



**Council of Military Education Committees  
of the Universities of the United Kingdom**

**Executive Committee Meeting**

**Held on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2018 at 1100hrs**

**at ULOTC, Yeomanry House, Handel Street, London, WC1N 1NP**

**Minutes**

**Present**

Mr R G Livingston (Chairman); Mr B Ritchie (Vice Chairman); Mr J Castle; Mr H Hamilton; Ms C Kinkead; Dr P J R Mileham; Gp Capt A Dickens; Gp Capt H Edwards; Col D Guinness; Lt Col M Bishop; Cdr A McLennan RN

**In Attendance;**

Mr Jason Norris (Secretary)

**Apologies**

Rev Professor J P Taylor (Treasurer); Professor E Archibald; Mr R Hall; Ms A Lyon; Col N Tougher

**1. Minutes**

APPROVED: The Minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2017 (COMEC\_2018\_02\_A)

**2. Matters Arising**

Minutes Publication on Website (Min 1 22 Nov 2017)

RESOLVED: Minutes of the previous meeting are now being published on the website 2 weeks following each meeting.

NOTED: J Castle noted this is excellent progress and COMEC activities are now more transparent to MECs.

Continuation-Recruiting Statistics (Min 2 22 Nov 2017)

**ACTION: Service staff officers to email COMEC secretary with recruiting statistics in the autumn each year, down to unit level if available.**

**ACTION: The Chairman requested data on leaver numbers from the Army – Lt Col M Bishop to send through the percentages.**

COMEC Prize (Min 2 22 Nov 2017)

NOTED: It was noted that details of the COMEC prize criteria, example of a successful submission and notice of submission date were sent to all USU COs via the MEC Chairs, MEC Secretaries and Service staff officers in December 2017 with a reminder in February 2018.

**ACTION: It was agreed that Ms A Lyon, with the other adjudicators, would review prize criteria in 2018 for 2019 prize, taking into account observations received from MECs in the Vice-Chairman's survey.**

**ACTION: As Mr B Ritchie has stepped down as adjudicator, the Chairman has invited Mr R Hall to join the adjudication panel and is awaiting acceptance. Ms C Kinkead offered to join the panel if required.**

Membership of the Executive Committee (Min 2 22 November 2017)

NOTED Professor S Denny and Professor I Ball have withdrawn from membership of the Executive with immediate effect. The Chairman thanked both members for their service to COMEC, noting the constructive work Professor I Ball had contributed over three years.

**ACTION: MECs are encouraged to nominate members with an interest in contributing to the work of the Executive Committee, especially from underrepresented regions of the country. It was noted that it is difficult to recruit to both MECs and COMEC due to pressures on staff time. The Secretary will write out to MECs on this matter before the end of March 2018.**

Reports from Service Staff Officers (Defence People) (Min 4 22 Nov 2017)

**ACTION: Col D Guinness to send through details of the number of Universities that have signed the armed forces covenant once available.**

NOTED: Mr J Castle informed COMEC that Glasgow Caledonian University had recently signed the covenant. The Chairman noted a number of issues with permeation and implementation of the covenant in each institution once signed.

Other Matters Arising: Update on Publications

NOTED: Dr P J R Mileham reported the No 8 Occasional on Air Power will be published soon. A proof of the No 11 Occasional was circulated at the meeting noting the final version should be available in a few weeks' time.

CONSIDERED: The content of the speeches given by Generals Bashall and Nanson and how they might be published was considered. The Chairman suggested adding to the COMEC website as a working paper.

**ACTION: Dr P J R Mileham updated the Executive on the progress of the new Conspectus and a copy of the previous version was distributed at the meeting. The Service staff representatives, including Defence People, were requested to send content and images of their respective services to Dr P J R Mileham by the end of April 2018 (for publication by the COMEC Conference in September 2018). It was agreed by the Chairman that DTOEES will be included under the Defence Academy section. The COMEC strategic alliances chart was being adapted for the new Conspectus by Dr P J R Mileham and the Chairman, and a version will also be published on the website which will be regularly updated.**

### 3. Chairman's Report

RECEIVED: A report from the Chairman:

#### MoD

The Chairman had a short meeting with Brigadier Gerhard Wheeler, Head of Reserves, in order to learn more of his response to COMEC's detailed answer to his predecessor's question on the USU offer. Brigadier Wheeler's slides for the Defence Conference were interesting, but could not do justice to his range of future options. For this reason the Chairman noted it would have been helpful to have his perspective, but he made it clear that his influence in this area was rather limited because the USUs belong to the three services. He was, therefore, not in a position to make progress on his options.

#### CRFCAs

The Chairman attended the Council of RFCAs' Annual Briefing, where he heard from the Chairman of the Council, the Vice Chief of the Defence Staff, the First Sea Lord, the Chief of the General Staff and the Air Officer Commanding Training Group.

The message was consistent:

- The value of the RFCAs in delivering on FR20 and whole force. The increase in the numbers of reservists and their mobilization last year were a central component of future defence, leveraging all the competencies society brings.
- The successful engagement with employers, such as covenants and employment recognition.
- Expansion of the cadets, including planned growth and recognition of the cadet commission as youth leaders.

However, the world was becoming more complex and dangerous, and there were many challenges:

- Reserves had a central role in deterrence to state-based threats, requiring new tools, technologies and competencies from external perspectives.
- The recruiting ground was shrinking, with a STEM shortage. The offer, including loyalty and duty, had to compete to attract more diverse and inclusive recruits: reserves and cadets were seen as a portal into society. Improved flexibility was required in employing reservists, and agility for different types of activity. CAPITA received a very bad press from the floor and the platform.
- Financial stringency meant affordability if the country was to remain a top five player in the world. All must have responsibility for value for money, and avoid duplication and overlap: this included streamlining the estate.

NOTED: A wide ranging discussion was had by the committee on recruiting and retaining talent, particularly in technical areas such as cybersecurity and Artificial Intelligence. It was noted the services are going through a culture change in this respect, with some noting this is happening too slowly with incompatible command structures; though 77 Brigade are seen as pioneers in the way they recruit and the military have been proactive in courting innovation in some quarters.

**4. Treasurer’s Report**

RECEIVED: A report from the Treasurer (COMEC\_2018\_02\_B)

**5. Reports from the Service Staff Officers**

RECEIVED: A report from each of the Service Staff Officers:

- a. Royal Navy (COMEC\_2018\_02\_C1)

**Significant Events**

1. The majority of activity since the last report has focused on the induction of the new cohort and continuing the training for years two and three. The revised medical process for this year has generally been more efficient. However, some units have experienced a candidate medical failure rate of up to 50%. Whilst this has reduced the organisation strength from over 96% to around 92% there are hopes that additional recruits from “reFreshers” events will raise numbers again.
2. The annual Blake Squadron weekend was held at BRNC over the first weekend in Feb to provide career updates, interviews and annual checks to 87 Medical and Dental Cadets and Naval Bursars.

**Personnel**

3. The CO at Northumbrian URNU changed at the start of Feb and the previously gapped CO positions at Glasgow and Bristol URNUs have now been filled. With the associated introduction of Command Selection Boards for URNU CO posts it is anticipated that the CO plot should be filled and stable from now on. The coming changes of command at Manchester & Salford, Liverpool, and Wales all have nominated reliefs.

**Recruiting Statistics**

4. Whilst numbers into BRNC remain strong, there has been a decline in the entry from URNU and USUs.

	2015 (as % of total entry)	2016 (as % of total entry)	2017 (as % of total entry)	2018 (as % of total entry)
URNU	13	15	10	8
All USU	17	23	20	15

Of significance, the BRNC Sep course of each year is the main graduate entry and figures for these are:

	Sep 2015 (ex-members as % of total entry)	Sep 2016 (ex-members as % of total entry)	Sep 2017 (ex-members as % of total entry)
URNU	25	28	14
All USU	31	36	22

Percentage of URNU members joining BRNC as % of URNU leavers<sup>1</sup>)

	2015	2016	2017
URNU	24	28	20

<sup>1</sup> From a total population of approx 660 on a three year programme it is assumed that each year approximately 220 members leave at the end of their studies.

**Infrastructure**

5. The Navy Command Volunteer Infrastructure Group (NCVIG) continues to investigate options for the relocation of Glasgow & Strathclyde URNU. It is also considering the proposed move of Cambridge URNU to the Coldham’s Lane ARC but dates and detail are TBC.

**Expansion**

6. Regrettably the plan to establish an URNU in Northern Ireland has been put on hold in the near term (1-3 years) due to financial constraints. As the costs associated with this plan were considered fairly generic it is expected that this means there will be no further expansion of the organisation within this timeframe.

NOTED: On the medical failure rate it was noted that student mental welfare issues were on the increase and prescriptions of anti-depressants were being offered more widely. There was also a similar issue for asthma with inhalers perceived to be being prescribed earlier than in the past. Both of these treatments could prevent a military career and need to be looked at.

NOTED: The Chairman enquired about the impact of the change to Command Selection Boards and it was noted that it was overcoming difficulties in placing officers in URNU posts. A discussion was also had on seniority of rank in URNU command as a more senior rank had a notable positive impact on the unit as well as better access to the University executive.

NOTED: The Chairman noted it would be useful to have numbers as well as percentages in the annual continuation-recruiting statistics report, particularly for student numbers leaving their URNU each year. The low proportion of USU entrants in the latest figures was explained by the main graduate entry being in September. It was noted BAME was at 7% currently.

NOTED: Ms C Kinhead expressed disappointment that the Northern Ireland URNU had been put on hold.

- b. Army (COMEC\_2018\_02\_C2)

**UNIVERSITY OFFICERS’ TRAINING CORPS NARRATIVE**

1. You are aware of the challenging state of the Defence in-year financial position and the £100M savings target faced by the Army as a result. The effects of the subsequent financial controls, coupled with the demands of

longer term transformational projects have rightly resulted in increased scrutiny of the Officers' Training Corps. Sandhurst Group must ensure all OTC activity represents focussed value for money. The success of the OTC is seen as output to the Regular and Reserve Forces and positive influences on wider society.

2. **Mission.** The mission of the OTC is *“To offer students and potential officers for the Army Reserve the chance to develop their leadership potential through the medium of military and adventurous training with the twin purpose of promoting Regular (Reg) and Reserve (Res) service with the Army and of creating a positive impression of the Army among individual participants and university communities more broadly”*.<sup>2</sup>
3. It is imperative that the dual nature of the OTC mission is understood. Output in terms of military personnel is measurable, although complex. Output in terms of “creating a positive impression” is less empirical and lacks measurable definition. The creation of a metrics dashboard is in process.
4. **Aim.** It is the intent of this narrative to detail the costs and benefits of the OTC and catalogue the wide range of activity that OTCs undertake in support of Army initiatives, allowing informed discussion.
5. **Costs.** TY17/18 costs are estimated to be ca £36.8 million<sup>3</sup>. This represents a significant reduction from previous totals of £46.5 million. These savings have been facilitated by the establishment of a more rigorous governance and management information regime enabling improved control. Additional measures have included standardisation across OTC activities, spending and training delivery. OTCs are being held to account against agreed forecast and actual RSDs and establishment numbers to avoid overspending against a reduced baseline. Greater centralised guidance and monitoring by RMAS Gp further promotes uptake of best practice and the leveraging of economies of scale (joint exercises and shared deployments). All these measures maximise the additional advantage of greater assurance and control in keeping with political and public sentiment.
6. The process of increased governance continues, coupled with the hardening of OTC activity focussed on core outputs. Improved data capture, a centralised reporting mechanism and further reductions in establishments offer potential additional savings. Work by the Army Advanced Development Programme is designed to further examine potential savings in costs and liability. An initial progress report was delivered in December with further detailed work in Q1 of 2018.
7. **Overseas expenditure.** Recent media coverage has focussed on overseas activity. In FY 16/17 (last full financial year) OTCs conducted 106 overseas activities for 3260 participants totalling £776,998.02. Details are summarised in the table below.

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<sup>2</sup> Taken from [Sandhurst Group Instructors' Pocket Book](#)

<sup>3</sup> £3.2 mill operating cost, £31.7 mill payroll ( including approx. £2.1 mill civilian staff, £18.4 mill military staff and £8.05 mill Ocdt) and £1.8 mill stock.

CATEGORY	Expenditure in £ per pax per day			
	MAX	MIN	MEDIAN	AVERAGE
Annual Camp	£216.05	£8.22	£30.64	£56.44
Competitions	£93.62	£30.25	£46.75	£56.87
Battlefield Studies	£132.98	£3.42	£72.29	£73.17
Adventurous Training <sup>4</sup>	£149.00	£0.69	£20.16	£23.83
Winter Sports	£89.62	£6.25	£19.11	£27.79
Miscellaneous	£191.07	£11.16	£23.69	£62.40

8. Specific guidance, increased scrutiny, greater centralisation and tracking of individual participation and progress as well as a focus on qualifications, should see a reduction in both overall costs and a narrowing of the disparity between maximum and minimum totals as well as an increase in recognised Leadership and Resilience Training qualifications. Output focus is to the fore. Personal development and leadership training and experiences are priorities.
9. **Outputs - Military.** In May 2016 DM(A) conducted a JPA analysis of 10,130 OTC Cadets over the period 2007-2011<sup>5</sup>. Analysis shows a maximum of 81% of OTC cadets have no further immediate contact with the military.<sup>6</sup>
- a. Regular. 1020 (10%) joined the Regular Army. (86% officers and 14% soldiers).
  - b. Reserve. 640 (6%) joined the Army Reserve. (24% officers, 76% soldiers).
  - c. Cadet Force. 40 (0.4%) joined the Cadet Force as an adult volunteer.
  - d. OTC. 240 (2%) remained in the OTC.
  - e. FTRS. 10 (0.1%) obtained an FTRS role.
  - f. 8,250 (81%) were not serving at that point.
10. OTCs have historically provided 38% of the regular Commissioning course and 52% of the Reserve Commissioning course. As a comparison with OTC and RMAS intakes, in TY 16/17 the RAF University Air Squadron (UAS) had an intake of 372 Officer Cadets and a strength of 875, with 375 leavers. Of their intake of 265 to Regular initial officer training (IOT), 98 were former University Air Squadron (UAS) members (37% of intake). 74% of UAS leavers were not tracked to further military service.
11. **Outputs – Civilian.** Participation in an OTC endows individuals with a skill-set that represents key competencies employers have observed in individuals who transform organisations and add value early in their careers. The award of a CMI Diploma through the OTC adds individual value to the

<sup>4</sup> Now designated Leadership and Resilience Training (LaRT).

<sup>5</sup> Data was analysed from 16,220 students who joined OTC from 2007-2015 but restricting the period to 2011 ensures all inflow equates to outflow.

<sup>6</sup> Data analysis covered Army only. OTC members do join Royal Navy, Royal Marines or Royal Air Force thus improving the output of OTCs and reducing the 81% figure further.

wider university offer. UOTC Alumni are currently being surveyed to quantify what benefits people derive from OTC service. As at 27 Nov, based on the 875 individuals who had responded, most were engaged Army advocates or Armed Forces Covenant supporters and were likely to step forward in civil emergencies. Specifically, 86% are defined as achievers – society’s ‘middle to top 3rd’. 18% were in Senior Management/CXO level, 54% in middle management and 14% self-employed professionals. Further work is being conducted to generate testimonials from significant achievers in their field in an attempt to quantify the value of their OTC experience in the subsequent careers. Of note, 80% of respondents stated they utilised their OTC-learned leadership skills every day. Alumni networks are being examined and strengthened to allow future interrogation of non-military outputs. COMEC and the MECs have a significant part to play.

12. **Outputs – Engagement.** OTCs deliver significant engagement effect across a range of sectors both in support of and in addition to Defence wide engagement priorities. Much of this activity is funded via RG or the RPoC but delivery relies on OTC staff and students.
13. **Engagement with UK Higher Education HE.** OTC COs conduct persistent, consistent and enduring engagement with UK HE through the Military Education Committees (MEC) in support of RPoC level engagement with Vice Chancellors. Delivery of the RMAS Leadership in Practice (LiP) to significant numbers of university staff and non-OTC students (ca 200 per OTC per year) is valued by both the wider student body and accredited by University faculties. Queens University have formally recognised that OTC membership achieves a core aim of *“an educational experience that enriches students intellectually, socially and culturally. Specifically, to develop students to be confident, resilient, creative, critical thinkers and problem solvers, with strong employability skills, prepared for leadership and citizenship in a global society and for the increasingly complex and challenging world into which they will graduate.”* This recognition is reflected in schemes such as Degree Plus and Ulster Edge, with certificates presented at graduation ceremonies.
14. **Engagement with business.** OTCs deliver variations on the LiP syllabus to business. As an example, Ex “Deep Heat” delivered by the City of Edinburgh Universities OTC routinely delivers training to approx. 48 staff from companies to Barclays, RBS, MAB and Brewin Dolphin. This has had measurable results including signing of the AF Covenant by the Mortgage Advisory Bureau, their subsequent award of a Silver Award in the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme, 14 cadets attending a Training day and the regular offer of 2 internships to cadets.
15. **Engagement with Cadet Forces.** OTCs maintain close links with CCF Schools and ACF detachments providing OCdts to act as leaders and exemplars for Cadet training activities, delivering a 6th Form ‘Senior Student’ Leadership programme based on ‘Day One’ of the LiP package. This programme is aimed at developing Young Leaders (School Prefects, Team Captains, CCF Senior Cadets, etc); introducing them to the Army



Leadership Code and Values and Standards; providing them with an opportunity explore 'Leadership Behaviours'; and reflect on 'Self-Leadership', setting SMART personal objectives and achieving team goals. The training can be delivered to between 30 and 50 students at a time, up to five times per training year by an OTC.

16. **Civil Engagement.** Depending on geographic location, selected COs operate as the Civil Engagement Task Force lead, providing the link with local government and civil communities in support of Army engagement priorities, including BAME. It should be noted that OTCs provide opportunities for recruitment priority groups to gain military experience at higher than Army-norm levels for both BAME and female participants. Oxford OTC is 30% female, Exeter OTC is 42% female. Along with the ACF, in many areas, OTCs represent the only military presence at civil occasions.
17. **Support to UK Ops.** OTCs provide Reg staff on 12 hrs NTE for UK Ops. In some cases, units are MLOs in Emergency Coordination Centres. OTCs also offer G4 support to CivPol. Recent examples are Cardiff-wide operations by the National Crime Agency, and Op CASULA, the CIVPOL support to the UEFA Champions League final.
18. **Summary.** The UOTC is currently conducting (at pace) the most rigorous analysis of all aspects of its operation. Thus far, considerable savings have been made against the perceived costs. In conjunction with the Army Advanced Development Programme a minimum of £6 Million saving in the Reserve Service Day budget was identified without significantly reducing the lived experience of the members. Further efficiencies in terms of governance and a more corporate management structure will serve to deliver an improved cost-benefit ratio. Management Information has not been easily accessible and is fragmented. That is being addressed now in order to inform analysis and intelligence based decisions going forward.
19. The OTCs deliver a wide range of services to a large number of beneficiaries. Support to Regional Brigades across a vast range of directed activities requires capturing in terms of both cost and benefit to Defence. Similarly the Reserve Forces and Cadet Association depend on the support of OTCs at annual events. The cost to the OTCs is not inconsiderable. Currently it is absorbed internally and not measured as an 'output'. The use of CHURCHILL codes is not efficiently administered in all cases.
20. There is a delta between perception and reality. The OTCs have historically been inoculated against the level of detailed scrutiny currently being undertaken. The end result will be a more efficient and measurable organisation. The capture of the tangible benefits to Defence against the costs of each activity will be the driver going forward.

NOTED: Lt Col Bishop noted significant savings have been made already. Lessons had been learned from the North West England and Yorkshire OTRs, and options were being considered for Scotland. Recruitment is down this year

purposefully to reduce numbers to baseline establishment (2864 cadets with 44 service days budgeted for).

NOTED: Ms C Kinkead queried the dashboard readiness. Lt Col Bishop noted the dashboard will track all cadets in pipeline and main stages including leavers, medical changes, moves to reserves etc. The first set of data has been gathered from Wales, Glasgow and Southampton. Plan to roll out to all UOTCs by next financial year. Lt Col Bishop also noted they are looking at better tracking of alumni, and it was noted data from this group about their skills learnt at OTC and perceptions would be useful. There remain issues of data protection and maintaining active contact.

NOTED: The Chairman queried gapping of staff posts and if this is being reduced. Lt Col Bishop noted gapping had reduced significantly for regular staff following authority to fill these. Challenge is with reserve staff where there are still gaps, this is more acute in some geographical areas than others e.g. Southampton and Glasgow.

**ACTION: The Chairman requested the numbers in paragraph 9 of the report include the number of leavers each year as this is the pool services are looking to recruit from. Mr H Hamilton requested numbers show how many UOTC students go through to final year (separate from those in their first 2 years of UOTC as different level of engagement).**

**ACTION: The Chairman raised a concern on how MEC / COMEC was involved in consulting on options, and local cultural considerations. Lt Col Bishop agreed to connect the ADP team to the Chairman for views.**

**ACTION: Lt Col Bishop will provide COMEC with updated stats on the common commissioning course.**

**ACTION: The Committee noted a lack of recent consultation with MECs on UOTC CO appointments which was commonly undertaken in the past. Request for services to include MECs in CO appointments as they can add vital environmental / cultural input which may be helpful to the selection process.**

c. Royal Air Force (COMEC\_2018\_02\_C3)

1. **Recruitment.** We have had another successful recruiting programme. The emphasis has been on quality rather than meeting our establishment of 1000. Current strength is 864 students of which 29% are female and 10% are BAME. Like our sister Services we are experiencing difficulties with the replacement to TAFMIS; the Defence Recruiting System. As a result there has been a delay in processing sponsorship applications and we are having to resort to paper applications as a temporary work around. That said we currently have circa 170 sponsored UAS students spread across a 5 yr academic cycle.

2. **Bristol UAS.** It had been anticipated that the Defence Infrastructure Organisation feasibility study into the future location of BUAS would have reported its findings by now. Due to unforeseen constraints their findings are unlikely to be known before Jun 18. Not an ideal situation but we continue to work with Babcock International Group to deliver flying from Boscombe Down, albeit at a restricted rate and retain the Town Headquarters function at Azimghur Barracks; the CO of 21 Signals Regt has been very supportive throughout.

3. **RAF Woodvale.** Work to the main runway at RAF Woodvale is currently being scoped and is programmed to be undertaken in FY 18/19. Contract has

been let to repair the hangar doors which once complete will allow LUAS & MASUAS to operate off the short runway.

4. **NIUAS.** The collapse of Carillion has caused a delay in progressing the design for infrastructure works to accommodate permanent basing of Tutor aircraft at Aldergrove; we are monitoring this closely.

5. **UAS Biennial Report.** The Biennial Report to Chief of the Air Staff has been well received. It documents the breadth and wealth of activities undertaken by UAS students, and the positive contribution in promoting air mindedness and the Royal Air Force to the wider community.

6. **Tutor Display.** Following last year's successful season, the team will undertake 20 displays across the UK this summer and will actively support RAF 100.

7. **Project TELUM.** The Fixed-wing Light Aircraft Training System will replace LAFT 2 which delivers UAS and air experience flying and engineering support. It is anticipated that the initial Business Case will be taken by the Air Investment Approvals Committee at the end of Mar 18.

8. **Change of Command.** Gp Capt Howard Edwards will take command of 6 FTS with effect from 16 Mar 18.

NOTED: Gp Capt Dickens noted the success of offering Bursaries to attract students to under-recruiting branches e.g. 100% recruitment for engineering officers for the first time. The RAF 100 anniversary this year will also be used to promote UAS membership and engage with young people by taking part in the flying display circuit.

NOTED: The Chairman thanked Gp Capt Dickens for his work with COMEC and welcomed Gp Capt Edwards as his successor.

d. Defence People (COMEC\_2018\_02\_C4)

Defence Overview

1. The MOD continues to progress the final elements of the FR20 programme and a number of new work strands have commenced to ensure the progress made under FR20 is maintained (e.g. examining wider uses for Reserves). Support to the wider People Programme also remains a key focus to ensure that Reserve specific issues are factored in as the models are being finalised.
2. Defence has now been separated from the National Security Capability Review (NSCR). The department will now undertake the Modernising Defence Programme. The programme is split into four strands. The first three will optimise how the MOD is organised and is operating, identify further efficiencies and ways to be more productive, including through an aggressive programme of business modernisation and improve our performance on the commercial and industrial issues. The last strand will look at the capabilities that defence requires to contribute to our three national security objectives today and in the future. It is too early to say how this will impact on reserves, although we expect to be heavily involved in some of this work. It is expected that the review will report before the Summer Recess.
3. Outside the NSCR, the department's priorities remain delivering operations overseas, especially against Daesh, and supporting the Government in its work to deliver BREXIT. The financial situation for the department

continues to be challenging and ensuring that the budget is balanced will also remain a priority. It is unlikely that there will be any relief, in the short term, from the financial controls, but RF&C remains actively engaged regarding any savings measures that might affect Reserves and Cadets.

#### Reserves Policy

4. Apart from the work on the NSCR the other key priorities for the Reserves Policy team are:
  - a. Flexible Engagement Strategy (FES). The Bill enabling certain elements of FES is now progressing through Parliament. Overall there remains very little change, in this programme, to the management of reserves. However, we are looking at a number of small initiatives that might help Reserves exploit any opportunities that might arise from FES.
  - b. Reserve Service Days. A DIN outlining the change in terminology from Man Training Days (MTDs) to Reserve Service Days (RSDs) has been released. It is emphasised that this is a change in terminology and not how we use reserves. Publications will be updated as and when there is an opportunity.
  - c. Use of Reserves. As part of the Department's focus on whole force we are examining ways that we might make better use of the reserves. Specifically, we are looking at ways that we might make it easier for the Services to use reserves across the spectrum of defence activities. As these ideas progress we will be engaging with stakeholders.

#### Commitments

5. As at 30 Nov 17 Reserves from all Services continue to operate in every theatre alongside their regular counterparts. 357<sup>[1]</sup> reservists are currently in permanent service (mobilised). The theatres where reservists are providing support are:
  - a. **Afghanistan: 23** (20 Army & 3 RAuxAF)
  - b. **Cyprus: 30** (all Army)
  - c. **Estonia & Poland: 6** (all Army)
  - d. **Kosovo: 28** (All army)
  - e. **Counter the Daesh Threat: 59** (19 Army & 40 RAuxAF)
  - f. **Defence Engagement: 29** (2 MR, 23 Army & 4 RAuxAF)
  - g. **Global Counter Terrorism and Counter Piracy: 48** (16 MR, 4 Army & 28 RAuxAF)
  - h. **Operation of UK Permanent Joint Operating Bases:36** (8 Army & 28 RAuxAF)
  - i. **Maritime Security Operations: 12** (12 MR)
  - j. **South Sudan: 66** (63 Army, 2 Air & 1 MR)

#### FR20 (Update info from the latest UK Armed Forces MSPS info)

6. The trained strength of the Volunteer Reserves continues to increase. Whilst the overall trend is upwards there remain significant challenges to

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<sup>[1]</sup> All Reservist numbers include VR & RR (the majority are VR)

deliver 35,000 reserves trained strength by 2019, in particular from the Army.

7. The following table shows Actual Trained Strength and Targets:

**Trained Strength Against Target:**

	End FY 15 Actual	End FY 16 Actual	1 Oct 17 Actual <sup>7</sup>	End FY 16/17 Target*	End FY 17/80 Target*	01 Apr 19 Target*
All Services	27,050	31,364	32,110	<b>30,880</b>	<b>23,250</b>	<b>35,060</b>
Navy	2,320	2,555	2,687	<b>2,320</b>	<b>2,790</b>	<b>3,100</b>
Army	22,890	26,657	27,108	<b>26,700</b>	<b>28,600</b>	<b>30,100</b>
RAF	1,840	2,152	2,315	<b>1,860</b>	<b>1,860</b>	<b>1,860</b>

\*Written Ministerial Statement targets

**Employer Engagement**

8. The latest updates on EE initiatives are:

- a. EE SLA. Work to review and revise the EE SLA governing delivery of national and regional EE, is nearing completion and will be signed off towards the end of Mar 18, coming into effect on 1 Apr.
- b. Project PORRIMA. Work to develop improved Measures of Effectiveness in the EE space is continuing. The project continues to be on schedule for introduction as part of the next iteration of the EE SLA in Mar 19.
- c. Employer Notification. The deadline for completion of EN is 28 Feb 18, after which RF&C will be analysing performance across the sS and producing a report for E3G.
- d. Armed Forces Covenant (AFC). The rate of signings continues to increase. The total of signings (as at 31 Jan 18) is 2189.
- e. ERS Awards. RF&C are working with DS Sec to seek formal Royal patronage for the awards. The outcome is awaited and it is hoped that the new arrangements will be in place for this year's Gold Awards presentation.
- f. Reserves Day. Planning continues for Reserves Day 18. Following direction from Min(AF) we are currently scoping the possibility of staging Attract and Inform events in four key transport hubs, likely to include London Waterloo, Cardiff, Glasgow and Manchester (or Birmingham). DRM are in discussions with Network Rail to agree the venues.
- g. Public Sector EE. The next set of results of the CS Reserves Challenge will be available in late Feb.
- h. NEAB Review. A ministerial decision on the future of NEAB is imminent.

<sup>7</sup> Trained Strength as at 1 Oct 17 – Source: UK Armed Forces MSPS published 16 Nov 17: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-armed-forces-monthly-service-personnel-statistics-2017>

Cadets

9. The Cadet Expansion Programme (CEP) is on track to achieve the target of 500 cadet units parading in schools across the UK by March 2020. Interest in the CEP remains healthy; at the latest CEP approvals board in November the target number of approvals was met and there are now over 400 units parading. The formal 6-monthly CEP progress report to No.10 has been submitted and, once feedback has been received, details of newly approved units will be published as soon as possible.
10. Independent research being carried out by the University of Northampton continues into the social impact of cadets. Professor Simon Denny briefed the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Reserve Forces and Cadets on progress in December. His presentation focused on the potential impact of cadets across several Government departments. The findings in the first interim report came mainly from research into community cadet forces. The next report, due to be produced in mid-2018 will have a greater emphasis on school cadet units established under the CEP.
11. The Cadet Forces Commission for CFAV Officers, new and existing, was introduced across all Cadet Forces on 1 Dec 17 including, for the first time, Commissions for CFAV Officers in the Royal Navy cadet forces – the Sea Cadet Corps, the Volunteer Cadet Corps, CCF(RN) and CCF(RM).

NOTED: The Chairman noted the need for flexibility and innovation in use of reserves as mentioned in CGS' speech.

**ACTION: Col D Guinness to circulate list of Universities that have signed the covenant.**

**ACTION: Col D Guinness to send revised numbers of “Actual Trained Strength and Target Numbers” (point 7) before publication.**

## 6. DTUS Report

Material on DTUS Squadrons provided by Jeremy Kindell, supplemented by details about Welbeck from Ann Lyon

### DTUS Squadrons

- Head Technology School, Dr Matt Chinn and Deputy Head, Capt Duncan Forer RN are currently conducting inspections of the four DTUS Sqns
- In this round, Thunderer Sqn (Southampton) and Taurus Sqn (Birmingham) have already been inspected and Typhoon Sqn (Loughborough) and Trojan Sqn (Newcastle) will be visited in February
- The reorientation of training towards the development of the students' knowledge of STEM in a Defence context is going well and each Sqn has launched a range of initiatives to achieve this
- Fieldcraft is still being delivered to students, but the proportion of it within the curriculum has been reduced

### RAF 100 Engineering Competition

- Thunderer Sqn has entered a team of bursars into this competition
- From thousands of entries, the team has been selected to go through to the finals of the competition in the autumn of 2018

### **RAF 100 DTUS Event**

- CO DTUS Typhoon Sqn is organising an event at RAF Cosford on 5 May 18 for DTUS bursars to celebrate the Service's centenary
- It will be based on a visit to the Cosford Museum followed by a Dining-in night

### **Fitness Testing**

- Owing to ever decreasing physical fitness input standards achieved by students entering DSFC, the Welbeck Fitness Assessment (WFA) and hence, the DTUS Personal Fitness Assessment (PFA) are under review
- Currently, DTUS bursars must pass the PFA each year to receive the bursary and a pass is also required for them to safely participate in Adventurous Training
- Each Service sets different standards to be achieved at different points in time, which makes it difficult to adjust the Scheme's fitness assessments to be taken by all students

### **Alternative Branches to Engineer in DTUS manning**

- The Engineer Branch of the RAF is finding it increasingly difficult to fill the flight commander roles in DTUS – gapping has been the norm for some time now
- DTOEES COS has found a solution to this problem by having the post specification changed from an Eng Branch fill to a Personnel (Training) fill
- The Training Specialisation expects to be able to fill the roles without any gaps and this should take effect from late 2018
- The Adjt role at DSFC, which is annotated for a Royal Navy Engineer, will be filled this time by a newly trained officer from the Logistics Branch

### **Reservists**

- Increased employment of Reservists has mitigated the gapping problem within DTUS to a very great extent
- Excluding the Adjt role at Welbeck (which should be filled from 1 May 18. A Flight Commander from Typhoon Squadron is filling the gap temporarily in addition to his normal role.
- Hd DTOEES is a bi-Service rotational post (RN/RAF) – from 10 Sep 18 it will be filled by a regular serving RN Warfare Branch officer, Cdr Stuart Blackburn

### **Welbeck**

- The Military Skills & Leadership Training syllabus has now been thoroughly revised and brought into effect for the Lower Sixth. It is structured over four terms (excluding the summer term each year), and builds progressively from Basic Military Skills in Term 1 to Advanced Leadership in Term 4.
- Excellent links have been forged with the REME training centre at Lyneham, where both Lower Sixth exercises took place. Exercise Start in November, combined Weapon Training with an introduction to living in the

field (in vile weather!). Exercise Leader, on the first weekend in February, involved a series of command tasks, an assault course in teams and a planning exercise (with comfortable accommodation at Centurion Barracks, South Cerney).

- The next event is the final field exercise for the Upper Sixth, Exercise Last Stand, hosted by the Royal Engineers at Minley on 15-18 March (prayers going up for better weather than we had in the last two years!)
- The training year ends in June after the exams, with an attempt on the British Three Peaks on the weekend of 9 June, and then the Lower sixth Adventurous Training week in the Yorkshire Dales.

NOTED: The Chairman noted this is an informal report. A number of issues raised including physical fitness and it was queried why this is happening given students boarding at Welbeck and then under care of DTUS squadrons.

**ACTION: The Chairman noted the report did not mention the strategic review report on value for money, which was still with the MoD, or measures to tackle quality and quantity. The Chairman will make contact with the new Director General of the Defence Academy when in post.**

## 7. Development of COMEC and Relations with MECs

CONSIDERED: The Vice-Chairman's survey of MECs and their responses (COMEC\_2018\_02\_D1-3)

NOTED: The Vice-Chairman noted only 50% of MECs responded to the survey. The returns that were received confirmed structures of MECs are very similar and not as dominated by retired staff members as some thought. The Vice-Chairman noted disappointment that this was an opportunity to introduce new insights or critical analysis by MECs but they were not forthcoming e.g. there was a significant lack of response on questions relating to the changing landscape of Universities and possible opportunities.

NOTED: The Chairman noted lack of responses from some MECs where there was a COMEC executive member, and requested members help facilitate responses to COMEC requests like this questionnaire. The Chairman also noted paucity of response from MECs with OTRs.

NOTED: Ms C Kinhead noted that the response from Queen's Belfast was from individuals and not representative of the MEC itself.

**ACTION: The Vice- Chairman will send round a summary of all responses in table format to the Executive.**

**ACTION: The Vice-Chairman will send a draft report to MECs, noting an incomplete response, with a request for feedback particularly from MEC University members.**

## 8. Conference and AGM

### 2018

APPROVED: It was agreed that the 2018 Conference at BRNC Dartmouth be held on 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> September with the Executive meeting to be held either the evening before on the 10<sup>th</sup> September or morning of the 11<sup>th</sup> September.

NOTED: The Committee discussed theming the conference to STEM subject areas which could feed into conference discussions, noting difficulty of attracting talent to this area and importance of employability. This could open up debate with industry / professional bodies as well as military.



NOTED: The Chairman noted the requirement to move to content that was relevant to officer cadets, their generic skills development, careers opportunities and military recruitment in the Year of Engineering. It was noted a student union representative could be invited to speak.

**ACTION: Mr B Ritchie will circulate to the Executive the draft format of the conference. As a result of the feedback of the last conference, discussion forums will be part of the conference, and there will be a focus on student cadet experience and careers. Further discussion is required on subject matter and content.**

2019 onwards:

CONSIDERED: To continue discussion, following the MEC survey and any offers to host, whether a university should be added to the cycle in addition to our three Service hosts

NOTED: The MEC survey showed that this was a good idea but challenges of cost and senior level engagement remain.

**ACTION: The Chairman suggested to wait on other responses from MECs for further discussion.**

**9. Any Other Business:**

NOTED: No other business raised.

**10. Dates and Venues of Future Meetings:**

To Note: The dates and venues of future meetings:

- Thursday 17 May 2018 (London)
- September 2018 (BRNC Dartmouth, 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> September)
- Thursday 22 November 2018 (London)
- Thursday 21 February 2019 (London)