



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Research and Library Service Bill Paper

December 2010

Armed Forces and Veterans Bill 2010

NIAR 640-10

Analysis of the provisions of the Armed Forces and Veterans Bill 2010.

Key Points

The Bill provides for a legislative basis for support to the armed forces community in Northern Ireland as part of the Nation's Commitment Command Paper, which perceives disadvantages members of the armed forces face by virtue of their service and lifestyle. Northern Ireland is the one devolved region that has yet to substantially contribute to this strategy.

While the Bill provides for a statutory requirement to implement the Nation's Commitment in Northern Ireland, other devolved regions have appointed armed forces and veterans' advocates and implemented policy and legislative changes where appropriate without introducing a statutory duty to do so. This has been undertaken through an Expert Group in Wales and a cross-party group in Scotland to make recommendations for change to support the armed forces community in those jurisdictions.

Additional support measures in England, Scotland and Wales are targeted according to specific areas of need, such as health care, accommodation and employment, where there are 'champions' to identify and address the needs of the armed forces community, rather than placing an obligation on all departments to have regard for their needs.

Executive Summary

The Armed Forces and Veterans Bill was introduced to the Assembly on 28 June 2010 as a Private Member's Bill. The Bill provides for the implementation in Northern Ireland of the Nation's Commitment UK Government White Paper on supporting members of the armed forces community and their families. Provisions of the Bill are as follows:

- The Bill provides for certain public bodies to have due regard for the impact of policy and legislation on members of the armed forces community. The paper indicates that there is no equivalent legislation in other parts of the UK, but policies and strategies are specifically targeted at supporting members of the armed forces community in those jurisdictions.
- The Bill requires each Northern Ireland government department to appoint a co-ordinator to identify and address issues for members of the armed forces community. The paper outlines how there is no requirement in other parts of the UK for departments to appoint co-ordinators, but there are 'champions' for the armed forces community in key areas, such as health and employment.
- The Bill obliges Northern Ireland departments to consult with their counterparts in England, Scotland and Wales to ensure consistency in policy and legislation impacting on the armed forces community between jurisdictions. The paper notes the role of the External Reference Group, formed by the UK Government to oversee the implementation of the Nation's Commitment strategy, in monitoring developments across the UK, with input from the devolved administrations on a voluntary, not statutory, basis.
- The Bill provides for the publication of a Service Personnel and Veterans' Charter to promote the interests of the services community. The paper refers to the UK Military Covenant, which is being reviewed as the Armed Forces Covenant, and proposals for a Veterans Charter in Scotland.

Contents

Key Points 1

Executive Summary 3

1 Introduction 7

2 Support to the Armed Forces Community 8

3 General duty to have due regard to the impact of the exercise of functions on the services community (Clause 1) 10

4 Co-ordinators (Clause 2) 10

5 Consultation with United Kingdom and devolved authorities (Clause 3) 11

6 Service Personnel and Veterans Charter and Reports (Clauses 4 and 5) 12

Appendix 1: Progress Chart for the ‘Nation’s Commitment’ 13

1 Introduction

The Armed Forces and Veterans Bill was introduced as a Private Member's Bill on 28 June 2010 by David McNarry MLA. The Bill is intended to legislate for the effective implementation in Northern Ireland of the proposals contained in the White Paper, 'The Nation's Commitment: Cross-Government Support to our Armed Forces, their Families and Veterans'¹, presented to the Westminster Parliament by the Secretary of State for Defence and the Minister of State for the Armed Forces in July 2008². This followed a Board of Inquiry into the national recognition of the armed forces, which reported in May 2008³.

The White Paper indicates that, while there is a co-ordinated approach to implementation with the Scottish and Welsh devolved administrations, the Northern Ireland Executive is to consider the proposals separately⁴:

Many of the recommendations in this Paper are devolved matters in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and decisions on their implementation fall to the relevant Devolved Administration. This is recognised by the close working between the UK Government and the Devolved Administrations of Scotland and Wales in making the commitments that follow. This collaboration will continue as we work to deliver on these promises. The proposals, as they apply to transferred matters, have also been sent to Northern Ireland for its Executive to consider collectively.

The rationale for the policy proposals in the White Paper is that there should be no disadvantage to service personnel and their families, highlighting the following reasons for action⁵:

- A profession in the armed services is just as much a lifestyle choice as any other and employment as such should not be a barrier to routine life events that others take for granted
- Service personnel and their families have to move location frequently, often to places they have not chosen to live, and there should be continuity of services, for example in terms of health, education or special needs
- Limitations to service life and the threat of or incidence of physical or mental injury represent a sacrifice for which service personnel and their families should not be put at a disadvantage

¹ <http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/AboutDefence/CorporatePublications/PersonnelPublications/Welfare/TheNationsCommitmentCrossgovernmentSupportToOurArmedForcesTheirFamiliesAndVeterans.htm>; see also the Armed Forces Covenant: <http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/AboutDefence/WhatWeDo/Personnel/Welfare/ArmedForcesCovenant>.

² *Armed Forces and Veterans Bill: Explanatory and Financial Memorandum*.

³ Quentin Davies et al., *Report of Inquiry into National Recognition of our Armed Forces*, May 2008.

⁴ *The Nation's Commitment: Cross-Government Support to our Armed Forces, their Families and Veterans*, p.12.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p.9.

- The armed forces and associated personnel and extended families comprise around 10 million people and therefore comprise a significant constituency whose needs should be taken into account when developing policy

A public consultation was carried out on the White Paper⁶, responses to which were published in February 2010⁷. An External Reference Group to oversee the implementation of the proposals, consisting of armed forces advocates, external members and representation for the Ministry of Defence, published its second annual report on progress to date in November 2010⁸.

The proposed measures in the Bill are to be subject to a consultation exercise during the Committee Stage⁹. This paper examines the provisions of the Bill in the light of actions in the other devolved administrations, issues raised in the public consultation and developments outlined in the External Reference group Annual Report.

2 Support to the Armed Forces Community

The 'Nation's Commitment' paper outlines a number of areas where in the view of the Secretary of State for Defence specific support to the armed forces community is needed, particularly in the fields of compensation, health, housing, education and skills, transport, support for families, benefits, careers, issues for foreign and Commonwealth service personnel and pay¹⁰. The document does not refer to legislation to be enacted to have due regard for the impact of policy or legislative change on the armed forces committee, although in some cases, legislation has been indicated for specific areas of action. Examples are as follows:

- The White Paper suggests legislation would need to be amended for an uplift of the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme¹¹, as suggested by a review of the Scheme published in February 2010¹², but this appears to have been delivered without legislation to date¹³

⁶<http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/AboutDefence/CorporatePublications/ConsultationsandCommunications/PublicConsultations/TheNationsCommitmentToTheArmedForcesCommunityAPublicConsultation.htm>.

⁷ *The Nation's Commitment to the Armed Forces Community: Consistent and Enduring Support – A Summary of Consultation Responses*, February 2010; there were 84 responses, none of which were from Northern Ireland.

⁸ *The Nation's Commitment: Cross Government Support to Our Armed Forces, Their Families and Veterans – External Reference Group Annual Report 2010*, 12 November 2010:
<http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/AboutDefence/CorporatePublications/PersonnelPublications/Welfare/TheNationsCommitmentAnnualReport2009.htm>.

⁹ *Armed Forces and Veterans Bill: Explanatory and Financial Memorandum*.

¹⁰ *The Nation's Commitment: Cross-Government Support to our Armed Forces, their Families and Veterans*, pp.11-19.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p.12.

¹² Ministry of Defence, *Review of the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme*, February 2010.

¹³ *The Nation's Commitment: Cross Government Support to Our Armed Forces, Their Families and Veterans – External Reference Group Annual Report 2010*, p.7, which indicates that this item was 'delivered' with a doubling of compensation payments in December 2008, although the current legislation governing the Scheme remains the Armed Forces and Reserve Forces (Compensation Scheme) Order 2005: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2005/439/contents/made>. However, a statement in the House of Commons by the Under Secretary of State, Defence, in July 2010 indicated that new legislation would be introduced in 2011 (HC Deb, 21 July 2010, c14WS).

- Legislation was amended in December 2008 to allow armed forces families to establish a local connection for social housing purposes in England and Wales¹⁴; similar provisions are in the Scotland (Housing) Bill 2010¹⁵
- Legislative changes regarding anonymity for armed forces personnel in investigations in England and Wales in the Coroners and Justice Act 2009¹⁶

The public consultation discussed legislating for the UK Government to publish an Annual Report, but arguments put forward by local authorities against such legislation were as follows¹⁷:

They suggested that legislation was an excessive response and not necessary to secure commitment. It was unclear what benefits legislation would bring in addition to current arrangements to report progress.

A legal duty to publish a Five Year Review, however, was more popular in the consultation responses, which according to the consultation document could be added to a future Armed Forces Bill¹⁸.

An Expert Group on the needs of the Armed Forces Community in Wales has been formed by the Welsh Assembly Government, meeting for the first time in May 2010, which oversees the implementation of measures to support people associated with the armed forces¹⁹. In the Scottish Parliament, the cross-party group Supporting Veterans in Scotland, which has operated since September 2008 on the initiative of Jeremy Purvis MSP, performs a similar role, albeit not as a government body²⁰. The Republic of Ireland does not have a policy initiative that equates to the Nation's Commitment document or specific legislation for government bodies to have due regard for the needs of the Defence Forces when developing policy or legislation.

The most recent annual report of the External Reference Group contained an update of progress to date in all the regions of the UK, which is at Appendix 1²¹.

¹⁴ *The Nation's Commitment*, p.14; legislation amended through Section 315 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/17/contents>.

¹⁵ Housing (Scotland) Bill 2010, Clause 143, which passed Stage 3 on 3 November 2010: <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/36-Housing/index.htm>.

¹⁶ Coroners and Justice Act 2009, Section 84: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2009/25/contents>.

¹⁷ *The Nation's Commitment to the Armed Forces Community: Consistent and Enduring Support – A Summary of Consultation Responses*, February 2010, p.8.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.9.

¹⁹ <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/housingandcommunity/safety/armedforces/afeg/?lang=en>.

²⁰ <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/msp/crossPartyGroups/groups/cpg-VetScot.htm>.

²¹ From *The Nation's Commitment: Cross Government Support to Our Armed Forces, Their Families and Veterans – External Reference Group Annual Report 2010*, pp.7-11.

3 General duty to have due regard to the impact of the exercise of functions on the services community (Clause 1)

The provisions of the Bill are for certain public bodies, which are named at Clause 1(2), to 'have due regard to the impact of the exercise of such functions as is likely to have on members of the services community²² in Northern Ireland'. The Department of Finance and Personnel may amend the list of bodies at Clause 1(2).

There is no equivalent legislation in the other devolved administrations of the UK. The suggestion of a legal duty on public bodies was discussed in the public consultation on the Nation's Commitment document. This was generally unpopular among local authorities, which raised practical considerations, such as enforcement, measurement of impact, resources and managing opposition to such a measure. The Welsh and Scottish administrations felt that existing structures were sufficient to support services families and the response from the Ministry of Defence indicated²³:

...the main reason for perceived discrimination against the Armed Forces community is lack of awareness of their particular circumstances and needs. Legislation would be heavy-handed and probably unnecessary, risking setting them apart from the communities into which they seek to integrate.

There does not appear to be any reference to how such a duty would be enforced in the Bill. However, the notion of an armed forces Ombudsman was raised in the consultation, but this was generally unpopular among respondents²⁴.

4 Co-ordinators (Clause 2)

Clause 2 requires each Northern Ireland department to appoint a co-ordinator²⁵ to take responsibility for identifying and addressing matters that affect members of the armed forces community²⁶. The Department of Finance and Personnel can issue guidance to these co-ordinators and they are required to have regard for such guidance²⁷.

Other devolved administrations do not have co-ordinators in each department, however, where there are deemed to be specific needs, Veterans' and Armed Forces Champions have been introduced. For example, in Wales, there are Champions in each of the Health Boards and NHS trusts to ensure the needs of the armed forces community are taken into account in services planning²⁸ and the Assembly has

²² The 'services community' is defined in Clause 6(1) as a current or former member of the naval, military or air forces of the Crown who has not been discharged due to misconduct or court martial.

²³ *The Nation's Commitment to the Armed Forces Community: Consistent and Enduring Support – A Summary of Consultation Responses*, February 2010, p.10.

²⁴ *The Nation's Commitment to the Armed Forces Community: Consistent and Enduring Support – A Summary of Consultation Responses*, February 2010, pp.22-3.

²⁵ Clause 1(1).

²⁶ Clause 1(2).

²⁷ Clause 1(3).

²⁸ <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/health/publications/health/guidance/veterans/?jsessionid=qLyhM1jGs6bxmK4Lbb98s6Nh0fJQ011nGKWRJNtJphfRIMDv2Jx1!55528624?lang=en>.

appointed an Armed Forces Advocate to identify and resolve legislative and policy issues that impact on the armed forces community²⁹.

In Scotland, Champions have also been appointed to Health Boards and trusts and the all-party group invited local councils to appoint Veterans' Champions to facilitate linking veterans and groups with local councils³⁰. To date, 22 councils have appointed Champions. The Scottish Parliament also has an Armed Forces Advocate³¹.

The UK Government has a Minister for Veterans³², who oversees provision for the armed forces community and there are Champions in certain areas of government and administration that are of particular significance to the armed forces community, such as at Jobcentre Plus³³, where there are 50 individuals looking after the interests of former members of the armed forces.

The consultation document on the Nation's Commitment acknowledges that armed forces advocates are already in place in a number of departmental and devolved settings and asks whether a network of such advocates would be appropriate. This suggestion received overall support from respondents in order to co-ordinate the actions of advocates at different levels and locations in harmonising policy and legislative approaches to providing for the needs of armed forces members and their families³⁴.

5 Consultation with United Kingdom and devolved authorities (Clause 3)

Clause 3 outlines an obligation to consult with the appropriate minister in England, Wales and Scotland before making policy or legislative decisions which may impact upon consistent treatment of members of the armed forces community in each of the jurisdictions. This would mean that, through such consultation, uniform provision can be maintained. This does not prevent the relevant Northern Ireland department from exercising its function following consultation³⁵.

Consultation currently takes place between England, Scotland and Wales primarily through the External Reference Group, whose role extends to the whole of the UK³⁶. Any actions in Northern Ireland in relation to The Nation's Commitment would therefore be linked in to the wider UK network through the obligations of Clause 3.

²⁹ Currently this is Dr June Milligan, Director General, Public Service and Local Government Delivery.

³⁰ See, for example: http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/chief_executive/governance/veterans_champions.aspx.

³¹ Currently, this is Dr Kevin Woods, CEO NHS Scotland.

³² Currently Kevan Jones MP.

³³ See:

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/DefenceNews/DefencePolicyAndBusiness/NewJobcentrePluschampionsForArmedForcesLaunched.htm>.

³⁴ *The Nation's Commitment to the Armed Forces Community: Consistent and Enduring Support – A Summary of Consultation Responses*, February 2010, pp.24-6.

³⁵ *Armed Forces and Veterans Bill: Explanatory and Financial Memorandum*.

³⁶ See *The Nation's Commitment: Cross Government Support to Our Armed Forces, Their Families and Veterans – External Reference Group Annual Report 2010*, p4.

However, the involvement of the Scottish and Welsh devolved institutions is not based on a legislative obligation, but a voluntary commitment to providing for members of the armed forces community with their jurisdictions in concert with the wider UK commitment. The External Reference group notes their participation in its Annual Report as a choice³⁷.

6 Service Personnel and Veterans Charter and Reports (Clauses 4 and 5)

The Department of Finance and Personnel is, with the assistance and participation of Northern Ireland Departments, to publish a Service Personnel and Veterans Charter for Northern Ireland, which is to be updated periodically. This is to take place within one year of the Act receiving royal assent³⁸. The Department is also to report on progress to the Ministry of Defence 'from time to time'³⁹.

The UK Government appointed an Armed Forces Covenant Task Force to 'rebuild' the Military Covenant⁴⁰. The Military Covenant is an unwritten mutual obligation between members of the armed forces and society that the armed forces community will be appropriately taken care of, although certain commitments to service personnel and their families have been made explicit, such as for support in the areas of health care, accommodation and compensation⁴¹. There is no legislative basis to the Military Covenant or the proposed Armed Forces Covenant.

A Scottish Veterans Charter has been proposed by Jeremy Purvis MSP the draft of which indicates the ways in which veterans are supported, commitments to provide services to veterans, standards public bodies should meet and rights in dealing with public bodies. The Charter is aimed at ensuring veterans' needs are met by local authorities. This issue was debated in the Scottish Parliament on 24 November 2010⁴².

The content of the proposed Charter is not specified in the Bill other than that it is 'for promoting the civilian interests of members of the service community and members of the families of the members of the service community'⁴³.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Clause 4.

³⁹ Clause 5.

⁴⁰ <http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/AboutDefence/WhatWeDo/Personnel/Welfare/ArmedForcesCovenant/>.

⁴¹ See *Military Covenant Factsheet*:

<http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/AboutDefence/CorporatePublications/PolicyStrategyandPlanning/MilitaryCovenantFactsheet.htm>.

⁴² SP OR 24 Nov 10 c30823: <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/officialReports/meetingsParliament/or-10/sor1124-02.htm#Col30823>.

⁴³ Clause 4(1).

Appendix 1: Progress Chart for the 'Nation's Commitment'⁴⁴

Key to Colours:

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Fully Complete by 31 July 2009 | | Ongoing monitoring / longer term commitment | |
| Fully Complete by 31 July 2010 | | Not applicable | |
| To be Completed by 31 July 2011 | | | |

Armed Forces Compensation Scheme

| No. | Serial [†] | Commitment Title | England | Wales | Scotland | N Ireland |
|-----|---------------------|---|---|-------|----------|-----------|
| 1 | 2.5 | Armed Forces Compensation Scheme Uplift | Delivered doubling of compensation payments in December 2008 All backdated uplifts processed by April 2009 | | | |

Health

| No. | Serial | Commitment Title | England | Wales | Scotland | N Ireland |
|-----|--------|--|--|-----------------------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| 2 | 2.6 | Continuation of the Military Ward in Birmingham | Delivered June 2010 | | | |
| 3 | 2.7 | Prosthetic Limb Provision | Delivered February 2009 | Delivered July 2009 | Work ongoing | |
| 4 | 2.8 | Access to NHS Dentistry | Long term monitoring | | | |
| 5 | 2.9 | NHS Waiting List Retention of Place | Delivered December 2008 | On track for delivery by end 2010 | Delivered January 2009 | Already in place |
| 6 | 2.10 | MF Stability | Delivered May 2009 | | | |
| 7 | 2.11 | Improving Information on Veterans Health Needs | Long term monitoring 'Meeting the Healthcare Needs of Veterans – a guide for General Practitioners' issued Nov 09 | | | |
| 8 | 2.12 | Roll-out of Community Mental Health following Pilots | All six pilots in place by March 2009 Assessment and evaluation will report in October 2010 Veterans service being maintained in areas where pilot has completed | | | |

Housing

| No. | Serial | Commitment Title | England | Wales | Scotland | N Ireland |
|-----|--------|---|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|--|-----------|
| 9 | 2.13a | Priority in Affordable Homes – Wales and Scotland | | Delivered May 2009 | Delivered July 2008 | |
| 10 | 2.18 | Affordable Homes – Extending Access | Delivered July 2008 | Delivered May 2009 | Delivered July 2008 | |
| 11 | 2.13b | Affordable homes - £20M pilot scheme | Launched January 2010 | | | |
| 12 | 2.14 | Defence Accommodation Management Strategy | Published August 2009 | | | |
| 13 | 2.15 | 'High Priority' for Adapted Social Housing | Delivered April 2009 | Revised Code of Guidance due Nov 2010 | Delivered June 2009 Revised code of guidance due Jan 2011 | |

⁴⁴ From *The Nation's Commitment: Cross Government Support to Our Armed Forces, Their Families and Veterans – External Reference Group Annual Report 2010*, pp.7-11.

| | | | | | | |
|----------------------|------|---|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| 14 | 2.16 | Adapted Affordable Homes Means Test – Disregard of AFCS/WPS Payments | Delivered July 2008 | Delivered May 2009 | Delivered July 2009 | |
| 15 | 2.17 | Disabled Facilities Grant Means Test – Disregard of AFCS/WPS Payments | Delivered July 2008 | Delivered May 2009 | Delivered April 2009 | |
| 16 | 2.19 | Social Housing – Establishing Local Connection | Delivered December 2008 | Delivered March 2009 | On track for delivery by end 2010 | |
| 17 | 2.20 | Acceptance of Certification of Cessation | Already in place | Revised Code of Guidance due Nov 2010 | Delivered February 2009 | |
| | | | | | Revised code of guidance due Jan 2011 | |
| Long term monitoring | | | | | | |
| 18 | 2.21 | Using MOD Void Property | Delivered August 2010 | | | |
| 19 | 2.22 | Homelessness – New Supported Housing | On track for delivery 2011 | On track for delivery end 2010 | Consultation due to complete end 2010 | |

Education and Skills

| No. | Serial | Commitment Title | England | Wales | Scotland | N Ireland |
|-----|--------|---|--|--|---------------------------------|-----------|
| 20 | 2.23 | Improved School Place Allocation | Delivered Feb 2009 | Delivered July 2009 | | |
| | | | Ongoing monitoring | | | |
| 21 | 2.24 | Assessment of Educational Attainment | Initial census completed in January 2008 Annual thereafter | | | |
| | | | Long term monitoring | | | |
| 22 | 2.25 | Ensure uninterrupted Special Educational Needs (SEN) provision | Guidance issued in Jan and Feb 2009 | | Statutory duty already in place | |
| | | | Revision of Code of Practice following 2010 Ofsted reviews | Revision of Code of Practice on track for 2012 | | |
| 23 | 2.26 | State Boarding Schools in England – Priority Access and Increased Provision | Priority access delivered February 2009 | | | |
| | | | Additional places during 2009, 2010 and 2011 | | | |
| | | | Academies on track for delivery in 2011 | | | |

| | | | | |
|----|------|--|----------------------|--|
| 24 | 2.27 | Education and Training for Service Leavers | Delivered April 2009 | |
| 25 | 2.28 | New opportunities for Basic Skills training for Families | Delivered 2009 | |

Transport

| No. | Serial | Commitment Title | England | Wales | Scotland | N Ireland |
|-----|--------|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|-----------|
| 26 | 2.29 | Concessionary Bus Travel for seriously injured Service personnel and veterans | On track for delivery by April 2011 | On track for delivery by April 2011 | Review complete May 2009 On track for delivery by April 2011 | Delivered |
| 27 | 2.30 | Blue Badge – Continuous Automatic Entitlement | On track for delivery April 2011 | On track for delivery 2011 | On track for delivery 2011 | |

Support for Families

| No. | Serial | Commitment Title | England | Wales | Scotland | N Ireland |
|-----|--------|---|---|--------------------------|----------|-----------|
| 28 | 2.31 | Improving Childcare Provision | Report complete March 2009 | Report complete May 2009 | | |
| | | | Ongoing monitoring. Commanders are liaising with Local Authorities to ensure sufficiency audits consider the needs of Service families | | | |
| 29 | 2.32 | Sure Start Children's Centres and Extended Services | Ongoing monitoring. Commanders are liaising with Local Authorities to ensure sufficiency audits consider the needs of Service families | | | |
| 30 | 2.33 | Inquests – Independent Support to Families | Coroners & Justice Bill received Royal Assent 12 Nov 09 RBL Independent Inquest Advice Service launched July 2010 Practical implementation of the Coroners Bill tbc due to a number of proposed changes | | | |
| 31 | 2.34 | Support to Bereaved Families | Ongoing monitoring | | | |

Benefits

| No. | Serial | Commitment Title | UK-Wide Position |
|-----|--------|---|--|
| 32 | 2.35 | State Benefits – Improved access for Service Families | NI Credits delivered April 2010 Impact on eligibility on track for delivery in 2011 |
| 33 | 2.36 | New Deal Employment Programmes - Improved Service Family Access | Delivered January 2009 |
| 34 | 2.37 | Seamless Transfer onto Benefits on leaving the Armed Forces | Delivered October 2009 |

Building Careers

| No. | Serial | Commitment Title | UK-Wide Position |
|-----|--------|---|---|
| 35 | 2.38 | Flexible Careers in the Armed Forces | Continuous drive for improvement |
| 36 | 2.39 | Support to the Volunteer Reserve Forces | Delivered October 2008 |
| 37 | 2.40 | Support to Employment of Service Families | Priority access policy for spouses in MOD civilian jobs published July 2009 Continuous drive for improvement |
| 38 | 2.41 | Improved Employment of Service Leavers in the Public Sector | Public sector employment website launched May 2009 Continuous drive for improvement |

Foreign and Commonwealth Service Personnel

| No. | Serial | Commitment Title | UK-Wide Position |
|-----|--------|--|----------------------------------|
| 39 | 2.43a | Settlement for dependants of F&C Service personnel | Delivered March 2009 |
| 40 | 2.43b | Unmarried/same-sex partners entitlement | Delivered March 2009 |
| 41 | 2.43c | Entitlement for time outside the UK | Scheme under review |
| 42 | 2.43d | Life in the UK Test – no disadvantage | On track for delivery April 2011 |
| 43 | 2.43e | Entitlement of children born overseas | Delivered January 2010 |
| 44 | 2.44 | Eligibility for Home Fee Status | Delivered March 2009 |
| 45 | 2.45 | F&C Service Personnel should not be disadvantaged | Continuous commitment |
| 46 | 2.46 | Earned Citizenship Project | Scheme under review |

Pay

| No. | Serial | Commitment Title | UK-Wide Position |
|-----|--------|--|---|
| 47 | 2.47 | Armed Forces Pay Review Body – Commitment to Process | Delivered March 2009 and March 2010 Ongoing commitment |

Service Families Employment and Skills Taskforce

| No. | Serial ² | Commitment Title | UK-Wide Position |
|-----|---------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| TF1 | 21 | IT based employment and Training 'One Stop Shop' | Launched April 2010 |
| TF2 | 26 | Jobcentre Plus Armed Forces Champions | Launched March 2010 |
| TF3 | 36 | Changes to Vocational Qualifications System | On track for delivery end 2010 |

| | | | |
|-----|----|---|--|
| TF4 | 44 | Revised Guidance for Local Authorities on Childcare Sufficiency | Revised guidance was published March 2010 |
| | | | Sufficiency will be assessed again in March 2011 |
| TF5 | 59 | Fair Access to Schools | As per SPCP commitments 20 and 29 |
| TF6 | 68 | Sure Start Children's Centres | |
| TF7 | 76 | Review of Accessibility | Review ongoing |
| TF8 | 78 | Flexible career options in the Public Sector | Ongoing monitoring |
| TF9 | 89 | Private Sector Support | Pilot schemes ongoing |