

Supporting Employer and Employee Engagement in the Reserves Service

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Key findings and recommendations

- In general, employers expressed a positive view of Reserve employees in terms of:
 - Skills, leadership, problem solving abilities, confidence, adaptability, reliability and discipline

“When I kind of consider where he is in terms of his colleagues who joined at the same time, I feel as if he’s kind of gone ahead quite quickly, and I would put a lot of that down to the attributes and the skills that he’s gained from his Reservist experience”

Employer Focus Group 111

Training

- Greater transparency needed around transferability of training to civilian context
- Minimise training schedule changes
 - Cancelling or rescheduling training events <2mo notice - negative repercussions for civilian employment and family

“You get asked to a lot of sort of ad hoc things where suddenly there’s some sort of exercise and they need 100 Reservists [...] We’re not the Regulars: you can’t just chuck it in our diary and expect us to cancel our leave. (Reserve Interview 351)

Employers

- Employer engagement should not just be at corporate level buy-in but cascaded down to line manager level
- Civilian employers ‘committed’ to Reserve Service versus reality for some Reserves
 - ‘Reservist-friendly’ employers specific policies to support Reserves versus standard policies for all staff
 - Discretionary/informal additional leave

Employers

- Line manager discretion
- Variations in terms of leave
(no/paid/unpaid/number of days additional leave)

“If they realised he was getting an extra two weeks’ paid leave year, it could cause a bit of resentment, but there is no need for them to know that. That’s an agreement between myself and {name}” Employer Interview 423

Employers

- Potential for resentment amongst line managers and colleagues
- Some Reservists were encouraged not to share army experiences with work colleagues in case other staff requested flexible working arrangements
- Many employers do not know how many Reserves they employ
 - No way of tracking reservists
 - Some Reserves are not confident around informing employer of their army role

Employers

- Mentoring and personal development plans would help Reservists to approach employers and family members to negotiate absence from work/home while maintaining trust and support

“I’d imagine, if you sat people down who are Reservists and have been to half a dozen interviews and they haven’t got the jobs, and asked the question: ‘Do you think you didn’t get it because you told them you were a Reservist?’ I’d imagine a percentage of them might think that’s the case” Employer focus group, 411