

30th Jul 07

CHIEF OF THE GENERAL STAFF'S BRIEFING TEAM REPORT 2007(1)

1. I have now received the full report for the first half of this year from my Briefing Team, which has been turned into what I believe to be a comprehensive and accurate portrayal of the views and concerns of the Army at large. Thank you for being really frank with the team. The information that you have provided lets me know what you think is really important and gives me a vivid and accurate picture of how things are. The full report is attached.
2. Of course I hear your views personally when I travel around the Army, so I do understand the great pressures that our current operations are putting on our people and our families. I know that we ask a great deal of you all, and reports like this are important to allow us to refocus our efforts and our money to make a real difference.
3. So let me be clear about what my priorities are:
 - a. Success on operations is the top and the bottom line, it is my main priority. I am reassured that the vast majority of opinion is happy about the continuing development of our operational equipment – the vehicles, weapons and equipment of units deploying today represent a quantum leap in capability from even a few years ago. I am keen that people continue to ask for what they think they need, not what they think we can afford – I will worry about arguing the case for the resources to deliver this.
 - b. ECAB's highest priority after operations is manning – covering all aspects of retention as well as recruiting. The Adjutant General is putting together a very comprehensive People Programme which will look to fund specific activities that will improve the quality of life for when we are not on operations.
 - c. My firm aim is to restore the balance of the Military Covenant – it is clearly out of kilter at the moment. I am determined that we shall continue to make improvements in our accommodation, our medical and welfare services and our pay. In return we must not only ensure that we deliver the highest standards of professionalism, but we must continue to robustly adhere to and defend our core values and standards wherever we are serving.
4. I know that there are a great many areas where the Chain of Command must still improve things – many of them small in nature or funding but important in terms of the impact they have on your lives. We are showing some signs of improvement in discrete areas, in particular I would like to highlight to you some measures that will help:
 - a. **Training Support:** We are looking at new and innovative methods of using contractors to relieve the increasing burden of training support on those deploying on operations. It is early days, but I expect positive results soon. I want to reduce the pressure on everyone between operational tours.

b. **Accommodation:** The recent Comprehensive Spending Review has allocated specific additional money for the estate and I fully expect the improvements to Army and families' accommodation to be brought forward. Not everything can be done at once, but I am determined that we accelerate our accommodation programmes.

c. **Inspections:** I have ordered a review of inspections, with a specific focus on the ECI and LSI. Although we cannot remove inspections completely I have directed that certain inspections will move to an advisory function and will be once in two years and synchronised with the FORM cycle.

d. **Medical:** There has been a great deal of media coverage of the medical aftercare and rehabilitation of our wounded soldiers in the UK. It is obvious that there were many issues that we were slow to resolve, but the medical treatment of our soldiers is genuinely first class and the measures that we have implemented to assist with the wider welfare of our wounded and their families mean that overall care is improving. Steps such as the setting up of high quality accommodation for families visiting wounded soldiers or the drive towards a full military ward at Selly Oak are moving us in the right direction – but I continue to monitor this closely.

5. Finally, I would ask that you continue to represent your views to me via my briefing team and through the use of ArmyNet. More importantly I would ask that you continue to trust in the chain of command to listen to your concerns to take action when it is possible. There is a strong current of admiration running throughout defence and the nation for your achievements, courage and selflessness in all that you are currently doing – I would ask that you continue to maintain the highest of standards in everything you do. Keep talking to my team – I am listening.



CGS

YOUR VIEWS

Positive Feedback	<p>CGS must continue to speak out in support of the soldier. UOR kit is excellent, although more is needed for training. OPTAG gets the 'thumbs up'. MATTS are much better. Good leadership in the field on ops – supported by OWP. Individuals look forward to operations, although some 'TELIC fatigue' was apparent. Operational bonus was well received and popular.</p>
Main Concerns	
Pace of Life	<p>Current level of operational commitments is unsustainable. Too many RAAT Tasks between operations. Training unrelated to current operations should be reduced. Problems with Career Courses – ROCC Military Knowledge. Harmony Guidelines are starting to become meaningless. Guards and duties – make more use of MPGS / GGS. Change – too many programmes at once (JPA, BOWMAN etc). Inspections – too frequent and of little benefit. Fun has gone – no time or money for AT, sport or overseas ex. Not enough time for leave – POTL and annual given up. Units expected to be on leave and on call at the same time.</p>
Lack of Resources	<p>Recent constraints on T&S, meetings etc should be overturned. Insufficient track mileage, training areas, para jumps, ammunition, time. Trawls for individual augmentees for ops are disjointed. Insufficient UOR kit and ammunition for pre-op training – need more now. Must have UOR weapons and vehicle to develop tactics before ops. Not enough DII(F) terminals for JPA, JAMES etc.</p>
Feeling Valued	<p>Poor accommodation – slowly getting better. Inadequate pay rise 3.3% but RPI 4.8%. Pay is now a key area. WOs' & Sgts' Mess feel undervalued – cost of mess dress, mess bills, poor accommodation and lack of family time. Lack of incentive for JNCOs to promote. More responsibility but no more money or status. Experienced staff leaving as they have 'had enough'. Poor service for R&R flights. Welfare support on ops not matched by in barracks support. Aftercare for wounded soldiers is vital.</p>
Change of Culture	<p>Effect of contractorisation and civilianisation of military posts. Loss of regimental identity – FIS, WFM, trawls and contractorisation. PAYD and Z Ensuite – more individualistic, less team focus. AWOL replaced by SAH. 'Going sick to get out'. Modular careers – few wish for a full career.</p>
Family Life	<p>MHS still poor, but with signs of recent improvement. Housing Information Centres (HIC) now becoming a concern. Lack of joined up government supporting med/dental care, schooling, childcare and little support from military community. Families are making big sacrifices to support the Army. MQ estates becoming less safe – fewer RMP and more shared housing. Little is being done to assist in buying a home – now a key area. Perception that the decent houses are being sold off by Annington Homes. Military gatekeepers less supportive of sending children into the Army.</p>

IMMEDIATE ACTION

Communications	<p>There is a blizzard of information – often too much. I am also aware that we rely upon the media too much to find out what is going on within our own organisation. I am working to improve our internal communications – ArmyNET has a key role to play here. Initiatives being pursued include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Army Board members to give regular briefings to the internal audience via ArmyNET. • Creation of a section on ArmyNET containing key information. • Provision of military personnel as SMEs for the media to interview. • Answer questions on ArmyNET. • Reinforced internal comms in LAND.
PAYD	<p>We must ensure that standards of PAYD are consistent, and meet the expectations of soldiers and the Army. A clearer explanation of what service personnel can expect from PAYD is required.</p>
UOR Equipment	<p>UOR kit is highly regarded, but it is in short supply before operations. The DECAs are processing the Business Cases but with over 1000 UORs and an average spend of £60M a month we just cannot do it any more quickly than we are. Naturally, operations get the first tranche of equipment and training the second. I am confident that we will continue to see further improvements in this area.</p>

MEDIUM/LONG-TERM ACTION

Quality of Life - Improved Living and Working Conditions	<p>Work-life balance is a growing concern. The high level of operational commitment, high activity levels between tours and a dearth of time available for personal interests and career development all contribute to a sense of being undervalued and overworked. Some measures to address these issues are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Posting orders should take POTL and relocation leave into account. • A reduction in time on guard through the increased use of MPGS and GGS. • A reduction in RAAT tasks by the greater use of FTRS and Private Military Companies to undertake the more routine and mundane tasks. • Consideration of a shift of emphasis in the inspection regime, by a focus on advisory visits rather than formal inspections.
Pay and Allowances	<p>AFPRB will examine the X-factor this year, and the Army will ask the AFPRB to address pay for the middle tier of leaders (LCpl to WO and Capt to Lt Col). Additionally I believe that there is more to be done to communicate the benefits of the whole Army package – pension, subsidised accommodation etc. We must also help individuals to take responsibility for their own financial affairs. This means more time must be invested in financial education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the inclusion of pension amounts on pay slips. • Make pay and allowances more transparent – guides to help claims. • Arrange for financial briefings for soldiers and families from SIIAP accredited IFAs on arrival at first unit and annually thereafter. • Continue to support the educational work of the Forces Pension Society. • Improve the take up of Standard Learning Credits.
Manning	<p>A number of initiatives have been developed to tackle the current undermanning in the Army, caused by the high tempo of operations. The situation will be addressed by increasing recruiting, encouraging rejoins and improving retention. Some additional measures are being staffed; these are tailored to target the cap badges and trades where undermanning is highest.</p>
House Purchase	<p>The Strategic Review of Remuneration is a project looking at the overall remuneration package for soldiers, sailors, and airmen – it will report in Dec 07. The Reviews findings still have to be confirmed, however, it is expected that a successor to LSAP, and one that better reflects the housing market, will be one of the first recommendations to be delivered. This should enable individuals to become property owners and support them in their choice of lifestyle and place of residence.</p>

30 Jul 07

CGS's BRIEFING TEAM (CBT) REPORT – 2007(1)

COMMITMENTS	Appendix 1
<p>Pace of Life. The Army has a higher level of operational commitments than planned, in excess of Defence Planning Assumptions. Consequently, people are busier than intended. Many believe that there will be no respite unless we concentrate upon fighting current wars and scale down all unrelated training.</p> <p>The reduction in commitments in Iraq, The Balkans and Northern Ireland were welcomed, but units remain overcommitted and not expect any respite in the near future.</p> <p>Between operations units considered there are too many inspections and RAAT tasks, too many change programmes and limited resources. It is these factors, and not operations, that adversely affect the moral component.</p> <p>The team was briefed by soldiers who work extremely hard. Many have been called in over leave and some even on Christmas Day. The tank of goodwill now runs on vapour; many experienced staff are talking of leaving.</p> <p>CGS. The long-term impact of operating above Defence Planning Assumptions (DPAs) is damaging and I understand that we are mortgaging the goodwill of our people in doing this. We must strive to give individuals and units ample recuperation time between operations, but I do not underestimate how difficult this will be to achieve whilst undermanned and with less robust establishments than I would like.</p> <p>The Adaptive Foundation provides the training required for our current and future success on operations - on this we cannot compromise.</p>	<p>LAND. There is no doubt that Double Medium Scale (DMS) operations are having an impact: For example, in the 12 months to Mar 07, the average TI (across all cap badges) was 22 months. In the previous 12 months (to Mar 06) it was circa 25 months. However, PORs from current operations consistently validate the policy of training for 'A' war (Adaptive Foundation) followed by training for 'The' war (PDT). For instance, Comd 16 Air Assault Bde stated in his POR post Op HERRICK 4 that "The Adaptive Foundation remains the back bone of our training and proved itself to be vital to success". In light of such endorsement LAND cannot support any move to concentrate training purely upon mission specific activity.</p> <p>Action has been taken to alleviate the burden in between tours: for instance the FIRIC has changed from a 4½ month tour to a 6 week deployment (training opportunity). Public Duties have been more evenly spread across the Command and to other FLCs. A significant number of extraneous tasks are being turned off. However, DMS has coincided with the Army bringing BOWMAN into service and the move to its FAS end state locations.</p> <p>LAND will review all current inspection regimes of units to determine if they are required annually or can move to a 2-yearly regime linked to FORM. This was last reviewed in 2004, and improved in 2005 and 2007, but the nature of current and planned operations and the frequency of deployments is changing apace so it is right to review again. A number of inspections are conducted to meet statutory requirements and the strictures of outside agencies (Charities Commission, HSE, Department of Transport) or Defence-wide 'Joint' regulations (audit of public and non public funds). In these cases there will be little or no latitude for change. However, the new LSI and ECI already allow units that receive a 'satisfactory' grading in any year to be exempt from an inspection the following year. Moreover, LSIs are already conducted, as much in an advisory capacity as an inspection. In several areas there may be scope to move to a 2 yearly routine, aligned to FORM, or else adjust the approach to be more advisory-focused.</p> <p>AG (DAPS). CAS results show that approximately a third of respondents were dissatisfied with the balance between work and free time. A significant difference was found between the attitudes of different age groups - respondents aged between 21-30 years were more dissatisfied (37%) than other age groups.</p>

Op TELIC / Op HERRICK. PDT means that personnel end up being away from home for 8 – 10 months and this is thought to be too long by those with families. By and large units like being on operations – they are properly resourced to do perform their role. The UOR equipment has increased unit morale and confidence.

However, many explained that not all POTL and annual leave could be taken as their units are so committed. The tour interval is too short and Harmony Guidelines are starting to lose credibility. The team came across considerable 'TELIC-fatigue' but a real appetite for Op HERRICK.

CGS. PDT ensures that units are prepared for the operational demands that will be placed upon them. It is encouraging that individuals are positive about OPTAG.

I am aware that there is a difference between unit tour intervals and the experience of individuals (and sub-units). I remain concerned that we are not meeting **Individual** Harmony Guidelines and that those with key specialisations (particularly the 24 Pinch Point trades) are often being asked to do too much.

Time off before and after operations is key to recuperation and family relationships. I do not want to hear of individuals missing their POTL or being asked to give up their annual leave, and on my visits I expect people to speak up if this is the case. There is no excuse for leave not being granted, even if it has to be flexed into the following leave year.

LAND. Whilst it is acknowledged that PDT adds to the separation endured by soldiers and their families, it is an essential piece of preparation for soldiers deploying on operations. Like other training, PDT is the responsibility of the Chain of Command and is generally scheduled to allow those deploying to take a period of leave just before deployment. It is they who largely decide how and where it should be conducted, though they will be constrained by resources in some instances. The Chain of Command must also manage the welfare of their personnel. This dual responsibility leaves them well placed to judge the best course of action to balance the needs of the physical (training) and moral (welfare) components of fighting power in the run up to operations.

A review of tour intervals has just been completed and the current policy of 6 month tours has been re-endorsed. The 5 year OCP (issued 8 May 07) seeks to give all formed units the requisite 24 months in between these deployments, and for most this will be achieved. Where it has had to be cut short, it has been with the full 'buy-in' of the Chain of Command. LAND Cts has recognised for some time that the time in between operational tours is over-heated (aka the Tour Interval Iceberg) and the acceptance by the wider defence community of the Rule of 8 BGs for operations has prevented further erosion of unit Tour Intervals.

LAND Cts acknowledge that there is "TELIC fatigue." The statement of requirement and need for a predominantly mechanised/armoured vehicle fleet dictates that the Mech and Armd Bdes are best suited, hence their over-exposure to this theatre. TELIC remains a complex, challenging and dynamic theatre that continues to require the highest standards of soldiering.

The force generation linkage between Op TELIC and Op HERRICK is understood i.e. we cannot do more in one theatre without doing less in the other. This has resulted in brigades being "paired in time" on the OCP. This ensures that the totality of our contribution to any one cycle of FORM is seen (rule of 8). Critically it enables us to move capability from one theatre to another without deploying units, or sub-units, out of synch with the inevitable impact on Unit cohesion and trg burden.

AG (DAPS). There has been little change since the last Service Personnel survey in the proportion of respondents who considered the frequency of tours to be 'about right' (still around the 50% mark). There has, however, been a significant decrease in the proportion of officers rating gaps between tours to be 'about right' (down 6% to 41%) and an increase saying they are 'too short' (up 8% to 57%).

Job Factors. A fifth of all negative comments made by officers and soldiers concerned 'job factors'. These encompassed manning, overstretch, workload, tours and postings.

Job Satisfaction. The latest Service Personnel survey showed a decrease in job satisfaction for both officers and soldiers since the previous survey (significantly so for officers). Job satisfaction no longer appears in the top 10 (highest percentage satisfied) for officers or soldiers as it did in SP10. This may tie in with too many inspections/RAAT tasks.

<p>Falkland Islands (FI). The Army needs to clarify whether duty in the FI amounts to an operational tour. If it is not an operation, the deployment of under-18 soldiers and those medically downgraded should be considered (releasing staff for other operations). If it is an operation then the tour should attract the Operational Bonus, R&R, POTL and count towards the ACSM.</p> <p>CGS. I fully support the deployment of soldiers under 18 to the FI, and where possible, those who are medically downgraded. This will help to alleviate some of the pressure within the Field Army and allow these individuals to make a valuable contribution to Defence and gain a useful training experience.</p>	<p>LAND. The Falkland Islands (FIs) remains an operational theatre, even though it deliberately has no op name. Due to its unique requirements it has a separate welfare package that includes R & R and extensive welfare facilities. POTL does apply to tours in FI at the normal ratio of 1 day for every 9 served on ops. The Op Bonus does not apply as it is intended to recognise, <i>'the increased and enduring nature of danger in specified operational locations'</i> on ops such as TELIC and HERRICK. For example the Balkans are likely to be removed from 1 Sep 07.</p> <p>Following a recent Force Level Review conducted by PJHQ and HQ LAND, COS LAND has written to DG Op Pol (18 May 07) requesting the authorisation for <i>"the deployment of soldiers aged 17 years and 3 months and older to the FIs as part of the 6 week FIRIC roulement"</i>. A reply is awaited.</p>
<p>Change. There was universal feedback that the Army is trying to change too much at once. Delivering just one project out of BOWMAN, JPA, DII(F), BLENHEIM, WFM, PAYD and FAS by itself would be a challenge. Attempting to do all, whilst overcommitted to operations, is extremely challenging.</p> <p>CGS. Slippage in many programmes has resulted in considerable change arriving simultaneously – and when the Army is heavily committed on operations.</p> <p>I have been greatly impressed by the Army's ability to adapt to new weapons and tactics in theatre and have seen the same adaptability in barracks. Once implemented these programmes should provide better support for personnel on, and between, operations.</p>	<p>QMG. When considering equipment, it must be acknowledged that most new programmes immediately support operations. The Attack Helicopter and Guided MLRS are but two examples. As Treasury funds seem likely to reduce, we must seek to exploit the (more agile) formal Equipment Support plan informed by an Army Equipment Plan. ACGS has this work in hand and QMG will ensure LAND and DE&S activity is better integrated to mitigate risk and synchronize delivery of industrial equipment projects.</p> <p>AG (DAG). The management and synchronisation of numerous change programmes/projects must be improved, particularly to reduce the impact at unit level between op tours.</p> <p>AG (DAPS). A fifth (20%) of all negative comments made by officers concerned organisational issues, which included comments about leadership, direction and change and the Army as an organisation. Although comments about organisational issues were not made as frequently by soldiers, 'management in your unit' has been in the top 5 retention negative factors for soldiers since Mar 04 and rated third since Mar 05.</p>
<p>Trawls. Units felt that there are too many operational trawls for individual augmentees and that the process was opaque, inherently inefficient and poorly organised. As trawls usually target those with qualifications so the same key people were the focus causing uncertainty for the individual, their family and team.</p> <p>COs remarked upon the negative effects on unit cohesion and could not understand why so many trawls were last minute. It takes too long to compose a penalty statement; a simple electronic form should be adopted.</p> <p>CGS. I am very aware of the disruption and uncertainty caused by trawls. It is inevitable that operational demands will mean that we will have to draw upon units for those with key skill sets. I will monitor closely the work that is ongoing to manage Individual Augmentees better. We must try to keep trawls to a minimum and to give individuals the maximum notice possible. Wherever possible the APC must select individuals for operational tours, not Land Command.</p>	<p>LAND. As a result of the current operational tempo the requirement for Army individual augmentees is extremely high (1547 pax every 6 months); however, it should be noted that this high figure is a Tri-Service commitment (the Defence individual augmentation commitment is apportioned: RN – 25%, Army – 40%, RAF – 35%).</p> <p>The process for identifying individual augmentees has been formalised by the Army Operational Augmentation Policy (AAP) (19 May 06). As a result, HQ LAND has now taken on a greater role in the management of Army augmentation across all Army TLBs. LAND has strived to reduce the pain of individual augmentation by better use of APC Glasgow (currently only 300 individual augmentee posts are resourced by career managers) intelligent attribution (the matching of enduring augmentee posts to the most appropriate TLB) and finally by rigidly sticking to the augmentation timeline as laid out in the AAP (minimum of 90 days notice for an individual to deploy).</p> <p>The negative effects of last minute trawls are acknowledged; however, these are largely due to essential changes in the operational requirement and have been endorsed at the highest level. It should be noted that within LAND, in order to break the timelines laid out in the AAP, 1* approval (ACOS Cts) is always sought.</p>

	<p>It is appreciated that writing penalty statements takes time and staff effort, however, in many cases this is the only supporting evidence that HQ LAND have available in order to make a selection for an individual augmentee post. Therefore the importance of this process should not be underestimated.</p> <p>There will always be a tension between those about to deploy on operations and those providing augmentation/backfill. We continually seek assurances from commanders and PJHQ that their requests are operationally essential.</p> <p>Through the Force Level Review process, HQ LAND will always seek to reduce any unnecessary operational posts.</p> <p>AG (APC). The impact of the trawl system is understood and the view expressed supported. DGS, LAND and APC are involved in work to identify a better method of selecting individual augmentees, possibly by grouping all IA posts on a single list and using the APC Boarding Process to select individuals. This should produce a fairer, more robust, better targeted and balanced way of selecting the right individuals for operational posts. It should also provide a better mechanism of balancing the 'pain' caused by widespread gapping.</p>
<p>Training Support. Ranges cannot operate without trained and qualified staff; a shortage of staff leads to many RAAT tasks. A solution might be to employ permanent cadres of FTRS range staff to ease the pressure on units. There may be scope for using non-military staff as CIVPOP in pre-deployment training.</p> <p>CGS. We have continued to make good use of FTRS and there is potential to exploit these contracts in order to retain those with qualifications and experience. Use of contractors to support training is accepted practice and the extension to OPTAG is a logical step. I like this idea and would like to see it rolled out as soon as possible.</p>	<p>LAND. LAND seeks to drive the level of external support required for Training support down to the minimum level and mitigating measures are being put in place: firstly, work is in hand to standardise BATUS; secondly, to alleviate the pressure on Fd Army units, the Army Bands will, from 1 Jun 07, begin contributing to the Training Support Group at OPTAG; thirdly, the advent of an Other Tasks (OT) Bde on the OCP will go some way to defining what 'supply' there is which can then drive down the demand to an acceptable level.</p> <p>Action is currently in hand to contractorise training support to OPTAG. This will be limited initially due to funding, but could increase as it gains momentum. There are some H&S issues with letting out a contract of this type and the recruitment of suitably qualified and security vetted individuals. The first contractors should be available by late Sep 07.</p>
<p>Guarding. Guards and duties are still placing a burden on many units, sapping morale and reducing the number of soldiers available for training. The introduction of the MPGS (and Germany GS) is an unqualified success and their use should be extended to all camps.</p> <p>CGS. The MPGS and GGS have been a success story and I am keen to see their use extended. I do not believe that soldiers should be exempt completely from guards and duties in camp, but I do not wish to see people's way of life in barracks, including training, suffering unduly because they are on guard. Commanders at all levels (but especially in units) must give adequate notice of guard commitments and should hold a roster of standby personnel in order to avoid single soldiers being unfairly penalised when short notice commitments arise,</p>	<p>LAND. The GGS implementation has been well received with the aim of reducing duties to one per month, per soldier. UKSC (G) continues to monitor. As for the provision of MPGS in UK:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHALI funded MPGS improvements are now transforming life for ARTD units. The 2 year programme will see the right MPGS provision at all ARTD sites, enabled by specific DHALI money which could not be used to provide relief for the Field Army. (DHALI: Doc Audit, HCDC, Adult Learning Institute). • This HQ has attempted, through the planning rounds in 2005 and 2007, to obtain funding for MPGS provision to the Field Army. So far this process has failed to secure the resources required. HQ LAND uses internal funding to provide minimum MPGS capability at Dishforth and Wattisham. • HQ LAND recognises the urgent need to steady the pace of life between operations, and the key role MPGS can play. We continue to staff the urgent case for MPGS provision to key garrisons, justified by operational pressure – in spite of the dire financial reality. Cases are being prepared for further provision under Planning Round 2008. <p>AG (DAPS). Soldiers are more dissatisfied than satisfied with notice given for extra duties. Since SP 10 there has been a significant decrease in officers' satisfaction concerning notice given for extra duties.</p>

Training for Ops. Many units questioned the relevance of current training and felt that we need to reshape exercises to reflect what is required on current operations. Security Sector Reform should replace high-intensity training for the time being – even though this may reduce our ability to fight future wars.

Units need to train on the UOR kit before deploying to theatre, in particular HMNVG and the new weapon systems such as MINIMI, UGL and AGL. There is a need for more ECM training and experience in driving the new vehicles.

Soldiers must become expert in both the handling of the equipment and developing tactics in order to get the best out of the new firepower now available.

CGS. The need to secure more UOR equipment for PDT is a key theme throughout this report. I am aware that much effort is underway to address this issue and the recent acceptance that enough equipment must be provided both for pre-deployment training and for the operation is a welcome step in the right direction. However, we are constrained by the speed with which industry can produce equipment and must make a judgement on the balance between that which we deploy to Theatre, and what we retain for training.

The Gold Standard of training remains the ability to conduct high intensity war fighting operations at Divisional level. Whilst I am convinced that our approach to training is right, I do support moves to make the Adaptive Foundation more relevant and reflective of the Contemporary Operating Environment.

LAND. PORs from current operations consistently validate the policy of training for ‘A’ war (Adaptive Foundation) followed by training for ‘The’ war (PDT). In light of these substantive endorsements, LAND cannot support any move to concentrate training purely upon mission specific activity. However, LAND initiatives to make the Adaptive Foundation more relevant and more reflective of the Contemporary Operating Environment, without it becoming mission specific, will increase the relevance of our training to current operations yet further.

LAND fully supports the need for soldiers to train with the equipment they will use on operations prior to deployment. Unfortunately, much of the equipment utilised on current operations (particularly in the DCC role) has been procured through the UOR process and is therefore in short supply. The creation of Operational Training Equipment Packs, a BG’s worth of operational eqpt to be used by a brigade conducting PDT, is a major step forward. This pack will be created through UOR procurement and should be at FOC in 2008. LAND will press this issue to ensure further improvement.

QMG. This is an issue which has been acknowledged and action has been taken - recent success stories which demonstrate this are the MASTIFF protected patrol vehicle and OSPREY body armour, where the equipment programme was planned to encompass training stocks. It is worth noting that the OTRES (Operational Training Recuperation and Equipment Shortfall) package now ensures that the procurement of UORs includes a quantity of kit for attrition and training purposes. However, it is conceded that the considerable pressure to deliver new UORs to theatre, as fast as possible, may be at the initial expense of the training pool. Defence collectively arbitrates over the delivery profile of equipment and whilst it strives to deliver both an operational and training pool concurrently, industrial capacity is limited. Decisions need to be taken on a case by case basis.

Training Resources. There is a lack of training area and range availability, shortages of ammunition, track mileage, spares (especially Power Packs and BOWMAN) range staff and manpower. This limits the amount of meaningful training that can be undertaken.

WFM is not allowing soldiers to prepare their vehicles properly and giving them the time to become familiar with the weapon platform.

There are insufficient serviceable aircraft to deliver parachute training – both the initial jumps course and requalification.

APACHE flying hours are limited by a lack of serviceable aircraft and spares.

MATTs are good – except we do not have the time to complete them. Why not link successful completion of these tests to an efficiency bounty like the TA? Fitness in the Army is tailing off and more soldiers are downgraded.

It remains difficult to get individuals away on career courses.

LAND - The demands of current operations are placing pressure upon training resources. Increased, high priority PDT means less training area and ranges available for others. Sustaining vehicles on demanding operations can mean less vehicles and spares available for training. Heavy operational ammunition usage has meant that some natures require active management (with the consequence that less are available). Training Support is in short supply due to high operational tempo. However, despite these shortfalls, commanders are not reporting an unmanageable penalty to training. Further, a review of the long term Defence Training Estate requirement is underway and significant improvements to the quality of some of the key estate is planned / ongoing. The ammunition shortfall is a short term issue, linked to industrial capacity, which DGM IPT is striving to address.

WFM provides for a sub unit (+) of equipment to be held by each unit to ensure that familiarisation and low level training needs can be met. Where their programmes are compressed and these vehicles are not deemed sufficient, units / formations can request an uplift in vehicles. However, operational pressure, the BOWMAN programme, ongoing UOR work and the recuperation of the RiP fleet mean we just do not have enough of some types of vehicle. There are none in store and we are having to fleet manage WR, CVRT and LR in particular.

CGS. I am concerned that we seem to be running an intensive programme without providing sufficient resources. The staff responses are very comprehensive and provide a frank timeframe for improvement. We do not have unlimited resources and must focus upon what is both achievable and affordable.

Frustrations will persist and shortages will endure, but I will continue to fight for more UOR equipment and resources for training purposes.

CR2 power packs have been in a parlous state for the last year and will remain so. This is about resources – only one squadron is on operations so CR2 is not top of the priority list.

The heavy commitment of the RAF AT fleet to current operations means that they are unable to meet their parachute training commitments. This shortfall is forecast to continue for the next 5 years. A justification to secure funding to contract out parachute training is being staffed.

An essential and unavoidable increase in Apache flying hours for Op HERRICK has had a negative impact on AH availability in the UK. Consolidation of AH at Wattisham in summer 07 will improve availability. Procurement of additional spares will also help but the problem is founded in the operational commitment, and until this reduces the issue is unlikely to be fully resolved.

It is pleasing to hear that MATTs have been well received. MATTs will be subject to review from Sep 07 including the time available for training. Incentives, including efficiency bounties, completion badges and “300 Club” badges, were considered during the initial concept phase of MATTs design but were discounted for administrative and divisive reasons. MATTs will allow the fitness level of the Army to be monitored, however a decrease in operational tempo is required to enable more time to be devoted to fitness training.

QMG.

BOWMAN. It is acknowledged that there has been an availability issue with BOWMAN equipment, primarily in the provision of spares. Funds have been committed to rectify this issue in the short term, taking us through to 2009 when a new contract will deliver an improved service. Furthermore, QMG, supported by DCDS (EC), has proposed that further funds for the additional BOWMAN conversion costs and the BCIP5 Uplift be found from the Contingency Planning Fund.

WFM. The pool of fully operationally equipped vehicles is limited and whilst every effort is made to ensure that soldiers have adequate time to prepare vehicles for deployment, the current pace of life, ever developing threat and proliferation of UORs make WFM difficult. We must begin restoring coherence to our fleets in Planning Round 08.

AH. In order to deliver AH on operations 2 years before originally envisaged, the UK based training and fielding fleet bore the brunt of supporting it on operations. Money committed 12 -18 months ago to replace these spare parts begins to deliver from Sep 07, from which time more spares will be available for the UK based fleet.

AG (APC). From the evidence available to the APC, career courses are being attended, at the expense of operational deployment when necessary. There is some potential for the career prospects of these individuals to suffer in relation to their peers who do deploy and whose performance on operations forms the basis of their CR. These courses tend to be long. In addition to individual Harmony issues, attendance timed to occur between operational tours simply to ensure maximum availability of manpower on operations, denies individuals non-operational time in post. This has an impact on their practical experience and ‘learning on the job’ prior to deployment, which can affect individual performance and career prospects as well as overall operational capability.

Attendance on CLM is a particular problem, mitigated by the fact that those selected for promotion without the requisite CLM can be granted acting rank for a period pending subsequent completion.

	<p>An additional challenge is finding time for individuals to attend those instructor qualification courses required for employment in training instructor posts, posts that are part of the optimal career path for many cap badges.</p> <p>AG (DAPS). There has been a general downward trend since 2003 for soldiers and 2005 for officers, with a significant decrease in confidence by both officers and soldiers in their fighting equipment.</p> <p>The latest Serving Personnel survey supports the view that MATTs are good.</p>
<p>Driver Training. Soldiers must be trained to drive earlier in their careers. There is an acute shortage of Cat C drivers to operate the new protected mobility fleet on operations. More centralised training courses must be made available.</p>	<p>LAND - Much work has been completed by LAND and DITrg(A) over the last 18 months to improve the availability of driver training for all. Since Oct 06, ARTD and LAND have been delivering 1750 B, 500 EforB, 500 C and 500 EforC, additional licences for the Infantry. Garrison Driver Training Centres have been set training delivery targets (including for the TA, OTCs and Cadet adult instructors).</p> <p>The recent Op HERRICK Theatre Equipment Review recommended an adjustment to the approach to driver cross county driving / operating. This work is being taken forward with HQ DRLC. Further, the Review of Soldier Career Training and Education looked at driver training and will recommend an additional uplift with increased delivery at DST.</p>
<p>EDUCATION Appendix 3</p>	
<p>CLM. It is frustrating to be promoted, get your feet under the desk, then have to go away to attend a CLM course. Everyone who broached the subject would prefer to do CLM, and then be promoted before taking up their next appointment.</p> <p>CGS. We must aim to deliver CLM to individuals before they promote and we are working towards achieving this.</p>	<p>LAND - CLM was a work strand of RoSCTE. The Report (yet to be endorsed) recommends that all CLM promotion training is delivered prior to substantiation</p> <p>AG (APC). The stated preferred course of action is the ideal. However, resource constraints require that only those who are to be promoted should undergo CLM, in effect 'just enough, just in time' training. Difficulties in releasing personnel for CLM due to other commitments prevents many personnel from attending before they are due to take up an appointment in the higher rank. Therefore, individuals may be selected for promotion and employed in <u>acting</u> rank, with their subsequent <u>substantive</u> promotion dependant on completion of the relevant element of CLM. The remaining CLM requirement can then be achieved after substantive promotion if need be. Cols MCM Div have the authority to extend the period an individual spends in acting rank without completing the relevant CLM.</p> <p>CLM is considered necessary training for employment in the higher rank both in barracks and, increasingly, on operations. Consequently there is a case for taking a more robust approach to enforcing the requirement for CLM, and thereby ensuring early attendance, by removing acting rank in those instances where it has not been completed in the required timeframe. This has been raised for resolution by the ROSCTE CLM WG.</p>

<p>MK1 & 2. Feeling is strong as ever that e-learning does not work and most give JOTAC as an example of YO's coming together for a course being really successful. There is a general belief that the present system does not properly prepare Capt's for demanding regimental and staff appointments in the way that AJD once did.</p> <p>CGS. I am aware of the failures of MK1 & 2 and the irritation that this has caused amongst officers who wish to continue their professional development in a busy programme. There is not enough time available to young officers and their mentors to complete this programme. It is taking too long to deliver and individuals are becoming frustrated. It is also clear that people need a thorough grounding in operational staff work before undertaking SO3 appointments.</p> <p>I understand that DI Trg(A) will be reviewing ways in which we can better deliver this programme. However, the onus remains with the Chain of Command – CO's and Formation Commanders must be responsible for the delivery of this training.</p>	<p>AG (APC). DI Trg(A) leads, is very aware of all the issues and has a programme in place to refine the MK packages. Whilst the APC is not surprised by the comments, it does, however, come back to the issue of objective empirical evidence. It is very difficult to say what is wrong with the MK1 & 2 system other than it is unpopular with those undertaking it. MS requested an audit of MK 1 & 2 in 2006 which was presented to the ROCC WG.</p> <p>The evidence presented to MS(C) indicates widespread dissatisfaction with the e-MK learning programme. Junior officers find themselves struggling to gain access to IT support and are more or less being forced to complete the programme at home and in their own time. In general, officers are not receiving the required mentoring support; there is also a level of evidence that a proportion of officers complete the assessments without an invigilator. The scale of the programme, and the subsequent demands it places on junior officers and mentors, appears to have been poorly assessed. That said, if an appropriate balance between workload and time available can be reached, and computer glitches ironed out, the principle of e-learning has been proven to work and continues to offer a study medium for the future.</p> <p>DI Trg(A) E-learning. Much time and effort has been devoted to e.MK which is at the cutting edge of e-learning technology. However, it is acknowledged that e-learning in isolation is challenging, and must be supported by unit-nominated mentors. The role of the mentor is to oversee the student's learning, providing guidance, encouragement and assistance as necessary - not to tutor or teach. The CoC are reminded of the need to nominate a mentor for the MK students within their unit at every opportunity. Any uncertainty over mentoring will also reduce in time as Field Officers themselves will have completed the courses and will be familiar with the content and study requirements. Some Bdes and units have taken this further by organising short MK Study Periods. Given that MK is to be completed during working hours (and not in an officers spare/off-duty time), MK Study Periods are examples of the CofC making provision for their officers to study, but furthering the concept to allow interaction with other students, discussion, readily-available mentor support and easy access to IT. Some Bdes have chosen to centralise this, usually holding them at the local ALC/AEC, at a time convenient in the Bde Trg programme. These have proved extremely popular with students, and the concept is being promoted as 'best practice'.</p>
<p>SLC. Many believe that a high profile should be given to SLC and more flexibility offered in their use. They are an excellent retention tool but too difficult to use; a wider range of courses should be eligible. If not used, the credit should roll over to the next financial year.</p> <p>CGS. I strongly support raising the profile of SLC and any actions that individuals take to widen their employability in the Army. I want to see the uptake of SLC rise and wish to be briefed upon the success of the marketing campaign.</p>	<p>AG DETS(A). A higher profile can be achieved through a marketing campaign – DETS(A) will action.</p> <p>Standard Learning Credits (SLC) are intended for courses that lead to qualifications (educational or vocational) that benefit both the Army and the soldier, therefore not all courses are available through the scheme. The criteria for use is very clearly laid out in the DIN.</p> <p>SLC are not an entitlement. Each soldier can access £175 per year throughout his career. Current Army uptake is approx £2M per annum. Rolling over of funding is not possible as the sums involved would be significant. The ELC is for more expensive courses and qualifications. ELC currently provides £3K for each registered soldier, rising to £6K in Apr 08.</p>

Inquests. A 4 year delay for an Inquest into an operational death is a disgrace (LCpl Hull).
CGS. I share the frustration and know that many families feel let down by the process. The current delays are unacceptable and I will continue to press for improvements.

AG. (LF Sec & DPS(A)). The responsibility for scheduling and managing inquests lies with the Coroner in whose area the deceased died or was repatriated. The delay in holding inquests into operational deaths was caused by the overload on the Oxfordshire coroner as all repatriations land at RAF Brize Norton. To clear the backlog, the Ministry of Justice appointed three additional Deputy Coroners and the Oxfordshire Coroner was encouraged to transfer jurisdiction whenever possible to "home coroners" closer to the bereaved families. Since those measures were put in place the backlog has been significantly reduced. The situation continues to be monitored in order to prevent a recurrence of a backlog.

Non UK Nationals. Little headway seems to have been made for our non-UK soldiers and their families. There is anger that the Government is so slow to change policies to help its soldiers. Many soldiers found it difficult to travel abroad for training because of visas. GTACOS have been welcomed, but many Gurkhas still feel disadvantaged when it comes to higher education for their children, support to those with disabled children and access to SFA (300 MQ short in Shorncliffe).
CGS. I am aware of the frustrations encountered by the restrictions placed on non-UK soldiers and their families. Things are getting better and we will strive to remove all the remaining irritants, working closely with the Home Office and Dept of Immigration.

AG. DPS(A). Commonwealth citizens are recruited into the British Army on the same Terms and Conditions of Service as British soldiers. They and their accompanying families can access and receive the same levels of support from both unit welfare staff and the Army Welfare Service as their British counterparts. However, CW personnel and their families remain citizens of their home countries and can be subject to travel restrictions in Europe, and their families do not always have access to some UK state benefits. Recent significant improvements which need to be better communicated by the chain of command to those affected include:

- Family UK Entry Visas can now be issued from the previous 6 months only to up to 4 years.
- Service personnel can now to seek UK Nationality in Service (Nov 06).
- Family further leave to remain in UK visas can now be issued from the previous 3 to up to 4 years.

Army work to take forward issues, where it is possible to do so, is co-ordinated through the Foreign and Commonwealth Task Force Action Plan. The Task Force is engaged with the Home Office and other Government Departments to take forward a number of issues particularly for those families posted to Germany. Whilst immigration, visa and nationality issues are generally high on the Government's agenda, it would be sensible not to raise expectations too high as we may not be able to achieve all we would wish without changes to UK law. AG is planning to visit the Chief Executive of the Borders and Immigration Agency to highlight the key concerns.

Units responsible for arranging training abroad are advised to check well in advance that appropriate travel documentation is provided for non-British soldiers. Where it is required for official travel it can be paid for from public funds in accordance with JSP 752.

<p>Leave. CGS stated that leave is a CoC responsibility, but units are over tasked – they cannot just cancel mandatory training, RAAT tasks or exercises. Over tasking is the main cause of missed leave. CGS must ensure that the CoC allows individuals to take leave.</p> <p>A number of units limited their staff to local leave because the unit was on call. This restriction is not included in JSP 760, which allows personnel to be recalled from leave – but not prevented from taking it. To benefit from Annual Leave and POTL soldiers need unrestricted leave to recharge their batteries.</p> <p>CGS. I am troubled by the concept of units placing restrictions to those going on leave. We have mechanisms in place for calling individuals back from leave, and I would prefer to see these used rather than the safety net of <i>ad hoc</i> restrictions.</p> <p>I would like to see all individuals taking their ALA, POTL and Relocation Leave and the CoC must provide a lead. Leave is the key method for the recuperation of individuals, supporting relationships and the strengthening of family ties.</p> <p>My direction is that leave restrictions should be the exception and require the sanction of a 2* commander before they are applied.</p>	<p>LAND - The 5 year OCP is a mechanism to enable longer term planning and by default identifying periods when leave can sensibly be taken. Similarly detailed engagement is undertaken by HQ LAND Cts at 12 months before deployment to ensure that formations are clear on the parameters of their op tour (RSOI, Movt dates, NMB, TOA, etc). Key within this planning is identifying and then protecting POTL and annual leave periods.</p> <p>The OCP, and its supporting force generation orders, state NTM for contingent forces (SLE, TRB, ABTF, etc). Due to DMS commitment, there are not significant numbers of units on very high readiness (VHR), therefore fmns must only place individuals on VHR where there is stated requirement. Only at VHR should leave be affected. Such restrictions are rare but are acknowledged within the construct of the X Factor. The CoC are regularly advised that all leave should be taken and remain without restrictions. The refund of nugatory expenditure is applicable where a financial penalty is incurred through unavoidable cancellation or restriction.</p> <p>RAAT is tasked out to fmns 12 – 18 months in advance, giving plenty of time to forward plan and allow units to avoid clashes with leave. Other training support (in particular PDT) is refined at shorter notice, but is still relatively predictable within anticipated timelines. Training units and fmns must understand the second order effect of requesting training support at the last moment.</p> <p>AG. We are aware of the difficulties experienced by units and individuals in taking leave in the current high tempo of operations. However the issues raised are indicative of the chain of command's management rather than actual leave policy. These difficulties are a consequence of the current high tempo of operations and are being used as evidence to gain an uplift in our X-Factor.</p> <p>AG (DAPS). In SP11, 52% of officers and 35% of soldiers were not able to take all of their annual leave last year. This is consistent with SP10, 'Unit commitments' was the most frequently cited reason for this.</p> <p>Overall leave entitlement emerged as a highlight for both officers and soldiers with over two-thirds satisfied. However, 47% of soldiers and 35% of officers said that they were dissatisfied as they could not take leave when they wanted it</p>
<p>Re-engagement Leave. The increased flexibility over Renleave was appreciated, but many felt that they should be able to take it as individual days instead of in 5 day blocks.</p> <p>CGS. I am pleased that AG will staff a policy change to provide greater flexibility in the taking of Re-engagement Leave.</p>	<p>LAND. Agree AG comment below and will remind the CoC of the impact of avoidable limitations/restrictions.</p> <p>AG (DPS(A)). A good point. We will now staff a policy change that will allow individuals to take leave as individual days. Implementation will need to be worked out unit level.</p>

PAYD. The NAAFI run PAYD facilities in Fallingbostal and Bergen Hohne were considered a disaster. NAAFI provides a consistently poor and expensive service to units across the spectrum of Retail, Catering and Leisure. The closure of unit bars and PRIs have stripped away a unit's freedom to generate non-public funds and Gainshare is insufficient to make up the shortfall.

There are real concerns about the new eating habits of some of our soldiers due to PAYD. A 'pot noodle and sandwich' culture is being created and soldiers are cooking rations over gas burners in their rooms. There are apocryphal stories of soldiers flaking during PT sessions from a lack of nutrients.

COs felt powerless; one civil servant Contract Manager refused to let the CO see the MoD contract with NAAFI.

PAYD was sold with a strap line of new restaurants, better choice and good quality. The reality is very different – for most, the only investment has been a till. Soldiers claim that some contractors are refusing to serve the core menu.

CGS. PAYD has had a mixed reception and I believe that commanders at all levels must keep a close eye on the feeding habits of their soldiers. There are examples of it working very well and other sites where there remains much to be done.

I expect transparency on both sides; we must cooperate with the contractors to ensure that CRL works to the benefit of our soldiers and the wider military community.

Eating habits is an area that the CoC must monitor closely, reflecting the duty of care we have towards our soldiers.

AG (PS4/Col Health)/LAND/AIO.

AG. PS4/Col Health. Catering, Retail and Leisure (CRL) is not a disaster. PAYD is being well received in UK, but not so well in GE. However, it is evident that the service provided in GE is at least as good as that in the best sites in UK.

Unit bars and PRIs have not closed, but certain restrictions have been negotiated with the Garrison as part of the wider CRL solution – this ensures that the contractor is able to invest in the facilities.

Contractors cannot refuse to serve the core menu, which provides 3300 calories and a balanced diet. Catering services are judged to be generally well received, although some criticism has been received over portion sizes of protein items. However, portion sizes are laid down in JSP 404 and these have not changed under PAYD.

Restaurant usage has fallen; unsurprising, as PAYD was meant to introduce choice and soldiers increasingly have access to self-catering facilities but numbers are now picking up. The Army has never been able to dictate what soldiers ate, even when they used the "Cookhouse".

Current evidence would suggest that Gainshare (or Welfare Return as it applies in Germany) is beginning to generate funding. The last Gainshare payout to Elmpt was 71,000 euros. Kent paid out £22,000 in its first year.

Retail and leisure are judged to be under-funded and, in the case of retail, to be uncompetitive. NAAFI does not have the buying power to compete with the GE High Street but nonetheless offers choice. Further investment in leisure facilities is being discouraged by the continued operation of competing unit clubs. All Garrisons are issued with a potted version of their own SLAs and further advice is available through the CoC.

AG (Col Health AMD). There is concern that the nutritional content (calorific value) provided in the core menu is insufficient to meet the requirements of some trades and training. The Institute of Naval Medicine is carrying out research at the RN PT and RN Diving Schools and this may read across some Army trades. Some areas of training in ARTD get a High Activity Training Supplement. High quality 'Service Guides to Nutrition' are available. Teaching on nutrition is provided during Phase 1 and 2 training, but it is difficult to change the lifestyle habits of teenagers and young adults through an "educational" approach alone.

Career Management. Many LE officers expressed their discontent with career management; they want wider staff and regimental employability – not to be given all the jobs that DE Officers do not want to do. More would be retained if there was a better chance to get to Lt Col.

The staff in the APC seems overworked and unable to meet officers' wishes. Why not put a database of jobs online so that individuals can volunteer? Many posts seem to have been stitched up by some regiments.

Posting orders take too long to be issued.

CGS. The Vine Study should mark a path for the future employment of LE Officers. The commissioning of our most experienced soldiers has been an undoubted success story and it is natural that they wish to continue to contribute to the Army in a range of appointments and ranks.

The APC continues to provide an excellent service to a busy Army. Although MS will try to match the aspirations of every soldier and officer in a timely manner, it is a complex business and it is inevitable that some will be disappointed.

AG (APC). LE employment will be addressed as part of the LE Package 3 Study being conducted by Brig Vine. LE Offrs should be aware that some of them are commissioned to fill specific appts and backfill the shortage of DE Capts. It is therefore reasonable that they compete for DE appts and individuals who are not sufficiently competitive will end up filling those appts less attractive to the DE cohort.

The issue of Promotion prospects /LE Lt Col liabilities is being addressed as part of the Vine Study.

The comment that the staff of the APC seems to be overworked is a fair reflection of the pressures involved with the introduction of JPA. However, the implication that the APC is failing to meet the wishes of officers is very different from the APC failing to deliver what is required, an assertion that would be strongly refuted. MS's Binding Principle is being applied more frequently to ensure that the needs of the Service do come first. This inevitably leads to disappointment in some cases but it also ensures that posts are filled by the correct calibre of individual.

All staff jobs (E1 and E2) are published on the MSWeb so all offers have visibility 6-12 months prior to the board sitting. Some MCM Div's RD appts are also published.

The frustration and difficulties caused by the late publication of Posting Orders is acknowledged. Notification of posting, which follows selection for appt, and the physical issue of Posting / Assignment Orders are distinct issues. Notification of posting can be via Board Results, signal, letter, e-mail or, in extremis, telephone but notification will always be followed up by a Posting / Assignment Order. Under JPA, Assignment Orders are part of the work flow process and it is anticipated there will be fewer incidences of late publication.

AG (DM(A)). This has been recognised. A review of the LE TACOS has been ongoing for the last 18 months. 2006DIN 02- 240 implemented packages 1 and 2 of the review in Apr 06. All Warrant Officers are now commissioned direct to IRC LE. Promotion quotas to Major increased from 30/40/50% in years 6/7/8 to 50/50/50% in year 6/7/8. LE to DE conversion rules relaxed.

The LE Audit Team leader started (10 Apr 07) a scoping study on Package 3 of the LE review which is to report back to DAG in Nov 07. The study will be looking into the following: Impact of V Eng on the LE career, promotion chances to Lt Col and Col, employment and posts for the LE officer, conversion criteria and future training, including attendance on ICSC(L).

AG (DAPS). CAS SP has questions on Post Preference Proforma (PPP), and in the last two Serving Personnel surveys about a quarter of officers and a third of soldiers did not receive the posting stated in their PPP.

<p>Uniform Grant for SNCOs. The uniform grant for SNCOs was again raised. QRs need to be changed to allow a uniform to be issued (which retains unit identity), to provide a grant or to give tax relief. The cost of uniforms is becoming a talisman to illustrate how the WOs' and Sgts' Mess feels undervalued, taken for granted and let down.</p> <p>CGS. Although public funding for Sgts' Mess kit has been agreed at AB level, we seem no nearer to achieving this. I have instructed that more work is conducted to ascertain how we might deliver a uniform grant for SNCOs on promotion.</p>	<p>AG DPS(A). It is assumed that this refers to the provision of Mess kit. ECAB have agreed that Mess kit should be provided at public expense, but, as yet, we have not been able to identify the funding.</p>
<p>Incentives for JNCOs to Promote. This is linked with SNCOs being undervalued. Most retention initiatives (pay rises and FRI) are aimed at junior ranks. A combination of more responsibility, less pay, bigger mess bills, poor mess accommodation and mess kit purchase makes promotion seem unattractive.</p> <p>CGS. There has indeed been a focus upon improving conditions for JNCOs and private soldiers through FRIs, Z-Type SLA and pay rises. This may have resulted in reducing the perceived benefits of entry into the WOs' and Sgts' Mess.</p> <p>However, if we are to encourage the brightest and the best into longer service and more responsibility, we must reward that achievement. SNCOs are the bedrock of the CoC within units and their contribution must be valued if promotion is to be a positive incentive.</p>	<p>LAND - Retention initiatives are determined by A+SD and DM(A) and aimed at junior ranks because that is where the retention issues currently lay. SNCO accommodation is being upgraded on an equal basis with JNCO accommodation as part of the Allenby/Connaught Projects (Tidworth, Bulford and Aldershot) as it is in Colchester and Catterick. New SNCO Accommodation has recently been built in South Cerney, has started to be built in Alexander Bks Pirbright and is planned for Andover. In Germany Fallingbostel, Hohne, Sennelager, Gutersloh and Bielefeld have received or are about to receive upgrades. A Cpl promoted to Sgt does receive a pay increase; no one gets a lower wage on promotion.</p> <p>AG (APC). The APC has seen no evidence of large numbers of Cpls refusing promotion to Sgt. On the 5 occasions over the past few years when it has occurred, geographical reasons were given for 3 cases, welfare reasons for one and 'personal' reasons for the other. We can only report the information provided, accepting it may not provide the full picture.</p> <p>There is an issue with promotion from LCpl to Cpl in AAC Ground crew. Ground crew LCpls are on the high band of pay, Cpls are on the lower band. The pay rise is regarded as insufficient for the additional responsibilities and training requirement that promotion brings. AAC Ground crew are being judged by the JSJET in Jun 07 to address this.</p> <p>Pay Band issues have also been cited in the case of an RAMC SSgt refusing promotion to WO2. There are possible signs of a growing number of WO2s in technical Corps refusing promotion to WO1 (7 x RE and 5 x R SIGNALS this year). The reasons are unclear but work-life balance is suspected.</p>
<p>Medals. Many regiments and corps require medals to be court mounted. Mat Regs states only units on public duties can have medals court mounted at public expense. Soldiers do not want to pay for court mounted medals.</p> <p>CGS. This is a regular issue; I am afraid that there is no prospect of public funding. Where units that are not on public duties require medals to be court mounted I would suggest that regimental funds should pay a proportion of the costs.</p>	<p>AG (DPS(A)). The mounting of medals is governed by Tri Service policy and it is clear that eligibility for court mounting at public expense is limited to those (less officers) on public duties. The Court Mounting of Medals for all others is subject to Single Service Dress Regulations but is to be at unit or personal expense. There is no funding to finance a change in policy.</p>

<p>Recognition. Families of bereaved soldiers should receive something to mark their sacrifice from the Nation – similar to the WW1 Bronze Medallion.</p> <p>CGS. I support the idea of a token from the Nation to the family of the deceased to mark the sacrifice of a loved one. I believe that National monuments provide a National focus. Something more personal is needed for the family – an appropriate token of thanks. This is a tri-service issue and I will ask AG to represent the Army's case.</p>	<p>AG (DPS(A)). This matter has been debated at the highest level as it is a complex issue with far reaching consequences. The memorial scrolls were sent to bereaved families as a focus for grief as their NOK were not repatriated as today. It has been affirmed that recognition will be focussed at the National Memorial at the National Arboretum and also at single Service memorials, which will be recorded in Rolls of Honour. In the case of the Army these will be kept in the Chapel of the Royal Hospital Chelsea.</p>
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Pay Rise. Although there was appreciation that the AFPRB secured the best award, there was resigned disappointment at an increase of 3.3% and anger that the 9.8% was headlined as the figure.

Pay is raised as an issue in the context of the increase in the number of hours worked and the parallel reduction in opportunities for leave, sport, courses and AT.

An ArmyNET poll in Apr 07 showed that 3% thought the award Excellent, 18% Good, 31% Average, 31% Inadequate and 17% Poor.

CGS. Although the Armed Forces did well in comparison with other public bodies, and the most junior ranks did particularly well, I understand that basic pay is becoming a key issue in recruitment and retention.

I will ask the AFPRB to examine the overall package of pay and conditions to ascertain whether it is sufficient to compete with less demanding and safer professions.

LAND. Agreed. High percentages for selected groups, while good for some, is creating a compression within the Pay 2000 structure that is poor for all. Need to address core pay.

AG (DPS(A)). Agree, but the factors listed are covered by the X-Factor element of our pay which is designed to compensate for the balance of advantages and disadvantages of Service life in comparison to civilian life over the duration of a full career, and forms part of pensionable pay. The X-Factor is being formally reviewed this year and this evidence supports the case that we need a significant uplift to the current 13%.

AG (DAPS). Consistent with results from previous surveys; the majority consider their pay to be worse than their civilian counterparts (58% of officers and 45% of soldiers). Since the previous survey both officers' and soldiers' satisfaction with their basic rate of pay has significantly decreased (down 10% each to 60% of officers and 44% of soldiers satisfied). Further analysis revealed that it was private soldiers that were most dissatisfied with their basic pay compared with other soldier ranks. Single soldiers were also more dissatisfied than those who were married, or in a long-term relationship.

Satisfaction with the amount of specialist pay is still lower than satisfaction with basic pay. 37% of officers and 27% of soldiers said they were satisfied with the amount of specialist pay, yet over 40% remain 'neutral' in their response

Pay 2000. Pay 2000 continues irritate and divide the Army. All units are affected; Gunners deployed in the Infantry role and corps instructors in the ARTD felt that you should be paid for the job you do – not the cap badge you wear. If designed to better motivate staff then it has failed.

CGS. I have sympathy with the view that Pay 2000 can be seen as unfair and divisive. We now have a very complex pay structure which needs to be reviewed.

The Strategic Review of Remuneration (SRR) sponsored by SP Pol intends to look at the pay structure and how it might be improved.

LAND. Agreed. A+SD and DPS(A) need to consider in detail not only what is needed and how it can be determined but how the outcome is communicated to their people. The principle of "all of one company" needs to be managed carefully.

AG (DPS(A)). Agree comments. However, personnel should note that the majority of these issues were recognised at the time of the development and introduction of P2K. They were accepted, either because it was thought P2K better targeted reward where it was warranted (hence its structural design), or as a necessary consequence of moving legacy structures without any individual taking a drop in pay (hence the differentials between structures). It is recognised that a simplified pay structure would be more intuitive for soldiers and ongoing work into the Strategic Remuneration Review (SRR) is aimed at ensuring that our remuneration structures are optimised for the coming decades. These issues are being examined as part of this work.

AG (DAPS). The latest Serving Personnel survey showed a significant decrease (10%) in satisfaction with pay for both officers and soldiers since the previous survey. However, responses were made shortly before the announcement of 'an above the rate of inflation' pay rise.

Whilst in the past pay has not been a major motivation for staying in or leaving the Army, it is a significant factor in attracting new recruits.

The most significant part of the latest Serving Personnel survey regarding pay is the dissatisfaction with the speed and efficiency in dealing with pay and allowance matters.

<p>LSA. Many felt that that the 10 day qualifying period for separation was too long. Many are still having nights out of bed which are neither counting towards the LSA accumulation nor resulting in pay.</p> <p>CGS. Whilst I have a great deal of sympathy for those who endure many nights out of bed, but do not qualify for LSA, the X Factor is designed to compensate individuals for periods less than 10 days. Any changes to qualifying for LSA may impact on the X Factor which is being reviewed this year by the AFPRB.</p>	<p>AG (DPS(A)). As explained above, part of the X-Factor takes into account the turbulence experienced by military life in the first 9 days of separation. LSA compensates those personnel experiencing separation over and above a 10 day period.</p>
<p>Allowances on Long Courses. A hire car is provided for the journey to, and from long courses. Soldiers are frustrated that they spend enough time away on Ops, and therefore feel that whilst on courses, weekends should be spent at home.</p> <p>In reality most take their own car and cannot claim. A quick win would be a policy change to allow soldiers to take their own car and make a claim for the journey. It would probably be cheaper than a hire car, and soldiers would feel more valued.</p> <p>CGS. The response from AG clarifies the position and reflects the flexibility within the existing system.</p>	<p>AG (DPS(A)). The issue that the individual raises here stems from budget holders attempting to save money by only providing a hire car there and back at the beginning and end of the course. This may be cheaper over longer distances.</p> <p>However, you are entitled take your own car to the course and claim MMA for the journey at the beginning and end of the course. During the course the individual is also entitled to Get You Home (Travel) (GYH(T)) which is designed to support and improve retention by reducing the impact of separation. It achieves this by assisting the Service person who has the opportunity to return home with the cost of their travel when within the same theatre. Travel may be by car or train as GYH(T) is paid as a daily rate for the appropriate mileage through the Service person's pay.</p>

<p>Commitments. The AMS remain undermanned in key medical areas - especially surgeons and anaesthetists.</p> <p>CGS. The AMS hopes to recruit personnel into these key roles. In the short term operational cover is being provided by members of the TA and those on contract.</p>	<p>AG.(DAG / AMD). The AMS Manning Plan 2006-2007 sets out the proposed initiatives to address undermanning and over the last year AMS manning has improved by 3.4%. However, given the long training pipelines for many specialities, full manning (i.e. the right people with the right skills) is not expected before 2012 even if all initiatives prove successful.</p> <p>In particular, special efforts have gone into addressing the shortfall in Secondary Health Care specialities with large numbers now in training (33 in anaesthetics and 54 in different surgery specialities). Until then, operational requirements are being met with a combination of AMS Regular manpower and use of the other Services, the TA or contract nurses.</p> <p>AG (DAPS). In general, health provision has been a high point from SP11 and the percentage who was very dissatisfied with healthcare is small. However Families 4found 20% of officers' and soldiers' spouses are dissatisfied with the service received from military provided healthcare.</p>
<p>Loss of X Factor. Significant numbers of soldiers are going sick, getting downgraded and avoiding operational deployments. Many felt that some soldiers 'Sick at Home' were playing the system and should lose the X Factor as an incentive to get better.</p> <p>CGS. Whilst I can understand the frustration of those who have to cover the gaps created by those who are sick or injured, I believe that the removal of the X Factor would be seen as draconian and would be open to legal challenge. Now that SAM is in place, together with better rehabilitation, individuals should be helped along the road to full fitness.</p>	<p>LAND. Whether or not losing X Factor would give any soldier playing the system an incentive to get better is a moot point. We have certainly seen no evidence to support the claim. However, there is no doubt that losing X Factor would quite unjustly penalise the genuinely ill. It is therefore a non-starter</p> <p>AG (DPS(A)). It is not a soldier's fault that he is sick or injured. Therefore, it would be difficult, unfair and in fact wrong to decide what types of injury or illness warrant removal of an individual's X Factor. Specialist Pay ceases when an individual is medically downgraded or from the date when an individual is declared professionally unsuitable for specialist duties. Better management through the new Sickness Absence Management will hasten malingerers to get better.</p> <p>AG (AMD). There needs to be real evidence that soldiers are "playing the system", as this remains anecdotal. There is a consultant-led medical boarding process to review those who are long-term sick and advise on their fitness for work.</p> <p>The vast majority of those who are sick would much prefer not to be. It would be iniquitous to reduce the pay of those who are off work or downgraded because of an injury or illness sustained as a result of military service, and impossible to assess whether a sick soldier was "blameworthy".</p>
<p>Sickness Absence Management (SAM). SAM is a good concept, but requires PI / Tp Comds to visit individuals at home every week which takes them away from their men and duties. It is proving impracticable.</p> <p>CGS. It is early days yet for SAM, but the numbers Sick at Home seem to have reduced markedly. The scheme does place the responsibility for the soldier firmly with the CoC – this is the right place for it to be.</p>	<p>AG (DPS(A)). The SAM policy is settling in well across the Army and feedback is positive. It has provided clarity of responsibility for the management of all sick absent soldiers, thus enabling them to be provided with the best possible welfare support during their recovery to duty or towards and beyond their medical discharge. The policy allows for visits every 14 days and the visiting officer does not have to be the PI Comd. If units are finding they are unable to cope with the SAM requirements there is of course always the option of requesting the transfer of the responsibility for the case to the Regional Chain of Command. As with any new policy there are areas where the policy can be improved or made clearer. The policy will be reviewed prior to the re-issue of the SAM policy in the Autumn 2007</p>

Z Type Accommodation. Many in the CoC welcomed the investment in new SLA but there are concerns about social isolation and how the duty of care can best be exercised with younger soldiers when many lock themselves away each night. Getting a single room is one of the big incentives to becoming a JNCO.

Loss of troop lines is a real concern for some; with WFM the tank park ceases to be focus of troop effort and with Z Type a troop's soldiers could be spread across a camp.

Some of the new accommodation is poorly put together and many reported that the communal areas are in a poor state despite only being a couple of years old. More cleaning equipment is needed for public areas.

CGS. The new accommodation has been well received and we must ensure that it is correctly maintained. Social isolation is a concern and I think that this reinforces the need for Platoons and Troops being responsible for their own lines. Junior commanders have a key role to play in fostering teamwork within barracks.

LAND. To ameliorate the potential of social isolation the CoC may use, at their discretion, old style accommodation for the more vulnerable members of the unit. Units manage this locally.

All new SLA is built to high standards; SLAM new build is maintained through a 7 year compliance contract. LAND is unaware of any 'poor states of accommodation' for these new builds, with none having been reported through the CoC. Clearly much of the unmodernised and older accommodation is in a poor condition and needs investment to improve.

AIO. The potential for social isolation in Z type accommodation has been recognized from the outset. However a balance has to be struck in delivering improved and modern accommodation to meet the expectations of today's soldiers for single en-suite rooms and the benefits that ensue. The provision for the communal area at the entrance, rather than at the end, and with windows into the corridor, in the design of Z type is to ensure that those in it can see who goes in and out and are thus included. The design of 6 man flats is also intended to match section and troop identity.

Modern Housing Solutions (MHS). MHS got off to a poor start; although there has been some limited improvement MHS and DE have lost their name.

CGS. MHS have some way to go before they meet the expectations of the service community. Their support to our communities is of particular importance when soldiers are deployed on operations. Personnel need to be confident that their family is being looked after in their absence. I will continue to monitor the performance of MHS closely.

AG (DPS(A)). The military, DE and MHS chains of command fully acknowledge the disastrous start to the Housing Prime Contract last year. An SFA Delivery Review was commissioned, which led to significant restructuring of DE in order to improve its service. MHS has also conducted a similar review. There will be no 'quick fix', but the decline has been halted, and the service is gradually improving. It is important that occupants continue to report problems if the pressure to improve is to be maintained.

AG (DAPS). In the last but one Serving personnel survey it was suggested that the poor satisfaction level with accommodation standards might have been due to the difficulties encountered with the Housing Prime Contract. Looking at responses from the latest survey it appears that the situation has not improved.

In the latest Families survey there was a small increase in dissatisfaction levels. The distribution of this survey corresponded with the introduction of the new Housing Prime Contract.

Council Houses on Leaving The Army. Section 199 of the Housing Act 1996 is being used to allow local councils to refuse soldiers a council house in the area in which they serve. Should they wish to settle in another part of the country after discharge, they find they do not qualify for accommodation as they do not have a local connection.

CGS. Although we are trying to remove from the legislation the clause that discriminates against service personnel and their families, we must recognise that there is far less local authority housing available than there once was. We will continue to lobby for change.

AG (DPS(A)). The MOD is aware of this problem at ministerial level and asking for a change in the legislation.

AG (DAPS). For those leaving the Army, 89% of officers and 70% of soldiers said that they would be living in their own home or rented accommodation when they left. 18% of soldiers said that they would be living with friends or relatives. However, 9% of soldiers said that they did not know where they would be living on leaving the Army. 70% of soldiers said that they did not feel that they had been advised and helped enough in finding accommodation appropriate to meet their needs. [Leavers' Survey].

COMMUNICATIONS		Appendix 8
<p>Public Information. It is very difficult to get information as to what is going on. The media tends to use same old faces for comment (Bob Stewart etc); why not use someone serving to speak up for the Army?</p> <p>CGS. I am aware that we rely upon the media too much to find out what is going on within our own organisation. I am working to improve our internal communications – ArmyNET has a key role to play here. Recently, members of the Army Board have spoken publicly on a range of issues, but this is not without its own challenges.</p>	<p>Def PR(A). This is a good point and one that we are making progress on. In addition to the Army Board, we have now got agreement for a network of 30 Brigadiers to speak on their specialist subject areas e.g. when there was an equipment story, Brig Levey (ACOS Equipment at HQ LAND) went on air to rebut it. We aim to do more on this, both on TV and in newspapers. With regards the 'old faces', they have their value but we agree that we could do with some younger ones. So AD DefPR(A) would be keen to hear from anyone who is leaving (Officer, Warrant Officer or SNCO) who might be prepared to make themselves available. The challenge for the 'new faces' will be to establish their credibility with the media</p>	
<p>Co-ordinating Change Programs. There are so many change programs happening all at once that it is difficult to work out what is happening.</p>	<p>LAND. Current practice sees change programme leaders develop individual communication plans. Given the amount of change underway, coupled with operational tempo, it is unsurprising personnel find it difficult to keep track of progress and direction. Work is being undertaken within LAND to address integration between change programmes and show priorities, thereby improving wider understanding thereof. Business Process Reviews (BPR) and Better Ways of Working (BWoW) studies, being completed under the auspices of Project HYPERION, will take this work forward.</p>	
<p>Benefits of Service. Why not better publicise some of the benefits of military life such as how to claim Standard Learning Credits and how much your pension is worth each month?</p> <p>CGS. A good idea. We have 'Doing Alright' on the Army Web which looks at the benefits of the whole package. However, I believe that we can do more to sell the Army as a vocation, a career and a community.</p>	<p>AG. The findings from this report will be used to shape the Army Communication Plan 07.</p>	
RECRUITING and MANNING		Appendix 9
<p>Retention. All effort seems to be focused on the young soldiers, whilst those who have served long and loyally seem to be taken for granted. Once a soldier is out of the key 'Retention Zone' the Army assumes that it has you trapped because of your pension. There seems to be growing disillusionment amongst experienced SNCOs, senior Cpls and Cpts.</p> <p>CGS. We are very keen to retain all the trained, experienced, loyal and battle-hardened soldiers that we can. FRIs have been introduced to good effect and we are seeing whether their use can be extended.</p> <p>I think that we retain most staff because they enjoy and believe in what they are doing. We must look more carefully at how we value our more senior personnel.</p>	<p>LAND. The need to address retention within the Army is well recognised. As a result, a retention paper, staffed by DAG, went to ECAB on 10 Jul 07. The paper specifically addressed retention and proposed a number of measures aimed at improving retention within the Army.</p> <p>AG (DM(A)). This clearly relates to the AFPRB PR 07 award. The Army considers through life manning and in doing so seeks to address those parts of the career where the pressures are felt most. Effort at present is focused on reducing soldier outflow at the 4-6 year point, as that is where the greatest manning turbulence lies. The recent award for a FRI for Infantry soldiers was approved as that was where the problem was most acute, and the evidence supported the case.</p> <p>There is a requirement for strong evidence of a manning problem before a FRI will be approved and such evidence is lacking in the Cpl/SNCO cohort; especially beyond the 12-year point where retention is good. The pension plays a significant part in retaining soldiers; some will therefore see this as a 'pension trap' whilst others will accept it is an effective retention tool that is working.</p> <p>AG (DAPS). Pension entitlement is in the top 5 factors for retention cited by officers & soldiers - a consistent trend over time.</p>	

<p>SHEF/H&S Post. Many officers / SNCOs are double or triple hatted. As a result important things like SHEF and H&S are put on a 'back burner' as more urgent priorities are addressed. A civilian employed in barracks would help ease the workload on the military and provide a more professional service.</p> <p>CGS. I am pleased to see that this issue is being staffed and hope that these posts will be established in the near future.</p>	<p>LAND. LAND is currently staffing an APRC paper, for Sep 07, to fund civilian Unit Safety and Environment Advisors (USEA) to support COs and QM/Unit Safety Advisor.</p> <p>AG (AMD). Access to dedicated professionally qualified H&S professionals would be of benefit to units to ensure that they meet their H&S obligations. They would provide a useful point of contact for Environmental Health personnel and OH services provided in support of primary healthcare.</p>
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<p><u>EQUIPMENT</u></p>	<p>Appendix 10</p>
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<p>UOR Equipment. Personnel accept that a huge investment had been made in a spectrum of new equipment – body armour, weapons, clothing, vehicles and communications. Therefore they feel more confident going on operations. However, there is a lack of UOR kit (and ammunition) available prior to operations and as a result few feel that they are getting the full potential from the weapon systems. More equipment must be procured if the Army is to become expert in its use. 2 RTR will first see MASTIFF in Afghanistan.</p> <p>CGS. Whilst I am reassured that the UOR kit has been well received, I accept that getting weapons and equipment into units before they deploy is key to continued operational success. More equipment, spares and ammunition is being procured so that we can send units on operations, confident in their ability to manage the weapon platforms and to apply the most effective tactics.</p>	<p>LAND - The lack of UOR eqpt available for trg is covered in some detail in the 'Training for Ops' section. In summary, LAND agrees the position on trg eqpt is unacceptable. The OTRES package, staffed in Jan 07, has as our number one priority additional equipment for training. The DECAs are processing the Business Cases but with over 1000 UORs and an average spend of £60M a month we just can not do it any more quickly than we are doing. Naturally operations get the first tranche of equipment and training the second.</p> <p>QMG. In total there have been 410 UOR equipment programmes delivered since 2003 (327 to Op TELIC and to 83 Op HERRICK), and it is pleasing to note the level of confidence soldiers have in such equipment.</p> <p>With regard to the quantities of UOR equipment, the OTRES initiative now ensures that all items are purchased in sufficient quantities to support both training and attrition pools. For example, of the 108 MASTIFF procured, 18 will be delivered for the Land Training pool and similarly, of the 144 VECTOR procured, over 20 will support the training requirement.</p> <p>However, the availability of UOR equipment for training must be balanced against the requirement to deliver to operations first. Industrial capacity is quite simply unable to deliver everything at once and as UORs are invariably deployed on a rolling basis rather than in line with roulements, an element of in Theatre training will be inevitable. Much will depend on the specific UOR and its complexity.</p> <p>With regard to the selection of UORs, we still need units to think beyond their own deployments and aid the preparation of follow-on formations. Equipment implications require an increased profile in forward contingency planning. QMG is also improving routine engagement with units preparing for operations and on operations. This will include the active involvement of the Senior Sergeant Majors to routinely gather 'ground truth' and equipment feedback, as well as raising awareness in units.</p>
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Boots. A common theme in 16 AA Bde is that there should be a range of boots to match the requirement. Current boots are not robust enough for an Infantryman in the light role, but may be sufficient for roles behind F Echelon. The system needs to match boots to role; this would result in few lower limb injuries.

CGS. We have always complained about our boots! I hope that the thorough explanation from the Clothing IPT will show how this key issue is being addressed with the intention to provide a range of boots. We accept that it is not the case of 'one size fits all'!

QMG. The Army monitors the performance of its existing range of operational footwear and constantly seeks feedback from the User as to the capability/utility of its products, principally through the Front Line Commands and DEC(GM), the Sponsor for operational clothing.

It is recognised that footwear is a very individual issue and that there are a wide range of opinions as to what constitutes a suitable boot. The current range of operational footwear includes boots for general combat in both temperate and desert climates, cold wet weather boots, lightweight patrol boots, footwear for arctic operations and jungle boots.

A trial is currently underway to provide a choice of boots for desert / hot weather operations. This is in recognition that boots are very personal items of footwear and what may suit one person may not suit another; it also recognises the extremes encountered in a desert environment. The aim is to provide a choice of 3 types of boots and will include those boots more suited to heavy combat use and those for lighter duties.

The Initial User/Technical Selection and subsequent Hot Weather Trial in Cyprus have been completed and the Operational Trial, in Afghanistan and Iraq, will take place between Jul and Aug 07. The chosen boots should be available in large quantities from early 2008.

Similarly, the Personal Equipment and Common Operational Clothing (PECOC) Cat B Project that will replace the current CS95 operational clothing ensemble, is undergoing its Assessment Phase, to be completed in late 2008. As part of its work it will be examining the requirement for operational footwear including the requirement for female footwear, and will provide a solution, or range of solutions. The project will move into its Development and Manufacturing Phase in 2009 depending on Main Gate approval.

Running concurrently to the operational footwear trial, is a pilot scheme to examine the feasibility of an internet based clothing ordering system – Project AMAZON. This will allow users, with a unique log-in, to order equipment for direct delivery to their location, whether at home or on operations. At first it will only consider selected items and will not examine the delivery methods, but rather concentrate on the concept of greater flexibility and accessibility to the clothing issue system for individual soldiers.

DII Terminals. All units visited reported that there will be insufficient DII(F) terminals to deliver JPA and JAMES as their original allocation has been cut back.

CGS. It has always been the intention to provide sufficient DII(F) terminals to enable the access of personnel to a range of applications such as JPA and JAMES. Without sufficient terminals individuals will not be able to administer themselves and this causes me concern.

I know that DSPS(A) has the matter in hand and will ensure that sufficient 'work arounds' are in place until roll out of DII(F) is achieved.

QMG. There has been no overall change in the number of terminals to be delivered by the DII(F) Programme in support of JPA and JAMES. However since the contract was let in 2005, a number of changes to the allocation for individual sites have been made to take account of Defence-wide estate rationalisation and organisational restructuring.

A number of sites are not due to receive DII(F) until after the JPA (Army) Self Service go live date of 31 July 07. As such contingency solutions are being put in place for sites on a case by case basis; typically current systems, such as DII(C), are being used. Where a contingency solution is provided, the number of terminals will be less than the full fit of DII(F) but, as a minimum, will meet the guidance of 1 terminal per 10 line managers and 1 terminal per 50 self-service users. The full allocation of DII(F) terminals for these sites will be provided at a later date.

AG (DSPS(A)). LAND G6 is the lead on final distribution and roll out of DII(F) - JPA is an ORACLE HRMS software package for which DII(F) will be the ultimate bearer once it (DII(F)) is fully rolled out. In the interim JPA can run on/be accessed through a number of legacy systems and this is happening now – Land CSSR, TAFMIS, TA NET, DII(C), AFOS, etc.

With delays in the DII(F) programme is delayed the Army has gone for a phased roll out of JPA. IOC was reached on 26 Mar 07 which saw every HR admin clerk and professional user at unit level and professional users in DGS, the APC, etc all with terminals. Where DII(F) terminals were not available contingency terminals (in most cases additional legacy systems were provided. This has proved successful.

FOC (31 Jul 07) will see sufficient infrastructure to allow self-service users to access JPA, with a number of dedicated and 'approach to use' terminals. Contingency terminals will ultimately be replaced by DII(F), providing greater levels of access to JPA.

FAMILIES	Annex C
<p>SFA. The maintenance of MQs by MHS still falls far short of expectation. According to the families newly constructed houses are pretty poorly put together. Some asked why there were no houses adapted to support families with disabled members?</p> <p>CGS. I fully accept that MHS has not lived up to expectations and hope that this is now being addressed. I would also encourage those who live in new SFA that is not 'up to scratch' to report it so that the issue can be addressed.</p> <p>I encourage you all to keep reporting faults and to use the complaints procedure if MHS fail to meet appointments or to rectify problems.</p>	<p>LAND. It is acknowledged that the Housing Prime Contract had a poor start and is yet to reach steady state. Improvements are now evident in most areas other than the South.</p> <p>SFA are adapted for disabled service personnel or their dependants at public expense. Where possible a modified SFA is retained in its adapted form for preferential allocation in the future.</p> <p>AG (AMD). Houses are adapted to meet the needs of families with a disabled family member.</p> <p>DE. MHS got off to a poor start due to a number of issues: the large influx of calls in the first few days, which led to a large backlog; poor IT on the helpdesk; and some staffing problems. Positive action has been taken and many of these early problems have now been resolved. DE continues to monitor the situation on a monthly basis and is working closely with MHS and Customers to provide the required level of service.</p> <p>Newly constructed properties have to meet a number of standards for both design and quality of build. The design standards are laid out in Service Personnel Policy Scales and reflect national design standards.</p> <p>[Figures are not held centrally on the number of adjustments made to properties for disabled occupants].</p>
<p>Estates. Estates are becoming less safe and more run-down. Some estates are degenerating – in Germany it is reported that many of the neighbouring areas are occupied by immigrant families with hordes of children. This is of particular concern for wives when husbands are deployed. In UK some SFA patches have ex-MQs owned by Housing Associations and disruptive civilian families have been moved in, causing concerns over vandalism and theft. It is reported that there are fewer opportunities for children and as a result they feel less of a community. As more Army units are based on old air stations, rural isolation, poor public transport, inaccessibility to schools and medical services are all proving to be problem areas.</p> <p>CGS. There is a clear need for an RMP/MDP presence in some estates and liaison with the civilian police. Our families must feel safe – especially during deployments. This is an area that needs further examination and I will ask AG to see what can be done to improve the situation</p> <p>We must recapture that sense of community within the Army. Individuals have a key role to play as good neighbours. COs and UWOs must share and adopt best practice in order to stimulate and support vibrant military communities. These must be underpinned with a mix of public and non-public funds in order to improve the quality of life in our garrisons.</p>	<p>LAND. Rationalisation of the Army estate over time will concentrate the service community in Super Garrison areas. Planning, in conjunction with local councils and education authorities, will ensure that adequate provision is made for schooling and medical services.</p> <p>AG (DPS(A)). SFA in Germany is the property of the German Government, and once handed back to them UKSC(G) has no control over its use or who lives in it. If non British Forces' neighbours cause problems, the chain of command should refer the matter to the German Civil Police.</p> <p>In UK, MOD must conform to government policy of the 'mixed economy' in housing, with integrated military and civilian communities. As in Germany, if civilian neighbours are disruptive it is a matter for the civilian authorities rather than the MOD.</p> <p>AG (DAPS). In Families 4 the following aspects of housing emerge as 'highlights': security in and around quarter, quarter in a liveable condition, amount of space outside and inside of quarter, and service from MOD removal contractors. For soldiers': charges for quarter.</p> <p>Also new to the Families survey was the question 'How satisfied are you with the closeness of local amenities and employment opportunities e.g. shops, schools and industrial estates'. The majority of respondents were satisfied with this, although a quarter of soldiers' spouses were dissatisfied</p>

Property Ownership. More needs to be done to help Soldiers and Service families into property ownership. LSAP of £8,500 is not enough. When first introduced in 1994 it was equivalent to about a 10% deposit. Despite a fourfold rise in house prices, LSAP has not increased once. Further, there are too many rules and exclusions which apply to this advance.

There is no affordable housing in future Super Garrisons so soldiers are buying houses in their home area and serving unaccompanied.

More information is needed on Key Worker programmes.

CGS. All personnel should plan for retirement and providing a home for the family must be a key priority. Whilst this will remain a decision for individuals, we must do more to inform and support house purchase. The Strategic Review of Remuneration is addressing property ownership and in time should provide the financial support required to enable individuals and their families to get 'onto the housing ladder'.

Although the changes made to LSAP with the introduction of JPA are welcome, it is clear that more needs to be done to promote home ownership. I am actively engaged in the Centre's work on assisting house purchase that should provide a better solution than LSAP

Key Worker status is good news for those serving in London, the South East and East of England. I would like to see less geographic restriction.

LAND. Property ownership and LSAP are being addressed through the Strategic Remuneration Review with the view to assisting with these issues.

Information and POCs on the Key Worker Living Scheme are contained in the DIN entitled Key Worker Living Scheme, Reference 2006DIN02-266. This gives a summary of the information and details of the relevant internet sites.

AG (DPS(A)). Agree comments – LSAP is not enough. Assisted house purchase is included in the SRR, which will report in Dec 07. The Reviews findings still have to be confirmed, however, it is expected that a successor to LSAP, and one that better reflects the housing market, will be one of the first recommendations to be delivered. The Army has also reaffirmed its Accompanied Service policy that encourages accompanied service, but does not penalise those who wish to serve unaccompanied. Although the Key Worker housing initiative is currently restricted to the SE of UK, MOD is working for it to be extended throughout the country. Information and POCs on the Key Worker Living Scheme are contained in the DIN entitled Key Worker Living Scheme, Reference 2006DIN02-266. This gives a summary of the information and details of the relevant internet sites.

AG (DAPS). CAS showed that there were large differences between officers and soldiers in levels of home ownership (67% of officers and 30% of soldiers owned their own home); this may be related to length of service.

In the latest Serving Personnel survey only 24% of officers and 38% of soldiers were satisfied with LSAP. However, it should be noted that 91% of officers and 87% of soldiers had either not heard of or not used LSAP to help with buying their own home.

Families 4 showed that 76% of officer's spouses and 39% of soldier's spouses owned their own home

<p>Childcare. More needs to be done to provide pre-school childcare and After School Clubs in order to assist working wives and single parent servicewomen. Childcare Vouchers are long overdue. The financial benefits of operational deployments are wiped out for families by additional childcare costs.</p> <p>CGS. The provision of high quality Childcare is a key enabler to allow spouses to return to work. There are some excellent schemes being run within the Defence community and those keen to establish scheme should seek out best practice. The introduction of Childcare vouchers later this year is excellent news.</p>	<p>LAND/AG. Agreed, but providing care is essentially a parental responsibility and sometimes hard choices need to be taken between personal aspirations and support to one's children. In the UK childcare provision is normally delivered through local authorities and private providers. The Government recognises that more needs to be done and has a 10 year childcare strategy to improve provision. Eligible parents on lower incomes using regulated childcare, can access the childcare element of Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit if their family circumstances merit it. Support is means tested but for those in greatest need with the lowest incomes, can amount to 70% of the cost of childcare. Detail is available on the HMCR website at www.hmcr.gov.uk/leaflets. The guide is called 'WTC2 Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit - A Guide'.</p> <p>Overseas the MoD replicates mandatory pre-school provision through the Services Children Education Agency. In addition the Army Welfare Service supports some 140 Early Years Settings across the Army comprising nurseries, crèches, and playgroups primarily funded by parental contributions.</p> <p>Upon completion of the Tri-Service Defence Internal Audit of childcare provision this Summer, the MoD (SPPol (Community Support)) is producing an MoD childcare strategy to enable TLBs to review and provide manageable childcare facilities – though no new money will be made available.</p> <p>On childcare vouchers the good news is that the MoD recognises the benefits and is committed to introducing a salary sacrifice scheme across the three Services as soon as possible though this has always been linked to JPA rollout. The potential of manually implementing a scheme was examined it was not feasible. So although the scheme has had to take its place amongst post-JPA projects, implementation is expected by the end of this year. More information is available from this Service Families Task Force: http://www.mod.uk/NR/rdonlyres/619CB9D0-4479-447C-8BB4-598E6197B197/0/SalSacV3.pdf</p> <p>AG (AMD). Married servicewomen with working civilian husbands would also benefit.</p> <p>AG (DAPS). In Families 4, of those who had used Army provided childcare most were satisfied with the quality, less were satisfied with the availability of childcare. A third of spouses found getting childcare difficult after a move.</p>
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[Electronically Signed]

RH MORGAN
 Lt Col
 Comd CGS's Briefing Team

Annexes:

- A. List of Units Visited.
- B. Families Feedback – By Location.

CBT SPRING TOUR 2007 – UNITS VISITED

Serial	Date	Unit	Location
1	11 Dec 06	Commissioning Course	RMAS
2	11 Dec 06	SOBC	LWC Warminster
3	22 Jan 07	2 Bn REME	7 (Armd) Bde Fallingbostel
4	23 Jan 07	2 RTR	7 (Armd) Bde Fallingbostel
5	23 Jan 07	9/12 Lancers	7 (Armd) Bde Hohne
6	23 Jan 07	29 (CS) Med Sqn RAMC	7 (Armd) Bde Fallingbostel
7	24 Jan 07	4 SCOTS	7 (Armd) Bde Fallingbostel
8	24 Jan 07	SCOTS DG	7 (Armd) Bde Fallingbostel
9	25 Jan 07	32 Engr Regt	7 (Armd) Bde Hohne
10	25 Jan 07	111 Pro Coy RMP	7 (Armd) Bde Hohne
11	25 Jan 07	7 (Armd) Bde HQ & Sig Sqn	7 (Armd) Bde Hohne
12	26 Jan 07	1 RRF	7 (Armd) Bde Celle
13	06 Feb 07	CODC	LWC Warminster
14	07 Feb 07	LEOC	RMAS
15	28 Feb 07	ATR Bassingbourn	Bassingbourn
16	01 Mar 07	Jt CBRN Regt	Honnington
17	02 Mar 07	Light Dragoons	Swanton Morley
18	02 Mar 07	12 Med Sqn RAMC	Swanton Morley
19	09 Mar 07	LEOC	RMAS
20	01 Mar 07	RLC(TA) Tpt Regts	Catterick
21	19 - 23 Mar 07	Army Personnel in Mount Pleasant and Stanley	Falkland Islands
22	16 Apr 07	16 (CS) Med Regt RAMC	Colchester
23	16 Apr 07	AMRAP	Colchester
24	16 Apr 07	156 Pro Coy RMP	Colchester
25	16 Apr 07	16(AA) Bde HQ and 216 Sig Sqn	Colchester
26	16 Apr 07	13 (AA) Support Regt RLC	Colchester
27	16 Apr 07	8 (CS) Coy	Colchester
28	17 Apr 07	2 PARA	Colchester
29	17 Apr 07	3 PARA	Colchester
30	18 Apr 07	3 Regt AAC	Wattisham
31	18 Apr 07	4 Regt AAC	Wattisham
32	19 Apr 07	7 Bn REME	Wattisham
33	19 Apr 07	BPS	Wattisham
34	19 Apr 07	AMTAT	Wattisham
35	19 Apr 07	23 Engr Regt	Woodbridge
36	20 Apr 07	7 RHA	Colchester
37	20 Apr 07	PFPL	Colchester
38	23 Apr 07	21 Sig Regt	Colerne
39	23 Apr 07	10 Sig Regt	Colerne
40	15 May 07	CODC	LWC Warminster
41	01 Jun 07	LEOC	RMAS
42	19 Jun 07	2 RGR	Shorncliffe
43	20 Jun 07	5 SCOTS	Canterbury
44	21 Jun 07	36 Engr Regt	Maidstone
45	21 Jun 07	1 RSME	Chatham
46	27 Jun 07	RSMs' Convention	RMAS
47	06 Jul 07	LEOC	RMAS

FAMILIES' FEEDBACK CBT REPORT 2007 (1) - BY LOCATION

INTRODUCTION

Getting an audience from the wider military community was a real challenge – despite the sponsorship of Forces Financial and the best efforts of Unit Welfare Officers. Although the size of a couple of audiences was disappointing, the enthusiasm displayed by those who did turn up made these sessions very worthwhile. The team was impressed by the eloquence, passion and objectivity of those who attended and the common sense solutions that they offered.

FAMILIES OF HOHNE - GERMANY

- The allocation of MFO allowance for families is not enough.
- MHS never turned up for my march in so I never had a proper hand over.
- MHS take far too long to get your problems fixed - they never turn up when they say they will.
- MHS is not working.
- MHS are no help; they simply do not understand the Army they are meant to be supporting.
- We do not have enough MOD or RMP in this area. We have a great problem with gangs on motorbikes causing trouble but our police force (RMP and MOD) have been cut.
- Our estate is in s**t order at the moment. The communal rubbish area is being abused and misused. People from outside our estate are using it as a dumping ground for old washing machines and fridges. We need help.

FAMILIES OF ATR(B) - UK

- There are not enough child care facilities available on camp and this situation is made even worse with there be very few places in the local day care centres. The Army needs to more to help out its families. I have been posted with my husband to about 7 different places and every place is the same. It is a nightmare situation which does not seem to be getting sorted out at all.
- Our community centre is in a poor state which needs updated and more funds pumped into it as it is a vital part of our lives here. We need to keep it open and in good condition so that it remains a useful and important part of our community.
- Why are we as “dependants” branded for being associated with the Army? We are treated like second class citizens by many within our local communities.
- We keep being promised a swimming pool here camp but the project always gets cancelled.
- All quarters should get insulation.
- What is classed as a reasonable time away from families? No one has explained ‘Harmony Guidelines’ to us.
- Sometimes LSSA has a detrimental effect on families. We need money so he volunteers to go.
- People should not be living in quarters with no heating or double-glazing windows. The Army needs to get up to date.
- Does the profit from the NAAFI go on welfare?
- NAAFI prices are just so over priced.
- Do we have the same rights as a civilian in a council house?

FAMILIES OF JT CBRN REGT – UK

- There is no bus service to camp and this is a terrible situation for some of the wives and families as we are so far away from any where so if you do not have a car you are pretty much stuck in camp.
- I have heard a rumour that boarding school allowance is changing. Is this correct?
- There is no social community her at all. Nothing is ever organised like family days or coffee mornings. I think we need to set up a group that could start to implement such events as I know we could all get involved and start to enjoy this posting. As at the minute this place is a nightmare posting for families.
- We do not have enough play areas for our children. We have one but it s very old and falling to pieces.
- We have a school bus here but if as a wife I want to use it I have to pay. Why?
- Why is housing allocation very different for us compared to the RAF and Navy?
- My child had a fit in the playgroup. I ran into the MRS next door to get help but was told “*we don’t treat dependants*” and he refused to help. Could not an exception be made for First Aid?

FAMILIES OF FALKLANDS

- AREA 51 (Internet facility) can not be used by families. Could there be an allocated time slot given maybe just once a week?
- With the new Operational Bonus lead to a cut in the X-Factor?
- With JPA coming in is it true that the disturbance allowance will be cut?
- Are you entitled to a free flight back to view schools?
- Can you use a warrant to fly back to view schools?
- We are forced into boarding schools when we do not want to send our children there because there simple not enough places in other schools. Plus as Army families we are put to the back of the queue. The government needs to do more to help us.
- Is it true that married quarters rent is going to be changed so it reflects civilian rates?
- JPA will not work here has anyone realised that?
- The singlies are entitled to a 30 min phone card why are families not entitled to it also?
- If we need to go back to the UK for medical reasons we are not given a place to stay, transport or entitled to a free flight back. This seems very unfair seeing as the facilities here are very limited.
- There is a massive worry between the families on the provision of seat allocation on RAF flights back to UK. Many of us travel back with our children when they return to the UK to go back to school but the RAF have a policy of if there is not enough seats we are not seen as a priority and may lose our place which would leave our in some cases very young children having to fly back alone. Then we have the extra worry of them getting to their school by themselves.

FAMILIES OF WATTISHAM

- With JPA in, how will wives and partners be able to access it when our husbands are away?
- Is anything being done about Army housing? It seems no improvement is being made.
- The new houses are falling down already. Why have we wasted so much money on such poor standards of new housing?
- Why are we still using MHS? They should be sacked. It is a disgrace that even now the problems have not been sorted out.
- We need competition for MHS so at least that would kick them into touch and probably reduce costs.
- Why is the call centre for MHS based in Liverpool? It makes no sense and no one there seems to have any intelligence in relation to military life.
- The grading of houses is simple out dated and unfair a new system needs to be implemented.
- I am an officer's wife and currently live next to a Sgt. We are in the exactly same type of house with no differences at all except we pay £185 more for it each month. How can this be fair?
- We need more funding to improve the facilities for our children; there is nothing here to keep them off the streets and out of trouble.
- There is no childcare provision here at all. Colchester has it but we do not it seems highly unfair.
- 23 Engr have agreed to update our pre-school but DE is dragging their heels to make it difficult.
- The just seems to be far too many Operational tours and exercises. The quality of family life is suffering at high cost. We have had enough and so have our husbands. We can not maintain this pace of life anymore.

FAMILIES OF 21 SIG REGT - COLERNE

- There are so any rumours about JPA and that we will not get paid and that it is going to make more work in the long run. Can you put our minds at rest?
- Why the Army so old is fashioned towards single serving parents? We seem to get no help or understanding.
- There is a lack of disabled quarters in the Army. Every time we are posted we encounter the same problems time and time again. It is very frustrating. The easiest solution is to have at least one MSQ already fully fitted and equipped for a disabled person.
- On posting to Cyprus why do we have to pay out of our own pockets to have our pets transported over? There should be some form of allowance to help with the cost.
- With the Army now qualifying as "Key Workers" there seems to be a lack of information on this. Can something be done to help the passage of information on this great opportunity?
- Why does the Army not help out more with childcare?
- Boarding school is paid for by an allowance but child care is not. It makes sense to help out with childcare as much as boarding school.
- Being in the Army as a single parent is a nightmare you are discriminated against. We try our best but seem to get no help or understanding. I am keen to go on operational tours but I cannot because I have a child. My promotion has been affected also. We just need help. We feel we are being forced out of the Army.
- Many of us still feel that the Army forces you in to marriage. It is an outdated rule and need to be changed. Why should we have to get married to get a quarter and certain allowances?
- There is nothing for older children to do here the facilities are non existent. We are willing to put the hours in but we have no money.

FAMILIES OF 5 SCOTS - CANTERBURY

- We cannot continue to work at the current rate. Our husbands do not have the right equipment and kit to do the job. If we are worrying about this, what must they be feeling?
- The Army tells to much “spin” only the papers tell the truth about how pushed the Army is and how badly we are looked after.
- Nothing ever gets done. We tell people like you about our problems but nothing gets sorted out. It's just report after report but what happens? Nothing. What's the point?
- MHS – what a disaster. What has been done to sort this problem out? If anything?
- We have not been told how long we are going to stay here. Do you know?
- Now that we know we are here until 2023 is there going to be some money invested into out houses and our welfare facilities?
- Why do we not get the same amount of warrants that we got in Northern Ireland? We are further away from Scotland now and we get less. Why?
- We are not respected or welcomed by the locals here at all. We have been made to feel like scum and have been treated unfairly all because we are in the Army.
- We want to go back to Scotland!
- My husband's pay gets messed up every single month yet still nothing gets sorted out.
- We are all worried about this new JPA thing. No one seems to be able to tell us what it is or how it's going to work. We as wives should be able to log on as most of us are the ones that sort out our husband's pay etc. Is this a possibility?
- Do you still have to pay for the final move out of your married quarter?
- Deployments are too long. It seems our husbands are away for 9-10 months not 6. Can something be done about this?
- There has been lots of news about the bad treatment of our soldiers in Selly Oak hospital. What has been done to sort this out?
- There is no crèche here which causes lots of problems. Can this problem please be raised?
- There should be more warning time for those to be deployed.



Army Families Federation

Families' responses Summer 2007

'Army dependants are treated like second class citizens within our local community'

Families showed little enthusiasm to go to these briefings; contributing factors may have been reservations about the advertising poster and the timing being so close to the Easter break.

Housing and condition of the estate

Once again housing and the condition of the MOD estate caused most comment during this reporting period. Modern Housing Solutions continues to bare the brunt of complaints *'MHS are no help, they do not understand the Army'*. Although the evidence gathered by AFF is that the MHS performance has improved greatly but it may never meet the expectations of occupants due to the poor condition of the housing estate and the inferior quality of new PFI builds *'New houses are falling down already'*.

Some families had concerns that SFA charges would be increased whilst others commented that the present way the charges are set is unfair *'I am an officer's wife living in an identical house to my neighbour who is a Sergeant but we pay £185 more each month'*

There are increasing problems in many areas about the overall condition of communal areas on estates, a problem that has been exacerbated in areas where there has been a reduction in the number of refuse collections. The high mobility of the military community adds additional pressure as families moving out of SFA often leave out additional refuse which is not collected.

Families feel that there are insufficient facilities provided for families on patches and in barracks, particularly where community centres are falling into disrepair *'Our community centre is in a poor state'*. Whilst there is community support where formed units are deployed, many smaller units have no local support or community leadership *'there is nothing organised for families'*. It is suggested that families should generate this, but Army communities are not representative of the population - the demographic is a younger and less confident population often living in isolated barracks *'if you don't have a car you're stuck in camp'*. Home ownership, which often requires both spouses being in employment to obtain a mortgage, is being encouraged but means fewer older or experienced families now live on patches and are therefore unavailable to support the community.

Childcare

Families want the MOD to ensure that sufficient childcare facilities are available within garrisons and barracks, particularly in remote locations (e.g. Bassingbourn, Colerne, Wattisham) *'There is no childcare provision here at all'* and *'The Unit has agreed to update our pre-school but DE say they may not'*. It is also the lack of consistency in childcare availability and provision when families are posted that causes complaint.

Pay and allowances (including flights)

Families in the Falklands are unhappy that they don't receive flights back to UK to view schools for children. Also parents booked to accompany their children back to boarding school from the Falklands have low priority and worry that, if they are not allocated a seat on the flight, that their children may have to travel alone. Families who have to travel back to the UK from overseas (e.g. for health reasons) often have difficulty finding support for flights, accommodation and transport.

Other pay issues are a continuing fear that Continuity of Education Allowance may be reduced, the impact of JPA - particularly access for families, and fears that the X factor may be reduced due to the introduction of the Operational Bonus.