



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

Executive Committee Meeting

held on Thursday 21st November 2019 at 1115hrs

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

Minutes

Present

Mr R G Livingston (Chairman); Dr R Hall; Mr H Hamilton; Professor P Ivey; Ms C Kinkead; Maj I Stoney; Dr M Vilnay; Col N Tougher; Col D Guinness; Col D Gray; Cdr N Downing RN; Sqn Ldr A Hawes

In Attendance;

Mr Jason Norris (Secretary)

Apologies

Rev Professor J P Taylor (Treasurer); Mr J S Castle; Dr J Smith; Gp Capt H Edwards; Lt Col M Bishop

1. Minutes

- APPROVED: The Minutes of the Executive meeting held on 4th September 2019 (COMEC_2019_11_A1)
- NOTED: The minutes have been amended to note the University of South Wales now have the Employer Recognition Scheme gold award.
- RECEIVED: The draft Minutes of the AGM meeting held on 4th September 2019 (COMEC_2019_11_A2)
- ACTION: Minutes to be uploaded to the COMEC website.

2. Matters Arising

- Action points arising (COMEC_2019_11_A3)

Action Points Arising from the Executive Minutes of 4th September 2019

Publications (Min 9 21 Feb 2019)

- NOTED: This item to be considered later in the agenda.

Treasurer's Report (Min 4 4 Sept 2019)

- NOTED: This item to be considered later in the agenda.

Reports from the Service Staff Officers – Defence People (Min 5d 4 Sept 2019)

- NOTED: This item to be considered later in the agenda.

Duty of Care (Min 9 4 Sept 2019)

- RESOLVED: A note was sent to MECs and Service Staff Officers on 15th October 2019

COMEC Relations with MECs (Min 10 4 Sept 2019)

- NOTED: This item to be considered later in the agenda.

Dates & Venues of Future Meetings (Min 12 4 Sept 2019)

- NOTED: This item to be considered later in the agenda.

3. Chairman's Report

- RECEIVED: A report from the Chairman

Chairman's Report November 2019

Vice-Chairman

Bryden Ritchie has unfortunately decided to resign from the Executive. He cited increasing ignorance of academic issues and reduced contact with the military, and did not feel able to continue in the role. We cannot fill the position until September, but meantime we need to fill an interim role to liaise with our RAF host on arrangements for the Conference next year.

Armed Forces Parliamentary Scheme

I have had further correspondence about one of the parliamentarians' days being spent in a USU.

The requirement for an attachment has been reduced from 22 days at each of four levels to 15 days at only one level for each service. Those doing the army or royal marines attachment who were short of a few days at any level were catered for by the nearest University OTC or other reserve unit to their constituency but, with the reduction of days required and the increased number of regular commanding officers the programme required, the respective SOIs at the MoD have permitted them to abandon the UOTCs.

Is there sufficient support and enthusiasm among the services to justify being involved in the abridged duration and press the matter with the trustees?

Security Related Issues in Higher Education

UUK are asking universities for the contact details of a staff member responsible for the monitoring and governance of security risks and liaising with UUK and Whitehall.

Their chairman has some specific questions emerging for which engagement with COMEC, and MECs, might be advantageous, and we would encourage members to contribute in whatever way may be appropriate. They will also second someone to the NCSC to update their guidance on managing cybersecurity risks.

- NOTED: The Chairman noted thanks to Mr B Ritchie for his contribution to the work of COMEC over the last four years, especially the last two as Vice-Chairman.
- CONCLUDED: It was difficult to justify, in the abridged duration of the Armed Forces Parliamentary Scheme, members spending a day in a USU, though it was hoped that it might be retained as an option for those parliamentarians who might be short of the odd day to fulfil their attachment requirement.
- **ACTION: MECs and USUs would be reminded in the New Year of the importance of including local parliamentarians in guest lists as appropriate in order to introduce them to how these units operate.**

4. Treasurer's Report

- RECEIVED: A report from the Treasurer (COMEC_2019_11_B)
- **ACTON: The COMEC budget and financials would be discussed in more detail at the February Executive meeting.**

5. Reports from the Service Staff Officers

- RECEIVED: A report from each of the Service Staff Officers:
 - a. Royal Navy (COMEC_2019_11_C1)

URNU REPORT

Significant Events

1. *The start of the academic year is the busiest time of the URNU calendar with the critical recruiting phase. This year strong levels of interest across the country, have resulted in most units being able to fill all vacancies and hold a list of eligible candidates in reserve. In order to take account of drop off due to medical failures, and pressure of studies, all units have been encouraged to recruit above their liability. This year, several units have placed more reliance on social media for recruitment due to the increasing cost of attendance at Freshers Fayres, and the less targeted nature of these events. This approach appears to have been successful however, it is clear that a combination of a broad social media campaign must be combined with face to face contact, in order to achieve the desired outcomes. Those units with spaces have already begun to organise further recruiting events, using current members to reach out to their peers for further recruits.*
2. *The first big event of their time in the URNU, for all of the latest recruits, is attendance at one of the New Entry Weekends. This year, to reduce travel time and*

take account of the availability of resources, the events were staged in three different venues:

- *Northern: HMS CALLIOPE Northumbrian; G&S; and Edinburgh*
- *Central: HMS EAGLET M&S; Liverpool; and Yorkshire*
- *South: HMS RALEIGH Oxford; Cambridge; Devon; and Wales*

A second weekend at HMS RALEIGH had to be cancelled due to manning issues, but the units involved were able to complete the required evolutions using local facilities.

3. *The next significant evolution of recruitment process is the Recruit Medical. This has been problematic over the last number of years, taking up to 6 months in a number of cases and can also result in high failure rates. It is hoped that early close liaison with the RN Service Medical Entry Cell will help to resolve identified issues. However, there will still be elements of the process that are out of our control because this process is completed under contract.*
4. *Many units have also staged Trafalgar and Alumni Dinners over the last number of weeks. Of particular note was Cambridge URNU's 25th Anniversary Dinner and the Bristol event where the unit hosted Rear Admiral Bath, who is currently Assistant Chief of Naval Staff (Personnel), Naval Secretary and Flag Officer Reserves.*

Personnel

5. *The CO at Cambridge URNU has changed with Lt Ian Woodward RN taking over from Captain Tim Pitcher RM who is leaving the Service. The planned personnel changes up to the end of Q2 2020 will be determined by selection, while the changes for the remainder of 2020 will be determined in Q1 20.*

Infrastructure

6. *Glasgow & Strathclyde URNU's extension of lease has now been secured. This means that joint funding can now be secured for the improvement / refurbishment of the premises.*
7. *The planned re-location of Wales URNU to the new HMS CAMBRIA site in Cardiff Bay is on Schedule for completion with the march in planned for May 20.*
8. *Infrastructure improvements funded by Navy Infra, for Edinburgh and Sussex URNUs have now been completed, while work is ongoing at the Bristol and Devon sites.*

Training

9. *The Universities HQ continues to conduct IPA on all units on an annual cycle, while the COMCORE HQ has introduced a 2PA strategy that is now entering its second phase.*

10. Two URNUs will be the subject of Ofsted Welfare Duty of Care Inspections in Nov 19, while a further unit is likely to be visited in Q1 20.

Future Activity

11. Manning will be a challenge in the coming months, with several units being gapped in the CO or Coxswain’s roles, while others are having difficulty recruiting suitably qualified clerical support. To mitigate this, experienced COs and Coxswains are being used to support remaining unit that and to ensure that there is an appropriate level of Duty of Care available at all times.

12. The Sea Training programme has already commenced with several units engaged in training onboard their affiliated P2000s.

13. In the coming months the URNU organisation will move to a regionalised model with units and P2000s operating in four regions: North, Central, South East and South West. This will ensure that best use is made of available hulls and the overall sea time offered to students will be increased as available bunk space will be fully utilised.

- NOTED: Mr H Hamilton noted the lack of an URNU in the East Midlands. Cdr N Downing noted this had been looked at previously and there may be another opportunity to review again in the future.
- NOTED: The Chairman noted the increase in sea time for cadets is welcome as concerns were raised previously on this. It was queried if a regional model for units and ships would mean that students would be in the care of a captain who did not know them or their capabilities. Cdr N Downing noted the importance of cadets being out of familiar surroundings.

b. Army

1. Army Report for November COMEC Meeting (COMEC_2019_11_C2a)

ROYAL MILITARY ACADEMY SANDHURST GROUP (RMAS GP) - UNIVERSITY OFFICERS’ TRAINING CORPS (UOTC) COMEC REPORT – NOVEMBER 2019

GENERAL

1. **Introduction.** This report covers the period May to Nov 19 and is aimed at providing COMEC with a broad overview of the Army strategic (4*), operational (1/2*) and tactical (UOTC) issues and activities that are related to military education.

2. **Strategic MEC Related Headlines:**

a. CDS direction for 2019 is the “year of empowerment” (delegating more responsibilities to subordinates with more trust). General Carter also gave

specific direction about improving Defence's ability to innovate, exploit new technologies and partner more with Industry to improve capabilities.

b. Army recruiting figures have improved – the new Capita recruiting push in New Year, controversially targeting the “snowflake” generation has worked. It will take time however (12-18 months) for the new applicants to get into training and then into Field Army.

CGS's Main Effort, remains “Manning the Army”. The priority is soldier recruiting over Officers.

3. Operational MEC Related Headlines: *The RMAS Gp Independent Advisory Panel (IAP) has finished their review of OTCs. They briefed their recommendations to COMEC (5 Sep). The executive summary is at Enclosure 1 and the RMAS Gp response is at Enclosure 2. Their nine recommendations are summarised below:*

*a. **Recommendation 1.** That RMAS revise the OTC narrative to articulate the purpose and approach of OTCs and what they offer more clearly, and that this be communicated widely within the Army and Defence, to universities and to employers.*

*b. **Recommendation 2.** That RMAS, through ARITC, make the case to Home Command for Defence and Army strategies to engage with universities, within which the RMAS plan should function. Develop a university engagement plan.*

*c. **Recommendation 3.** That RMAS engages more systematically with MEC chairs and considers using the Dean of Sandhurst as the focus, and that consideration be given to changing the name of MECs to ‘Military Training Liaison Committees’.*

*d. **Recommendation 4.** RMAS, through ARITC and ECAB, raise the case to Defence for working with COMEC to review its terms of reference. Recognising that COMEC operates at the Defence level, that COMEC's membership be reviewed to include proactive senior Defence representation from CDP's area, the Defence Academy, Dstl, the three Armed Services¹ and current senior university staff. Given the Army's major interest in University Service Units, that RMAS be the Army lead for the relationship with COMEC.*

*e. **Recommendation 5.** The development of a broader set of metrics to measure OTC performance going beyond recruiting and to include university engagement and alumni.*

*f. **Recommendation 6.** RMAS Group develop and maintain a tailored OTC syllabus and lesson plans. The offer to third year officer cadets be reviewed, formalised and adequately resourced in order to improve retention. A lesser offer be developed to attract and engage individuals who are unable to commit to the full syllabus*

g. **Recommendation 7.** *Noting the need to balance an overt recruiting posture for the OTCs with their relationship with universities and work underway, we recommend that: The OTCs' relationship with Recruiting Group and role in recruiting are process mapped in order to identify synergies, opportunities and efficiencies; and that consideration be given to exploiting the OTC opportunity to attract minorities and specialists.*

h. **Recommendation 8.** *Clearer articulation of OTC policies and standards by HQ RMAS Group. Greater standardisation between OTCs, while retaining freedom for COs to show initiative; Formal assignment of tasks to other elements of the RMAS Group in respect of OTCs; Further strengthening of the OTC cell in the Group HQ.*

i. **Recommendation 9.** *That a leaning exercise be conducted on the establishment, which considers the key factors affecting delivery (attraction, inflow to regular and reserve armies, health and safety, welfare, reputation). This should be followed by a review of job specifications for instructor roles.*

4. **Tactical MEC Related Headlines.**

- a. *The OTCS deployed on an excellent series of UK and overseas deployment exercises, including Germany, Cyprus and Gibraltar.*
- b. *Recruiting in Sep/Oct has been challenging*

5. **Recruiting.** *After the summer break, the emphasis switched to recruiting with a series of events at Freshers Fayres. Current numbers are:*

- a. *Funded establishment = 2570.*
- b. *Held on strength = 3477.*
- c. *Attestations so far = 1231.*

6. **Defence Engagement.** *Defence engagement activities whist on Adventure Training (AT) remain a priority with expeditions as far afield as Chile, Denmark and Morocco. CUOTC will send 2 staff and 8 cadets along with 4 cadets from Oxford to Jordan in Mar 20. The trip intends to build on the relationship formed with Mutah university in Amman.*

7. **RMAS Officer Pipeline Statistics.** *Directed Main Effort is to get as many cadets into RMAS as either Regular or Reserve Officers. Detailed numbers are enclosed as a separate document.*

8. **Civil Engagement.** *Noting limited workforce, every effort was and is made to conduct civil engagement in line with Regional Bde's direction. Home Command/Regional Command's engagement priority is with schools (12-18 yrs) to improve the younger generation's understanding of the Army but also to sow the seed for recruiting.*

9. **Ex EXECUTIVE LEADER.** *OTCs continue to deliver on behalf of Regional Reserve Forces and Cadets Association, including successful Employer Engagement exercises.*

10. **OFSTED Visit.** *It has been confirmed OFSTED will visit Oxford and Liverpool Nov 19-Mar*

- NOTED: Col N Tougher noted that more responsibility has been delegated to lower ranks. There is a key driver to recruit regular army soldiers.
- NOTED: Col N Tougher noted activities had not been reduced. There is funding for 2570 cadets for 44 days per year. Medicals have been improved and cadets who are unlikely to pass are identified early, so allowing more opportunities for those cadets able to devote more time.
- NOTED: Col N Tougher noted investment (including overseas defence engagement opportunities) follows strong recruitment e.g. West Midlands. An increasing number of cadets are attending AOSB and related briefing weekends, allowing the Army to categorise their potential appropriately.
- NOTED: Mr H Hamilton noted that the Army “snowflake” advertising campaign worked well and resonated with young people. Col N Tougher noted he was looking for something similar from the Army recruiting group to support recruitment to OTCs.
- NOTED: Dr M Vilnay asked about the number of females being recruited to OTCs. Col N Tougher commented that there is a higher percentage of female cadets in the OTCs than in the regular Army and the issue is why they do not decide to make it a career.
- NOTED: Professor P Ivey noted there is an issue with the current Army recruitment process, noting the experience of a family member who is currently going through it. The process and messaging needs to be reviewed so it can be articulated better.
- NOTED: Col N Tougher noted that OTCs are seriously misunderstood, with a lack of understanding in the local community and University space. He is trying to address this through closer engagement of COs with MECs to support recruitment: for example Sheffield Hallam involve the OTC in leadership programmes.
- NOTED: Col N Tougher noted concern on the replacement for DTUS, noting there could be an increased bespoke ask of OTCs which he would be unable to resource. He noted this was being overseen at a much higher level than Service Staff Officer. The Chairman had raised with the Chief of Defence People and Director General of the Defence Academy concerns at the Graduate Inflow Scheme’s potential impact on our USUs: it is supposed to grow significantly larger than DTUS, so it would need to be carefully managed. We had offered to contribute as appropriate to its design, development, delivery and promotion, but the Defence Academy’s team had failed to consult us. Col D Guinness offered support on this from Defence People and Col D Gray would take this forward. Col N Tougher suggested the Chairman attend the next meeting in Shrivenham in November 2019.
- NOTED: Col N Tougher noted a new UOTR will be formed in Scotland combining Aberdeen and Tayforth UOTCs. Learning from the Yorkshire OTR experience, this is being done in consultation with MECs and RFCA. Col N Tougher emphasised there will no change of cap badges or footprint. The HQ will be in Aberdeen. There is an ongoing discussion relating to the current UOTC premises at the University of Dundee, noting the University now desires to buy out the lease: Tayforth MEC requested to support

discussions. Dr M Vilnay noted the MEC have been involved in some discussions and is willing to engage.

2. Full IAP Report with Executive Summary (COMEC_2019_11_C2b)
 3. Formal Response to IAP, including progress so far (COMEC_2019_11_C2c)
- NOTED: The Conference had been interested to learn from Brig van der Lande something of the Panel's findings, and had been reassured that COMEC and our MECs contribute on diverse recruiting, STEM and employer relations, and we are delivering on engagement with UUK, Armed Forces Covenant and sharing best practice.
 - The IAP report drawing attention to a range of issues is opportune and should assist us all in determining the future direction. We welcome the intention to engage actively with university, and our common business and industry, partners.
 - COMEC's primary responsibility is to represent the interests of our MECs, which have as their primary responsibility monitoring the work of our USUs. We are the continuing presence championing collaboration, and our respective remits extend beyond officer recruiting to a wider alliance between universities and Defence. However, Defence should articulate its needs more clearly, so that we may assess our capacity to deliver before extending our remit and composition.
 - We will continue to review our partnership with Defence, and use the issues addressed in the report to inform our deliberations.

c. Royal Air Force (COMEC_2019_11_C3)

20191114 – 6 FTS COMEC Update

Key Points

- **Recruiting to establishment.**
- **Ofsted**
- **Delivered 2,072 AT places.**
- **Basing (BUAS, YUAS & NIUAS).**
- **Planning for 2020 Tutor display season**

1. **Recruitment.** *Recruitment has gone well despite fewer individuals seeking us out at the Freshers Fairs but the quality of the candidates who did is higher than in previous years. We are hoping that we will be able to recruit to our establishment of 1000 students. Against a recruiting target of 30% of students into Initial Officer Training we achieved 26%; historically we have achieved circa 34%. Unfortunately, in the transfer of data from TAFMIS to the new Defence Recruiting System a number of current and former UAS members were not correctly identified and as a result the figure is artificially low. These and several other issues have now been corrected and future figures will more accurately reflect performance. The target for this coming year*

remains at 30% though the annual course in-take will rise from circa 400 to 650 and this will present a more challenging goal.

2. **OFSTED.** *Ofsted inspected University of Birmingham and Southampton University Air Squadrons on the 7 & 12 Nov 19. Initially feedback has been extremely positive, and we await their full report.*

3. **Adventurous Training.** *One thousand, five hundred and eighty-two places were taken up in the UK, 174 overseas and 316 skiing overseas; total 490. HQ 6 FTS was successful in being granted financial assistance through the RAF Charities Trust Paul Bowen Award; Northumberland University Air Squadron took 12 students to Iceland; East of Scotland University Air Squadron took 14 students to Mongolia and Cambridge University Air Squadron took 12 students to Jordan. UAS organised AT is specifically designed to deliver UAS training objectives within a safe environment for pre-Phase 1 trainees: it requires student engagement in every aspect of planning, delivery and recovery of an expedition. It builds team cohesion within individual UASs and tests individuals' suitability for military service by taking people outside of their comfort zone.*

4. **Bristol UAS.** *Earlier in the year it was hoped that the Initial Gate Business Case (IGBC) would pass muster in June. However, while the IGBC has passed DIO scrutiny it remains in the 'financial approvals process'. Consequently, there is a pause in the project.*

BUAS continues to fly from Boscombe Down, albeit at a restricted rate. To mitigate this, we have programmed flying camps at Newquay Airport, formerly RAF St Mawgan; over the Easter and Summer period.

5. **Yorkshire UAS.** *It has been formally announced that flying will cease at RAF Linton on Ouse in Dec 20. Flying activities will 'bolthole' to RAF Leeming and YUAS will co-locate with NUAS whilst DIO complete a feasibility study as to the future location of YUAS. An option being considered is to conduct flying from RAF Leeming and secure THQ facility in either York, Sheffield or Leeds.*

6. **Northern Ireland UAS.** *Full Operating Capability will be declared 6 Jan 20 with 3 x aircraft permanently located at Aldergrove.*

7. **Tutor Display.** *Another successful display season where we flew 16 full displays at 10 venues and attendance figures for the shows we attended totalled some 1.9M. This engagement figure does not include social media, with several events being live streamed on YouTube. Eight displays were cancelled primarily due to weather. The Tutor Display Team received very positive feedback from the Air Show Organisers for both flying and ground elements. A UAS was allocated to each venue to provide ground support and actively engaged with the public; promoting both the Service and the UAS opportunities across the UK. Planning has now commenced for the 2020 display season.*

- NOTED: Sqn Ldr A Hawes noted there is now increased capacity for flying training for UAS and Air Experience Cadets, as well as for some regular service personnel. The Chairman noted he hoped Project TELUM would

address regular flying capacity going forward noting the protracted contractual negotiations.

d. Defence People

- NOTED: Col D Guinness noted there were 3 main areas of focus:
 - o Study on RFCAs on their scope, role and purpose. An initial report is with ministers.
 - o Following on from the future engagement strategy on regular forces, work is now starting on reserve forces with the aim of bringing harmony to FTRs across services. Also need to look at how dynamically to build up and down reserve forces as needed e.g. move to a single Armed Forces Act. Sqn Ldr A Hawes noted more flexibility was needed on pilot reservists which is being considered.
 - o Defence Engagement Activity – noting the need for reserves to do more in this area in a more structured way.
- NOTED: Col D Guinness noted 74 Universities have now signed up to the Armed Forces covenant (from 47 this time last year), and supports earlier discussions on how to get Universities more engaged with Defence.
- NOTED: Col D Guinness noted recruitment numbers are stable (Army Reserves at 27,000 trained strength, RAF at 2699 trained strength and Marine at 2850 trained strength).

6. Continuation Recruiting Statistics Annual Return

- RECEIVED: Annual continuation recruiting statistics from Service Staff Officers. (COMEC_2019_11_D)
- NOTED: The Chairman thanked Services for supplying the recruiting figures, noting some more detail to follow. This will inform future discussions and decision making.

Continuation-recruiting Statistics						
The Services agreed that, in the absence of anyone else, COMEC should collect, in the autumn for the previous academic year, reliable basic statistics on the USUs and continuation-recruiting to the Services, in order to inform deliberations and have a single source of information to refer to.						
Definitions might vary between the Services and the data might not be directly comparable, but in-Service annual trends could be identified.						
Royal Navy						
	<u>2014/15</u>	<u>2015/16</u>	<u>2016/17</u>	<u>2017/18</u>	<u>2018/19</u>	
<u>URNUs:</u>						
1. Intake (net after any early drop-outs)				271	143	
2. Total Officer Cadets				702	761	
3. Leavers				316	161	
<u>Regular BRNC intake:</u>						
4. Total				386	454	
5. Of whom former URNU OCdts				39	57	
6. And other former USU OCdts, UOTC:UAS				14:11	39	
All former OCdts as a percentage of the previous year's URNU leavers						
Former URNU OCdts as a percentage of R	13%	15%	10%	10%	13%	
All former OCdts as a percentage of Regula	17%	23%	20%	17%	21%	
<u>Reserve AOP intake:</u>						
7. Total				not available		
8. Of whom former URNU OCdts						
9. And other former USU OCdts						
All former OCdts as a percentage of the previous year's URNU leavers						
All former OCdts as a percentage of AOP in	17%	24%				
<u>Other Ranks</u>						
10. Former USU OCdts recruited						
	<u>2014/15</u>	<u>2015/16</u>	<u>2016/17</u>	<u>2017/18</u>	<u>2018/19</u>	
Note 1:	Sep. intake, URNU as % of total		25%	28%	14%	13%
Note 2:	Sep. intake, URNU+USU as % of total		31%	36%	22%	21%
Note 3:	URNU as % of total		17%	18%		
Army						
			<u>2016/17</u>	<u>2017/18</u>	<u>2018/19</u>	
<u>UOTCs (Note 1):</u>						
1. Intake (net after any early drop-outs)				1313	1592	
2. Total Officer Cadets				3150	3454	
3. Leavers				1173	1088	
<u>Regular Commissions (or intake):</u>						
4. Total				not available		
5. Of whom former UOTC OCdts				114	201	
6. And other former USU OCdts				nk	nk	
All former OCdts as a percentage of the previous year's UOTC leavers						
Former UOTC OCdts as a percentage of Regular Commissions			35%	n/a	n/a	
<u>Reserve Commissions:</u>						
7. Total			143	nk		
8. Of whom former UOTC OCdts			69	108	100	
9. And other former USU OCdts				nk	nk	
All former OCdts as a percentage of the previous year's UOTC leavers						
Former UOTC OCdts as a percentage of Reserve Commissions			48%	47%		
<u>Other Ranks</u>						
10. Former USU OCdts recruited				nk	nk	
Note 1:	2017/18 excludes Aberdeen and Oxford					

Royal Air Force				2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
<u>UASs:</u>						
1.	Intake (net after any early drop-outs), M:F			372	247:108	413
2.	Total Officer Cadets, M:F (Note 4)			622:252	857	615:272
3.	Leavers (Note 5)			375	383	302
<u>Regular IOT intake:</u>						
4.	Total (Note 6)			265	348	to follow
5.	Of whom former UAS OCdts			98	121	
6.	And other former USU OCdts			not captured		
All former OCdts as a percentage of the previous year's UAS leavers						
Former UAS OCdts as a percentage of IOT intake				37%	35%	
<u>Reserve Commissions (or intake):</u>						
7.	Total			unknown	35	
8.	Of whom former UAS OCdts			3	not available	
9.	And other former USU OCdts			not captured		
All former OCdts as a percentage of the previous year's UAS leavers						
All former OCdts as a percentage of Reserve Commissions						
<u>Other Ranks</u>						
10.	Former USU OCdts recruited, Regular:Reserve			3:3	not available	
				2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Note 4:	Sponsored, M:F			81:19		48:20
	BAME			10%		11%
Note 5:	Including individuals allocated an IOT place in subsequent year					
Note 6:	Excludes currently serving Armed Forces					

7. Conference

- RECEIVED: Collated feedback report from the Vice-Chairman on the COMEC Conference 2019. (COMEC_2019_11_E)
- NOTED: There were 7 responses to the requested Conference feedback (noting URNU put in a joint response). Members particularly noted how successful the Conference had been, appreciating the extent of the challenge faced and all the hard work required.
- NOTED: Discussions were had on consolidated feedback with the following outcomes:
 - o The first week in September on a Wednesday and Thursday is the best timing for most people.
 - o The length of the last conference was considered optimal.
 - o The conference should be annual.
 - o Current conference costs are reasonable considering charges are now unavoidable whether at a Service or private venue.
 - o There was a good balance and spread of subjects at the last conference.
 - o The presence of an increased number of cadets at the last conference was welcomed and should be encouraged for the next conference.
- RESOLVED: The timing of the next conference would be scheduled for Wed 2nd and Thurs 3rd September 2020. The venue is still to be confirmed with the primary option being RAF Halton, followed by the RAF Club in London or Victory Services Club.
- RESOLVED: Mr H Hamilton and Ms C Kinkead agreed to support the planning of the 2020 Conference with Wg Cdr T Bake.

8. Relations with MECs

- **CONSIDERED:** The Chairman noted COMEC had tried several ways of engaging with MECs to enhance communication and exchange ideas, and some had responded e.g. Oxford DMI (Duty of Care Paper). It had previously been suggested that a few MECs per meeting should be asked for a brief report on their activities.
- **ACTION: Dr M Vilnay agreed to submit an update from Tayforth MEC for the next meeting.**
- **RESOLVED:** The Executive decided against reintroducing the designation of a member as a contact for each MEC.
- **CONSIDERED:** It had been suggested that the Executive hold a meeting each year outwith London, hosted by an MEC at a date arranged to fit in with a lecture, training night or other event in order to meet with some of their members and students.
- **ACTION: The Chairman will contact Liverpool MEC, which had responded positively to the Chairman's offer to improve communication, to request if the February or May 2020 Executive meeting could be held at there.**

9. Publications

- **ACTION: Nominations were invited from members to succeed Dr P J R Mileham as Publications Editor. This was deferred to the February 2020 Executive meeting.**
- **RECEIVED:** Conspectus draft text for any observations. (COMEC_2019_11_F)
- **NOTED:** The Chairman noted this was draft text, with the purpose of publicising what COMEC does and for whom. Several issues were raised regarding the content, accuracy and layout, and further updates were awaited.
- **ACTION: Mr H Hamilton would advise on appropriate design for limited hardcopy printing, PDF and web publication.**

10. Prize

- **RESOLVED:** It was agreed that Mr R Hall be appointed as lead adjudicator in succession to Ann Lyon.
- **RESOLVED:** It was agreed that Ms C Kinkead, Mr H Hamilton continue to adjudicate and that Dr M Vilnay will shadow for the first year.

11. Any Other Business:

- **NOTED:** The Chairman thanked Col D Guinness for his engaging and informative input to the COMEC Executive.
- **NOTED:** Dr M Vilnay highlighted the following opportunities that may be of interest to the MECs:
 - o DASA <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/defence-and-security-accelerator> finds and funds exploitable innovation to support defence and security. Their vision is to maintain strategic advantage through innovative capabilities and technologies. DASA is a cross-

Government team from Defence, security, the private sector and academia co-located with Dstl at Porton Down and also at Imperial College.

Regional innovation partners have been visiting the universities to promote the research opportunities, which might be of interest to MECs and those considering funding submissions. Proposals may be submitted either to the open call for innovation or in response to the technical challenges in a specific themed competition <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/apply-for-funding>

- Ex-Forces business awards; 2020 nominations are now open. Details are: <https://exforcesinbusiness.co.uk/>
- **ACTION: To discuss at the next meeting whether a briefing by an Innovation Partner to the Executive and case studies to the Conference would be of interest to members.**

12. Dates and Venues of Future Meetings:

- **CONSIDERED:** The dates and venues of future meetings:
 - Thursday 20 February 2020 (Venue TBC)
 - Thursday 14 May 2020 (Venue TBC)
 - Wednesday 2nd – Thursday 3rd September 2020 (RAF, Venue TBC)
 - Thursday 19 November 2020 (ULOTC, London)