



ARMY

ARMY GENERAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTIONS

VOLUME 3

CHAPTER 81

ARMY WELFARE POLICY

The welfare of SP and their families is a key CoC leadership responsibility

This Chapter is sponsored by Personal Services on behalf of Director Personnel. AGAI 81 promulgates Army Welfare Policy to deliver a key element of the moral component of fighting power and thus contribute to maintaining operational effectiveness. It should be read in conjunction with JSP 770: Tri-Service Operational and Non-operational Welfare Policy. This policy applies to all Army SP including Reserves and Regular Reservists, their families and Army veterans where practicable and manageable.

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CHAPTER 81
ARMY WELFARE POLICY**

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RECORD OF AMENDMENTS

AEL Number	Amendment Date	Authority	Amendment
AEL 110	Mar 19	Pers Cap, Pers Svcs, Pol	Minor amendments to paras 81.015 & 81.064
AEL 120	Jan 20	Pers Cap, Pers Svcs, Pol	Restructuring of Parts
AEL 121	Feb 20	Pers Cap, Pers Svcs, Pol	Addition of exclusion to SFA/SSFA following reports of DA. Appendix 1 to Annex C (3 Feb). Subsequent revision of paragraph numbering (26 Feb)
AEL 143	Dec 21	Pers Svcs, Pers Pol	Restructuring of Parts and revision of paragraphs.
AEL 151	Aug 22	Pers Svc, Pers Pol	Addition of Paras 81.005.b and 81.155. New Para 81.231 and renumbering of remaining paragraphs in Part 7.
AEL 153	Oct 22	Pers Svc, Pers Pol	Minor amdt to Para 81.021 & 81.047e
AEL 158	17 Mar 23	Pers Svc, Pers Pol	Addition of JANIS Pilot Paras 81.004 Point J, 81.047 Point G, 81.152, 81.159 and 81.160 and renumbering of remaining paragraphs in Part 5. Revision of Paras 81.151 and 81.154.

1. **Inclusive Language.** As directed by the Executive Committee of the Army Board, all new policies and services must where possible use inclusive language. This can usually be done by rephrasing sentences or, if this is not possible, by using 'they' or 'their' rather than 'his' or 'her'. This AGAI 081 complies with the MOD's inclusive language guidance.
2. **Equality Analysis.** As directed by Head of Diversity and Inclusion in ACSO 3252, this AGAI 081 has been considered against the Public Sector Equality Duty and whilst it does impact on people it does not impact adversely on any protected characteristics and thus a full Equality Analysis Impact Assessment (EQIA) was not required. The initial EQIA is archived and available from the author / owner.

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VOLUME 3 CHAPTER 81 ARMY WELFARE POLICY

PART 1 - GENERAL

Introduction

81.001. This Army General and Administrative Instruction (AGAI) promulgates Army Welfare Policy to deliver a key element of the moral component of fighting power and thus contribute to maintaining operational effectiveness (OE). It should be read in conjunction with [JSP 770 \(Tri-Service Operational and Non-Operational Welfare Policy\)](#).

81.002. Amendments. Proposed amendments or new material for incorporation into this AGAI should be submitted for consideration to the [Pers Svcs Gp Mailbox](#). Updates will be publicised via an Army Briefing Note and the [Welfare Matters Newsletter](#).

Conceptual Framework

81.003. Defence Context. The MOD is responsible for developing and coordinating welfare policies, including those that derive from government legislation. Tri-Service welfare policy provides the framework for welfare delivery by the single Services (sS) and UK STRATCOM. However, the sS deliver some aspects of welfare policy in a way that satisfies the needs of the particular Service. Within this context, the Army are responsible for the development and delivery of welfare policy that meets its needs. The sS and UK STRATCOM are responsible for feeding up to the Centre best practice and lessons identified so that tri-Service welfare policy can be formulated or amended.

81.004. The Army's Conceptual Framework for the provision of welfare can be found in the [Army Welfare Capstone Document](#). The Capstone expands on the strategic Ends of Army welfare outlined below and should be read in conjunction with this AGAI.

81.005. Definitions.

- a. **Welfare.** The provision of a widely recognised and accessible personal and community support structure that secures and improves the well-being of Service Personnel (SP) and the Service community, and can adapt to societal, legislative, and operational change to optimises the capability and motivation of all SP.
- b. **Service Community.** SP, their dependant and non-dependant family members.
 - (1) **Family Members with Dependant Status.** This includes spouses, civil partners, partners in long-term relationships, and children (biological, adopted or fostered). These are family members whose access to barracks, messes, gyms, medical facilities etc is dependent on the SP's status as a serving member of the UK Armed Forces; it does not imply they are dependent on the SP financially or as a person.
 - (2) **Family Members with Non-Dependant Status.** These are predominantly parents and siblings of a SP. While not entitled to the support available to

dependant family members, non-dependant family members should be considered when addressing casualty and compassionate cases and when supporting single SP during operational deployments.

81.006. Purpose. To enhance the OE of the Army by increasing the resilience of SP and their immediate families to mitigate the unique challenges of Service life: mobility, separation, and personal risk.

81.007. Vision. Welfare provision that delivers the right outcomes for our people and the Army, by the right people, at the right time.

81.008. Principles. The purpose and vision are underpinned by the following principles:

- a. The needs of the Army come first; those of the SP and their immediate family come a close second.¹
- b. Welfare provision that is affordable, efficient, and effective, and focuses resource on those functions which are of the most value.
- c. Welfare provision that is accessible, configured for all and truly focussed on the needs of our people.
- d. Welfare provision that supports those most in need, while fostering independence in all.
- e. Welfare provision modernised to reflect the differing needs, aspirations, and expectations of our people now, and in the future.
- f. Welfare provision is interrelated and interdependent to its people and services – it cannot operate in stovepipes.
- g. Welfare provision that is communicated effectively and exploits modern connectivity.
- h. Welfare provision that is driven by targeted data.

81.009. Outcomes. The Army seeks the following outcomes from its welfare provision:

- a. OE is enhanced.
- b. The impact of mobility, separation and personal risk is mitigated.
- c. The right people are retained.
- d. Confidence and trust in the system is maintained.
- e. Equality of experience realised by all.
- f. The resilience and resourcefulness of SP, their immediate family and

¹ But to be worthy of its pre-eminence the Army must give due consideration to the best interest and preferences of each individual SP.

communities is strengthened.

81.010. Endstate. The provision of welfare by appropriately selected and trained welfare staff, whenever and wherever required, which enhances OE by increasing the resilience of Army personnel and their immediate family.

Delivery

81.011. Welfare Functions. The welfare functions required by SP and their immediate family include, but are not limited to:

- a. Safeguarding.
- b. Domestic abuse (DA).
- c. Support to Wounded Injured and Sick (WIS) SP.
- d. Support during separation and isolation.
- e. Bereavement support.
- f. Housing support.
- g. Support to non-UK SP.
- h. Children and education support.
- i. Disability and additional needs.
- j. Resilience.
- k. Money and financial support.
- l. Overseas supportability.
- m. Support to partner employment.
- n. Estrangement and familial breakdown.
- o. Relationship counselling.
- p. Spiritual and pastoral care.
- q. Fostering and adopting.
- r. Support to under 18s and care leavers.

81.012. Entitlement to Welfare Provision. The matrix of entitlement to MOD funded welfare provision is outlined in [Annex A to Chapter 1 of JSP 770](#). It differs based on the level of support required and whether the SP is UK-based or overseas. As a minimum and

at all times, Welfare provision must directly support all Regular and on-duty Reserve personnel and their immediate family regardless of their length of Service, from attestation to transition, and applies equally to non-UK SP and families. Overseas, this entitlement is widened to include MOD civil servants and contractors. Welfare provision for veterans is also a core funded activity delivered centrally by the MOD's Veterans Welfare Service (VWS), supported by the Army's Corps and Regimental Headquarters and the 3rd Sector.

81.013. Roles and Responsibilities. The effectiveness of Army welfare provision is dependent upon the coordination, communication, and balance of responsibility between the individual, the Chain of Command (CoC) and the Army's welfare support services (each of which are supported by non-organic welfare agencies). Welfare activities are frequently complex, overlapping and performed at multiple levels; optimisation can only be achieved if all elements of this triumvirate work in harmony.

a. **Individual Responsibilities.** Welfare starts with the SP. It is incumbent upon SP to understand their own welfare needs and those of their immediate family, and to ensure timely communication with the CoC where personal situations may affect resilience, functionality, availability, or OE. To achieve this, SP must be given clear guidance in their responsibilities and the pivotal role they play in communicating effectively with both their family and the CoC in times of need. They must have access to appropriate welfare resources and be empowered to make informed choices to meet their needs. The CoC have an important role in enabling individual responsibility and removing the barriers that prevent the empowerment of our people.

b. **Command Responsibilities.** Welfare is a function of command. [JSP 770 \(Tri-Service Operational and Non-Operational Welfare Policy\)](#) details the welfare responsibility of Commanders for Army SP and their families. Commanders at all levels in the CoC are responsible for the welfare support of those under their command and within its community. The CoC have a critical role as welfare first responders, providing information and face-to-face guidance. They are supported by specialist advisors and professional welfare workers. Overseas, Commanders should seek to replicate the welfare services provided by the local authorities in England wherever reasonably practicable; this will be informed by the provisions of international agreements and local legal requirements and includes responsibility for the welfare of MOD Civil Servants and contractors.

c. **Army Welfare Support Services Responsibilities.** The Army's welfare support services are responsible for providing support to the CoC and the provision of services that require specialist staff. These services often assist the CoC with complex issues that cannot be resolved by practical interventions alone or those that require extensive on-going support including: personal and emotional support; spiritual and pastoral support; information support; and structural support placing the needs of the Army community within the wider context of civilian society and identifying gaps in provision to target resources effectively.

81.014. Accountability for Army Welfare. As the Principal Personnel Officer, the responsibility for personnel capability and Defence Lines of Development coherence rests with the Deputy Chief of the General Staff. In accordance with the Army Operating Model, Army welfare provision responsibilities are split between the Army Headquarters (Army HQ) Directorate of Personnel (D Pers) and Home Command (HC).

- a. **Army HQ.** D Pers is responsible for the development of Army non-remunerative Conditions of Service policy, including welfare. This includes shaping and informing Defence welfare policy, owned by the Chief of Defence Personnel, and setting the policy framework for welfare delivery across the Army.
- b. **HC.** Commander HC is tasked with delivering the Army's personnel and institutional support, including welfare. Welfare delivery is delegated to General Officer Commanding (GOC) Regional Command (RC), who is responsible for the evaluation of the effectiveness of welfare delivery throughout the Army.
- c. **Field Army.** Commander Field Army (CFA) is responsible for the delivery of operationally effective force elements and has a key supporting role in ensuring the effective delivery of welfare support. CFA and Theatre Commanders (TC) are responsible for developing welfare policies specific to their own Commands, which must be in line with this AGAI and tri-Service welfare policy. In overseas commands the TC is responsible, wherever practicable and manageable, for the statutory provision in place of the Local Authority (LA) in England and for ensuring that the Army welfare policies are incorporated into their Command's Local Overseas Instructions and Overseas Legislation where appropriate to do so. Commanders at formation and unit level are to ensure that the instructions promulgated in this AGAI are incorporated into local Standing Orders and instructions and briefed to those to whom they apply

81.015. Training Delivery. Commanding Officer (CO) Army Welfare Service (AWS) is the designated Training Delivery Authority (TDA) for AWS personnel and the Unit Welfare Officer (UWO) courses. In addition, they are to ensure Casualty Notification Officers (CNOs) and Visiting Officers (VOs) are trained to undertake their respective roles which is the responsibility of the Bereavement and Aftercare Support (BAS) team in the Army Personnel Support Group (APSG). Overseas Commands are to deliver in-theatre orientation training where there are differences from that which would normally be expected to be delivered in the UK. Further details of Army welfare training should be sought from HQ AWS.

Types, Categories and Levels of Welfare

81.016. Types. There are two main types of welfare.

- a. **Statutory.** Statutory support is defined as the provision of support which is provided by the state/local authorities (LA) because of legislation. Such support would include provision under the NHS and social services. In overseas commands, the Theatre Commander is responsible for the statutory provision in place of the LA in England, wherever practicable and manageable.
- b. **Non-Statutory.** Non-statutory welfare provision is in addition to the statutory provision and is provided by the Services. It compensates for the unique circumstances SP and their families are in. Non- statutory welfare includes HIVE, community centres, sporting facilities and messes.

81.017. Categories. Within the Army, welfare falls into one of three main categories:

- a. **Personal Support.** Personal support encompasses advice and support to a wide variety of individual and family circumstances, such as relationship difficulties, bereavement, addictions, DA, financial problems, and military separation.
- b. **Community Support.** Community support is the support provided to individuals, groups and families throughout the military community including MOD employed civilians and their entitled families employed overseas. It may include amenities such as community centres, clubs (including retail, catering, leisure, educational, recreational, and sporting), childcare and youth activities.
- c. **Aftercare.** Aftercare is the provision of support to the ex-Service community of veterans and their families. It is principally delivered by the Statutory provider, the VWS and Veterans UK (Vets UK) supported by wider third sector organisations.

81.018. Levels of Welfare. Welfare is provided by several organisations broken out into three distinct levels of support:

- a. **Primary.** Primary support is defined as the provision of support generally available from within unit resources. Primary level support can be given by COs, their CoC and the unit administrative and welfare staff including pastoral and medical personnel. Early identification is key to providing effective and timely support to a SP and their family. Unit welfare specialists will identify, advise, assist, and refer SP and their families based on their welfare needs. Unit specialists include trained:

- (1) Unit Welfare Officer (UWO) and Unit Welfare WO/SNCO (UWWO/UWSNCO) of Regular Army units.
- (2) Regimental Operations Support Officer (ROSO) and Regimental Operations Support Warrant Officer (ROSWO) in Reserve units.
- (3) Regimental Career Management Officer (RCMO).
- (4) Army and/or civilian Chaplain.
- (5) Regimental Medical Officer (RMO).
- (6) **RVS** and HIVE (where available).

These specialists must be trained and operate within the Army Welfare Code of Confidentiality (see para 81.020 - 81.023), in support of the CO and the CoC. Mandatory unit welfare responsibilities are covered in more detail in Part 2. Primary level support is appropriate for those situations that can be dealt with by practical help, advice, or a one-off listening session. These should primarily be dealt with by the CoC and the SP referred to welfare professionals if required. For example, a SP or family member:

- (1) Who is worried about stress, pay matters or requires debt counselling.

- (2) Who has a sick relative and needs compassionate leave to visit.
- (3) Who wants information about the local community.
- (4) Is experiencing homesickness and needs a friendly ear to listen.
- (5) Whose relative or close friend has died and who wants to talk with the Padre or UWO.
- (6) With a welfare need.

Where any doubt exists about the appropriate level of welfare support, unit staff and other first line welfare providers should consult with the AWS. They will advise on issues which may require secondary level welfare provision.

b. **Secondary/Specialist.** Specialist welfare support is defined as that which cannot or should not be dealt with at the primary level based on the training required to address the issue. Such support is usually provided by the AWS and is appropriate to deal with situations involving complex issues that cannot be helped by practical interventions alone, as well as those that require extensive on-going support. Specialist level support can be divided into the following categories:

- (1) Cases where a referral **must** be made to AWS include:
 - (a) Any situation involving DA, sexual violence, stalking or similar allegations or where there are potential safeguarding children concerns.
 - (b) All complex casualty cases.
 - (c) Any situation where an adult is at risk of serious harm.
 - (d) Matters or situations where there are safeguarding children or child protection and vulnerable adult concerns **must** be brought to the attention of the local AWS/PWS.
- (2) Cases where a referral to AWS is being considered should be proactively explored with the SP. In such cases referrals will usually only be made with the consent of the SP and/or family member, subject to the routine principles of confidentiality (see Para 81.020). These include:
 - (a) A SP who has experienced abuse in the past and who is finding the resultant issues have re-surfaced.
 - (b) A SP who is alleging bullying, harassment or discrimination, even when the appropriate bullying, harassment and discrimination or criminal procedures have been instigated.²
 - (c) A Care Leaver who is or has been looked after by a LA. In this situation, the individual may be entitled to LA support and resources which

² SP should be referred, in the first instance, to their Unit Equality and Diversity Adviser for first line support.

the AWS can help them access.

Whenever unit welfare resources are engaged, SP must be advised of the availability and value of AWS support. The AWS referral form can be found on the AWS SharePoint [here](#). Unit staff should engage with the local AWS team when completing this form. Completed forms should be sent to RC-AWS-IAT-0Mailbox@mod.gov.uk.

c. **Tertiary.** Tertiary support is defined as that which is provided by MOD, corporate, charitable, and voluntary organisations.

(1) **MOD.** This level of support includes organisations such as: the Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC), Forces Line (FL), VWS, [Vets UK](#) and the Defence Children Services (DCS).

(2) **DCS.** DCS sits under Regional Command and is the lead for all issues relating to Service children and young people, whether living in the UK or overseas. DCS incorporates the Service Children's Education (SCE) providing education and children's services overseas, and the **Education Advisory Team (UK) and the Overseas Education Support Team, both of which provide** information, advice, and support about all aspects of Service children's education. Further information on DCS can be found [here](#).

(3) **Employee Support Networks.** There are a wide range of employee support networks which support minority groups (eg gender, orientation, and race). These include, but are not limited to, the Army Servicewoman's Network, LGBT Network, and the Army Parents' Network. Further details are available through [DPers' Diversity and Inclusion team](#).

Public and Non-Public Welfare Funds and Grants

81.019. There are many sources of public and non-public funds available to units to support welfare, recreational and sporting projects and activities:

a. **Public Funds.** See [JSP 770](#) for full details. Public funds include:

(1) **CO's Public Fund (COPF) and Enhanced COPF (ECOPF).** ECOPF is intended to allow COs to improve the quality of life for their SP and underpin retention initiatives.

(2) **Sports Equipment Public Fund (SEPF).** The SEPF exists to improve the provision of sports equipment and facilities for SP (See [AGAI 82](#)).

(3) **Accumulated Welfare Fund (AWF).** The purpose of the AWF is to help COs to enhance unit welfare amenities.

(4) **Families Welfare Grant (FWG).** The FWG is designed to assist home/parent units in providing welfare support to families of SP on qualifying deployments where the Deployment Welfare Package (DWP) has been authorised.

b. **Non-Public Funds.** Most units have non-public, PRI, funds available to them. In addition, several external charities also make grants to units (as opposed to those charities that assist SP on an individual basis) notably:

(1) **Public Gainshare and Excess Income.** Access to funding from both Catering, Retail and Leisure (CRL) Public Gainshare and Excess Income (EI) from Hestia Contracts is available in accordance with [ACSO 3206](#).

(2) **Army Central Fund (ACF) and Nuffield Trust (NT).** All applications for grants from the ACF and NT are staffed through the RPoC to [SO2 Welfare Funds](#) at HQ RC, where they will be considered by the Army Welfare Grants Committee (AWGC) in accordance with Annex F to [ACSO 3206](#). Both charities allocate funds to the AWGC which disburses about £1.3M in grants every year. Those projects that cannot be funded by the AWGC are then referred to the Trustees of the ACF or NT as appropriate:

(a) **ACF.** The ACF is one of the Army's premier charities providing grants for both welfare and sport in support of all ranks and their dependants. As well as providing annual Command Grants the ACF will also consider Super Grants (above £25,000).

(b) **NT.** The NT is a charity that promotes the welfare and efficiency of the serving members of the Forces of the Crown. The NT makes an annual allocation to all three Services and will also consider Major Grants (up to £40,000) and Capital Grants (£40,000 and above).

(3) **Other Charities.** Details of other charities are contained in Annex E to [ACSO 3206](#) and include; the Berlin Infantry Brigade Memorial Trust Fund, the Ulysses Trust, the Army Sport Control Board (Charitable Fund and Army Sports Lottery), the Team Army Sports Foundation, the Annington Trust, the Services Sound and Vision Corporation Welfare Fund.

Code of Confidentiality

81.020. All welfare work conducted within the Army is to be conducted within the 'Code of Confidentiality'. Confidentiality is the protection of personal information. A duty of confidence arises when one person discloses information to another in circumstances where it is reasonable to expect that the information will be held in confidence. It is a legal obligation that is derived from case law and a requirement established within professional codes of conduct (eg doctors, solicitors, chaplains, professional welfare staff).

81.021. The core element of this code is the legal and professional obligation not to disclose 'confidential information' (which may include the fact that an individual is using a welfare service) without the express consent of the individual concerned. This duty of confidentiality is not absolute and confidential information may be disclosed without the individual's consent where the disclosure is required by law or can be justified in the public, including Service, interest. Only trained welfare (AWS or UWO), legal, service police or medical professionals hold the authority to determine when confidentiality may be breached and must be consulted before a breach occurs. Circumstances where the duty does not apply include:

- a. Where there is a risk of harm to the individual or others.³
- b. To prevent a serious criminal act.
- c. If there is a contravention of military law.
- d. If there is, or is likely to be, a serious breach of national security.
- e. If the individual is no longer able to carry out their duties.
- f. If there are concerns relating to adult or child safeguarding issues, DA or, violence against a protected characteristic.

81.022. Whether the disclosure of confidential information is in the public, including Service, interest must be judged at the time when the disclosure is sought. Any such disclosure must be restricted to the information necessary to avert the contravention of military law and restricted to those to whom it is essential that such information is provided. Examples of those to whom it may be appropriate to make disclosures of confidential information can include: CoC, RMP, Civilian Police, Social Services and Medical Services.

81.023. Confidentiality is only to be breached in the circumstances set out in para 81.021 when there is clear evidence of a detrimental impact on OE, and not as a general justification for disclosing 'private information' without the consent of the SP or family member concerned. When any of the exception conditions listed above exist, the individual concerned should be informed of the action to be taken before disclosure is carried out unless to do so would put the individual or others at risk. Where there is any doubt as to whether an exception condition has been met, advice should be sought from the Divisional Legal Branch via the Unit Welfare Office.

81.024 – 81.040. Reserved.

³ When assessing risk it is essential to consider a SP's fitness for armed duties (i.e. access to or in charge of a firearm) when deciding on disclosure of information to the CoC. Any concerns relating to this must be disclosed to the CoC and their LM and recorded.

PART 2 – PRIMARY LEVEL SUPPORT

Unit Responsibilities

81.041. Co-ordination of Army Welfare Support. The effectiveness of statutory, primary, specialist and third sector welfare support is dependent on the co-ordination of effort. At unit level this is best achieved through a Welfare Management Committee (WMC) that meets at least monthly and brings together the CoC, UWO, Chaplain, Medical Officer, and other relevant staff/organisations, including AWS, which support welfare delivery in the unit. The CO should chair the WMC. The purpose of these meetings is address specific welfare concerns and to identify trends in welfare matters that need to be addressed.

81.042. The CoC are encouraged to review the staffing of unit welfare offices to ensure their staff reflect the community they support. The CoC are also encouraged to review the staffing levels prior to unit deployments or moves with a view to increasing them should there be a need to do so.

81.043. CO and CoC Responsibility. Welfare support to all unit SP and the Service community is the responsibility of the CO. This responsibility is exercised through the CoC, utilising specialist advisors and welfare workers, and by providing community support assets. COs and the CoC are to:

- a. Where practicable, provide and maintain as a minimum the standard of welfare and community support assets as detailed in Part 2 of this AGAI.
- b. Establish a stigma-free welfare culture that encourages SP to seek advice at the earliest opportunity through the CoC or directly through unit welfare staff.
- c. Provide or ensure access to welfare resources where normal civil society does not meet the need.
- d. Ensure that all appropriate personnel undergo suitable training to meet their welfare responsibilities.
- e. Ensure that all vital information, including full details of welfare and community support services, is communicated effectively to the Service community.
- f. Ensure the welfare needs of parties to a complaint (complainant/respondent) are properly considered and they are assisted with coping with the stresses of their situation.
- g. Seek specialist advice where necessary. Timely advice and guidance should be sought from higher authority (HA) where required. Potentially high profile and contentious cases must be referred to HA before unit action is taken.
- h. Maintain a close working relationship with specialist welfare organisations granting suitable access where required. The CO is to regularly hold formal welfare meetings with unit welfare and specialist staff to address current welfare issues and ensure that a seamless and coherent welfare service is available.

- i. Include welfare requirements in preparations for all exercise and operational deployments; this should apply equally to mobilised reservists attached to the unit.
- j. Publish a Unit Welfare Standing Orders or Instructions that sets out the unit welfare strategy. The document should cover, as a minimum; entitlement, delivery, responsibility, and funding framework. A framework is at Annex A.
- k. Disseminate, as part of the induction process for SP and their families newly arrived at a unit, the following information as a minimum:
 - (1) Details of the welfare CoC. Personnel should be made fully aware of whom they or their families can contact.
 - (2) Assurances that the unit is a stigma-free welfare environment.
 - (3) The CO's Equality and Diversity policy and the MOD Harassment Complaints Procedures and contact details for the Army's Confidential Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Helpline (Speak Out Helpline) (94391 7922 or 012364 381922 local call charges apply). The Speak Out Helpline is open Mon-Fri: 0830-1730. Messages can be left outside of these times. Or email: Army-SpeakOut@mod.gov.uk
 - (4) Details of welfare facilities both on and off base. These should include at the very least, the HIVE and community centre; education and sports facilities; social and retail facilities; and youth and childcare facilities and activities.

81.044. UWO/ROSO Responsibilities. These include:

- a. Be responsible to the CO for the support, assistance and welfare advice given to SP and families of the unit. This is best done through the development of a Unit Welfare Information Pack (UWIP) that lays out the unit's approach to welfare.
- b. Brief the CO and the CoC, when necessary, on individual cases within the Code of Confidentiality.
- c. Liaise with relevant welfare agencies and social services on behalf of the unit to:
 - (1) Establish working links with local welfare organisations such as the AWS, HIVE, **RVS**, AFF, Service Social Welfare Service providers, local welfare charities such as RBL (Royal British Legion); SSAFA (Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association); RELATE; Citizens Advice Bureau and LA representatives where appropriate.
 - (2) Ensure that appropriate and timely referrals are made to relevant agencies when specialist intervention is required, eg safeguarding children's concerns.
 - (3) Establish and maintain links with local pre-school groups (including Early Years Childcare) and schools (particularly where there is a concentration of children from the unit).
 - (4) Establish and maintain links with local Service medical staff and local

health services and health visitors.

- (5) Act as the local Child Support Agency (CSA) Forces Focal Point.
- d. Be aware of other Army Welfare resources such as Forces Line (FL).
- e. Provide the focal point for unit housing and the link with the Housing Allocation Service Centre or Housing and Community Support Staff Officer overseas.
- f. Represent the unit on welfare and WIS committees, where directed to attend, and act as the CO's representative on welfare matters within the unit/station/garrison.
- g. Provide two-way communication and a mechanism for listening to views, feelings and needs of SP and families, such as spouses' forums. Provide feedback to the unit CoC, noting the restrictions of the Code of Confidentiality.
- h. Encourage both SP and families to participate in voluntary activities such as families' support groups, youth and community activities and supporting service charities in service committees.
- i. Establish a local database of support groups, which exist locally, eg CRUSE (bereavement support); SANDS (Stillbirth and Neonatal Death Society); and MENCAP (support to individuals and families with learning difficulties), etc.
- j. Adhere to SOI 201 if undertaking the JANIS Pilot.

81.045. It is strongly recommended that UWOs/ROSOs **do not** form an integral part of the discipline chain or act as Casualty Notifying Officers/Visiting Officers. This is to ensure their availability for core welfare support activities as well as preventing a conflict of interest through their involvement in both discipline and welfare matters.

Key Welfare Activities

81.046. Unit key welfare activities are at Annex B.

Selection, Training, Employment Checks and Development of Unit Welfare Staff

81.047. COs are responsible for ensuring their welfare office staff are appropriately trained and complete the required employment checks in accordance with AGAI 119: Employment Checks on Personnel in Posts Requiring Disclosure Checks. This should take place ahead of the individual(s) taking up their appointment(s).

- a. **Selection.** The selection of appropriate unit welfare staff is key to effective welfare support. COs are to ensure that UWOs/ROSOs are selected against the following competencies and personal qualities.

- (1) Essential competencies for welfare work are: sound interpersonal skills; good verbal and writing skills; well organised administrator; and emotional intelligence.

(2) Personal qualities required for assignment to welfare posts include: compassion; understanding; integrity; ability to work in a small closely-knit team; willingness to accept the post; and empathy.

b. **Mandatory Training.** HQ AWS is responsible for the UWO training course that is mandatory for all UWO/ROSOs and UWWO/ROSWOs. UWOs must attend a five-day residential pre-employment training course (Part 1) followed by a 3-day period of residential continuation/confirmation training after four to six months in post (Part 2). The training is delivered under contract with course loading conducted through HQ AWS. The aim of the course is to provide appropriate knowledge, skills, and signposting awareness to enable UWOs to deliver effective first line welfare provision. The course is open to Regular and Army Reserve Welfare Officers, Warrant Officer, SNCOs and equivalent Civil Servants. The UWO course director will identify personnel who may be either unsuitable for the UWO appointment or who require further training. This information is to be passed to HQ AWS, who are to inform the unit and/or the CoC and, where appropriate APC. Details of these courses are published [here](#).

c. **Development Training.** UWO/ROSOs are also to attend their LA inter-agency safeguarding children training. Overseas Commands are to run theatre specific welfare courses to ensure compliance with local welfare standing orders and instructions. To develop specialist skills, UWO staff should attend unit welfare office training, seminars and workshops conducted by AWS or LA on issues such as safeguarding children and DA.

d. **Pre-Employment Checks.** See [AGAI 119: Employment Checks on Personnel in Posts Requiring Disclosure Checks](#).

e. **Competency.** The qualification is lified for three years after the completion of the Part 2 course. Refresher training (the first three days of Part 1) must be attended by all those continuing in a UWO role before the three years elapse. Subsequent refresher courses must be attended every three years. If a period greater than three years has elapsed since the completion of Part 2 course both parts of the course are to be re-taken (time between the two parts need not be six months but should not be undertaken back-to-back) to ensure that all involved with welfare provision are suitably trained and informed on the latest policy and processes.

f. **Continuation Training.** AWS support the RPoCs in the provision of annual Welfare Conferences to provide a sustainable continuation training model.

g. **JANIS Training.** Mandatory training for JANIS must be conducted by all users in accordance with SOI 201 Para 11 prior to being issued a user account.

Welfare Management Committee (WMC)

81.048. A WMC should be regularly held, chaired by the CO, to discuss individual casework (within the bounds of the code of confidentiality), co-ordinate existing welfare support, capture emerging welfare issues and share best practice. Terms of Reference must be produced; a template and additional guidance can be found in Annex C. Representation should include the Adjutant, RCMO (if established), sub-unit commanders,

the Padre and the RMO,

Communications

81.049. There must be regular communication both up and down the unit CoC and between the unit CoC and welfare agencies with the UWO/ROSO as the focal point. Mechanisms for achieving this should include, but are not limited to:

- a. Induction/orientation briefings for a newly arrived SP and their families.
- b. Newsletters. With the permission of the SP, these must be sent to single SP' Emergency Contacts (EC) /Next of Kin (NoK) or nominated partner during deployments.
- c. Monthly WMC.
- d. Unit notice boards and welfare information boards
- e. Unit welfare seminars for both SP and their accompanying families
- f. Information (dedicated welfare pages) on Defence Connect/unit websites
- g. Use of e-mails/Defence Connect ArmySMS text messaging.
- h. Social media (Facebook, Twitter etc)
- i. Awareness briefings for non-UK SP and families (see [AGAI 50](#), para 50.011).

81.050. The use of formation and garrison facilities such as local Overseas Commands Families' in-country briefing booklets, Army Garrison Community Guides, Garrison news sheets, and local Garrison radio/BFBS should also be considered.

81.051. Unit Welfare Information Packs (UWIP). UWO/ROSO should lead in the development of a UWIP for dissemination within the unit. This document should be brief, readable, and concise. The main points to cover are:

- a. A summary of what support the Welfare Office/Support Office can provide to:
 - (1) The CoC in the unit.
 - (2) Married/civil partners of SP and their families.
 - (3) Single SP and fiancées/ future spouse or civil partners and parents or EC.
 - (4) Non-UK SP and their families.
- b. An explanation of the Army Code of Confidentiality.
- c. Details of how to contact Unit Welfare Staff.
- d. Details of how to contact other Service welfare providers (eg AWS/ AWIS/

HIVE/ JSHAO⁴/ FL etc).

81.052. Defence Connect. This is an MOD-sponsored portal that provides individual SP and their families with access to information about the Defence and the Army as well as providing links to the open Army website. Although the information on the website is unclassified, it does provide SP and their families with access to information that may not necessarily be in the public domain. For example the website includes access to open Regimental and Corps sites, staff lists, Army Briefing Notes, back briefs from CGS' Briefing Team together with welfare information for SP' families within the limits set by [JSP 440: Defence Manual of Security, Resilience and Business Continuity](#). Access to the website is through a security gate similar to that used by standard internet banking. The site allows User Groups (Corps, Regiments, etc.) to have a unique customised display and makes the user feel at home within each of the electronic areas. Units are encouraged to have both unit and deployment websites. Units should also have processes in place to ensure SP and their families create accounts to access the information. The use of the SMS texting facility greatly enhances unit welfare staff ability to communicate with those registered.

81.053. Communication with Families. As living arrangements for families evolve, the means of communicating directly with them becomes more important. COs and welfare teams should employ a variety of methods to communicate effectively with them. A guide to what might be considered is encapsulated in the matrix at Annex D.

Resourcing and Administration

81.054. Code of Confidentiality. All UWO/ROSOs and their staff are to abide by the Code of Confidentiality when dealing with individual cases. Where [AGAI 110](#) (Vulnerability Risk Management) procedures differ from the Army Code of Confidentiality, the procedures in [AGAI 110](#) are to be followed.

81.055. Resources. Equipment tables and office infrastructure are the responsibility of the CoC. The following provision is recommended:

a. **Location and Accommodation.** The needs of the client, whether they are single SP or families, should be the determining factor in locating a unit welfare office. Specific locations will vary from unit to unit and a balance will have to be struck between accessibility and the need for anonymity. Co-location with other welfare or community support assets such as community centres, HIVE or **RVS** should be considered where possible. The accommodation/ office space provided should not normally be in Regimental HQ. It should include an area for confidential interviews and have ready access to suitable toilets. Thought should be given to running two welfare offices; a satellite welfare office accessible to single SP within the barracks and a main office adjacent to Service Families' Accommodation areas for families.

b. **Office Equipment.** In addition to the normal range of office equipment, welfare offices will require: IT access to both the MOD intranet and the internet; telephones (with military and civilian access); mobile telephone(s); and secure filing facilities.

c. **Finance.** COs are encouraged to provide their Unit Welfare Office with ready access to a non-publicly funded cash float (COPF, PRI or Garrison welfare funds). In

⁴ Joint Service Housing Advice Office

addition, funding for specific welfare projects can be applied for from The RBL, SSAFA In-Service committees, NT, Army Central Fund, Berlin Infantry Brigade Memorial Trust Fund, SSVC and ABF/Corps/Regimental funds in accordance with the appropriate fund's instructions. Where authorised, publicly funded resources are available through COPF and DWP (see [JSP 770](#)), which provides a publicly funded families element (Families Welfare Grant) to support UWO/ROSO activities.

d. **Welfare Transport.** Welfare staff should have access to a civilian vehicle and, when required, a driver who is DBS checked. For further information on the support available refer to: [JSP 770](#) and [JSP 800](#). Appropriate insurance cover must be in place when transporting families.

e. **Dress.** Where unit welfare staff are required to wear civilian clothes to undertake their duties, allowances for SP may be claimed in accordance with [JSP 752](#).

f. **HIVE Contact Houses.** The Directory of Tri-Service HIVE Contact Houses can be found [here](#).

81.056. Welfare Data. The UWO is the focal point for receiving and compiling data on welfare trends within the unit, which should then be reported, along with other suitable data, at the WMC. Separate reports could be compiled using a summary of the numbers and categories of unit cases being dealt with by the AWS.

81.057. Welfare Records. Units are responsible for the recording, retention, and access to welfare records in accordance with Part 5 of this AGAI.

81.0589. Family Mentors/Emergency Family Support. Units may wish to consider maintaining a list of experienced families who could assist in mentoring newly joined families on arrival in station. In addition, a list of 'reliable families' (also known as a 'trusted friends' scheme) may also be developed to help in crisis situations by providing sympathy, support, and emergency childcare. Such families, if not identified but the SP and family themselves, **must** have full and proper clearance checks made, in accordance with the Disclosure and Barring guidance in para 81.047.d. above, before they can temporarily look after children. Permission of the family will also be required before such checks are carried out.

81.059. Reducing Stress on Welfare Staff. Much of the work unit welfare staff encounter will be new and uncomfortable to deal with. It is recognised that they will require regular opportunities to manage stress by discussing confidential issues and the handling of individual cases outside the unit. UWOs are encouraged to develop close working relationships with their local Army Welfare Workers (AWW) to discuss case issues within a confidential environment. This will help and reassure the UWO that the actions proposed are correct and provide an opportunity to explore and express personal distress, difficulties, or lack of motivation. The unit Padre and/or MO can also be used for a similar purpose. Eligible staff should bid for the Care for Carers Course. Further details available from BAS staff on APSG-PersSvcs-BAS-SO2@mod.gov.uk.

81.060 – 81.080. Reserved.

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PART 3 – SECONDARY LEVEL SUPPORT

Army Welfare Service (AWS)

81.081. AWS Mission. To provide a comprehensive, professional, and confidential welfare service responsive to the needs of individuals and families and the CoC to maximise the operational effectiveness of Service Personnel.

81.082. Welfare Provision. As Army's professional welfare provider, the AWS is independent of the CoC offering comprehensive and confidential welfare service responsive to the needs of the CoC, SP and families to maximise OE. The AWS' remit includes regular and reserve SP; SP from other Services⁵; their families and, in certain circumstances, veterans and MOD civilians serving overseas. Specialist welfare support to the Service community is provided on a non-statutory basis as statutory services are provided in the UK by LAs and overseas by the contracted British Forces Social Welfare Service, usually supported by the AWS. AWS Welfare Support Officers provide welfare coordination across two key delivery pillars:

- a. **Personal Support (PS).** Provide accessible, independent, confidential, and professional specialist welfare services to SP and their families. PS provides specialist advice to the CoC and outside agencies delivered by military and civilian Army Welfare Workers (AWWs) who are supported by Personal Recovery Unit Social Workers (PRU SWs) where the SP requiring additional welfare support is assigned to, or on a Unit Assist with, a Personnel Recovery Unit (PRU).
- b. **Community Support (CS).** Secure or directly provide CS learning and personal development opportunities for SP and their families wherever they are living. Community, youth and play centres/ projects provide learning and personal development activities to children, young people, and their families throughout the year and across the UK and overseas. CS delivers additional activities during school holidays, including Easter and Summer programmes as well as offsite and residential experiences. Formed Gurkha units in the UK and Brunei are supported by AWS Gurkha Support Workers (GSW).

81.083. AWS Supporting Activities. The AWS provides wider support through the following:

- a. **AWS Intake and Assessment Team (AWS IAT).** The AWS IAT is a telephone/[e-mail](#) delivered service which provides an initial triage assessment of welfare needs. Intake and Assessment Team (IAT) in York can be contacted on: Mil: 94777 3053 /or 3054 or Civ: 01904 88 2503 /or 2504.
- b. **Services Cotswold Centre (SCC).** SCC is a tri-Service short-term accommodation facility delivered by HQ AWS. It is managed by a tri-Service Management Board, Chaired by Col AWS, and has capacity for up to 60 families (including two disabled units), as well as having a 37-bed residential unit. It is available to all ranks from all three Services who may require accommodation because of welfare need or emergency evacuation from overseas, be between assignments, retiring from the Services, need a family holiday or weekend break or

⁵ IAW JSP 770 Tri Service Welfare Agreement.

any other legitimate reason. Further information can be found [here](#).

c. **RVS**. AWS sponsors the **RVS** Services Welfare staff and, in conjunction with APSG, coordinates their delivery and operational footprint. **RVS** personnel assist the CoC by providing welfare support to single and unaccompanied SP in military establishments in UK, Cyprus, Northern Ireland, and the Falklands Islands. Together with units, they provide leisure facilities in a non-alcoholic environment and a place for SP to relax away from the work environment. The current AWS established priority for provision includes initial training establishments, infantry battalions and isolated units.

81.084. Principles. The key principles that govern the way the delivery of welfare by the AWS to the Army include:

a. It is independent of the CoC in terms of confidentiality but works alongside and is answerable to the CoC when necessary.

b. All information supplied to AWS staff is to be treated in absolute confidence unless the key criteria are met as outlined in para 81.021.

c. It must be as comprehensive as practicable so any SP and entitled families are able to access suitable and effective provision to meet their needs.

d. It requires the development of effective relationships with relevant partners from military, civilian, charitable, and statutory domains. Where necessary, these relationships are to be managed through Service Level Agreements or Memoranda of Understanding, particularly with the leading Service Charities.

e. It should apply an evidence-based approach, which matches the best practice standards of the wider civilian community and complies with all relevant legislation and guidance. Feedback from service users, the CoC and other stakeholders is to be actively sought and used to inform continuous improvement.

f. The second-line welfare support provided by AWS must be based upon the assessed needs of individuals and communities.

g. This assessment of need should be carried out by an appropriately qualified professional but be informed by the stated priorities of the CoC.

h. AWS support must meet assessed needs within the context of available resources and set priorities.

i. In most cases, PS provision will be in response to a specific request for assistance. Proactive intervention by PS staff must however take place to respond in the following circumstances:

(1) To support Complex Casualty Cases (CCCs). These are defined as:

(a) Any SP seriously injured whilst deployed on operations, which requires hospitalisation and eventual repatriation to UK; or

(b) Any SP seriously injured which requires hospitalisation and is likely to have life-altering implications.

(2) To support SP who are subject to the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000. In these cases, proactive intervention will consist of at least the offer of a visit by the relevant team. For CCCs in hospital, an assessment by an AWS professional is mandatory. The Service User is at liberty to refuse the AWS support.

Training and Mentoring

81.085. AWW Defence Specialist Welfare Course (DSWC). AWWs can be either military or civilian (75/25% respectively). Training is conducted on DSWC which is a joint Navy/Army course lasting 8 months, and normally runs April to November. It consists of residential academic classroom-based phase, followed by a similar period where students are attached to AWS teams and operate under supervision. The course finishes with a short period of consolidation with graduation in November. The training is mentally challenging; and is pass/fail. It trains personnel to deal with the most complex of personal issues, including DA, child and adult safeguarding, depression, suicide, and bereavement. Successful students transfer to the AGC (SPS). Details on how to apply to become an AWW can be found [here](#).

81.086. Mentoring. AWS are to ensure that a face-to-face meeting is conducted with all newly appointed UWOs/ROSOs within the first three months. AWS are also mandated to coordinate the routine mentoring of said individuals (utilising experienced local UWOs) for the first three months in appointment. Any UWO/ROSO that has been identified as a risk candidate is to receive mentoring support from AWS until such time that there is no longer an operational risk (the unit and APC are to be kept informed throughout).

81.087. Regional Brigade/Garrison Welfare Course. A 1-day course delivered under contract and facilitated by HQ AWS. The aim of the course is to provide unit welfare staff with appropriate knowledge and skills to carry out their duties.

Army HIVE

81.088. Providing up to date and relevant information to the Service community on behalf of the CoC. Working from across a network of HIVE Information Centres (UK and overseas) it delivers information both face to face and online with an additional International HIVE (iHIVE) covering the rest of the world. HIVE provides access to a range of sources of information including education, employment, accommodation, health, and local information. It also provides specific information packs to all units including HIVE Deployment (see Annex E) and delivers information online via HIVE Blogs, social media, Army Web and via MOD SharePoint.

Third Sector/Corporate Level Support

81.089. Joint Service Housing Advice Office (JSHAO). The MOD's tri-Service focal point providing housing information to encourage SP and their families to consider their civilian housing options at any point in their career and during Armed Forces (AF) Resettlement to assist transition to civilian life. Information is delivered through briefings,

'Housing Matters' magazine publication, and one-to-one discussions. JSHAO also manages the MOD Referral Scheme supporting social housing in conjunction with LAs and other housing providers. JSHAO staff operate from HQ AWS within HQ RC.

81.090. Veterans UK and VWS. Veterans UK is part of MOD Defence Business Services (DBS). The charity signposts ex-SP to a range of government, LA and charitable services and provides advice on: the War Pension Scheme (WPS); AF Compensation Scheme (AFCS); AF Pension Schemes (AFPS); as well as signposting them. It also provides AFCS advice to those still serving. The MOD VWS is part of Veterans UK and can offer support to those transitioning from Service to civilian life who may have an enduring welfare need. In-service referrals can be made up to three months prior to discharge through the Defence Transition Referral Protocol (DTRP). DTRP forms can be found on their [website](#). Veterans UK provides a free helpline: 0808 1914 2 18. Further information can be found on the [Veterans UK](#) website.

81.091. Forcesline (FL). The SSAFA-provided FL is a free and confidential service in support of SP and their families. COs are to ensure that SP and their families are made fully aware of FL by widely advertising it throughout the unit. The FL telephone number should be included in the list of useful telephone numbers issued to all. FL can be reached by telephone from anywhere in the world Monday to Friday and most Bank Holidays, from 09:00 to 17:30hrs UK local time using the following numbers:

- a. From UK and Germany 0800 260 6767
- b. From Cyprus 080 91065
- c. From Falklands #6111
- d. Rest of World +44(0) 207 463 9292
- e. Operational Theatre use Paradigm phone system, dial appropriate access code then *201 at PIN prompt.
- f. Online at <https://www.ssafa.org.uk/help-you/forcesline/forcesline-email-enquiry>

81.092. AF Charities. The ABF The Soldiers' Charity is the Army's National charity and units are encouraged to raise funds to support it. There are many other Service charities; a list of those with a formalised relationship with the Army is contained within Annex A to [AGAI 100](#). For information on the wider AF charities ecosystem see the [Cobseo⁶ Membership Directory](#).

Clubs and Hostels

81.093. The Union Jack Club. All serving members of the AF below commissioned rank are automatically full members. Upon leaving the AF, those who were never commissioned but who completed two years of service can apply for Ex-service membership. Those who have left active service but who do not wish to apply for ex-service membership may also use the Club through Temporary Honorary Members (THM) status. For more information, please go to the Club's [website](#).

⁶ The Confederation of Service Charities.

81.094. The Victory Services Club (VSC). Membership is open to all serving and retired members of the AF. SP are not required to take out membership to use the Club's facilities. They can gain entry by production of their identity cards. More information can be found [here](#).

81.095. Rothiemurchus Lodge - The Tri-Service Adventurous Training and Leisure Centre. Rothiemurchus Lodge is a Joint Service Recreational Centre offering year-round, affordable, self-catering accommodation in the Cairngorm Mountains. The Lodge is open to SP, veterans, MoD civilians and Cadet Forces (the families of these groups are also welcome). It can also be used by the Scout Association, Girl Guide Association and other recognised youth organisations including schools outside the MoD family. More information cost can be found on the Lodge's website [here](#).

81.096. Douneside House. Eligible military guests are invited to join the Douneside Military Club, Tarland, Aberdeenshire which offers significant discounts throughout the year, along with other membership benefits. To join, applicants must complete the registration details at this [link](#).

81.097. - 81.110. Reserved.

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PART 4 – REQUESTS FOR SPECIALIST WELFARE RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

81.111. The CoC may require a Specialist Welfare Recommendation (SWR) to make an informed decision regarding the management of a SP and they **either** have incomplete information or require independent verification of information and have exhausted all other options for achieving the desired outcome. The SWR provides details of the options available to the CoC, along with a recommendation on the action considered most appropriate and the timescales within which this should take place. A SWR is a tool for the CoC, and as such, should be generated with the best interests of the Service as its focus, whilst also reflecting the needs and wishes of the SP. However, an SWR **must not** be considered an alternative to standard administrative/operating procedures and must not be used simply to 'rubber stamp' foregone conclusions. The forms to be used in producing the recommendation can be found [here](#).

81.112. Examples of when a request for an SWR would be appropriate include:

- a. A SP seeking discharge on compassionate grounds.
- b. Unit considering retention in the UK on compassionate grounds.
- c. Unit has been through standard administrative procedures in processing a SP's application regarding assignment, but there remain personal/family issues that may have had a bearing on the management decision but have not been fully explored or considered.

81.113. Examples of when a request for a SWR would not be appropriate include cases:

- a. In which the outcome is already determined between the unit and the Military Secretariat Branch.
- b. That are more appropriately dealt with by disciplinary or administrative action.
- c. Where the outcome is to be determined entirely or predominantly on medical grounds.
- d. That have not first gone through the usual administrative processes (eg requesting a SWR on receipt of an assignment order simply because the SP has 'welfare issues').

Process

81.114. Submission. Units are to submit requests for a SWR in writing to the Senior AWW (SAWW) of the AWS Intake and Assessment Team using SWR Form 1 and AWS Referral Form.

81.115. Acknowledgement. The AWS will acknowledge receipt of a request in writing, advising that the AWS will undertake an assessment, and if appropriate, aim to complete the subsequent recommendation within 20 working days.

81.116. Assessment. Assessments to support the production of a SWR include the following:

- a. **Sift.** As the Army's main provider of secondary welfare support, AWS has a remit to respond to all *appropriate* requests for a SWR from the CoC. Where assessment indicates a SWR is *not* appropriate, the referrer will be advised of this in writing and the case will be closed.
- b. **Extended Timelines.** Where the requirement for a recommendation is indicated but it cannot be completed within the stated timescale, the SAWW will liaise with the referrer and agree a time scale for providing a completed recommendation. If for operational reasons, the request is deemed urgent, and a recommendation is required before full independent verification of the circumstances can be obtained, the Unit may elect to receive a 'Situation Report' instead, in the form of a letter, which will outline the circumstances known at that time and which must detail the limitations of the assessment.
- c. **Consent.** The SP must give consent to a SWR being produced and to AWS approaching agencies or individuals for information, and this consent is to be obtained using SWR Form 3. Where an agency or individual subsequently provides information their consent to AWS using this is to be obtained on SWR Form 4. It is the responsibility of the AWW writing the report to ensure all necessary consents have been obtained before using any information provided.
- d. **Information Gathering.** The AWS will gather relevant information from appropriate civilian and military agencies, or individuals, to formulate a thorough assessment. It is acceptable for information to be gathered verbally and recorded on SWR Form 2. A record of all information gathered will be retained on SWR Form 2s and kept on the AWS case file. As part of the information gathering process, an AWS team may request another AWS team or another appropriate Welfare Agency visits the SP's family to establish or evidence certain matters. In this case, the AWS team must put the request in writing, using SWR Form 5, to the relevant other AWS team or Welfare Agency clearly stating the requirement and enclosing a completed SWR Form 3 (with names of other individuals blanked out) and a prepared SWR Form 4, which will need to be completed and returned with the reply. When one AWS team is asked to gather information, which will be used as part of another AWS teams SWR, it will be sufficient for the reply to be in letter form.
- e. **Conclusion.** SWR Form 2 and SWR Form 2a is the format to be used for all SWRs. An assessment of the situation is to be made, using all relevant information obtained, including the views of parties approached and the wishes of the SP and their family where appropriate.
 - (1) Where this assessment indicates there are no extenuating welfare issues pertinent to the management decision requiring to be made, a letter will be sent to the referrer advising of this and stating that no recommendations will subsequently be made.
 - (2) Where the assessment indicates there are pertinent welfare issues, this will generate a SWR. This assessment is to be recorded in full on SWR Form 3

and cross-referenced with information recorded on SWR Form 2. This will provide essential information to the CO to enable them to recognise the validity of the recommendation being made. This will include details of the range of options considered, along with a brief explanation as to why the preferred option was selected over any other options presented. SWR Form 2 will be retained by the CO and not shared with other Agencies, without the consent of the SP. SWR Form 2a will constitute the formal SWR. This will detail the recommendation being made by AWS, along with suggested timescales and priority classification. It is permissible for the CO to detach this form and provide it to other Agencies such as MS Branch and DE as evidence of the SWR.

f. **Completion.** When complete and approved by the specialist supervisor, the SWR should be signed by the SP indicating that they have read the document. SP are also to be offered a copy of the recommendation. Should they decline to sign the recommendation can still be shared with the CoC. Once signed the SWR is to be forwarded to the CO of the SP's Unit. The recommendation can be dispatched 'attention' the requestor (who may be either the CO or UWO), but must be addressed to the CO. A covering letter in the format of SWR Form 6 should be included, drawing attention to the requirement for receipt of the recommendation to be acknowledged within 10 working days, and for an outcome to be recorded at serial 7 of the SWR Form 2 and returned to the author within 1 month.

Notification of Outcome.

81.117. The covering letter requests the Unit to notify AWS of the outcome of the situation for which the SWR was written within one month. To monitor the effectiveness and the validity of the Report, it is important this information is available to AWS. If not received within this timescale, the Unit is to be approached for this information. The case file will remain open until the outcome has been notified. If the Unit choose not to follow the SWR, or are unable to do so, they are to inform HQ AWS.

Complaints.

81.118. Any complaints about the quality or content of SWRs are to be staffed through the normal AWS complaints procedure. If the Service User has concern about the decision taken by the CO, the Service User must address this through the internal redress procedure.

Practice Standards

81.119. The specialist supervisor (SAWW, equivalent or above) is responsible for quality assuring the SWR and the 'Additional Information for the CofC. The following standards are to be applied to every SWR completed:

- a. Completed within timescale unless appropriate justification provided.
- b. Consent forms completed. Sources of information acknowledged.
- c. Appropriate consultation with sources of relevant information.

- d. Content to be focussed and concise and based on relevant, factual information.
- e. No use of 'jargon'. Military abbreviations kept to a minimum. If recommendation is tri-service, relevant Service abbreviations used.
- f. Individuals referred to by title/rank and surname, or title/position, not solely by forename.
- g. Contents to reflect awareness of equality and diversity principles and issues.
- h. Pertinent references to be included.
- i. Options to be clearly stated and realistic in terms of preferences and priorities given, reflecting the needs of the Service, balanced with needs of the individual, and reasons for *Preferred Option* to be substantiated and included. Any risk of recommendation(s) not being followed is to be clearly articulated.
- j. Report to be signed by supervisor prior to release. Only SAWW, equivalent or above are to quality assure SWRs.

81.120. - 81.140. Reserved.

PART 5 – RECORDING, RETENTION AND ACCESS TO WELFARE RECORDS

JPA Welfare Indicator Tracking Tool

81.141. The JPA Welfare Indicator Tracking Tool is designed to ensure SP have continued welfare support from one posting to another. Whilst current practice is for the losing unit's UWO of an SP with ongoing welfare needs to provide a Welfare Summary to the receiving unit's UWO, the JPA Welfare Indicator Tool ensures the timely passage of welfare information by the losing unit on JPA.

81.142. RCMOs⁷ are responsible for managing the assignment of SP between units and they are required to highlight on JPA if a SP has a welfare issue. The tool does not give details of the welfare issue, just that one is ongoing. The flag is visible to SP but will allow the RCMO to see when an individual has a 1st or 2nd line welfare issue and to inform the UWO. APC will also be able to see the flag and should discuss with the RCMO before finalising the individual's suitability for future assignment. UWOs will need to liaise closely with the RCMO so information is kept up to date on JPA. RCMOs are responsible for checking the JPA records of SP assigned into the unit and informing the CoC/UWO of those with a welfare flag. The JPA 'Welfare Case Tracker' report (MISR 3002784) should be generated by the RCMO at regular intervals to assist with this task. Further guidance can be found in the [JPA Business Process Guide](#) and the Pers Svcs PowerPoint [Step by Step Guide](#).

Passage of Information within ARITC/LWC

81.143. To provide effective welfare support to recruits and trainees it is essential that the passage of information regarding all welfare issues is effective both within the unit and between training units or stages of training. It is particularly important that the recruit/trainee reports from Assessment Centres through Initial and Trade Training units and thence onward to the Field Army are complete and contain a record of any significant welfare concerns, which must be flagged up to the receiving unit. All units should refer to the [Passage of Information](#) policy found in the ARITC Operations section of the [ARITC Handbook](#). Further details are given in the Joining Instructions and Contact with Parents and Welfare policy instructions in the G1 section of the [ARITC Handbook](#).

Retention of Records

81.144. The Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) and, for the MOD, [JSP 441](#), lays down specific guidelines for the content, storage and access to personal information. Careful consideration should be made as to what personal information is to be held on individuals, with arrangements made to ensure that it is stored securely for as long as is required and no longer (see DPA Guidance Note 1) and then appropriately disposed of. Medical records should be kept as separate sub-sets of personal files. Armed services medical records can be made publicly available at 100 years from the date of the last entry on the record unless there are reasons not to do so.

81.145. The principles that apply are that data:

⁷ Some units may use the Adjutant to manage the assignment of officers.

- a. Storage should be being fair and lawful.
- b. Is necessary, relevant and for specific purposes.
- c. Is accurate and up to date.
- d. Is of limited content and retention.
- e. Is kept securely.

81.146. Case Record Forms. AWS have developed a format for reports and system of recording which UWO/ROSOs should use. Further information can be obtained from HQ AWS.

81.147. Agreement on Record Keeping. Unit Welfare Staff are required to maintain a record of their work. It is essential that a unit agreement on record keeping is set up and promulgated. The agreement should cover the scope and range of notes to be kept, details of who has access to the information, any arrangements for sharing information such as to a third party and arrangements for access. The data subject must give express consent to have personal information kept and processed where necessary, for the UWO/ ROSO to take on the case. It is recommended that written consent is obtained or at least that a record of any consent obtained is made. If contact forms are used it is recommended that they contain minimal details. The only exceptions to this – where recording of accurate, factual information would still be necessary, regardless of the consent from the service user – are listed in Para 81.150 below.

81.148. JANIS Pilot Agreement on Record Keeping. Unit Welfare Staff undertaking the JANIS Pilot are required to maintain a record of their work on JANIS in accordance with SOI 201. The SOI covers the scope and range of notes/forms to be kept and time frames that SNCO's and above with Unit Welfare User permissions must adhere to; noting that all SU difficulties must be recorded either within the Case File Container or JANIS Threshold Form. At the start of the Pilot, Unit Welfare Staff must ensure that the case file difficulties outlined in SOI 201 Para 19 are uploaded. The SU's personal details will need to be checked and updated on JANIS upon opening a case file.

81.149. Access to Personal Information. The DPA gives an individual the right to see, have a copy of and challenge any personal information kept on them having followed the correct data access procedures.

81.150. Exceptions. Disclosure of information should not take place when the information is restricted by statute such as adoption records or it is likely to:

- a. Interfere with the prevention or detection of crime.
- b. Prejudice national security or OE.
- c. Cause harm to the physical or mental health of the SP or another individual.
- d. Conflict with the instructions from a third party who does not consent for their information to be released. This can be overruled if it is deemed that the reasons the third party has for withholding information are not valid.

81.151. Transferring Information. Files should not be routinely transferred to another unit on posting of an individual and family. However, a summary of the contents of the file may be transferred to the gaining unit, having first obtained the consent of the individual concerned. If a welfare file is not required for transfer, the UWO/ROSOs is to destroy such files after **seven years**, in accordance with MOD DPA guidance. Where the criteria established in Para 81.021. are met, but do not relate to safeguarding children, a transfer summary is to be sent without requiring the service user's consent. It is good practice to advise the service user that the transfer summary will be sent. The original file should be kept for three years. A notable exception to this general rule is set out in [AGAI 110 \(Vulnerability Risk Management\)](#) Paras 110.065 – 110.067.

81.152. Transferring Information for JANIS Pilot Units. A Case File Container with open case files will be routinely transferred on assignment of an individual and family to another JANIS Unit as per SOI 201 Para 27. It is the receiving UWO's responsibility to ascertain whether the incumbent is assigned from another JANIS Pilot Unit⁸ by undertaking a JANIS check. A Welfare Summary will also be sent to both JANIS and Non-JANIS Pilot units in accordance SOI 201 Para 25 and upon receipt must be uploaded into the Case File Container of the individual concerned. Documents should be uploaded only via an MOD authorised device, such as, an MOD scanner or MOD electronic device. Consent of the individual concerned must be obtained unless the criteria established in Para 81.021 are met, or the case relates to a safeguarding children issue. It is good practice to advise the SU that the transfer summary will be sent. If the Case File Container cannot be transferred, the UWO/ROSO is to ensure the Case File Container is closed in accordance with SOI 201 Paras 31-32 and such files are destroyed after seven years, in accordance with MOD DPA guidance⁹.

81.153. Domestic Abuse. Policy for retention (and sharing) of information when an allegation of domestic abuse has been made may be found in [JSP 913 Part 1](#), paras 12-23.

81.154. Safeguarding Children Cases. Cases involving safeguarding children issues are not be destroyed until the youngest child in the family has reached eighteen years of age It will be retained at its original unit, but a transfer summary will always be sent to the new unit. Unit Welfare staff at the new unit are to advise AWS of the arrival of the service user and the case history, so that appropriate action can be taken. **JANIS Pilot Units must transfer all Case File Containers that involve Safeguarding Children Cases in accordance with SOI 201 Para 27 and upload the transfer summary into the Case File Container of the individual concerned in accordance with SOI 201 Para 26.**

81.155. Goddard Enquiry. *Sexual abuse case records must never be destroyed, contact AWS for further advice.* Any information documents and other material relating to any child sexual abuse incidents, whether proven or not, must be immediately preserved. This includes all documents which could place a child or an adult in a particular location at a particular time, regardless of whether that location is in the UK or overseas. This is in accordance with the Goddard Enquiry, an independent inquiry into child sexual abuse. In addition, new allegations could be made and so all documents which could place a child or

⁸ JANIS Pilot Unit List: Annex A to SOI 201

⁹ [JSP 441, Retention Schedules, Pt 9](#)

an adult in a particular location at a particular time should also be retained regardless of whether that location is in the UK or overseas.

81.156. No information should be destroyed if it could conceivably be relevant to the terms of the Goddard Enquiry regardless of age of the document. For the avoidance of doubt, any routine or automatic destruction activities that could impact on potentially relevant material must be suspended: for example, files may have already been marked with an instruction to “destroy after X years”. If you believe this may apply to material belonging to your branch, then you are to take immediate steps to prevent destruction from taking place. See [2018DIN05-010](#) for more information.

81.157. Further Advice. It is important to keep the client involved in any information recording process. Further advice can be sought from your unit Records Management Officer or [JSP 440](#).

81.158. Recording Welfare Interviews. Welfare proceedings are routinely classified as OFFICIAL – SENSITIVE. It is inappropriate for audio recordings to be made using recording devices (overtly or covertly). Verbatim recordings are not to be made in anything other than exceptional circumstances. If required they must have the consent of all parties involved.

81.159. JANIS Pilot System Amendment Requests. JANIS Pilot Units can request system amendments in line with SOI 201 Para 30.

81.160. JANIS Pilot Access to Welfare Records. Unit Welfare Staff are to inform the APWM of their Assignment Order date so their JANIS account user permissions can be rescinded in accordance with SOI 201 Para 37.

81.161 - 81.170. Reserved.

PART 6 – SUPPORTING POLICIES

Army Welfare Sources of Information, Guides and Facilities.

81.171. A list of useful publications and sources of support is at Annex F. Pers Svcs also promulgate a termly [Welfare Matters Newsletter](#) to the CoC. In addition:

a. **Websites.** The following provide useful sources of information:

- (1) Army Welfare & Support (www.army.mod.uk).
- (2) [Army HQ Personal Policy Open Site](#).
- (3) Army Intranet – [Army Personnel Support Group](#)
- (4) [Defence Discount Service](#).
- (5) [Amey Defence Services Guides and Resources](#).
- (6) [Army HIVE Blogs](#).

Supporting Policies

81.172. Leave Policy. [JSP 760](#) contains the Tri-Service leave policy. Annual Leave is granted to SP for reasons of relaxation, personal recreation, and family union with the intention of keeping the SP fit for further duty. It remains the CO's responsibility to ensure that a SP's leave is correctly managed, and that all SP take their full leave entitlement. Further information on the management of leave can be found in [ACSO 3204](#).

81.173. Accommodation Policy. [JSP 464](#) contains the Tri-Service Accommodation Regulations including policy on the use of Service Families Accommodation as part of a support package.

81.174. Stress Management. All personnel need some degree of pressure or stimulation to achieve best performance, but when the pressure becomes excessive work performance and the health of individuals can be adversely affected. 'Stress in the Workplace' policy can be found in [JSP 375, Vol 1, Ch 17](#). Army guidance is contained in [ACSO 3218](#) (Army Stress Management and Resilience Training).

81.175. Operational Stress Management (OSM). The Army's policy in [ACSO 3209 \(Land Post Operational Stress Management \(POSM\)\)](#) sets out the framework of action to be taken by the CoC and supporting agencies in order to provide appropriate and effective personal support to all individuals returning from operational deployments, in order to minimise the likelihood of adverse post operational stress. This applies to all SP, Regular and Reserve, and their families, and to all operations (including Non-Combatant Evacuation Operations and disaster relief), whether deployed as part of a unit, or as an Individual Augmentee (IA). Care must be taken to ensure those returning early are not excluded. The Army has a corporate responsibility for the psychological welfare of its SP whilst on and post any operational deployment.

81.176. Vulnerability Risk Management (VRM). The Army VRM policy can be found in [AGAI 110](#). It provides guidance to Commanders by assisting them to identify those in their unit who are likely to be more vulnerable and signposting them to appropriate responses and management tools to mitigate identified risk, in order that they may make a judgement as to how to actively manage vulnerable personnel.

81.177. Support to Transgender SP. The [Equality Act 2010](#) places a duty on public sector authorities to: eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Act; to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. This duty includes protection for gender reassignment which includes SP who are proposing to undergo, undergoing, or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the individual's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex. [JSP 889](#) sets out Defence policy for the recruitment and management of Transgender SP in the Armed Forces. The CoC should familiarise themselves with this JSP, specifically Annex B which covers the recruitment of Transgender SP and Annex C which covers managing and supporting Transgender SP.

81.178. Command and Care of Wounded Injured and Sick (WIS) Service Personnel. [AGAI 99](#) provides policy and direction for COs and unit staff on the management of Army SP who are WIS.

81.179. Welfare Support to those Subject to Intense Media/Press/Public Interest or Service/Civilian Police Investigation. From time-to-time SP may be subject to intense media/press/public interest, or Police or other forms of investigation or awaiting trial. COs are to ensure that individuals and their families are reminded or made aware of the welfare support that is available to them. Furthermore, COs are responsible for coordinating appropriate welfare support to those affected or where they consider it is required.

81.180. Welfare of SP in Custody and Support to their Families. The Policy on providing on-going welfare support to those SP in custody either at a unit detention holding facility or the Military Corrective Training Centre is within [JSP 837 \(Service Code of Practice – Custody and Detention and Committal to Civil Prison\)](#). Families should also be signposted to the appropriate sources of support.

81.181. Care of SP Under the Age of 18. All U18 SP are protected by the [Children's Act 2004](#). [JSP 834 \(Safeguarding\)](#) and [AGAI 109 \(Care for SP Under the Age of 18\)](#) provide policy and best practice guidelines for the care of U18 SP. Whilst much of the advice could be applicable to older SP new to the Army, there are additional legal requirements associated with U18 SP. Although maturity and experience vary considerably between individuals, U18s may be more vulnerable than others, and their care will require thought. To that end, COs of training establishments must follow the policy set out in [JSP 822, Part 1 \(Defence Direction and Guidance for Training and Education\)](#) and the [ARITC Handbook](#), in discharging their duty of care to trainees U18, paying specific attention to the needs of U18s as they pass from recruitment through training to the Field Army. In addition, though this would not generally be relevant to those under training, restrictions are applied to the operational deployment of U18s, in accordance with the UK's obligations under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

81.182. Care Leavers (CLs). There will be recruits joining the Army who are subject to

the provisions of [The Children \(Leaving Care\) Act 2000](#), which seeks to ensure that young people 16 yrs or over, who have had a significant period of care from a LA, continue to receive advice, support and befriending for a period of time after they cease to be formally looked after full time by that LA. CLs may not have the family support that others enjoy and this may make them more vulnerable. Whatever processes are put in place to meet the needs of CLs, sensitivity is required to ensure they do not feel embarrassed or singled out from their peers. COs are to take the following action, seeking advice from AWS if required:

- a. Ensure that all recruits at the start of Phase 1 training formally confirm whether they are or have been subject to a Care Order. With the specific agreement of the individual, that information is to be passed on to the Phase 2 establishment and in turn to their first unit.
- b. CLs represent a 'special group with specific needs and units must always actively explore with the CL the value of making a referral to AWS, who can provide support and/or engage with the relevant LA. Head Personal Support at HQ AWS would also be the point of contact for a LA wishing to discuss issues relating to a specific CL. Where the CL does not want a referral to be made to AWS, Unit Welfare staff should seek generic advice from AWS in relation to the issues and procedures around CLs in order that they may best respond to their needs.
- c. If they request it, a CL must be given access to the responsible LA's services to which they are entitled. The unit must facilitate this contact and access. As far as possible, CLs should not be disadvantaged by the inevitable moves that they will experience during their career up to the age of 25.
- d. In recognising a LA's statutory responsibility to take reasonable steps to keep in touch, or to re-establish contact if lost, with their CL (up to the age of 25), units are to effect a mail forwarding system for correspondence from the LA to the SP concerned. They are also to encourage CLs to maintain contact with their responsible LA.
- e. Where the LA has a statutory requirement to carry out visits to CLs on MOD property, units should offer every assistance to the LA to enable this access whilst making it clear that the unit is not able to compel a CL to attend any such meetings or visits. Where a LA wishes to meet a CL on an MOD establishment and the CL indicates that they do not want to participate (potentially to avoid CL confidentiality being compromised with their peer group) the unit may also offer to facilitate a meeting between the CL/LA at an appropriate location and time that ensures that CL confidentiality is not compromised. This may, for instance, be at the CL's own home or in LA premises during leave.

81.183. Catering, Retail and Leisure (CRL). In-barrack CRL services are primarily delivered under contracts managed by the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO). At present, the contracts within the UK are shared between several industry partners. As with all contractual arrangements, the level of engagement at site level between the CO and the industry partner is crucial to ensure delivery standards are maintained. Profit share through 'Gainshare' or 'Excess Income' continue to provide a welfare funding stream.

81.184. Personal Financial Management and Mitigating Debt. All SP are expected to manage their own financial affairs responsibly. Where appropriate, the CoC should

signpost SP to the following sources of information and guidance:

- a. [**Forces Mutual Military Foundation \(FMMF\)**](#). The FMMF offers advice to SP and briefings in units. The FMMF is working in partnership with PayPlan to offer free debt advice services. A dedicated team will deliver confidential financial education and debt awareness presentations free of charge and separate from the CoC. The FMMF can also assist by offering one to one counselling and advice through a network of trusted partners.
- b. [**RBL Money Force**](#). The RBL Money Force Benefits and Money Advice Team can help SP manage their finances and support them if they are experiencing financial problems.
- c. [**Credit Unions \(CU\)**](#). The MoD supports three of the UK's leading CU that have joined forces to make saving simple and loans more affordable to the SP and veterans. The CU can provide advice to SP directly or conduct surveys in units to identified issues and trends. The CU can then follow up on the survey results with bespoke advice and briefings as required by the unit.
- d. [**Self-Help Guide - Personal Debt \(AC 63968\)**](#). This booklet has been designed to help SP deal with personal debts and regain control of their financial situation.
- e. [**The Service Insurance and Investment Advisory Panel \(SIIAP\)**](#). SIIAP consists of companies that have specialist knowledge and experience in the provision of financial services to individual members of HM Forces.

81.185. Personal financial matters are regarded as private and personal. In exceptional circumstances where the level of debt has become so unmanageable that an individual poses a security risk or where it adversely impacts on performance and OE, administrative or disciplinary action may be taken. It must, however, be stressed that formal Service action would only be taken in cases of persistent and irresponsible indebtedness, as this displays a lack of judgement and self-discipline. Such cases are particularly serious when involving SP in a position of responsibility as it calls into question their ability to manage the welfare of subordinate and their suitability to manage public/ Service non-public funds.

81.186. It is not Army practice to intervene in the recovery of private civil debts except in the case of Judgment Orders or where it is considered that the reputation of the Army may be at stake. Any individual who has a receiving order in bankruptcy made against them, files a petition of bankruptcy, receives a Judgment Order or is unable to meet their financial commitments must inform their CO, who has a responsibility to help and advice.

81.187. – 81.200. Reserved.

PART 7 – SUPPORT TO FAMILIES

Introduction

81.201. The Army recognises that supporting SP' families contributes directly to OE. The Army is therefore committed to ensuring that all Army families are provided with additional support when a SP is deployed away from home and in the event of a family emergency. In addition, there is a wider obligation on the Nation to ensure Army families receive continuity of public services wherever they are based and whenever they are obliged to move, this is covered in greater detail and supported by the AF Covenant.

81.202. Armed Forces Families Strategy. Army life places considerable pressure on a family in terms of separation, mobility, and welfare. Army SP could not deliver what is required of them by Defence without the support of their families. The [Armed Forces Families Strategy](#) seeks to recognise the essential contribution of Service families and ensure they have the respect and support they deserve. The aim of the strategy, therefore, is to provide both the context and the framework for the delivery of a range of practical interventions designed to strengthen and improve policies and service provision across the Service families' agenda, leading to improved retention and enhanced operational effectiveness.

Army Accompanied Service Policy

81.203. The provision of accompanied service, wherever possible, is a key tenet in supporting Army families. The Army recognises how individuals choose to live and serve is a personal choice and varies according to how they wish to provide familial stability. There is a package of allowances, benefits, and educational and welfare support to address, as far as practicable, those disadvantages associated with the impact of Army service on family life. These include factors such as [subsidised housing, Forces Help to Buy, Continuity of Education Allowance, and Get You Home allowances](#).

81.204. It may be more difficult for a CO to provide a comprehensive welfare support package to those families who, whether by choice or for Service reasons, are not collocated with the unit. This includes support to families of mobilised members of the reserve and the regular reserve and deployed members of the regular army not informed units. COs are to ensure such families¹⁰ are presented with a comprehensive welfare information package including as a minimum, contact details of the relevant welfare specialists, the "[A Guide for Army Families](#)" and advice on what to do in given circumstances. Where a specific welfare problem arises from dispersed families and the CO finds it difficult to manage or assist with that problem due to the geographical separation, the CO may either seek assistance from AWS staff local to the family or apply to the RPoC G1 staffs which cover the postal code for the family's address. The Bde Staff should then delegate that matter to a unit local to the family address directing them to assist. In these circumstances it is imperative that the nominated staff (AWS, RPOC G1 or local unit welfare staff) continue to update the parent CO of progress with the problem. Provision of support may be delegated; responsibility may not.

¹⁰ This should include the parents or nominated Emergency Contacts/NOK of single SP in addition to the families of SP married or in a civil partnership.

Army Non-UK Citizens and Families

81.205. Direction on the administration of non-UK SP and families is contained in [AGAI 50 \(Supporting Non-UK Army Personnel\)](#). Pers Svcs produce supporting information and guidance in the [Guide For Non-UK Nationals and Unit Support](#), which is in three parts:

- a. Part 1. Information for Individuals from Overseas Considering a Career in the British Army.
- b. Part 2. Information for Non-UK Soldiers and Non-UK Spouses/ Civil Partners.
- c. Part 3. Information for Regular and Reserve Units on Administration of Non-UK Nationals Serving in the British Army and Non-UK Spouses/ Civil Partners.

These publications are to be used by G1 staff, COs, and unit personnel support staff to provide support to the Army's non-UK SP personnel, with Part 2 of the Guide being promoted to non-UK SP¹¹. The guide directs the CoC to engage with the immigration and cultural challenges faced by SP and their entitled family members who enter the UK under the [Immigration Rules Appendix AF](#) as they manage their Regular service life, establish a family life and [transition through to civilian life](#) on discharge. The guide does not replace policy or instructions covered in existing tri-Service or Army publications, which already apply to all SP and their entitled families regardless of their nationality and should always be consulted in the first instance.

81.206. These publications also contain useful information and advice on naturalisation, settlement (commonly known as Indefinite Leave to Remain/Enter (ILR/E)) and the procedure for discharge of non-UK SP. Importantly, it is the responsibility of the discharging unit to inform the Home Office when an SP is discharging from Service.

81.207. The CoC and Career Managers (CM) should be aware that all non-UK national personnel who are to be discharged and need to regularise their immigration status should apply to the Home Office **eighteen weeks prior** to their discharge date to guarantee the grant of settlement (where they meet all the criteria) shortly after discharge. On discharge, non-UK National personnel will not have recourse to public funds or the right to work until such time that their settlement is granted. Therefore, notification of discharge dates for non-UK National personnel must be made sufficiently in advance to allow units to relocate the soldier to UK if overseas, notify the Home Office of the discharge and for the soldier to start the application process both for themselves and any entitled dependants.

Army SP and their Families in Tri-Service or Joint Units

81.208. The application of sS policies in each joint location is not always reasonably practicable or manageable and may not offer best value for money. [JSP 770 \(Tri-Service Operational and Non-Operational Welfare Policy\)](#) outlines the following:

- a. **Joint Units under SS Command.** These units follow the policy of the sS command or established welfare practices of the unit. However, subject to agreement, sS may make additional arrangements at their own expense.

¹¹ This guide contains advice and support for Non-British nationals and Non-British family dependants including those married to a British Citizen. Where there are differences between Commonwealth citizens and Gurkhas these are highlighted in the guide.

Nevertheless, sS should be prepared to offer specialist support as required. Commanders of Joint units are to ensure that their policy is disseminated to all personnel through induction briefs and unit orders.

b. **Units under Joint Command / Joint User sites.** Provision of primary welfare is a function of the CoC, delivered through the J1 element of the unit / site, the structure of which will vary across locations and organisations. Secondary or specialist welfare will usually be provided through the relevant Service welfare agency unless another single-Service welfare provider is better placed to meet the needs of the case or service user, in accordance with the tri-Service Specialist Welfare Agreement.

Support to Relationship Breakdown and Estrangement

81.209. The breakdown of a relationship is a private matter¹² but that is not to say the Services cannot and should not offer help and support. Legal relationship breakdown can be a traumatic and stressful experience for those involved and has a significant impact, socially, financially and in terms of entitlement, on the individuals, the Army and the Services' aftercare organisations. Aside from any compassionate considerations, the need to maintain OE provides the justification for the Army to mitigate the adverse effects of relationship breakdowns. It is important to ensure that a properly co-ordinated approach is adopted, involving the CoC, the in-Service welfare staff, professional welfare and relationship agencies, the Home Office¹³ and the aftercare community to provide an effective level of support to such families. A record of interview, to support those who may be going through estrangement, is at Annex G. This must be completed by the CoC or welfare staff and, wherever possible, signed both parties (SP and spouse /civil partner) prior to the change of an SP's Personal Status Category (PStatCat). Where one or both parties refuse to sign the document, action must still be taken to inform them of the consequences of the change in PStatCat and their options prior to the change taking place. In such instances, guidance should be sought from AWS as to whether there are any underlying issues eg when there is suspicion of coercive and controlling behaviour. This action should then be noted on the record of interview form.

81.210. Support should be provided throughout estrangement, but welfare concerns are often precipitated by either partner leaving the family home and moving into Single Living Accommodation (SLA) or other private accommodation. The role of unit welfare staff is crucial at this point. The CO can authorise the SP to move into SLA while maintaining the family home if it is considered that a cooling off period may assist with a possible reconciliation. This would normally be for a 90-day period. As soon as it becomes apparent that reconciliation is unachievable, the SP should change their PStatCat, noting that the day this happens will initiate the 93-day 'Notice to Vacate' for the SFA. It must be made clear to the SP and spouse/civil partner/partner in a long-term relationship that should they remain in the SFA past the 93-day 'Notice to Vacate' period, they will be classed as 'Irregular Occupants' and charges amended accordingly. The SP should not return or enter the SFA unless specifically invited to do so by their spouse/civil partner/partner in a long-term relationship. Any return to collect belongings etc must be coordinated and authorised by the UWO and AWS advice sought if difficulties prevail. Further detail can be found in

¹² Domestic Abuse is NOT to be considered a private matter. Para 81.213. covers this in more detail.

¹³ For non-UK spouses/partners on a route to settlement.

[JSP 464 \(Tri-Service Accommodation Regulations\)](#). If the family is subject to immigration control (non-UK) the unit must follow the instructions in [AGAI 50 \(Supporting Non-UK Army Personnel\)](#).

81.211. Overseas. In the case of estrangement occurring overseas, the CO should give the family the opportunity to return to the UK before the start of the 93-day 'Notice to Vacate' period. This move is to be publicly funded and the spouse/civil partner can move either into available SFA, the [Services Cotswold Centre](#), [SSAFA Stepping Stone Homes](#) or private accommodation. Note: estranged spouses/civil partners cannot claim for the final move out of SFA and into private accommodation.

Counselling

81.212. Counselling is provided under contract and can be obtained through referral from the AWS. Contractor supplied counselling via AWS referral is publicly funded and not restricted to relationship counselling. AWS is available to provide advice to SP or family members on the potential sources of support available to them for any of the above needs.

Domestic Abuse (DA)

81.213. DA is a complex issue which the CoC is unlikely to have a detailed understanding or knowledge on. Any DA reported in relation to Army SP is not to be condoned, dismissed or ignored under any circumstances. Nor should it be treated as a purely private matter. MOD DA policy is covered in [JSP 913 \(Whole Force Policy on Domestic Abuse\)](#). Further guidance and support for the AF community can be sought from the [AWS, DA Consultation Form](#) or the AF [DA website](#)¹⁴.

81.214. All suspected or actual incidents of DA, including patterns of coercive and controlling behaviour, must be reported to AWS, who will advise on whether further coordination with other statutory agencies is required and of other support options. If the CofC feels that the victim/survivor, or another family member, is in immediate danger the relevant Police force should be contacted, even if the victim/survivor's consent is not given. Where a child is or would normally be present, or where the victim/survivor or perpetrator is pregnant, the abuse is also to be reported immediately to the LA Children's Social Care ServicesS.

81.215. Where an incident of DA has been reported and the alleged perpetrator is the SP living in SFA/SSFA with the victim/survivor, the CO may order the alleged perpetrator to leave the SFA/SSFA and be excluded from it on a temporary basis where it is necessary and proportionate to do so. Such an exclusion is not to exceed 28 days, and SLA is to be provided for the use of the alleged perpetrator. Where an exclusion has been ordered and to ensure the safety of the victim/survivor, the CO must engage with AWS (or the social work provider overseas) and the civilian or Service Police so that safe and informed decisions can be made regarding allowing that SP to re-enter the SFA/SSFA/SLA. This action would normally be taken when a Domestic Violence Protection Order/ Notification Order (DVPO/DVPN) is not feasible, or for situations where the victim/survivor is not prepared to report incidences to the Police but there remain concerns about victim/survivor safety. The better course of action for cases arising in the UK where a crime has been

¹⁴ Definitions vary across devolved administrations as does legislation. Units should familiarise themselves with the variations for the AOR they are operating in.

committed is to report the matter to the civilian Police so that the case can progress rapidly to the Magistrates Court and appropriate bail conditions can be imposed.

81.216. Where it is not possible for a victim/survivor to remain on the Defence estate (e.g., it is not deemed safe), AWS with support from the CofC should assist in securing alternative accommodation.

81.217. All UWOs and their staffs must be trained and have unit instructions in place to ensure they respond appropriately to a suspected or an actual case of DA. This **must** include what practical assistance can be offered to the victim, such as:

- a. Informing **AWS** (and the local civilian or Service Police **in cases of immediate danger**) if an offence is suspected; UWOs should be instructed that the civilian police have primacy over DA incidents that occur in the UK and the presumption is that they will deal with criminal offences arising in a DA case.
- b. Informing the statutory Social Care Authority for the area of any incidents in a household that includes children (even if only visiting occasionally) or any adult with vulnerabilities.
- c. Providing confidential means of seeking help, for example permission to use facilities to contact help lines or services if the individual does not feel safe to do so at home.
- d. Providing information about internal and external organisations that can help.
- e. Where appropriate, allowing time from work to obtain medical, counselling, or legal assistance.
- f. Where appropriate, enabling workplace relocation.
- g. Ensuring that the victim has access to information and help in developing a safety plan.
- h. Encouraging the reporting of DA to the police in order that appropriate safety planning and consideration for bringing the perpetrator to account is given; in many cases there will also be a duty to make the Service Police aware.

81.218. Guidance to the CofC on disciplinary/criminal aspects of DA, where the alleged perpetrator is the SP, may be found in AGAI 62. Other than in extreme cases where there is an overriding operational imperative, the CofC should support and prioritise the attendance of behaviour change programmes for perpetrators of domestic abuse.

Employment and Deployment of Serving Parents or Carers

81.219. [QR\(Army\) Para 9.260](#) states that SP must be available for world-wide assignment at any time. This applies to all Service parents, single or dual serving couples.

81.220. All parents and carers have a legal responsibility to make appropriate arrangements for their children and any dependant adults if they are absent, for example

during an early shift, carrying out a 24-hour duty or during a six-month deployment. Whilst SP often rely on their spouse, civil partner, or partner in such circumstances, when a SP is a single parent or has a spouse or civil partner who is also a SP the situation becomes more complex. The Army has an interest in helping serving parents balance the needs of family life against the needs of the Service and the MOD provide a number of schemes promulgated in [JSP 750 \(Centrally Determined Terms of Service\)](#), and in [JSP 760 \(Tri-Service Regulations for Leave and Other Types of Absence\)](#) including Career Intermissions, Enhanced Leave, Parental Leave, Flexible Working and Flexible Service.

81.221. The final decision on employment or deployment lies with the CO, whose overall aim should be to make individuals aware of their obligations to play a full part including deployment, assist individuals with constructing robust arrangements for the care of their child(ren) while balancing the operational requirement with each case on its merits. In coming to a decision, COs must weigh the demands of the operational task against morale of the team and the specific circumstances of the individual. Where individuals are unable to carry out their military duties, COs should seek specialist welfare and legal advice before considering administrative action on the grounds of inefficiency or disciplinary action.

81.222. Working Patterns. Guidance and policies exist to enable serving parents or carers to request flexible working arrangements. This includes the following:

a. **Leave Types.** SP, under law, are not entitled to the statutory provision of time off for dependants. However, military leave regulations replicate this provision and support the principle of reasonable time off to deal with an emergency involving family or dependants. Where time off is needed for a dependant, the issue can be dealt with using one, or a combination of the following leave types including; Compassionate Leave, Career Intermissions, Time off for Dependants, Special Unpaid Leave, Enhanced Leave, Parental Leave, and Transfer of Leave Between Spouses/Civil Partners. Details of each leave type can be found in [JSP 760 \(Tri-Service Regulations for Leave and Other Types of Absence\)](#).

b. **Flexible Working Arrangements (FWA).** While flexible working is not a right in the AF, all SP are entitled to request FWA so they may better balance the demands of personal life and Service commitments. There are currently two FWA options available to SP:

(1) **Flexible Working Policy.** This option allows a SP to amend their working hours, for example to work compressed hours, vary start and finish times or working from home. Line Managers (LM) must consider FWA where it does not impinge on operational capability. It may not always be possible for non-standard hours to be worked due to the ways in which a unit operates. Implementation of FWA is on a temporary basis and is subject to review. Further details can be found in [JSP 750 \(Centrally Determined Terms of Service\)](#).

(2) **Flexible Service (FS).** FS is the overarching policy name for temporary working arrangements. Principally, they are: Part-Time Working (PTW), Restricted Separation (RS), or a combination of both. The default service for Regular Army SP continues to be a full commitment engagement/commission, involving full-time unlimited service and liability for duty (so-called 24/365

liability). SP cannot be forced to change their Commitment Type or to enter into a FS arrangement, equally they do not have the right to change. Further details can be found in [AGAI 44 \(Army Flexible Service Including Career Intermissions\)](#).

c. **Deployments/Exercises.** The Army assists in helping SP balance the needs of their family against their unlimited liability where possible. The following guidance is offered to the CoC:

(1) If a CO determines that it is operationally imperative for a SP to deploy then they should do so.

(2) No two sets of circumstances will be identical; the CO should weigh the demands of the operational task against morale of the team and the specific circumstances of the individual. In some circumstances the balance will lie with the operational imperative and in others with the individual. The AWS can be approached for impartial advice.

(3) Individuals should be given as much notice as possible of deployments, exercises, or other changes in working practices to allow serving parents or carers to put the necessary arrangements to enable them to meet their commitments.

(4) Where individuals are repeatedly unable to carry out their military duties, the CO may have to consider administrative action on the grounds of inefficiency. Administrative Action is intended to address *professional* shortcomings and [AGAI 67 \(Administrative Action\)](#) should be consulted in the first instance.

d. **Pre-Empting Potential Challenges.** Much can be done by units to pre-empt potential challenges by identifying individuals with care responsibilities on their arrival in units and advising, where necessary, on the preparation of both short- and long-term Care Plans (see para 81.226). Individuals should also be provided with information on local Service or civilian childcare facilities and facilitating private fostering arrangements.

81.223. Advice for Serving Parents. Serving parents should ensure that their CoC and CM are aware of their personal circumstances. All SP can include personal circumstances on their Posting Preference Proforma (PPP) and can use the 'Employee Domestic and Welfare Considerations tab' on JPA to highlight any personal circumstances which may need to be considered during the assignment process.

a. **Dual Serving Parents.** Dual serving parents should note that whilst the Army will endeavour to meet geographical and assignment preference, there is a risk it may not be possible for them to be co-located. Both parents should engage with their CoC and CM to determine the best possible outcomes for their family. **See also paras 81.239 to 81.246.**

b. **Declaring Supportability.** All SP are reminded that Part 8 of this AGAI requires them to inform their CoC and CM as soon as they are aware that a family member has a supportability need. This is to allow the CoC to ensure responsive career

management which meets the needs of the Army and when informed, takes account of any additional family supportability needs that may have an impact on future assignments.

- c. **Parental Leave.** The aim of Parental Leave is to allow SP unpaid leave to look after their child. Parents may take up to 4 weeks per year for each child. It is unpaid and can be taken by either parent until a child is 18. See [JSP 760 \(Tri-Service Regulations for Leave and Other Types of Absence\) Part 1 \(Chapter 28\)](#)

Children and Young People

81.224. Children and Young Peoples' Service. DCS act as the tri-Service professional lead for all issues related to Service Children and Young People (SCYP); the MOD SCYP Trust Board, chaired by Commander HC who holds tri-Service responsibility for SCYP matters and the MOD Safeguarding Children Board under an independent chair. In overseas locations, the MOD acts in lieu of a LA, including the provision of children's services, and subordinate Children's Boards and Safeguarding Boards exist in all major Commands. Within the UK, where responsibility remains with LA and equivalents, DCS ensures that the unique needs of Service CYP are met and seeks to identify and mitigate disadvantage. DCS includes the MOD Schools and Settings Service, which is responsible for the provision of high-quality education and care in MOD funded schools and nursery settings overseas for Service children and children of eligible MOD personnel. The organisation formerly known as CEAS has divided into two teams – the Education Advisory Team (UK) and the Overseas Education and Supportability Team, who both provide information, advice, and support about all aspects of Service children's education.

Emails are as follows:

RC-DCS-HQ-EAT@mod.gov.uk

RC-DCS-HQ-OEST@mod.gov.uk.

81.225. Childcare. Ensuring that children are properly cared for remains a parental responsibility. It is recognised that Service parents like all parents, need access to appropriate childcare and that, where appropriate, this childcare needs to be properly regulated.¹⁵ Policy for delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in overseas settings is in [JSP 342 \(Education of Service Children and Young People\)](#). In the UK, commanders are to ensure that garrison or unit childcare settings are registered with the appropriate authority and are complying with the [Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage](#). This framework is mandatory for all early years providers.

- a. **Use of the Defence Estate for the Delivery of Childcare.** Where, due to a lack of access and availability to childcare services operating in a local community, it is determined that there is an operational capability need for a setting to be provided at a Unit location, the use of Defence Estate accommodation may be considered. More information on can be found in [JSP 850](#) and in [2021DIN01-076](#).

81.226. Tax Free Childcare (TFC). The AF Childcare Voucher Scheme and other Government Childcare voucher schemes closed from Oct 18. If SP were a member or joined prior to 4 Oct 18 they can continue to receive childcare vouchers. All other SP should visit the [Government's Childcare Choices website](#) more information on what childcare support is available to them. TFC is not accessible in all overseas locations.

¹⁵ DCS are the policy lead for childcare and are producing an Early Years Childcare Study which will inform MOD childcare policy.

81.227. Boarding School Finder. SP and families thinking of placing their children into boarding school should refer to the [MoD Boarding School Finder](#) (BSF). The BSF provides information on schools across the UK to enable SP to make informed decisions on the school options for their children.

a. **The Duke of York's Royal Military School (DOYRMS).** DOYRMS is a co-educational catering for 500 boys and girls, aged 11 – 18 years. The school itself is unique as it is not only sponsored by the MoD, but it is also the country's only state full boarding school based on an independent school model with high quality education, unrivalled extra-curricular activities, and outstanding facilities, yet with fees that make it a very affordable boarding option. More information can be found on the school's website [here](#).

b. **Queen Victoria School (QVS), Dunblane.** This school provides affordable education and pastoral care (within a fully boarding environment) to the children and young people of Service families on behalf of the Secretary of State for Defence. Tuition, boarding, ceremonial uniform, books, and many other costs are met by the Ministry of Defence. It is open to children of serving Scottish SP or those SP who have served in, or are currently still serving in, Scottish units or units in Scotland and is open to the children of SP of any rank. Priority is given to children whose parent has been killed or has died whilst in service; other compassionate cases; and length of remaining service. The main entry point is the last year of Scotland and Northern Ireland primary education (P7), or Year 6 in England and Wales. Vacancies arise from time to time for later years. Further information on the school can be found [here](#).

81.228. Safeguarding Children. The introduction of the [Children Act 2004](#) (CA04) in England led to significant change in the way in which the safeguarding of children and young adults is delivered. The Act defines a child as "a person under the age of 18". Section 11 of the Act places a duty on key people and bodies to decide to ensure that, in discharging their functions, they have regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. Within the MOD this duty is therefore taken to include all people under the age of 18. If commands, units, and COs are unsure about their duty they should seek clarification from the AWS or DCS.

81.229. Care Plans.¹⁶ To plan for and manage potential difficulties, the CoC should identify those Serving parents and carers who may have difficulty meeting their full commitment obligation to carry out shift work, guard duties or full deployments. Such individuals should be engaged in advance and encouraged to produce both short term and long-term robust care plans detailing how their children/dependant family members will be looked after on those occasions when they will be required to conduct either out of normal working hours duties or a full deployment. The CoC should note that no-one can be ordered to complete a Care Plan however, doing so is highly encouraged.

81.230. An example Care Plan can be found at Annex H. Care Plans should cover parents or carers intended arrangements for the provision of short-term care (eg to cover a 24-hour duty) along with long term plans (eg arrangements for an extended deployment). Care Plans could include powers of attorney for temporary and long-term guardians,

¹⁶ SP cannot be forced to complete the plan and Commanders should consider this plan applies to all parents.

certificates of acceptance of guardianship/care and financial support arrangements. Those identified as needing guidance should be interviewed. Discussion topics include:

- a. Confirm that the SP is aware that Service parents or carers are liable for duty or deployment always without restriction though special note will be taken where a SP has registered a dependant(s) under Part 8 to this AGAI.
- b. Confirm that the SP is aware that they are responsible for arranging appropriate care for their children or dependant adult and for meeting the costs involved.
- c. Establish the names and whereabouts of the children or dependant adults for which the SP is responsible.
- d. Discuss the short-term/long term arrangements that the SP has made for: childcare, care, food, housing, transportation, and emergency needs of their family members.
- e. Discuss the arrangements that the SP has made for transferring care responsibilities (legal, educational, financial, and religious) should the need arise.
- f. Discuss with the SP who will be their children's/dependant adult's nominated guardian or carer.
- g. Confirm that the SP has made the necessary arrangement to transport their family member(s) to their nominated guardian/carer.
- h. Remind the SP that they need to ensure that any parental responsibility documentation, acceptance of guardianship/carer responsibilities and or power of attorney documents are kept up to date.
- i. In the case of guardianship/change of career, potentially resulting in a child changing schools during a deployment, SP should be advised to seek advice and discuss the implications with the **EAT or OEST as appropriate** before taking any action to remove a child from school.
- j. For Non-UK personnel, advise the SP that Home Office rules preclude them from bringing a family member or friend from their country of origin to provide care.

81.231. Child Protection Plans. When a child is made the subject of a Child Protection Plan (CPP) following an Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC) any disruption to that plan (operational deployments or military exercises) need to be carefully considered to ensure there is no impact to the outcome or effectiveness of the CPP. As directed in [JSP 834 \(Safeguarding\)](#), upon receipt of the ICPC minutes that have formalised a CPP, AWS are to inform the SP's workforce authority and the CO. This information should be shared using the letter template at Annex I. Once the child is removed from the CPP by the LA and the AWS has received formal confirmation, the letter template at Annex J should be used.

81.232. Pregnancy, Maternity, and Return to Work (RtW). Annex K [Pregnancy, Maternity, and Return to Work Guide](#) brings together aspects of policy¹⁷ which relate to SP

¹⁷ [JSP 760 \(Tri-Service Regulations for Leave and Other Types of Absence\)](#). Chapters 24, 25 and 27.

who are pregnant or, on maternity, shared parental or adoption leave. It collates and summarises extant policy and guidance to support the CoC and LMs in the management of pregnant SP and those returning from maternity leave. It is broken down into 3 parts: Pregnancy Related Issues, the Maternity Passport, and Returning to Work. Specifically:

- a. Support to SP on maternity leave is the responsibility of the parent unit even though SP on maternity leave are assigned to the Resilience Margin as directed in [AGAI 39 \(The Resilience Margin\)](#).
- b. The CoC are required to interview SP upon formal or informal notification of pregnancy. The interview should be based on a HARDFACTS assessment to identify any potential issues that may arise prior to and during maternity leave, and on the SP's return to work. Details of the HARDFACTS assessment can be found in [Annex G to AGAI 99 \(Command and Care of Wounded Injured and Sick SP\)](#).
- c. The CoC and SP should work through the Maternity Checklist (Annex A to Part 1 of Annex K) as required.

81.233. Employment of New Mothers. [AGAI 78 \(Army Medical Employment Policy PULHHEEMS Administrative Pamphlet \(PAP\)\)](#) states that new mothers RtW from maternity leave are to be graded MLD(T) A4L4M4E3 for a period of six months from their RtW date. Medical policy outlines that after pregnancy, consideration should be given for a rehabilitation or remedial exercise programme to enable them to attain the necessary fitness and functional capacity. Additionally, health and safety policy requires that a risk assessment be conducted upon the new mother's RtW to ensure they are employed appropriately taking into account whether the SP is breastfeeding.

81.234. Supporting the Non-Birthing Parent. Support is available to a SP who: is the father of the child; the spouse, civil partner or partner of the birthing parent or adopter; or the intended parent if having a baby through a surrogacy arrangement. The principle support mechanism is the AF Occupational Paternity Leave Scheme (Paternity Leave). Paternity Leave (PL) is given to recognise the birth or the adoption of a child (where the SP applying for Paternity Leave is not taking Adoption Leave) and to enable the SP to care for the child or support the birthing parent or adopter. PL provides for two weeks paid leave. Research by the UK Government Equalities Office has indicated this two-week period is important not only for the non-birthing parent-child relationship, but also in promoting greater stability in the relationship between the parents. In addition, commanders are encouraged to show greater empathy in circumstances where the birthing parent requires greater post-natal support. This may include instances where there have been complications during the birth, a caesarean section has been required or pre-planned support arrangements have fallen through at short notice. The [JSP 760: Tri Service Regulations for Leave and Other Types of Absence](#) is clear that compassionate leave should be used in these circumstances. The default settings for these circumstances is, as a minimum, two weeks compassionate leave in addition to the two weeks PL. The CoC remains the authority to grant this provision and to increase the provision of compassionate leave based on an assessment of the circumstances of each case on its merits.

81.235. Assisted Conception Services. Defence policy on assisted conception and fertility services can be found in [2021DIN01-020](#). It is in a SP's best interests to inform their CoC of their intent to access assisted conception or fertility services for the family to

make best use of the provisions outlined in Defence policy relating to career management and separated service.

81.236. Adoption and Fostering. There are many SP who consider adopting or fostering children and there is a great demand for placements for children in the UK; Defence policy can be found in [2018DIN01-130](#). The MOD has an agreement with SSAFA to deliver an adoption service through SSAFA's Voluntary Adoption Agency. While SP may use an adoption service provided by an appropriate LA, the occasional lack of understanding from LAs regarding service life and the demands of military employment means they may choose the SSAFA adoption service instead. The SSAFA Adoption Agency can work directly with SP or assist them to access a service via other adoption agencies. Once adopted, a child becomes a dependant in the same way as any other dependent child of a SP.

81.237. Private Fostering Arrangements (PFA) and Guardianship. A PFA is one that is made privately, without the involvement of a LA, for the care of a child under the age of 16 (under 18 if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative (eg grandparent, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, or stepparent) with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more. **Any period more than 28 days constitutes a guardianship arrangement and must be notified to the LA.** Legislation and guidance relating to private fostering has been established by the UK Government, the Scottish Parliament, and the Welsh Assembly. The intention of the legislation and guidance is to ensure that children who are being looked after under PFA will be safeguarded by the supervision of an appropriate authority. Individuals with queries on PFA or Guardianship Arrangements should be signposted to the [Fostering and Private Fostering SharePoint](#) page and referred to their local AWS team who will provide the appropriate advice and guidance. Overseas Commands should consider establishing both short term and long-term foster carers from volunteers within the existing Service community in conjunction with the British Forces Social Work Service.

81.238. Maintenance of Families. SP have a moral responsibility to support their spouse or civil partner (or former spouse or civil partner) and any children. Army policy encourages all individuals to meet their obligations voluntarily, and as SP have the same obligation as any civilian, to comply with child maintenance. Equally, it is Army policy that child and spousal maintenance orders should be determined by the courts or Child Maintenance Service (CMS). Further guidance can be found on the [gov.uk](#) site. A [Child Maintenance Calculator](#) is available and further advice can be found [here](#). SP and their families should be reminded that they may also seek legal advice at their own cost. If Child Support Agency orders or CMS orders are not paid voluntarily, they may be enforced by the MOD in accordance with the MoU between the Department for Work and Pensions Child Maintenance Group (DWPCMG) and the MOD. The DWPCMG recognises that the nature of Service life can cause additional difficulties for SP in their dealings with the DWPCMG and as such have established a Forces Focal Point to support SP, ensuring that they receive a consistent, accurate, timely and cost-effective service for the assessment, calculation, collection, and payment of child maintenance. The Forces Focal Point can only be accessed through military welfare or finance staff. Where an SP is required to pay maintenance¹⁸ for a child or to a former spouse/partner then the Defence Business Service may take those payments from a SP's pay at source.

¹⁸ In accordance with a CEA, CMS, or UK Court Order.

81.239. Foreign Maintenance Orders (FMO). Save for exceptional circumstances, an FMO should be registered with a UK Court before the DBS will enforce it against a SP's pay at source. An application to register an FMO with a UK court can be made through the relevant Central Authority in the country of origin to the UK Reciprocal Enforcement of Maintenance Orders (REMO) Unit. If there is no Central Authority (for example, Fiji has none), an application can be made through a local court in the country of origin and that local court should then liaise directly with the [REMO Unit Helpline](#).

81.240. Support Networks. There are several additional support networks which can provide impartial advice and guidance to the CoC and SP including:

- a. **Army Families Federation (AFF).** AFF are the independent voice of Army families. They offer support, information and guidance to individuals and Army communities on issues that impact on the quality of their lives and have several specialists in areas such as education and housing.
- b. **Forces Additional Needs and Disability Forum (FANDAF).** FANDAF is a non-publicly funded body supported by SSAFA to keep Service families with additional needs and disabilities in touch with issues that affect them both inside and outside Service life. It is directed by a Full Members' Committee who represent the Forum, and whose membership is made up of Service parents of children with an additional need and/or disability and adults with an additional need and/or disability. Service families are encouraged to engage with FANDAF.
- c. **The Army Parents' Network.** The aim of the Army Parents' Network is to support Serving Army Parents and the Chain of Command by providing access to information, advice and peer support. The page promotes information on relevant topics (including policy updates and useful articles) and also acts as a forum for individuals to ask questions for other members to provide advice – all questions asked can be posted anonymously. The group is predominantly accessed through its Facebook page (search for "Army Parents' Network") but also has a web page www.army.mod.uk/people/support-well/army-parents-network and an e-mail address armypers-parents-network@mod.gov.uk.
- d. **The Defence Breastfeeding Network.** The Defence Breastfeeding Network is a peer support network that supports SP (including Civil Servants) and their families throughout their pregnancy and breastfeeding journey. They have over 50 trained peer supporters who are able to advise on specific breastfeeding queries, alongside Dr Wendy Jones (pharmacist) from the breastfeeding network to advise on medication related queries. They are also able to advise on any policy questions that may arise. It should be noted that the SP does not have to be exclusively breastfeeding and the network's peer supporters are trained to assist on infant feeding journeys no matter the route they take. They do however ask that the breastfeeding person is the one who joins the network. The network can be found on their Facebook and Defence Connect Pages (search for "Defence Breastfeeding Network") and questions can be e-mailed to ArmyPers-Pol-BF-Network-Mailbox@mod.gov.uk.
- e. **The Defence Child Bereavement Network.** The Defence Child Bereavement Network is a support group to help Quad service serving personnel, veterans and

spouses who have experienced child loss. This child loss can include, but is not limited to, miscarriage, stillbirth, TFMR, ectopic pregnancy, neonatal death and child loss. The aim of the network is to provide peer support from fellow loss parents and medical / welfare professionals and provide help through signposting. The page provides a listening ear in times of extreme grief. The group organises small self-care packages when requested to help enable a loss parent to look after themselves during this emotionally turbulent time. The network can be found on their Facebook page (search for “Defence Child Bereavement Network”) and questions can be e-mailed to armypers-Pol-DCB-Network@mod.gov.uk.

f. **The Defence Fertility Network.** The Defence Fertility Network exists to provide individuals, couples and their civilian partners across Defence (Quad service) who are considering, are on or have been on a fertility journey a welcoming and confidential support group. It functions primarily as a private Facebook group where members can provide and receive peer support, signposting to relevant resources and the benefit of collective experience when navigating NHS and MoD policies. The Defence Fertility Network can be found on Facebook, and for those who want more information (and access to support resources without having to join) we can be found on Defence Connect. The Network’s Service Leads can be e-mailed to Army-Pers-DF-Network@mod.gov.uk.

g. **Service Couples Network.** The aim of the Service Couples Network is to support Service Personnel who are in a relationship (legal or otherwise) with a fellow Service Person. The Service Couples Network is a tri-Service network designed to connect people, inform policy and raise awareness of dual-serving couples specific issues. The page acts as a forum for individuals to ask questions and for other members to provide advice – all questions asked can be posted anonymously if required. The group is predominantly accessed through its Facebook page (search for “Service Couples Network”) but also has an e-mail address AFNetworks-SvcCouples-0Mailbox@mod.gov.uk.

81.241. Non-UK personnel. Serving parents intending to arrange childcare support in the UK, or during an overseas assignment, using individuals, relatives, or friends subject to UK immigration controls will need to take account of UK immigration rules or Service Standing Orders or Instructions applicable to their overseas assignment. This needs to be done well in advance. Home Office rules preclude them from bringing a family member or friend from country of origin to the UK to provide childcare. Those planning on returning children to their country of origin during an extended deployment will need to satisfy any safeguarding children requirements required by legislation in their country of origin. See the [Guide For Non-UK Nationals and Unit Support](#).

Separation of Single and Dual-Serving Parents with Dependent Children (DSPC)

81.242. Separation. Wherever possible, it is in the interests of the Service to avoid concurrent deployment¹⁹ of dual-serving parents where they hold joint responsibility for dependent children²⁰. This is also the case for single SP with parental responsibility. DSPC policy aims to ensure the impact of separation for single and dual-serving parents of

¹⁹ The term deployment in the context of this policy refers to the attendance of the SP on any of the activities listed in para 81.239.

²⁰ A child, who is below the age of 18, is defined as a legitimate or legitimated child or stepchild of a SP; a child statutorily adopted by a SP; a child of the family from a previous relationship of a SP; a fostered child of a SP, an intended child of a SP, or a child under a specific court order of a SP.

above two weeks is given appropriate consideration at a suitable level. Separation includes:

- a. **Operational Tours.** Operational tours are mandated by a CDS directive and include both PJHQ led operations or operations delivered by Land Operations Command. For the purposes of this policy this also includes Defence Activity Other than Operations (DAOTO) such as Short-Term Training Teams etc.
- b. **Military Aid to Civil Authorities.** Assistance provided by the Armed Forces to other Government Departments on urgent work of national importance in maintaining supplies and services essential to the life, health and safety of the community.
- c. **Unaccompanied Postings or Temporary Detachments.** Assignment Orders issued to SP in a dual-serving couple that do not permit family members to accompany them such as Defence Engagement posts in Iraq or Somalia. Shorter term temporary detachments such as Temporary Staff at BATUK or in the Falkland Islands may be included.
- d. **Collective Training.** Collective training for contingent or current operations, at home or abroad. This may also include theatre specific specialist individual courses, IPDT and training support tasks.
- e. **Individual Courses.** All residential Branch/trade and employment courses, pre-employment training and command courses.
- f. **Readiness Activities.** R0 – Immediate NTM²¹, R1 – 24hrs or 48hrs NTM, and R2 – 5 days NTM activities.

81.243. Affected Cohorts. The types of family structures in scope to be considered DSPC include, but are not limited to:

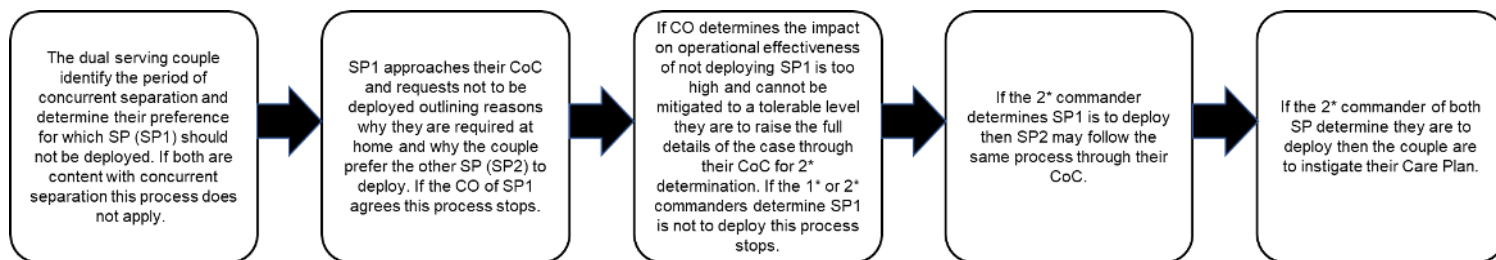
- a. **Married.** A legally or formally recognised union of two people.
- b. **Civil Partnerships.** A civil partnership is a legal relationship which can be registered by two people who aren't related to each other.
- c. **Long-Term Relationships.** A relationship recognised by Defence and recorded on JPA which has endured for equal to or greater than 365 days in which the serving parents may or may not live together without being married or in a civil partnership.
- d. **Special Guardianships.** A court order that places a child or young person to live with someone other than their parent(s) on a long-term basis.
- e. **Separated Parents.** Where two SP have undertaken separation (physically or legally), divorce or dissolution, but are jointly responsible for a child(ren), including those where a visitation court order is in place.
- f. **Single Parents.** PStat Cat 2 SP as defined in JSP 752 Para 02.0203b . For deployments, due consideration must be given to the needs of single SP with primary

²¹ FE ready to deploy from their home base or current location.

carer responsibilities which must be balanced against the impact on operational effectiveness. This policy, as detailed in Paras 81.242 – 81.246 therefore applies equally to single SP that are primary carers/parents.

81.244. Dual-Serving Parents with Dependent Children (DSPC) Status. It is the responsibility of both SP to confirm their status as a DSPC on JPA through their APC CM. DSPC status identifies the SP as holding a legal responsibility for a dependant. DSPC status ensures dependants are factored into career and assignment management decisions. Respective CMs are to be informed soonest if there is a change in personal circumstances that impact on DSPC status of either SP.

81.245. Deciding Authority. Concurrent separation for periods of less than 2 weeks are to be managed at unit level. The decision to concurrently deploy both SP must balance the needs of the Service against the impact on the SPs' family. If circumstances arise where both SP are required to deploy concurrently for a period of greater than 2 weeks, the following process is to be followed. Resolution at the lowest level should be aimed for but is only possible if the decision is made not to deploy the DSPC²²:



81.246. Engagement with another MOD TLB²³. Occasionally there may be a requirement to discuss the concurrent deployment of DSPC across TLBs. Where this is the case the process above is to be followed. Where necessary, discussions should take place at the lowest appropriate level and only escalated to 2* where not resolved.

81.247. Care Plans. Where the Deciding Authority has determined that the SP is to deploy, the Care Plan should be reviewed with the CO for implementation by the SP. An example Care Plan can be found at Annex H.

81.248. Deployment of New Parents. Whilst it is the responsibility of parents to make suitable arrangements for the care of their child(ren), it is recognised that deployment may have a particular impact on new parents returning to work immediately following Shared Maternity or Parental Leave (ShPL)²⁴. New mothers will be graded L4 E4 MLD(T) for a minimum period of 6 months from their return to work (RtW) date²⁵. This grading should not prevent individuals completing career courses where they volunteer to do so and occupational health assessment, where relevant, is that it is safe for their health to do so.

²² The 2* Deciding Authority for boarded OCE tours is MS. For OCE FGen fails the DA is ACOS Ops as the STA.

²³ Consistent with RN policy listed in [Chapter 58 – Management of Career, Para 5807\(e\)](#) and [Air Publication 3392 Vol 2 Para 6e](#) (Google Chrome only).

²⁴ [AGAI 44: Flexible Service including Career Intermissions](#) and [JSP 760: Tri-Service Regulations for Leave and Other Types](#) gives details of the policy for Maternity Leave, Shared Parental Leave, Adoption Leave, Paternity Leave and Parental Leave.

²⁵ As detailed in [JSP 760: Tri-Service Regulations for Leave and Other Types](#) and [Pregnancy and Maternity: A Servicewoman's Guide](#) to give the SP time to regain their fitness after childbirth.

81.249. Flexible Service. There will be occasions where single parents and DSPC require greater freedoms than which are provided within this policy. Where appropriate Flexible Service (JSP 760) should be considered in this instance.

81.250. Reserved.

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PART 8 – SUPPORTABILITY AND ADDITIONAL NEEDS

Introduction

81.251. Scope. The overarching tri-Service policy on supporting SP and their entitled family members who have disabilities and additional needs is in [JSP 820 \(Disability and Additional Needs Policy\)](#) whilst [JSP 770 \(Tri Service Operational and Non-Operational Welfare Policy\)](#) provides specific guidance for supporting families with additional needs and disabilities on overseas assignments. The aim of this AGAI is to set the sS Supportability and Additional Needs policy²⁶. These documents provide direction, guidance, and advice on the support available and application processes to be followed to record a family supportability need.

81.252. Employment. The underlying principle for employment in the Army is the ability of SP to be available for worldwide deployment or assignment at any time. [AGAI 60 \(Service Overseas\)](#) sets the policy for Service Overseas. The Army can only take account of a SP's family needs if the CoC and APC CM are aware of changes in personal circumstances and the SP registers details of their family dependants who have additional needs, disabilities or SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) support requirements. Where practicable, employment will be found that can meet the needs of the family and enable the career of the SP to continue to develop and progress.

81.253. National Legislation. The MOD has a duty to ensure that national legislation is adhered to within the UK. It is MOD practice to implement the spirit of UK legislation outside the UK wherever it is appropriate and practicable to do so. The principal Acts which place obligations upon the Services regarding Additional Needs are contained in [JSP 820](#).

81.254. SP's Responsibility. SP are fully responsible for their dependants and must be made aware that whilst the MOD will try to provide the necessary support for their dependants' health, education, and social welfare needs, this may not be possible in every location either in the UK or overseas. It is mandatory for SP to register a dependant's supportability and additional need to ensure that the SP's assignments are appropriate and safe for dependents. Early discussions between SP, APC CM, RCMO and unit Welfare staff will enable the SP to list the most appropriate positions for consideration by a Board. SP must report any changes in family circumstances that may require an additional supportability need. **In the event of a dependant's clinical or psychological assessment, the SP does not need to wait until formal diagnosis is given before submitting the Annex L (below).** Reporting changes is by the Career Management Notification Proforma (CMNP) at Annex L. SP also have the voluntary option to record additional information on family support or care considerations themselves using JPA Self Service, selecting Extra Information Types and entering details into the Employee Domestic and Welfare Considerations area. Completing these JPA fields does not replace the mandatory requirement for SP to complete the CMNP; it acts as additional guidance for APC CM.

81.255. Formation and Unit Responsibility. Formations and Units must routinely inform SP of their responsibilities to update the CoC of a dependent's supportability and additional needs requirement. This is to be completed biannually as part of [General](#)

²⁶ It replaces AGAI 108 (Career Management and Supportability Checking for Army SP with Family Dependants who have Additional Needs and/or Disabilities) which has been rescinded.

[Routine Orders, or equivalent orders](#). The CoC are responsible for providing appropriate career management for SP who have registered an additional need, disability or SEND issue and take full account of Service and individual needs for supportability prior to advising on an assignment location, especially if the assignment is outside the UK.

81.256. Career Management. SP who have family with additional needs or disabilities are to be considered for promotion, career courses and advancement in competition with their peers without reference to their family's specific circumstances. SP should be briefed by their CoC and APC CM that any self-imposed restriction for attendance on career courses or opportunities to gain further relevant training or experience may adversely affect future employability and career prospects. The assignment process on the [MS Web](#) should be used to determine the correct assignment action for the SP and family.

81.257. Posting Preference Proforma (APP). In addition to completing a CMNP (Annex L), SP are to use the comments box on their APP to declare any supportability or SEND needs that may have a bearing on their future assignment. Failure to insert this information on the APP may lead to a refusal of an assignment outside the UK, or an early repatriation of the SP and their family from an assignment outside the UK²⁷.

81.258. Annual Appraisal Reports. Reporting Officers are responsible for ensuring that at the appraisal report interview, SP are advised of their options for future employment and training. Reporting Officers (RO) should not comment on family circumstances that could impact on SP career development.

Support in the UK

81.259. In the UK, all SP and their dependants, who are UK citizens, or are eligible through their immigration status, are entitled to access the same services and facilities as any other UK citizen; this includes medical, educational, social services, or facilities provided by the responsible LA and Clinical Commissioning Group ([CCG](#)). The Army does not replicate these services, but the MOD accepts that where differences occur because of service in the AF, appropriate assistance may be provided where possible. Additional information is available in the Army's quarterly publication of [Welfare Matters](#), the [MOD AF Covenant Microsite](#), the [Army Families Federation](#) and [Defence Connect Guidance | The British Army \(mod.uk\)](#). The [Army HIVEs](#) website also contains links to Army HIVE blogs (which provide information) as well as contact details for all HIVE locations (UK and overseas).

Support Overseas

81.260. Dependants must undergo an assessment of supportability for all assignments outside the UK in accordance with [JSP 770 Ch 2A](#).

81.261. Support Outside the UK. Commands outside the UK are to implement the spirit of UK legislation, wherever it is possible to do so, noting that, it may not always be possible to replicate the level of support normally available in the UK. Therefore, an individual may be refused an accompanied assignment if the supportability needs of the dependants cannot be met.

²⁷ Unit to take "Removal from Appointment" action under AGAI 67.

81.262. Supportability Information. When considering an assignment outside the UK SP/ family should check the in-country guides for supportability information in the location they are interested in. This is critical as the MOD cannot support every additional need in all locations. The in-country guides should be available from their receiving unit or Command HQ, plus additional in country information can be found on the [iHIVE Blog](#) and the [Rest of the World - AFF](#) useful guides for families on Overseas Postings, including living in remote locations and non-routine postings. This supporting information may help the SP and their family to better understand whether their supportability needs can be met in that location, but it does not replace the requirement for the SP and dependants to complete the necessary overseas assessment set out in [JSP 770 Ch 2A](#).

81.263. APC Overseas Assignment Checklist. SP are to complete this checklist when considering an overseas assignment to identify what support services are in place in country. This checklist is held on the [MS Web](#) as well as [Defence Connect Guidance | The British Army \(mod.uk\)](#)

81.264. Assignment Notification outside the UK. Subject to the overriding needs of the Army, APC assignments boards will take account of any additional supportability needs reported to them via the CMNP ([Annex L](#)), when deciding whether to assign the SP overseas. APC CM where possible, will give as much advance notification of an overseas assignment in order to allow the mandatory Assessment of Need (in accordance with [JSP 770 Ch 2A](#)).

81.265. Assessment of Supportability. SP are fully responsible for their dependants and must be made aware that whilst the MOD will try to provide the necessary support for their dependants' health, education, and welfare needs, this may not be possible in every location overseas. SP and dependants must complete the following:

- a. **Self-Declaration of Supportability Need²⁸.** On selection for an overseas assignment and on receipt of an assignment order from APC, the SP and their dependants are to complete [Annex A to JSP 770](#). This will initiate a full supportability assessment to confirm whether or not the dependants can proceed on an accompanied assignment. Families should not proceed to travel before a decision has been made. The decision must support the Service need whilst striving to support SP and family aspirations. Each case is judged on its individual merits but where essential support is not available, and cannot practicably be made available, then the family will not be authorised to accompany the SP. Subject to any appeal process and final decision APC CM will decide as to whether the assignment is cancelled, or the SP is able to undertake the assignment overseas unaccompanied.
- b. **Family Travel F/Mov 564e Application.** Available via the [Global Removals and Family Services webpage](#). This must be completed not less than **8 weeks** prior to departure date regardless of the method of travel. It contains the forms necessary to arrange family travel to the overseas destination and includes essential information about family visa and status stamp requirements. Once Movement Support Services (MSS) receive a completed F/Mov 564e the Families Section will automatically

²⁸ JSP 770_Chapter 2A_Annex A.

dispatch the Family Pack containing travel, medical screening, and education guidance.

- c. **Family Pack.** Once Movement Support Services (MSS) receive a completed F/Mov 564e.

For further information is available from the Families section [here](#).

81.266. Unit Arrival outside UK. If a family arrives in a new location outside the UK without having completed the 'Assessment of Supportability' including completing the self-declaration, a retrospective assessment must be conducted in accordance with [JSP 770 Ch 2A](#) and [Annex A](#), and APC CM warned of the potential for reassignment if the needs cannot be met. If an SP fails to declare a known supportability, or additional need that cannot subsequently be met, the SP may be held liable to meet the repatriation costs for their family back to UK.

81.267. Emerging or New Supportability Need During Assignment. An 'Assessment of Supportability' in accordance with [JSP 770 Ch 2A](#) must be completed where an SP or dependant has been identified with an emerging or new supportability need and where a SP marries and the new spouse/additional dependants have a supportability need. If an SP and dependants must return early from an overseas assignment because of an emerging additional supportability need that cannot be supported, APC CM will identify an appropriate alternative assignment. Where SP are awaiting a dependant's formal assessment of an additional need or disability, the SP should notify their APC CM through their CoC so the circumstances can be considered in any future career managed move, or extension in post.

Appeals Process

81.268. Army Supportability Appeals Process. Army Overseas' Assignment Suitability and Supportability Appeals Process Map is hosted on the [MS Web](#).

81.269. Medical Screening Appeals Process. Tri-Service policy [JSP 770 Ch 2A](#) sets the appeals process for those that wish to challenge a non-supportability decision. The process has three steps:

- a. **Step 1.** Where a SP wants to appeal a notification of a non-supportability decision for a dependant, they are to submit this in writing within 10 working days of receipt of that notification.
- b. **Step 2.** On receipt of the appeal, an appeal review will be undertaken and completed within 40 working days by the Consultant Adviser in General Practice and AH Professional Standards and Regulation (Army HQ) as the appeal body for the Army. APC CM Ops Occ Health Team will provide the conduit between APC and the appeal body in accordance with the process set out in the Army Overseas' Assignment Suitability and Supportability Appeals Process Map hosted on [MS Web](#).
- c. **Step 3.** Where the appeal review at step 2 upholds the non-supportability decision previously made, the SP can request step 3 in the appeal's process. This is a multi-disciplinary 3rd party review conducted by the Overseas Comd (OS Comd)

concerned, which is to be completed within 10 working days once initiated. This will enable the OS Comd to balance the risk appetite, medical supportability, and the overall business requirement to fulfil the role with that individual. It will also allow articulation of the risk and record keeping of the acceptance via formal RoDs. This process can be undertaken simultaneously to step 2. The requirement for an OS Comd review can most likely be pre-empted through early conversations with DGP and Consultant Advisor in General Practice as the review body.

Wider Supportability Policies

81.270. Supporting Children's Education Overseas. The policy and guidance for the education of Service children is contained in [JSP 342 \(Education of Service Children and Young People\)](#). As in the UK, parents overseas are responsible for the education of their children and are strongly advised to research education provision overseas in their prospective assignment/transfer location. Information on education overseas is accessed at the DCS's pages on the [gov.uk website](#) and personnel are strongly advised to contact DCS for advice and guidance on their child's education as early as possible in the assignment/transfer process. Parents are also advised to contact the head teacher of the relevant MOD school in the prospective location.

81.271 The MOD Assessment of Supportability Overseas (MASO) process includes a DCS assessment of educational supportability which applies to all Defence children. This process is to be followed for all assignments/transfers and in any circumstance where there is a change to a child's education or educational needs (for example, where parents choose to electively home educate or where a specific and or additional need emerges whilst a child is overseas). Parents need to be aware that schools overseas may not always be able to meet the needs of children with SEND or additional needs. It is therefore crucial that parents who have children with SEND/ additional needs seek advice from DCS at the earliest opportunity.

81.272 SP who are being assigned/transferring to overseas locations are to complete the DCS First Contact form included in the Families Section 'Travel Pack' or provided on request from DCS. Completion of this form enables early contact with DCS and begins the process of educational supportability assessment. MOD civilians transferring overseas are also directed to Civilian HR Policy for Overseas Transfers, which details policy specific to their terms and conditions of Service. DCS provides the following services to Defence families:

a. **MOD Schools.** In overseas locations where the number and age profile of children justify it, and where there is no equivalent/appropriate local provision, the MOD will provide dedicated schools. The role of MOD schools is to provide an educational service to meet the needs of Defence children outside the UK which, as far as possible, conforms in type, scope, and standard to that required by statute in England. Information and points of contact for individual schools is accessed on the [MOD Schools page of GOV.UK](#).

b. **The Overseas Education and Supportability Team.** This team has, or has access to, a wide range of educational expertise to provide information, advice and support related to the education of Defence children. This information, advice and support is available to Service families, entitled MOD Civilians, the MOD CofC at all

levels, schools, and local authorities. The team can be reached by emailing: RC-DCS-HQ-OEST@mod.gov.uk.

c. **Educational Psychology and Advisory Specialists (EPAS).** EPAS are a multi professional team made up of Educational Psychologists, Specialist Advisory Teachers (SEND and Transitions), Speech Therapists, a Nurse Advisor (Public Health) and business support. As experienced senior practitioners with specialist qualifications in professional areas, the EPAS team seeks to apply specialist knowledge to support children and young people, schools, and families overseas, particularly in areas where there are MOD schools but also in the wider Service population. The EPAS team is contacted by emailing: [DCYP-EPAS-GPMailbox \(MULTIUSER\)](mailto:DCYP-EPAS-GPMailbox(MULTIUSER)@mod.gov.uk)

81.273. Accommodation Adaptation. The policy for SP with dependants who have additional needs or disabilities that require accommodation adaptation is set out in Annex C (DIO Adaptation Process Guide) to [JSP 464 \(Tri-Service Accommodation Regulations\)](#). Adaptation to living accommodation can take a considerable time to agree and complete. Therefore, SP are to inform housing authorities of any requirement for adaptation as soon as possible. To determine the provision of suitably adapted accommodation the MOD will assess and consider each case on its merits

81.274. Unit Welfare Staff. Unit welfare staff are to ensure that once a supportability requirement has been identified, the SP and their family are aware that the assessment of needs process is complex and may take longer than expected to ensure that an individual's unique circumstances are fully considered. Unit welfare staff are to ensure that SP and their family remain engaged and are made aware of the support available to them.

81.275. Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) SP. The support of SP with SpLD can be found in [JSP 898 \(Defence Direction and Guidance on Training, Education and Skills\)](#). Essentially SpLD is a term that is used to describe a range of learning difficulties that are inherent to an individual and which have the potential, to varying degrees, to affect an individual's ability to function effectively within the workplace. A diagnosed SpLD can hinder learning and progress but can be mitigated through appropriate coping mechanisms and other learning support strategies.

81.276 Isolated Detachments (ISODETS) and Extra Command Areas (ECA). SP and family with dependent children who have been offered an assignment to an ISODET or ECA have difficult decisions to make regarding the continuing education of their children especially if they have SEND. Given the diverse locations to which some SP are assigned, SCE provision is not always available, and the nature of educational provision will vary enormously. SP should consult the Overseas location guides and engage with the ISODET or ECA administrative support teams to understand the education options available to make an informed decision on whether to utilise schooling in the UK via Continuity of Education Allowance or the school provision in the location.

81.277. Medical Equipment. In the UK, special medical equipment for Service dependants should be supplied by the Local Health Authorities. Overseas it is the responsibility of the Service medical authorities to ensure the provision of mobility and other aids to SP and their dependants with additional needs and disabilities. Authority for the purchase of mobility or other aids, when supported by the clinician concerned, will

normally be granted where it can be confirmed that the NHS or LA would have provided them if the person concerned was in the UK.

81.278. Contracted Community Health and Social Services. The MOD provides a contracted Community Health and Social Work Service to families serving overseas. This service is made up of health visitors, community midwives and social workers²⁹ all of whom are professionally qualified. Social Workers provide serving and entitled personnel and their families with a professional, comprehensive, and confidential service relating to children and families, including children in need, children with disabilities and adoption and fostering matters.

81.279. UK Strategic Command (UKStratCom). UKStratCom currently holds responsibility for 3 areas in which a bespoke Social Work Service operates: Cyprus, Gibraltar, and the British Forces South Atlantic Islands (BFSAI) - Incorporating Ascension Island and The Falkland Islands:

- a. **Cyprus.** Within the Sovereign Base Areas (SBAs), SSAFA provides the LA Social Work Service and has statutory obligations and authority where Additional Needs supportability is concerned. SSAFA Social Work operates in partnership with other Command HQs; public organisations; the voluntary sector; members of the Services and their families; and the wider MoD community in Cyprus.
- b. **Gibraltar.** The Joint Social Work Service (JSWS) provides a quasi-statutory and non-statutory social work service in Gibraltar. The constituent social work organisations, SSAFA and RNRMW share the lead on providing specialist personal welfare and support. JSWS operates in partnership with the Command HQ, wider community, and government agencies within.
- c. **BFSAI.** SSAFA provides the LA Social Work Service through a designated social worker, located in the Falkland Islands. However, the Falkland Islands Government has statutory obligations and authority in respect of supporting welfare and Additional Needs. SSAFA Social Work operates in partnership with the wider community, local social work teams and Falkland Island governments across BFSAI.

81.280. – 81.300. Reserved.

²⁹ Provision may vary between locations due to contracting arrangements.

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PART 9 – CASUALTY AND COMPASSIONATE

Introduction

81.301. The Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC) is the single focal point within the MOD for all Casualty and Compassionate cases affecting SP worldwide. Specifically, JCCC is responsible for ensuring that the families of all notifiable casualties are informed as quickly and as sensitively as possible; tasking the appropriate sS Notifying Authority (NA); monitoring any changes in the status of notifiable casualties; and, for all post-death administration. The policy for the management of casualties and the support provided to bereaved families, through the Casualty Notification Officer (CNO) and the Visiting Officer (VO), is laid down in [JSP 751 \(Joint Casualty and Compassionate Policy and Procedures\)](#).

Duty of Care

81.302. The Army has a duty of care to support bereaved families, to assist them in moving on and adjusting to their loss, and to ensure they have a channel of communication for any issues they wish to raise. This support extends beyond the immediate Next of Kin (NOK) to the wider family, and is determined, on a case-by-case basis, by family relationships, notably estranged parents, partners, and girl/boyfriends. It is grounded in the regimental system, but co-ordinated in the first instance through the RPOC structure and overseen by the Bereavement and Aftercare Support (BAS) Team in the Army Personnel Services Group (APSG). JCCC is a critical element in the notification and administration of casualties, but the lead for all aspects of welfare, in respect of families, remains the responsibility of the Army. A new [JCCC Virtual Contact Card](#) (vCard file, 198KB) can be downloaded onto smart phones and can be shared with your family and friends.

Responsibilities

81.303. RPoC Responsibilities. Routine management and appointment of CNOs and VOs is delegated to the RPoCs by BAS (see para 81.304), which deals directly with JCCC, and liaises closely with the other designated NAs in the UK and overseas. RPoCs are responsible for ensuring that there are adequate numbers of suitable and trained personnel available at short notice at any time of the day or night in their AORs to carry out notification and to be appointed as VOs, to support families of SP who have died, are missing or Very Seriously Ill (VSI). Where there is a known shortage of regular units in an RPoC AOR, BAS will co-ordinate the appointment of CNOs and VOs with other RPoCs and if necessary, with other Services. The following practices supplement the guidance and policy contained in [JSP 751](#).

- a. RPoCs must ensure they have set in place robust direction and guidance for their silent hours duty staff.
- b. The appointment of a VO to the family of a VSI SP is not mandated and must be decided on a case-by-case basis, often determined by the respective locations of the Emergency Contact (EC)/ NoK and the casualty. In many cases family support can be better organised by unit welfare resources, without tasking a trained VO

through the NA. RPoCs must monitor all VSI cases, coordinating with BAS and the SP's unit.

c. DILFOR (UK) is a unit responsibility to administer, requesting funding authority from JCCC, unless it is an aero-medevac direct to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH) in Birmingham, where authority for the travel of families has been delegated to Royal College of Defence Medicine (Patient Support Services). As a rule, VOs should be appointed for VSI cases, and CNO-trained Escorting Officers (EO) for all other notifiable casualties. DILFOR (Overseas) will always be managed by JCCC in conjunction with the unit. [JSP 751, Vol 1, Chapter 6](#) contains the detail.

d. Where the civilian police notify the EC/NoK in cases of death, it is imperative that a military representative visits the family as soon as possible afterwards, to prevent the family feeling abandoned or neglected. As CNOs are on a roster at one-hour NTM, it will often be easier to deploy a CNO, as a VO might not be immediately available. **RPoCs must be alert to this issue.**

81.304. Bereavement and Aftercare Support (BAS). email: APSG-PersSvcs-BAS-Group@mod.gov.uk. BAS is responsible for the three key functions: Notification, Aftercare and Training. Its specific functions and tasks are as follows:

- a. Act as the primary Army NA for the UK, ROI, Nepal, and Brunei.
- b. Direct, oversee and co-ordinate with the RPoCs the appointment and deployment of all CNOs and VOs.
- c. Organise and deliver the training of CNOs and VOs as required.
- d. Ensure that the RPoCs maintain rosters of adequate numbers of trained CNOs and VOs.
- e. Monitor and support, as necessary, CNOs and VOs relating to Army SP in other NAs including RN, RAF, DSF, BFC, JFC, EJSU, High Commissions and Embassies.
- f. Ensure that the Army Duty Officer (ADO) is supported by BAS staff during silent hours.
- g. Provide an enduring focus for all bereaved families, working with the RPoCs and VOs as necessary, leading as required in high profile and/or sensitive cases.
- h. Co-ordinate and control the passage of information to families for all inquiries and investigations, working with Defence Inquest Unit (DIU), DSA, SI Branch and PM(A). Facilitate the attendance of families at inquests, liaising with the DIU.
- i. Provide advice to NAs, VOs and units when required.
- j. Co-ordinate the stand-down of VOs.

Reporting, Notification, and KINFORMING

81.305. Casualty Reporting. Regardless of how JCCC is initially informed of a notifiable casualty (eg by police, hospital, NoK, overseas G1/J1 Branch, BATUS, BATUK, AT or the unit), it is the SP's current unit which is responsible for completing the NOTICAS and sending it to JCCC in accordance with [JSP 751 Vols 1 and 2, Ch 2](#). If possible, this should be preceded by a warning order phone call, but units must realise that INCREPS do not replace the need for a NOTICAS, and JCCC will not initiate the notification process without a hard copy. Having been informed of a notifiable casualty, JCCC will direct the appropriate NA to stand up a CNO, and VO if necessary. Units are also responsible for sending updates and progress reports for all listed casualties.

81.306. Notification and KINFORMING. JCCC co-ordinate notification, and once appointed, the CNO must ring JCCC for an update on the situation, and then again before they knock on the door. For dead, missing, VSI and Seriously Injured (SI) casualties, the CNO is to be accompanied by an assistant (ACNO), and as a default setting smart civilian clothes should be worn, so as not to draw undue attention to the situation. Notification is to be carried out on a 24/7 basis, with a target time of three hours, noting that each case will be dependent on individual circumstances. Notification should only be delayed if the EC or NoK cannot be located. In cases where it is necessary to deploy several CNOs, either resulting from family dynamics (eg for split families or estranged parents), or where more than one family is involved in an incident, the NA is responsible for co-ordinating their deployment in conjunction with JCCC and the RPOCs.

81.307. Unit Notification. Units will have to undertake notification themselves when the incident occurs in barracks or locally, and the EC/NoK lives in SFA or nearby. When this happens JCCC should be informed immediately, with the NOTICAS annotated as KINFORMED. JCCC will then inform the NA, and the RPOC will nominate a VO if the unit has not already done so. In cases of death, it is better if notification can be undertaken by a different unit than the deceased's, as this causes less emotional trauma.

Personnel and Family Briefs

81.308. JCCC have developed two DVDs which cover:

- a. **SP Brief.** Designed to give SP confidence that there is a dedicated organisation responsible for the immediate management of casualties and compassionate cases 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. It includes unit responsibilities in passing information to JCCC regarding notifiable casualties and compassionate cases.
- b. **Families Brief.** Designed to explain to families the role undertaken by JCCC, when incidents occur involving SP or their families.

UWOs should hold a copy of these DVDs, they can also be obtained from: DBS-JCCC-OIC@mod.gov.uk or 01452 519951 or dbs-jcccgrouppmailbox@mod.gov.uk and postal address: JCCC, Innsworth House, Imjin Barracks, Gloucester, GL3 1HW.

Selection, Appointment and Training of CNO, ACNO, EO and VO

81.309. SP involved in the Cas & Comp process should be:

- a. Suitably qualified through age and experience, both of life and the Army. A mature, patient, and sympathetic listener who has been assessed as suitable by their CoC, with no immediate personal or emotional problems.
- b. The CNO should not be the UWO, RAO, Padre, or a personal acquaintance of the casualty.
- c. Be within not more than 90 minutes' drive of the EC/NoK.
- d. On rosters at one-hour Notice to Move (NTM).

81.310. CNO. CNOs should be able to carry out notification as quickly, accurately, and compassionately as possible, within a maximum of three hours of being stood up. RPoCS should ensure that CNOs have a vehicle allocated, which is easily accessible for immediate use. The length of the notification visit cannot be determined but is likely to be between 30 and 90 minutes. Selection criteria for CNOs are:

- a. Mandatory attendance on the one-day CNO training course.
- c. Should normally be a Major, Captain or Warrant Officer. Younger and more junior ranks may struggle and are probably better suited to being an ACNO. SNCOs (SSgts or Sgts) may be suitable, but careful selection is essential.

81.311. ACNO. The CNO must be accompanied by an Assistant. CNOs must personally identify suitable ACNOs to avoid delay in deploying. ACNOs can remain with the EC/NoK after notification if necessary, take notes and generally assist in supporting both the CNO and the family. Selection criteria for the ACNO are:

- a. Must have completed the one-day CNO course.
- b. Experience has indicated that diversity in the team is sought so that both the CNO and ACNO complement each other.
- c. Minimum rank should be full Corporal, providing the individual has the necessary maturity, sensitivity, and awareness.
- d. Civil Servants may act as ACNOs providing they are volunteers, have completed the one-day CNO course and have their LM's approval. They should only be appointed during their normal working hours.

81.312. EO. The term EO is used only for accompanying families of SI, III and UL (Unlisted) Aeromed casualties to QEH, or any other hospital to which they may be taken. Supporting families of casualties admitted to other hospitals in the UK is normally the responsibility of the soldier's unit. EOs must have completed the 1-day CNO training.

81.313. VO. Selection of the VO is critical to the Army's duty of care, they do not have to be of the same cap badge, despite some strongly held tribal beliefs. The criteria below are more important and must be adhered to:

- a. Must have completed the 3-day VO training package.
- b. Should normally be a Major, Captain, WO, or SSgt. Some Sgt and Young Officers will be suitable, if specially selected, although experience shows that most are not.
- c. The VO must be fully briefed on the personal details and circumstances of the Service casualty by the RPOC casualty staff, as well as getting an update from JCCC before the first visit. The CNO must also brief the VO on the family's circumstances and any questions they might have. Ideally this should be a face-to-face meeting, but depending on geography, might have to be by telephone.
- d. It is not possible provide definitive policy on whether it is appropriate for the CNO to introduce the VO to the EC/NoK because personal experiences and opinions differ. There can therefore be no black and white guidance as every family is different, and every case must be judged on its own merits. The decision must lie with the CNO, who is able to assess whether their association with the VO is likely to have an adverse effect on the VO's relationship with the family.
- e. The VO's proximity to the EC/NoK is a more important consideration than being from the same cap badge as the casualty. It is also better if the VO is not a close family friend, as their own grief is likely to impede their effectiveness.
- f. Have at least six months to serve until the next posting.
- g. VOs should not be tasked to look after two separate families at the same time unless both are related to the deceased and get on together.
- h. Once a VO has officially ended formal contact with a bereaved family, there should be at least nine months separation before another VO assignment.

81.314. Training. It is mandatory that CNOs and VOs complete the respective training before being appointed, to be professional in carrying out the duty.

- a. **CNO Training.** This is a one-day course conducted at regional level by the RPoC or BAS. The following structure has been developed by BAS to achieve consistency:
 - (1) **Introduction.** What the course is all about, to include: content, aims and objectives, target audience.
 - (2) **Understanding the Process.** Notification: Who, What, When and How, followed by the role and responsibilities of the key players. This includes JCCC, NA, Bde, Army Inquiries and Aftercare Support Cell (AIASC) and Pers Ops.
 - (3) **The Notification Visit.** Actions before, during and after. This includes

preparation, getting in the door, breaking the news, gathering information, reactions, media, and reporting.

(4) **DILFOR and Accompanying Families to QEHB.** This covers the procedures and organisation of supporting the patient group at RCDM and is specifically related to Aeromedevac.

(5) **Soft Skills.** Loss and bereavement, family reactions and relationships, looking after yourself. This is a very much shortened version of the VO course below and is expanded for overseas detachments and training establishments.

b. **VO Training.** This is a 3-day course run monthly by BAS at the AF Chaplaincy Centre, with additional courses run by request in Cyprus, Scotland, NI, and other isolated Garrisons. The VO training package is designed to provide potential VOs with a comprehensive overview and understanding of the key issues, which will confront them, when dealing with bereaved families. It is not designed to turn them into bereavement counsellors, nor does it attempt to cover the detail of all the various problems which the families might have, but it does show where the answers can be found. It covers casualty administration, VO duties and responsibilities, the difficulties they will face, the Inquiry and investigation process, financial issues, and an overview of the characteristics of grief and bereavement. Completion of the CNO course is a mandatory requirement prior to attendance. The VO course consists of:

(1) **Introduction.** What the course is all about, and includes content, aims and objectives.

(2) **Understanding the Process.** Notification and Reporting – Who, What, When and How, followed by the role and responsibilities of the key players. This includes JCCC, NA, BAS and the RPoCs.

(3) **Role and Responsibilities of the VO.** First visits, family dynamics, passage of information, media, VWS, Veterans UK, Padres and AWS.

(4) **Role Play.** With professional actors.

(5) **Practical Matters.** Repatriations, funerals, return of personal effects, Coroners & Inquests, accompanying families to RCDM.

(6) **Soft Skills.** Voice of experience, the first meeting and listening skills, loss and bereavement, the grieving family, coping with stress and looking after yourself.

c. **Qualifications and Competencies.** Qualification is lified for three years. Competencies are entered on to JPA centrally by BAS or the relevant RPoC. After three years, individuals should re-qualify as a CNO by attending another course, whilst for VOs there is a day's refresher course which will be run regionally by the BAS team, together with the RPoC. The only exception being if individuals have carried out the appointment within the past two years prior to the competence end date.

Management of the CNO and VO

81.315. CNO and VO Numbers and Availability. RPOCs are responsible for ensuring there are sufficient numbers of trained CNOs and VOs in Brigade and Garrison areas, in accordance with the quotas recommended in the [Compendium of Mandated Course Trained Personnel within an Army Unit](#). Brigades and Garrisons are expected to be able to deploy a CNO and ACNO within one hour of being informed, to achieve KINFORMING within three hours of being warned off by JCCC. The target time for the deployment of a VO should be between six and ten hours after notification, although the CNO should be consulted over the family's wishes, as to when the VO should make their first visit. This is considerably shorter than the 24 hours given in [JSP 751](#), which should be treated as an absolute maximum in exceptional circumstances.

81.316. Corps and Regimental HQs. Responsibility for the welfare of Army casualties and bereaved families is predicated on the 'Regimental System' as a matter of policy. However, geographic constraints often prevent an officer of the same cap badge being appointed as the VO, and consequently the responsibility for their provision has been centralised through the regional CoC and JCCC. It is, therefore, incumbent on VOs of a different cap badge to the deceased, to liaise with Regiments/Battalions/Corps, or their rear parties/RoGs, over repatriations and funerals, and to co-ordinate any contact and communication from them to the family. In such circumstances the unit or the rear party/RoG should nominate a Liaison Officer, which in most cases will be the UWO. The following points are relevant to the appointment of VOs:

- a. If Regiments/Corps/RHQs wish to provide their own cap badged officers as the VO, they should let the relevant RPOC know, and ensure that the individual is trained and within not more than a 90-minute drive.
- b. Regimental/Corps Association members are not suitable as CNOs or VOs, but may be used as assistants to VOs, providing they have completed the one-day CNO course at minimum, and are in close contact with the VO.
- c. There are likely to be several occasions where public funds cannot be used in support of bereaved families, and Association funds must be used; such as transport for family to funerals, incidental expenses including alcohol, when accommodation is booked under DILFOR, and Travel and Subsistence for cathartic events. In such circumstances the VO must liaise with the deceased's unit.

81.317. Tenure of the VO. Even though there is no specified tenure for the appointment of a VO, it is Army policy that the target is six to nine months, and VOs should use their monthly reports to assess progress on how the family is adjusting, and what support they need. Every bereaved family has different needs, and adjusts to their new circumstances in different ways, but there is always a danger that some become over-dependent on the support which the VO provides, thereby hindering their ability to move on. The decision, therefore, to stand the VO down must be judged against family dynamics and the complexities and sensitivities of the case, not slavishly waiting until the conclusion of the inquest. BAS will co-ordinate the withdrawal of the VO with the RPOC, confirming the decision in writing to the family and the appropriate Corps or Regimental HQ. If the VO has stood down before the inquest, BAS will arrange for a unit representative to attend.

81.318. Supporting the VO. VOs are inevitably subjected to pressures and stress from the family they are supporting, their own family and their regular job. They therefore need support themselves, and it is the CO's responsibility to ensure that their commitment is properly recognised, and that they receive both emotional and practical assistance. In the first 6 to 8 weeks, a VO cannot be expected to perform all the functions of their regular job, as well as support a bereaved family. As time goes on, they will be able to disengage more and more:

- a. COs must satisfy themselves that a VO has delegated as many of their responsibilities as practical to subordinates.
- b. COs must ensure that the demands on a VO are made clear in OJARs and SJARs, so that their careers do not suffer.
- c. The CoC must ensure that a VO provides updates on their work with the family, so that the emotional burden can be shared, and assistance provided where necessary.
- d. The AWS and/or Padre should be asked to get involved if the stresses become too apparent.
- e. NAs should ensure that RPOCs run formal debrief/decompression workshops, where CNOs and VOs can exchange experiences in a relaxed environment.

81.319. Unit Support to Bereaved Families. It is important that VOs work with unit welfare staffs in supporting bereaved families, but in the immediate aftermath of a fatality or serious injury, when a VO has been appointed, all contact with the family, particularly from the SP's parent unit, **must** go through the VO. This will ensure that the family is not overwhelmed by a myriad of well-motivated individuals, all with their own agenda.

81.320. - 81.340. Reserved.

PART 10 – TRANSITIONAL WELFARE SUPPORT

Welfare Support to those Leaving the Army

81.341. [JSP 100 \(Defence Holistic Transition Policy\)](#) is the source policy document for welfare support to those leaving the Army, including Early Service Leavers, those identified as vulnerable and those medically discharged with severe physical or mental disablement.

81.342. SP being discharged prematurely from the Army often leave at extremely short notice without having had the opportunity to plan their transition to civilian life. This is especially true for those being compulsorily discharged and those being demobilised post operations. Consequently, both the individuals being discharged, and their families could be more vulnerable to a range of social and welfare difficulties which, if left unattended, could lead to: homelessness or hostel living; indebtedness; relationship difficulties; drink/drug dependencies; unemployment or job transience; crime; or gambling addiction.

81.343. The Army has a duty to these SP, and it must ensure that all Vulnerable (VSL)³⁰ and Early Service Leavers (ESL) are identified prior to discharge/demobilisation and made aware of support available to them. COs are to ensure that all VSL and ESL have a one-to-one transition interview prior to their discharge, to explore/identify potential vulnerability and enable details to be passed to VWS with the completion of the Defence Transition Referral Protocol (DTRP) for post discharge support. The interview is to be conducted by the UWO or UWWO, using HARDFACTS as a template³¹.

81.344. The Army makes specific provisions for welfare support to those SP who are medically discharged with severe physical/mental disablement. The aim of this work is:

- a. To identify, register and contact those SP deemed to be most vulnerable due to their severe disablement and imminent medical discharge.
- b. To clarify any welfare support needs they may have and then, in conjunction with VWS, [Veterans UK](#), take forward a plan for the provision of the identified welfare support over the discharge period and beyond.
- c. For the VWS to maintain contact with the medically discharged veteran for at least 24 months beyond the discharge date, and further if required.

81.345. **VWS and Veterans UK.** The VWS, [Veterans UK](#) purpose is to enhance the quality of life for veterans and their dependants. VWS works in collaborative partnerships with the Services, charities, statutory and non-statutory bodies, local community service providers and Veterans Advisory & Pensions Committees (VA&PC) to deliver a welfare service that promotes independence, within a veterans' community, but provides continuous support through life. It also provides support to enable the seamless transition from Service to civilian life for the more challenged groups. It achieves this by adopting a single central coordinating role that facilitates access to all appropriate services involved in

³⁰ It is essential that Units are aware that any individual on the VRM register at time of discharge is classed as a Vulnerable Service Leaver (VSL) and the necessary DTRP that apply to ESLs and SILs are followed.

³¹ Using the HARDFACTS template as explained in [AGAI 99](#) Command and Care of Wounded Injured and Sick personnel.

transition. The VWS have an agreement between the three Services to support those identified through the DTRP Protocol to the VWS:

- a. **DTRP.** This protocol aims to ensure the early identification and ongoing support for those Service leavers identified as being likely to be discharged / about to transition from military service, who may have severe physical or psychological disablement or are considered as having an enduring welfare need with which they will require support post Service (see [Veterans Welfare Service Protocols](#)).
- b. **Routine Medical Discharges.** With other medical discharges VWS initiate contact when JPAC notify of the discharge, maintain contact as required by the client and are then proactive, yearly on the anniversary of the discharge. The VWS provides a national caseworker approach that offers help and guidance in a professional manner through either telephone contact or a dedicated visiting service.

81.346. In addition to the provision for those SP leaving the service prematurely, all Army Service leavers must receive be signposted to the Transition Information Sheets [here](#).

Aftercare Support

81.347. Aftercare is the provision of support to the ex-Service community of veterans and their families. It is principally delivered by the statutory support VWS, Veterans UK, Defence Business Services (DBS), part of MOD and supported by Regimental and Corps Associations, the ABF and charities that serve both the serving and the ex-Service community. It includes the process by which vulnerable Service leavers and their families are identified, and with their agreement, ensures details are provided principally to the VWS or appropriate ex-Service charities in order that seamless support can be provided. Requests for non-public financial assistance can also be provided and these are normally channelled through the appropriate Regimental or Corps Association. In delivering support Regimental or Corps Associations can draw on wide ranging sources of advice and resources. As VWS, Veterans UK is the statutory body for veterans support it is encouraged that they are involved at an early stage to assist those identified as vulnerable.

81.348 - 81.400. Reserved.