

# Introduction of Flexible Service in 2019

**Senior Naval Service leadership is committed to ensuring that Service personnel can balance work and family life.**

Opportunities already exist in the Naval Service for some to work flexibly - you can find more information in 'Flexible Working and You' which we highlighted in the Spring 18 issue of Homeport, at [https://nff.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/2920\\_17RD-Flexi-Working-Bklt-003.pdf](https://nff.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/2920_17RD-Flexi-Working-Bklt-003.pdf) or in JSP 750.

From April 2019 the MOD is going to add to these options for Regular Service personnel.

The new policy, called Flexible Service, will introduce new ways to temporarily change their work patterns.

## These are:

- Part Time – working one or two days fewer a week
- Restricted Separation – which would limit separated service to no more than 35 days per year
- Combining Part Time working and Restricted Separation in the same assignment

Understandably, for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines, remaining operationally able to meet all their Defence outputs is a priority, so these opportunities are more likely intended for those who are not serving in front-line or high-readiness units.

Key factors to be considered during the approvals process will be if the Service person is serving in a branch or trade with personnel shortages, the nature of their unit and operational demand.

Anyone will be able to apply, but it will be recommended that your Service partner seeks Divisional/Regimental advice before going ahead with their application.

If your family member wants to voluntarily reduce their commitment then there will be a compensating reduction in their pay, X-factor for those on Restricted Separation, leave and ultimately any pension entitlement.

MOD is working on updating the Armed Forces Pension Calculator and introducing a benefits app that will enable you to calculate what this means financially. Entitlement to subsidised accommodation, medical and dental care, Get You Home etc will still apply.

"Flexible Service is not for everyone, but it offers more choice to a broad cross-section of the Armed Forces, providing new opportunities to balance busy careers with personal responsibilities and changing circumstances," said Lt Gen Richard Nugee, Chief of Defence People.

As impractical as Part Time Working or Restricted Separation may seem for anyone serving at sea, in a Naval air squadron or a Commando unit, over the course of a career everyone will get the opportunity to potentially benefit from this new policy.

It may not be of interest right now, but it may be right for your family member at some point in the future.

**Look out for more information in the Spring 2019 edition of Homeport.**