 satisfaction amongst Soldiers had increased.

Impact on spouse/partner's career

7.14. Finally those with a spouse/partner were asked how satisfied they were with the effect of service life on their spouse/partner's career. Overall only 7% were satisfied. Amongst Officers 6% were satisfied and 56% were dissatisfied. Amongst ORs 7% were satisfied and 46% were dissatisfied. Those who were married/in a civil partnership (7% satisfied, 51% dissatisfied) were more dissatisfied than those in a long term relationship (6% satisfied, 40% dissatisfied). In comparison with 2007, satisfaction amongst Soldiers had increased.

SECTION 8: LEAVE

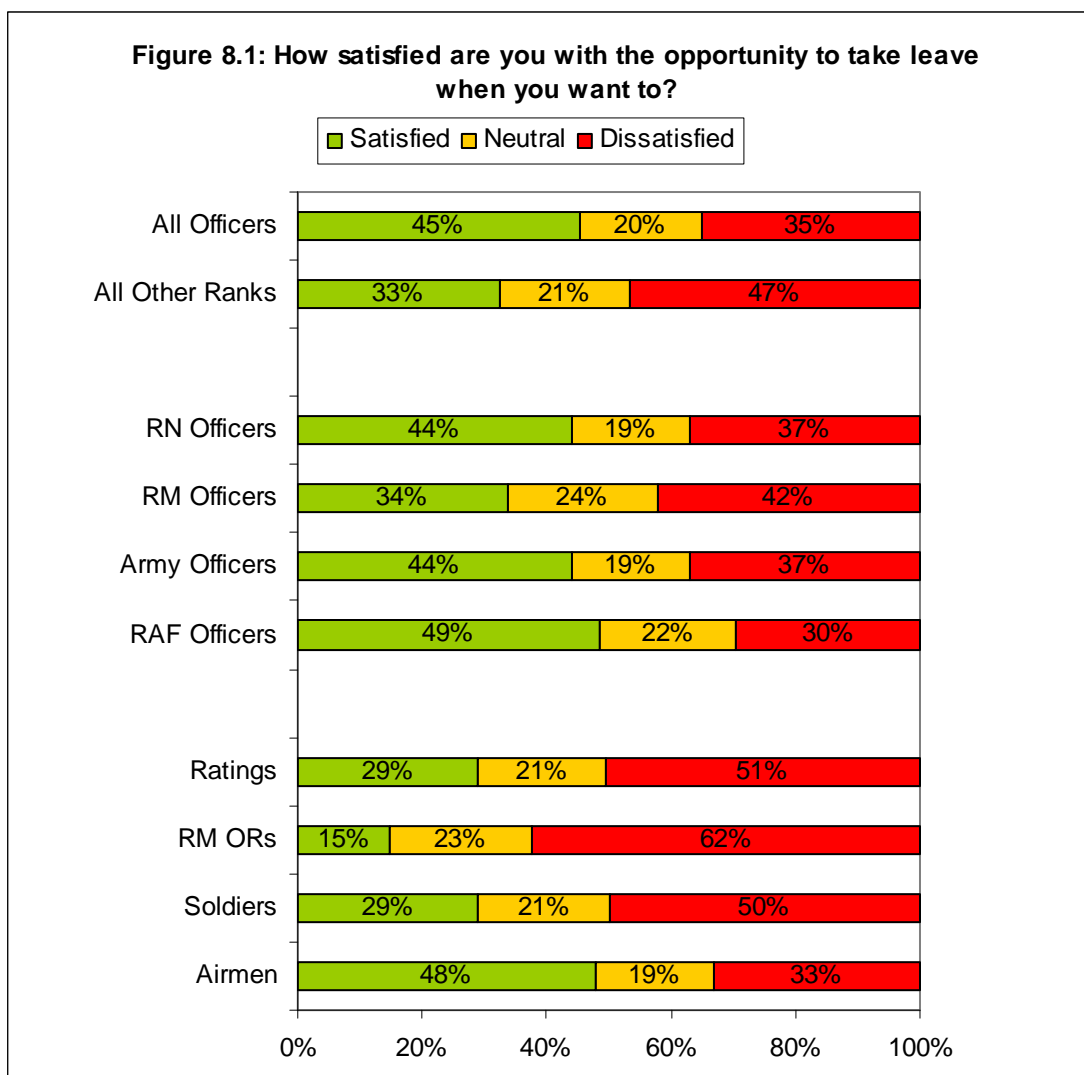
Key Findings

Eighty-three percent of Officers and 66% of ORs were satisfied with their overall leave entitlement (Officers and ORs have the same basic annual entitlement of 30 days). The majority of Officers (56%) and about half of ORs were satisfied with the amount of leave they had been able to take in the 12 months before completing AFCAS.

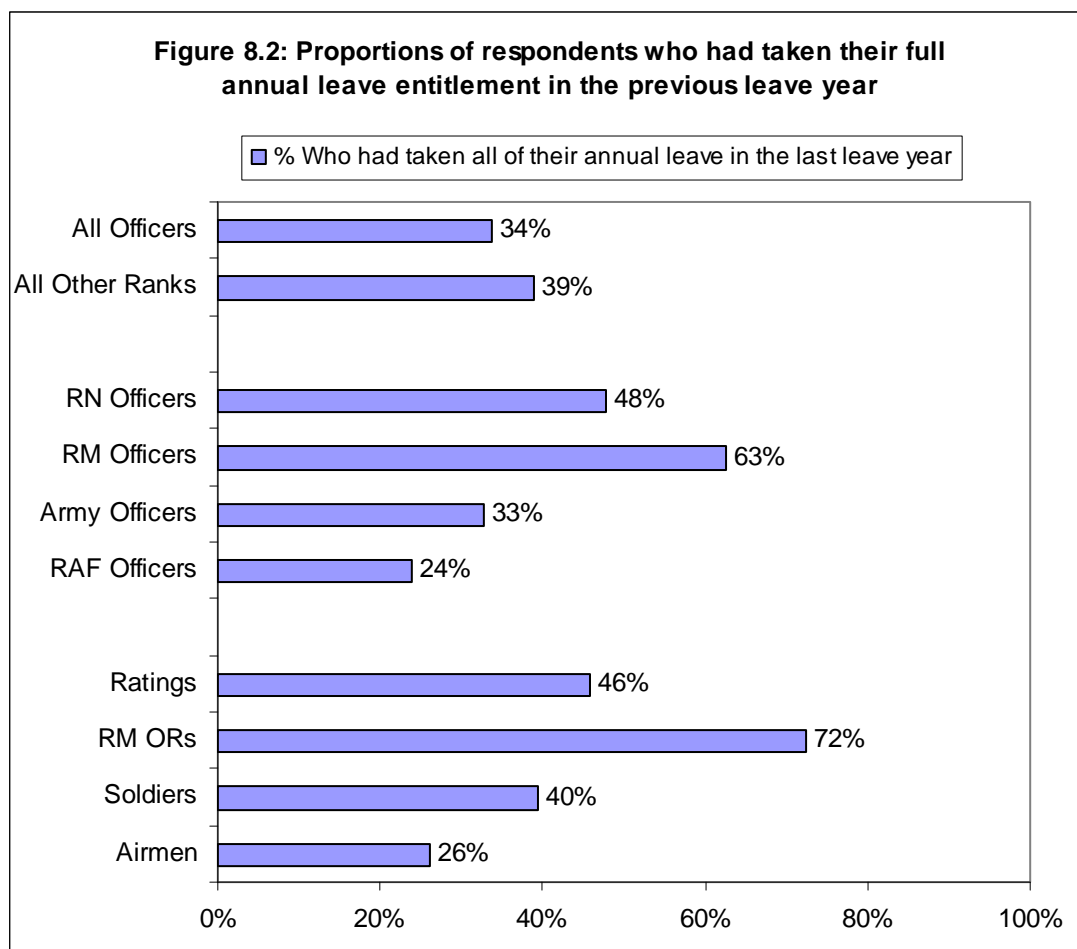
There were differences between the Services in the proportions able to take all of their annual leave in the last leave year: overall, 71% of RM respondents, 46% of RN, 39% of Army and 26% of RAF had been able to take their full allowance; paradoxically this was inversely related to between Service differences in satisfaction with opportunity to take leave when personnel wished to. The most common reason for leave not being taken was workload, followed by undermanning and other Service commitments.

8.1. All of the AFCAS respondents were entitled to the same amount of basic annual leave: 30 days per year. Table B8.1 of Annex B shows that 83% of Officers and 66% of ORs responded that they were satisfied with their overall leave entitlement, which the questionnaire defined as 'annual leave, Post Operational Leave, leave carried over from other years etc'; 7% and 16% respectively were dissatisfied. Compared with the 2007 AFCAS figures, in 2008 the proportion of RM ORs who were satisfied was 6 percentage points less, whilst the proportion dissatisfied was 7 percentage points more.

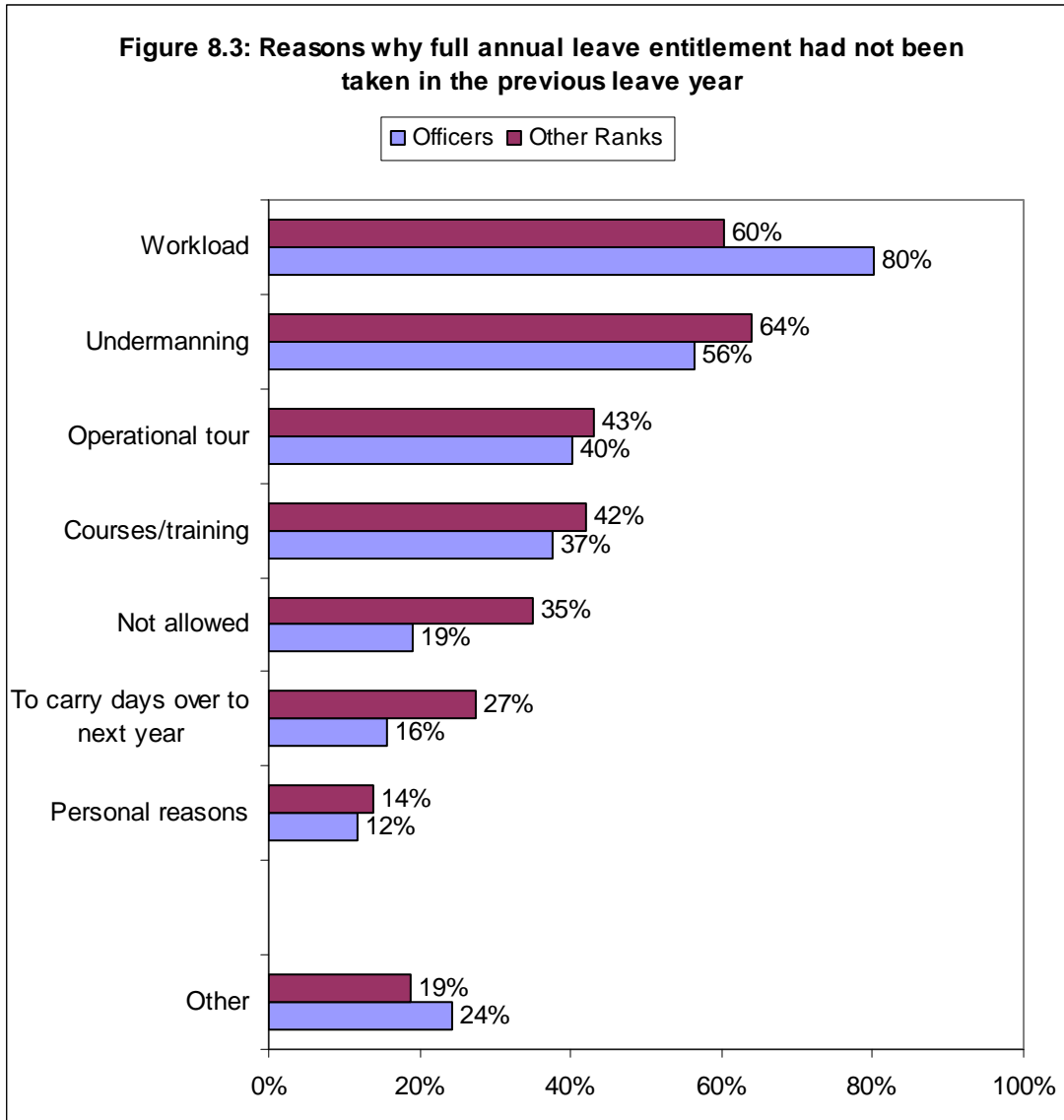
8.2. The majority of Officers (56%) were satisfied with the amount of leave they had been able to take in the 12 months before completing AFCAS; 27% were dissatisfied. Amongst RN Officers, the proportion dissatisfied was 5 percentage points higher than in 2007. Overall, just under half of ORs were satisfied (49% as opposed to 28% dissatisfied), although for Airmen the figures were 58% and 22% respectively. The proportion of Ratings dissatisfied was 5 percentage points higher than in 2007, and the proportion of RM ORs satisfied was 6 percentage points lower.



8.3. Figure 8.1 shows that there were differences between the Services in satisfaction with opportunities to take leave when Personnel wanted to. RM had lower proportions satisfied and higher proportions dissatisfied than the other Services, whilst Airmen were the only non-commissioned personnel with a higher proportion satisfied than dissatisfied.



8.4. There were also differences between the Services in the proportions able to take all of their annual leave in the last leave year, as shown in Figure 8.2. Overall, 71% of RM respondents, 46% of RN, 39% of Army and 26% of RAF had been able to take their full allowance. The only Service for which this represented a significant increase in proportion compared with the 2007 AFCAS respondents, was RAF; for all other groups apart from RM ORs there had been significant decreases in the proportions able to take all of their leave. Paradoxically, satisfaction by Service with ability to take leave when personnel wished was inversely related to the proportions able to take all of their annual leave in the last leave year.



8.5. Figure 8.3 shows that the most common reasons for leave not being taken were workload and undermanning, followed by the Service commitments of operational tours, training and, for ORs, ‘not allowed’ (the last two of these reasons were significantly more frequent for RM ORs than was the case in 2007). ‘Personal’ reasons and wishing to carry leave over to the next year were relatively infrequent.

SECTION 9: HEALTH, WELL-BEING AND FITNESS

Key Findings

High proportions of AFCAS respondents were satisfied with the Service medical and dental treatment they had received in the 2 years before completing the survey. There were also high levels of satisfaction with Service medical and dental treatment received by family members amongst the minority whose families had received this.

There was prevailing satisfaction with the sport, exercise and fitness facilities offered by the individual Services, and 57% percent of Officers and 66% of ORs considered that they had enough opportunity to pursue fitness activities.

Service medical and dental treatment

9.1. High proportions of AFCAS respondents were satisfied with the Service medical and dental treatment they had received in the 2 years before completing the survey.

9.2. Table B9.1 of Annex B shows that 80% of Officers and 71% of ORs were satisfied with the medical treatment they had received on their units as opposed to 12% and 16% respectively dissatisfied. These figures represented a 3 percentage point increase in the proportion of Officers satisfied compared with 2007, and a 4 percentage point increase in the proportion of ORs satisfied. Ratings showed a 6 percentage point increase in the proportion satisfied, and RM ORs an 8 percentage point increase.

9.3. Amongst Officers 87% were satisfied and 7% dissatisfied with Service dental treatment received, the corresponding figures for ORs were 83% and 8%. However the proportion of RM Officers satisfied was 5 percentage points lower than in 2007.

9.4. Only 15% of respondents replied to the item asking for levels of satisfaction with Service medical treatment received by members of their families in the 2 years before completing AFCAS. Seventy-five percent of Officers and 66% of ORs expressed satisfaction here, with 17% and 16% respectively dissatisfied. Levels of satisfaction with Service dental treatment received by family members were only given by 10% of respondents: 71% were satisfied with 11% dissatisfied. (See Tables B9.3 and B9.4 of Annex B.)

Sport, exercise and fitness

9.5. Tables B9.6 and B9.7 of Annex B show that there was also prevailing satisfaction with the sport, exercise and fitness facilities offered by the individual Services. Overall 72% of respondents were satisfied as opposed to 13% dissatisfied: this represented an increase of 5 percentage

points in the proportion satisfied compared with 2007. At the single Service level, increases in the proportions satisfied were: RAF Officers 10 percentage points; Ratings 4 percentage points; Soldiers 7 percentage points; and Airmen 5 percentage points. Fifty-seven percent of Officers and 66% of ORs considered that they had enough opportunity to pursue fitness activities.

SECTION 10 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

Key Findings

Officers held positive views about fairness and equality across the Services. Although ORs were less positive than Officers over half held positive views on all aspects of fairness and equality. Compared with the 2007 AFCAS results, ORs' views were more positive in 2008. Officers were more likely to say that the provision of equal opportunities had remained unchanged over the last two years, whilst ORs felt that there had been some improvement.

A relatively small proportion of respondents had experienced discrimination, harassment or bullying in a Service environment in the last 12 months.

Most respondents knew where to get information about the complaints procedure for unfair treatment, discrimination, harassment or bullying. However, only a relatively small proportion who had experienced this type of behaviour made a complaint.

Attitudes towards fairness and equality

10.1. Respondents were asked how strongly they agreed or disagreed with five statements about fairness and equality. Across the Services, Officers held positive attitudes with regards to all aspects. Although ORs were less positive than Officers over half held positive views on all aspects of fairness and equality (being treated fairly, treated with respect, encouraged to use talents, individual differences being respected and there being fair treatment and equal opportunities for all).

10.2. Compared with the 2007 AFCAS results there were significant increases in the number of ORs saying that:

- They were treated fairly (61% in 2007, 67% in 2008),
- Treated with respect (49% in 2007, 55% in 2008),
- Individual differences (culture, lifestyle, working styles, backgrounds and ideas) are respected (47% in 2007, 52% in 2008) and,
- There is fair treatment and equal opportunities for all (49% in 2007, 55% in 2008)

10.3. Respondents were asked to say if the provision of equal opportunities for all had got better or worse over the last two years. Fifty-two percent of Officers and 39% of ORs reported that things were getting better whereas 38% (Officers) and 39% (ORs) felt that things were unchanged. Compared with 2007 results Officers were more likely to say that the provision is unchanged but ORs felt that there had been some improvement.

Discrimination

10.4. The majority of Officers (90%) and ORs (84%) said that they had **not** been the subject of discrimination in a Service environment in the last 12 months. Compared with 2007 there was a small but significant increase in the number of ORs saying that they had **not** experienced this type of behaviour.

10.5. Females (11%) were more likely than males (2%) to say that they had experienced discrimination on the grounds of gender.

10.6. One percent of respondents who did not consider themselves to be from an ethnic minority had experienced discrimination on the grounds of race in the last 12 months, whereas 18% of respondents who did consider themselves to be from an ethnic minority reported that they had experienced discrimination on the grounds of race.

Harassment

10.7. The majority of Officers (96%) and ORs (92%) said that they had **not** been the subject of harassment in a Service environment in the last 12 months. Compared with 2007 there was a small but significant increase in the number of ORs saying that they had **not** experienced this type of behaviour.

10.8. Females (7%) were more likely than males (less than 1%) to report that they had experienced harassment on the grounds of gender. Looking across the Services and ranks between eight and ten percent of female Officers said that they had experienced harassment and between five and eight percent of female ORs said they had experienced this type of behaviour.

10.9. Less than 1% of respondents who did not consider themselves to be from an ethnic minority reported that they had experienced harassment on the grounds of race in the last 12 months; whereas 9% of respondents who did consider themselves to be from an ethnic minority reported that they had experienced harassment on the grounds of race.

Bullying

10.10. The majority of Officers (94%) and ORs (93%) said that they had **not** experienced bullying in a Service environment in the last 12 months. Compared with 2007 there was a small but significant increase in the number of ORs saying that they had **not** experienced this type of behaviour.

10.11. Females (12%) were more likely than males (6%) to say that they had experienced bullying. Figures were similar across the Services for both female Officers and ORs.

10.12. Seven percent of respondents who did not consider themselves to be from an ethnic minority had experienced bullying in the last 12 months, whereas 10% of respondents who did consider themselves to be from an ethnic minority reported that they had experienced bullying.

Complaints

10.13. Eighty-five percent of Officers and 66% of ORs said that they knew where to get information about the complaints procedure for unfair treatment, discrimination, harassment or bullying. This is a 4 percentage point increase for ORs compared with 2007.

10.14. Sixty-seven percent of Officers and 43% of ORs said that they had heard of the Service Complaints Commissioner, although the figure is less for RM ORs where 26% had heard of the Commissioner. Forty percent of Officers and 33% of ORs said that they knew fully how the Commissioner could help with a complaint and 54% (Officers) and 60% (ORs) said that they knew to some extent.

10.15. Seven percent of Officers and 15% of ORs said that they had made a formal written complaint about the discrimination, harassment or bullying that they experienced. A number of questions were then asked about how the complaint was dealt with, but the number of respondents was too small for reliable inferences to be made from these results.

10.16. Respondents who had experienced discrimination, harassment or bullying were asked to say why they had not complained. The main reasons for not complaining were:

- It might adversely affect their career (Officers 51%, ORs 32%),
- It would cause problems in the workplace (Officers 42%, ORs 44%)
- There would be recriminations (Officers 34%, ORs 30%) and
- They did not believe anything would be done (Officers 35%, OR 33%)

10.17. The seriousness of the incident i.e. considered to be too minor (Officers 17%, ORs 19%), not being believed (Officers 19%, ORs 22%) and not wishing to go through the complaints system (Officers 22%, ORs 15%) were secondary reasons for not complaining.

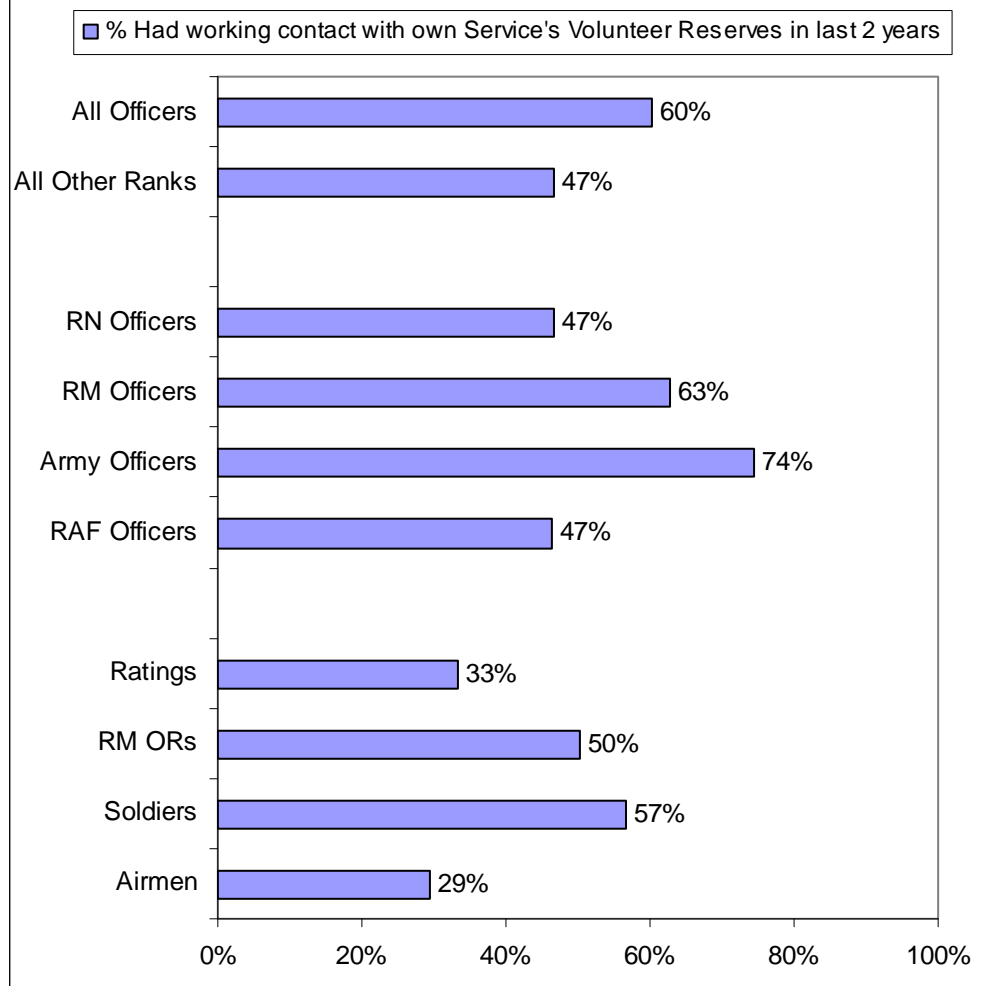
SECTION 11: WORKING WITH VOLUNTEER RESERVES

Key Findings

About half of the 2008 AFCAS respondents had been in working contact with their Services' Volunteer Reserves (VRs) during the two years before completing the survey. Higher proportions of Officers than of ORs, and higher proportions of Army and RM than of RN and RAF had experienced contact.

The AFCAS respondents with recent contact with VRs were asked to rate the following: the value of the VRs' contributions to their Services; how well integrated they are with the Regular Services; and the VRs' professionalism. For each of these, and across all groups of respondents, the responses were predominantly positive.

Figure 11.1: Experience of contact with own Service's Volunteer Reserves



11.1. In total, 49% of the 2008 AFCAS respondents had been in working contact with their Services' Volunteer Reserves (VRs) during the two years before completing the survey. Figure 11.1 shows that there were differences between the Services in the proportions of respondents who had experienced contact. Higher proportions of Officers than of Other Ranks, and higher proportions of Army and RM than of RN and RAF tended to have had contact. Compared with 2007, 13 percentage points fewer RN Officers and 10 percentage points fewer Ratings reported recent working contact with VRs, whilst 9 percentage points more Soldiers reported this.

11.2. The AFCAS respondents who had working contact with their Service's VRs in the last 2 years were asked to rate the following: the value of the VRs' contributions to their Services; how well integrated they are with the Regular Services; and the VRs' professionalism. For each of these, and across all groups, the ratings given were predominantly positive. The data are shown in Tables B11.2 to B11.4 of Annex B.

11.3. Where the VRs' contributions to their Services were concerned, 87% of Officers considered these to be valuable and 12% not (very) valuable, with the comparable figures for ORs being 79% and 17%. RN respondents held less positive views of their VRs than did their counterparts in the other Services: 74% of Officers and 64% of ORs considered their contributions to be valuable, with 24% and 28% respectively considering them not (very) valuable. The proportion of Soldiers giving a 'valuable' rating was 7 percentage points higher in 2008 than in 2007.

11.4. Sixty-seven percent of the respondents who had recent working contact with their Service's VRs rated the VRs to be well integrated with the Regular Services, whilst 30% rated them as not very well integrated. Amongst RM Officers the corresponding figures were more positive at 90% and 9%. The 2008 proportion of Soldiers considering the VRs to be well integrated was 7 percentage points higher than in 2007.

11.5. Where VRs' professionalism was concerned, 76% of Officers and 68% of ORs with recent working contact with their Services' VRs considered them to be professional, with 21% and 28% respectively thinking them to be not (very) professional; the corresponding figures for RM Officers again were more positive: 89% and 10%.