

Volunteer Reserve Forces

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Policy Statement

Summary

West Yorkshire Police (WYP) supports the Volunteer Reserve Forces (VRF), which is made up of men and women who train in their spare time to serve alongside the regular Forces in times of increased demand.

The aim of this policy is to explain what the VRF are, who is eligible; and how individuals can apply.

Scope

- This policy applies to all police officers and police staff.
 - This policy does not cover police officers or police staff members who:
 - Train cadets or equivalents. These trainers do not participate in VRF training and would not be “called up” to active service; or
 - Are regular reservists, i.e. are former members of the armed forces who can be recalled to active service but who are not part of the VRF.
 - Officers or staff who are members of the VRF in addition to carrying out the training of cadets or equivalents or in addition to being a Regular Reservist are covered by the provisions of this policy guidance.
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Principles

General

- The Volunteer Reserve Forces (VRF) are the:
 - Army Reserve; Link
 - Royal Auxiliary Air Force; Link
 - Royal Marines Reserve; Link and
 - Royal Naval Reserve Link.
- The Force will allow up to 50 officers and/or staff to be members of the VRF.
- Individuals must apply for approval from the Force to join the volunteer reserve forces.
- If an application is successful individuals must then submit a business interest for their VRF duties.
- The Force is committed to re-engaging any police officer or member of staff following mobilisation.
- Individuals will be granted special leave of absence, without pay, from the date they are required to report following mobilisation up to and including the date they return to the Force. This will preserve the continuity of the individual’s employment throughout their absence.
- Individuals will not accrue annual leave while they are called up. However, on request, consideration will be given by their second line manager for them carrying over any outstanding leave at the date they are called up so they can take it on their return.

Training and Special Leave

- Volunteer reservists make a minimum basic training commitment of around 27 days a year which is usually undertaken in evenings, weekends and in one or more continuous period.
- As VRF training schedules are confirmed months in advance, all reservists must give the Force as much notice as possible so that these commitments can be taken into account operationally.
- Second line managers will approve all special paid leave (VRF) and arrange for the leave to be recorded on the duties management system.
- Subject to exigencies of duty the rosters of police officers and staff members may be adjusted to accommodate up to 9 weekend training days per year. This will involve an adjustment to re-allocate rest days at weekends, taking into account the requirements of the Working Time Regulations.
- Special leave with pay will only be granted in respect of working days when they attend the annual camp or another training block. That is, it will not be granted where training days fall on rest days.
- The Force will allow reservists to take special paid leave (VRF) as follows:
 - Police Officers**
 - If an officer's annual leave entitlement is less than 24 days, then sufficient special leave allowance may be granted to bring the total leave allowance (special and annual leave combined) up to 30 days.
 - If an officer's annual leave entitlement is 24 days or more then a special leave allowance of 6 days may be granted.
 - Police Staff**
 - If a staff member is a volunteer member of the non-regular Forces they are entitled to 6 days paid leave to attend the annual camp or another training block.
- This is additional to the individual's normal annual leave entitlement.

Call Up

- Once a reservist has been selected for mobilisation they will be sent a call out pack to their home address by the Ministry of Defence. It will usually be issued 28 days prior to the date that they are required to report for duty.
- The Ministry of Defence will also send the Force a notification of mobilisation, this will include:
 - A copy of their call-out notice;
 - Guidance about applying for a deferral exemption; and
 - Guidance about financial assistance.
- Where the Force has difficulty releasing the reservist, due to operational or business needs, their second line manager can submit a request for a deferment or exemption.
- Second line managers must apply for a deferral or exemption to the appropriate Adjudication Officer for their reservist who has been issued with a call out notice.
- Deferrals or exemption requests should only be submitted if the individual:

- Possesses a high level of technical knowledge that cannot be replaced in the short term;
 - Is engaged on activities of a very sensitive nature; or
 - Is required as a key witness in a sensitive or high profile court case.
 - The reservist can also submit a request for a deferral or exemption to the adjudication officer based on their personal circumstances.
 - The adjudication officer for the branch of the HM Armed Forces, which has called up the reservist, will make the final decision on whether a deferral or exemption is appropriate.
 - If the reservist's second line manager is dissatisfied with an adjudication officer's decision on an application for exemption or deferral they can submit an appeal to the Reserve Forces Appeal Tribunals through the Secretary of Tribunals.
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Salary and Service

- During the period of their service in HM Forces, the reservist will receive from HM military pay.
 - If a reservist is called up they can claim financial support to cover the difference between their West Yorkshire Police pay and their military pay.
 - Instructions about how to claim financial support are provided in the mobilisation pack which reservists are given when they are called up.
 - If a claim for financial support is rejected an appeal may be made to the Reserve Forces Appeal Tribunals (RFAT).
 - If a reservist has applied for financial support and has appealed the outcome and the final decision reached is that the assistance they receive does not top up their military pay to their West Yorkshire Police salary, they can apply to the HR Department SLT for assistance from the Force.
 - Application will be considered sympathetically provided that the reservist produces evidence of the:
 - Military pay they receive; and
 - Decisions taken about the claims for financial support.
 - Any financial assistance provided would be pensionable and subject to usual pay deductions.
 - Mobilised police officers and police staff will be treated as if they are on unpaid leave from the Force.
 - Military service will be reckonable for pay purposes so that the reservist's salary on return to the Force would be at the same level as if they had remained on the payroll throughout the period of mobilisation.
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Pension

- There are potential implications for the reservist's pension and their continuous service and they should seek independent financial advice.
- If a reservist is a member of the police officer or police staff pension scheme and they choose to remain so during their mobilisation, the MOD will deduct pension contributions from their military pay, equivalent to their normal monthly police pension contributions and forward them to the Force.

- The MOD will pay the Force's employer contributions.
- Separate arrangements must be made to pay any voluntary deductions directly through the reservist's bank or building society, e.g. metro card.
- If the reservist is in a salary sacrifice scheme, e.g. for a car lease or childcare voucher, they should contact their armed forces pay section to discuss arrangements for the mobilisation period.

Intended Return

- Reservists are required to give written notice of their intended return to the Force by the third Monday after the end of the reservist's service with HM Forces; and provide a date of return within a period ending on the 6th Monday after the end of that service.
- Failure to provide the required notice of their return in accordance with the above may result in disciplinary action being taken against them.
- Reservists must undertake a medical examination to assess their fitness for full duties.
- Subject to their fitness, reservists will return:
 - To the role that they had before being called up; and
 - On the terms and conditions that would have applied had they not been called up.
- In addition, background vetting checks and enquiries will be made to cover their period of absence.
- Where organisational change has resulted in the role that they undertook prior to mobilisation no longer being in existence then:
 - Police Officers,**
 - Will be considered under the organisational change policy and, if necessary, they will be posted to a new role in accordance with the police officer resourcing policy guidance; and
 - Police Staff,**
 - Will be dealt with in accordance with the principles of the organisational change policy. Each case will be considered individually.

Force Financial Assistance

- Under the Reserve Forces (Call out and Recall) (Financial Assistance) assistance for Employers Regulations (SI 2005/859) employers can claim:
 - The ongoing costs of replacing the reservist including additional pay and overtime to existing employees (maximum £110 per day);
 - One off costs, e.g. agency fees and advertising costs to recruit a replacement; and
 - Any necessary retraining costs for the reservist to bring them up to date on their return to work if this is required as a direct result of their mobilisation.
- All relevant paper work needed to re-claim costs is provided in the reservist's call-out pack.

Permanent

- If a reservist is unable to return to the Force due to disablement while they

Disablement or Killed While Called Up

were called up, then they should contact the Pensions Section Finance Force and Business Support department for advice and guidance.

Police Officers

- Officers would qualify for payment of an ill health award if they become permanently disabled for police duties during their service in HM Forces.
- The Chief Constable has discretion to make up their total pension payments received from the police and armed forces schemes to the level which would have been payable had their disability occurred on police duty.
- Police Pension Regulations allow police officers who become permanently disabled during the mobilisation period for police duties to be paid the ill health award which they would have received had the disablement occurred during a period of police service.
- Mobilised officers will not be covered under the police injury benefits scheme. The armed forces have their own compensation scheme for injuries and deaths which are attributable to military service (these are separate from the pension arrangements).
- The Chief Constable can use their discretion for the reservist's dependants' to receive benefits at the level which would have been paid had the reservist received a qualifying disablement which resulted in their death while on police duty.
- The Ministry of Defence will reimburse West Yorkshire Police for the costs of employers' pension's contributions for officers who are disabled or killed.

Police Staff

- Staff who are members of the West service Yorkshire Pension Fund and die, or are permanently disabled, as a result of injury sustained during their military service, will be treated as if they were in Force employment at the time.

Responsibilities

Individuals

Responsibilities

Individuals are responsible for:

- Submitting an application to their Senior Leadership Team using the application form for approval to be a member of the volunteer reserve forces;
- In addition, submitting a volunteer reserve forces business interest using the process and form detailed in the business interest policy if their VRF application is approved through this policy;
- Submitting requests for special paid leave to their line manager using a Per 14 form;
- Submitting requests for up to nine weekend training days to be reallocated

- to their line manager via email;
 - Notifying the Force if they are mobilised;
 - Notifying the Force in accordance with this policy of their intended return date following mobilisation; and
 - Notifying the Force if they cease to be a member of the volunteer reserve forces.
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First Line Managers

- Responsibilities** First line managers are responsible for – if an exemption or deferment is to be sort:
- Obtaining the following information from the HR IT system and/or People Services:
 - Full name of officer;
 - Rank; and
 - Date joined Force;
 - Preparing a Recall Letter;
 - Signing and sending the letter headed copy to the relevant officer of HM Forces, filing a copy of the letter on the reservist's personal file;
 - Considering requests for reallocated weekend days and forwarding approved requests to Duties with their comments; and
 - Forwarding special paid leave requests to the reservists 2nd line manager for decision, with their recommendation.
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Second Line Managers

- Responsibilities** Second line managers are responsible for:
- Submitting requests for deferrals or exemptions, as appropriate; (About two weeks after the letter has been sent, an exemption certificate should arrive in respect of the officer. This must be forward to HR for inclusion in the officer or police staff member's personal file.)
 - Submitting appeals if they are dissatisfied with an adjudication officer's decision on an application for exemption or deferral;
 - Considering requests for annual leave to be carried over in the event that an individual is called up; and
 - Approving all requests for special paid leave.
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Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

- Responsibilities** Senior Leadership Teams (SLT) are responsible for:

- Contacting People Services for them to check an HR IT System Discoverer report, to see how many officers and staff are already appointed force wide, when an individual has applied to be a member of the volunteer reserved forces;
 - Approving an application, depending on the number of officers and/or staff members who are already members of the volunteer reserve forces;
 - Justifying their decision if the application is refused in writing to the applicant within 14 days of receiving the request. An application will be refused where the maximum number of volunteers reservists allowed by the Force has been reached; and
 - Arranging for the outcome to be recorded on the HR IT system.
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People Directorate

- Responsibilities** The People Directorate are responsible for:
- Recording on the HR IT system details of officers and staff who have been given approval to join or, who have ceased to be members of, the Volunteer Reserve Forces;
 - Creating and checking an HR IT System report to see how many officers and staff are already members of the volunteer reserve forces and notifying the district or department that had submitted the request of the number.
 - Monitoring the number of approved volunteer reservists on a 6 monthly basis;
 - Ensuring that any incorrect details are updated, e.g. any officer or staff member who has left the reserve but are still shown as a current reservist on the list;
 - Receiving any exemption certificate and stapling this to the inside front cover of the officer or police staff member's personal file.
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Chief Officer Team

- Responsibilities** The Chief Officer Team are responsible for:
- Periodically reviewing the maximum number of officers and/or staff members allowed by the force to be members of the VRF; in light of increasing operational demands made on the Force and to ensure that operational effectiveness can be maintained in the event of mobilisation.
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Additional Information

Further Information

Further guidance in relation to this policy can be sought from:

- Contact details for the adjudication officer are provided at:
<https://www.gov.uk/employee-reservist/mobilisation>
 - Further details for the appeals process are provided at:
<https://www.gov.uk/appeal-call-up-reserve-forces>
 - Further details about financial support for reservists are provided at:
<https://www.gov.uk/employee-reservist/financial-support-for-reservists>
 - Further information about pension contribution is provided at:
<https://www.gov.uk/employee-reservist/financial-support-for-reservists>
 - Further details about financial assistance are provided at:
<https://www.gov.uk/employee-reservist/financial-support-for-employers>
 - Ministry Of Defence Guide to Employing Reservists
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