

Ref : 81808

4 December 2025

Dear Sir Andrew

On 20 October 2025 I undertook to write to you with the answer to the remainder of your parliamentary question (UIN81808) relating to the Army Reserve.

To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the average length of time is between receiving an expression of interest and receiving a formal application and the start of a training programme for a new recruit in the (a) Army and (b) Army Reserve.

Of the Army untrained Volunteer Reserve Other Ranks who joined in the 12 months ending 1 July 2025, the estimated average time from application to entry was **209 days**. This applies only to individuals with no previous Armed Forces service.

Because the Reserves application process is complex and some data is inconsistent, certain groups were excluded when calculating this figure. Including them would make the average longer.

These exclusions are:

- People commissioned through the University Officer Training Corps (UOTC).
- Anyone with recorded prior service in the Armed Forces since April 2007. This includes those joining from the Regulars, UOTC, Cadet Force Adult Volunteers (CFAV), University Air Squadrons (UAS), or University Royal Naval Units (URNU). It also excludes anyone who previously served in the Volunteer Reserves.
- People who joined the Reserves but applied through a different route (e.g., Reserve Officer, Regular Soldier, Regular Officer) or have no recorded application to join as a Reserve Soldier.

NOTES/CAVEATS

- The average is expressed as the median number of days. That is, it is the middle value in the dataset when durations are put in ascending order e.g. half of those that entered the Reserve Other Ranks did so in 209 days and half took longer.
- Application data is taken from the Defence Recruitment System and matched to untrained intake data from the Joint Personnel Administration (JPA) system and should reflect time to entry.

- Army figures differ from Recruiting Group (RG) information reported elsewhere due to differing methodologies. The RG figures are intended to support operational decision-makers monitoring operational and pipeline performance.
- Unlike figures for Regular Time of Flight, Reserve Time of Flight is not limited to entrants from the UK/Ireland.

I am placing a copy of this letter in the Library of the House.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Louise Sandher-Jones', written in a cursive style.

LOUISE SANDHER-JONES MP