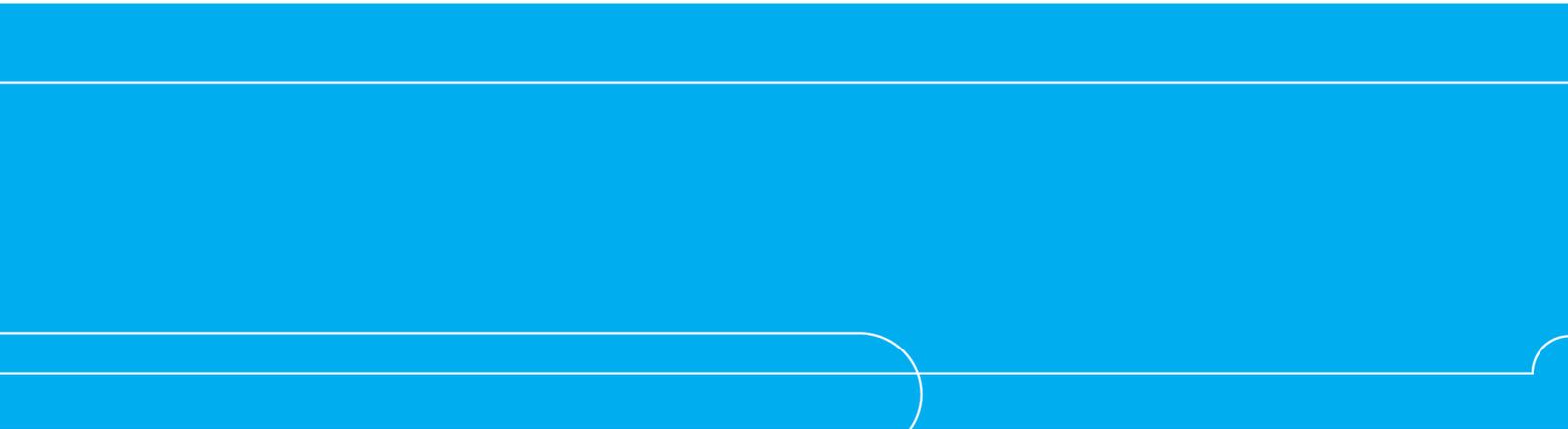


Reserve Forces Policy

September 2023



RESERVE FORCES POLICY STATEMENT

VolkerWessels UK is committed to employ staff who are in the Reserve Forces (Maritime Reserve, Army Reserve and RAF Reserve) and who may be subject to call up and mobilisation to areas of conflict. The Company has actively demonstrated their commitment to the Armed Forces by pledging their support and signing the Armed Forces Covenant. The Company recognises the valuable contribution that Reservists make to the UK Armed Forces, their communities, and the civilian workplace.

Reserve Forces Policy

Issue 1, September 2023

1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide a consistent framework and guidance for existing members of, or those wishing to join, the Reserve Forces. The Company acknowledges the training undertaken by Reservists that enables them to develop skills and abilities that are of benefit to both the individual and their employer. This policy intends to define the Company's obligations towards all employees who are members of the Reserve Forces.

2 SCOPE

This policy applies equally to all employees employed by VolkerWessels UK. The Company will not disadvantage those Reservists who notify the Company of their Reserve status or those Reservists who are made known to the Company directly by the Ministry of Defence (MoD).

2.1 Types of Reservists

- Volunteer Reservists - civilians recruited into the Royal Naval Reserves, Royal Marines Reserves, Army Reserve and Royal Auxiliary Air Force.
- Regular Reservists - ex-regular servicemen who may retain a liability to be mobilised depending on how long they have served in the Armed Forces.

2.2 The Reserve Forces Act 1996 also provides for other categories, such as:

- Full Time Reserve Service - Reservists who wish to serve full time with regulars for a predetermined period in a specific posting.
- Additional Duties Commitment - part-time service for a specified period in a particular post
- Sponsored Reserves - These are personnel employed by a contractor to provide a service to the Ministry of Defence (MoD).
- High Readiness Reserves - These are Reserves, usually with a particular skill set, that are available at short notice (with written agreement from their employer)

3 ABBREVIATIONS & DEFINITION OF TERMS

MoD - Ministry of Defence - the government department responsible for the country's military measures or resources

POL - Post-Operational Leave

RAF Reserve - Royal Air Force Reserve support the Royal Air Force in defending the UK and its interests, strengthening international peace and stability.

SAO - Service Adjudication Officer (The **Adjudicator's** Office investigates complaints about HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and the Valuation Office Agency (VOA)).

VW UK - VolkerWessels UK

4 POLICY**4.1 Reserve Status Notification**

Reservists are required to inform their employer that they are a member of the Reserve Forces and the specific force that they belong to. This is so that the Company can provide the appropriate level of support to the Reservist. It also assists with resource planning during periods of leave e.g., training and / or mobilisation.

Reservist employees are also required to grant permission for the Ministry of Defence (MoD) to write directly to their employer. This is known as 'Employer Notification' and ensures the Company is made aware that the employee is a Reservist and the benefits, rights and obligations that apply.

The MoD will issue written confirmation to the employer informing them the employee is a Member of the Reserve Forces. The letter will provide detail of mobilisation obligations and rights as an employee; rights as an employer; and details of the financial assistance available if an employee is mobilised. Where possible, it will also provide details of any annual training commitments. The MoD will also send a follow-up letter each year to confirm that the information held is still accurate.

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4 POLICY (CONTINUED)**4.1 Reserve Status Notification (Continued)**

It is the responsibility of the Reservist to ensure their personal details are kept up to date e.g., if they change employer or leave their respective Reserve Force.

In any circumstance, the Reservist will not be disadvantaged because of notifying the Company of their Reserve status.

4.2 Training Commitments and Time off

The Company recognises the importance of the training undertaken by Reservists that enables them to develop skills and abilities that are of benefit to their respective Reserve Force, the individual and the Company.

The Company will allow special leave for employees required to be absent from work for reserve forces activities. However, if the amount of time off that the employee requires becomes excessive or begins to cause operational difficulties for the company, the company has the right to refuse the employee further time off in the immediate future. Alternatively, the employee may be permitted to take time off out of their annual holiday entitlement.

Additional unpaid leave, or annual leave from the employee's normal annual allocation, of up to 18 days will be granted for short periods of training provided adequate notice is given and where such training cannot be undertaken in off-duty time. Attendance at weekend training which cannot be undertaken during off-duty will be subject to the same arrangements.

4.3 Mobilisation

Mobilisation is the process of calling Reservists into full time service with the Regular Forces, to make them available for military operations. The maximum period of mobilisation will depend on the scale and the nature of the operation and is typically no longer than 12 months.

The Call-out papers for mobilisation are sent by post to the Company or sometimes delivered in person by the Reservist to their reporting manager. The documentation will include the call-out date and the anticipated timeline. Whenever possible, Defence aims to give at least 28 days' notice of the date that a Reservist will be required to report for mobilisation, although there is no statutory requirement for a warning period prior to mobilisation. For further details on the mobilisation phases and the process, please refer to *U23 Reporting Manager and Reservist*.

4.3.1 Appling for Exemption / Deferral / Revocation

The employer has the right to ask for exemption from, or deferral of, mobilisation if it is considered that the organisation will suffer serious harm because of their absence. Serious harm can be defined as demonstrable harm to the provision of services or any financial harm. Please refer to *U23 Reporting Manager and Reservist*.

4.4 Contractual Implications

Employees will not receive a salary from VW UK whilst they are away on active service, as employees are paid a basic salary by the MoD. If this basic salary is less than the salary element employee would have received at VW UK, then employee can apply to the MoD for the difference to ensure they suffer no loss of earnings.

Employees will remain in the pension scheme during leave; however, employee should contact the administrators of the pension scheme which the employee is a member of to determine the impact on their pension.

Any private health cover ceases but employee would continue to be covered for life assurance during the period of mobilisation.

4.4.1 Annual Leave

Reservists should be encouraged to take any accrued annual leave before mobilisation. The Company is not obliged to accrue annual leave for a Reservist employee during the period of mobilisation. Reservists accrue annual leave with the MoD whilst they are in full time service. When they demobilise, Reservists are entitled to a period of post-operational leave (POL). During this period, they will continue to be paid by the MoD.

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4 POLICY (CONTINUED)**4.4 Contractual Implications (Continued)****4.4.2 Dismissal / Redundancy**

A Reservist's employment cannot be terminated on the grounds of their military duties or their liability to be mobilised. To do so would be a criminal offence under s.17 of The Reserve Forces (Safeguarding of Employment) Act 1985.

Reservists can be included in the redundancy pool if this is necessary due to a downturn in business or closure of a department. However, all employees should be treated consistently, and redundancy criteria should not discriminate against Reservists on the grounds of their Reserve service or call-up liability.

4.4.3 Sick Pay

Should a Reservist become sick or injured during mobilisation they will be covered by Defence Medical Services and any financial assistance will continue to be received (including pay) until demobilised. If the sickness or injury continues and this results in early demobilisation, the Reservist will remain covered by Defence until the last day of paid military leave.

After this time The Reservist will be covered by the Company sickness arrangements in line with the *VolkerWessels UK Absence Management Policy*. If the Reservist becomes ill post mobilisation, and a notional return to work date has been agreed, they will be covered by the Company Sickness arrangements in line with the *VolkerWessels UK Absence Management Policy*.

4.4.4 Return to work

Once military service has ended employees should submit a written application for reinstatement to employment. This should be made no later than the third Monday following the end of military service and should include the date on which employee will be available to restart work.

The return-to-work date should be within 6 weeks of the last day of full-time military service.

Employees have the right to return to work after a period of mobilisation. If it is not possible to reinstate employee into their previous job role, the Company will offer employee the most reasonable and practicable alternative role on the most favourable terms and conditions. For further information on the Return-to-Work process, please refer to the *U23 Reporting Manager and Reservist*.

4.5 Financial Assistance

Financial assistance for employers in the event of an employee who is a Reservist being mobilised is governed by the Reserve Forces (Call out and recall) (Financial Assistance) Regulations 2005. These cover additional costs above the normal earnings of the called-up Reservist associated with replacing that employee.

Please refer to the Government website for further information on the maximum claim available and any further information on the application process.

4.6 Further Information

Further sources of guidance and information can be obtained from the following:

- [Defence Relationship Management - www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) - Helpline: 0800 389 5459. This is a free telephone helpline open during office hours where advice and guidance can be obtained on training, mobilisation and employment issues.
- [Royal Navy Website - www.royalnavy.mod.uk](http://www.royalnavy.mod.uk)
- [Army Website - www.army.mod.uk](http://www.army.mod.uk)
- [Royal Air Force website - www.raf.mod.uk/rafreserves](http://www.raf.mod.uk/rafreserves)

5 IMS AUTHORISATION

Document owner approval:

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