



Ray Lock CBE
Chief Executive
Forces in Mind Trust
6 – 20 Elizabeth Street
London SW1W 9RB
E: ce@fim-trust.org



14th September 2020

Supporting veterans' transition to civilian life through employment – Consultation

About Forces in Mind Trust

Forces in Mind Trust (FiMT) was established in 2011 by a £35 million endowment from the Big Lottery Fund (now The National Lottery Community Fund). Our vision is for all ex-Service personnel and their families to lead fulfilled civilian lives, and our mission is to enable successful sustainable transition by funding evidence generation and influence activities that help to further our mission, and by strengthening the capability of the Armed Forces charities sector.

FiMT's goal is one of successful transition and the research we fund is UK-wide with specialist reports in each of the devolved nations. FiMT funds research in seven areas: Housing, Employment, Health, Finance, Criminal Justice System, Relationships, and our new Enabler Programme.

We believe that no ex-Service person, or their spouse or partner, should be disadvantaged in achieving successful employment outcomes, and that special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given the most such as the injured and the bereaved. Our vision is for all Service leavers seeking employment to be able to secure a satisfying job role which meets realistic expectations, provides fulfilment, and generates a sufficient source of income.

Overview

At present, some Service leavers are experiencing disadvantage when they enter the civilian labour market. This disadvantage, caused by time (often many years) spent separated from the civilian world of work, can result in a failure to secure appropriate employment on transition.

FiMT welcomes the National Insurance Contribution (NICs) relief for employers that hire veterans and we thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Being able to find secure and suitable employment is one of the key indicators of a successful transition from the Armed Forces to civilian life and we welcome an intervention which will help reach this goal. The relief is a good starting point and we hope that it will be an incentive to businesses to employ more veterans, and for employers who have never considered ex-Service personnel as a source of talent, to consider them. However, more can be done, and we will continue to fund research and work with government and the business sector to ensure that ex-Service personnel and their families are able to secure long-term and successful employment.

Our response will refer to the evidence available on the employment for ex-Service personnel to help answer some of the Consultation's questions. If you would like any further information on the evidence available, or FiMT's work in general, please let me know.

All our research, together with external UK and international research, is also hosted on the FiMT Research Centre's Veterans and Families Research Hub¹.

¹ <https://www.vfrhub.com/fimt-research-centre/>

1. Would a relief of this nature encourage employers to employ your first or more veterans?

Previous research has shown the biggest barriers to employing ex-Service personnel include employers, particularly small and medium sized enterprises: being unaware of ex-Service personnel or the value they can bring to an organization; not knowing how to access ex-Service personnel or the intermediary organizations that work with them²; and holding negative perceptions of those who have served. In research examining the experience of Service leavers aged 50 and over, less than half of employers felt they could make good use of military skills³. In a YouGov survey conducted in 2019, nearly one fifth of UK organizations surveyed said they were unlikely to consider hiring veterans due to negative perceptions of their time spent in the Armed Forces⁴.

Several reports have called for interventions which improve employers' awareness of ex-Service personnel and which make it easier for employers to access Service leavers^{5,6,7}. This relief may therefore be a useful tool in starting to break down these barriers, increasing employers' awareness of the value of hiring ex-Service personnel, while helping to ease the cost burden for smaller businesses.

However, the relief is unlikely to meet its aims of supporting ex-Service personnel into employment and businesses utilising the valuable skillset of veterans alone. A collaborative approach is needed with government departments working with each other, including the Ministry of Defence and the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, as well as the business community, to facilitate a long-term solution. There needs to be improved career and life planning by Service leavers whilst still in service^{8,9,10}, including commercial skills training¹¹. Additional training and support should be provided to civilian Human Resources departments and hiring managers to support the recruitment and retention of ex-Service personnel¹², and there needs to be better translation of military skills¹³, and better recognition of those skills by employers¹⁴. There also needs to be better engagement between the MOD and business¹⁵ to help improve understanding of the skills needed in the civilian labour market and to facilitate work placements¹⁶.

The Armed Forces Covenant and the Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) have helped to encourage businesses to engage with and employ the Armed Forces Community. However, the focus of the ERS has primarily been on large employers and more work needs to be done with smaller businesses to encourage them to sign up to the Covenant

² GoodPeople (2020): A Better Working Future for Ex-Service personnel

³ Officers Association (2020): Understanding Service leavers 50+: Their challenges and experiences in the civilian jobs market

⁴ <https://www.fim-trust.org/news-policy-item/veterans-face-negative-stereotypes-when-applying-for-jobs/>

⁵ RAND Europe (2020): Changing Our Approach to Veterans' Employment

⁶ *Op cit* GoodPeople (2020)

⁷ Cranfield University (2019): Female Service leavers and Employment

⁸ *Op cit* Officers Association (2020)

⁹ *Op cit* Cranfield University (2019)

¹⁰ Kantar Futures (2017): Continue to work: The Transition Mapping Study

¹¹ Warwick Institute for Employment Research (2018): Self-employment and the Armed Forces Community

¹² *Op cit* RAND Europe (2020)

¹³ *Op cit* GoodPeople (2020)

¹⁴ *Op cit* Kantar Futures (2017)

¹⁵ Deloitte (2016): Veterans Work: Recognising the potential of ex-service personnel

¹⁶ *ibid*

and to ensure it is accessible to organizations with limited resources¹⁷, including better regional support and simplified processes.¹⁸

While it is important that employers become aware of ex-Service personnel as potential employees, and this relief may help facilitate this, it is also important that employers recognise the strong and varied skill set of Service leavers rather than seeing the relief simply as a cost-saving exercise. Employers should be encouraged to consider how the money saved through the relief could be invested in veteran recruitment, such as by providing dedicated military transition and talent programmes and sharing best practice to effect real and long-term change.¹⁹

In addition to progressing with this relief, we would encourage the government to evaluate this scheme to examine take up, the outcomes for both employers and ex-Service personnel, and the impact it has on the long-term employment of ex-Service personnel, beyond the first year of relief. Research has found that employers speak very highly of ex-Service personnel as employees²⁰ and that they have helped fill skills gaps.²¹ Case studies should therefore be encouraged and shared amongst the business community.

4. Do you agree that the Government should define the qualifying length of service to be considered a veteran as set out in the Armed Forces Covenant?

We agree that the qualifying length of service should remain as it is currently set out in the Armed Forces Covenant and, as an organization, we follow the same definition. Previous research has shown that Service leavers are not a homogeneous group and may experience challenges when finding employment for several different reasons. However, those who left the Armed Forces before completing their initial terms of service, Early Service Leavers, have been identified as a group that are more likely to experience worse employment outcomes than the rest of the veteran population²². It is therefore important that they are included within the qualifying criteria. Whilst they may not have served on the front line, virtually all will have signed for 'the Queen's Shilling' with that intention, and the State (and Armed Forces charities) should recognize them by offering their full support.

5. Do you agree that making this relief available for all veterans, regardless of when they left HM Armed Forces is the correct approach? If not, what approach would be preferable?

While most Service leavers make a successful transition into civilian life, research has shown that not all Service leavers secure civilian employment before or directly after leaving the Armed Forces. We would therefore agree that making the relief available for all veterans, regardless of when they left the Armed Forces, is the correct approach.

The latest statistics from the Ministry of Defence show that 6% of regular Service leavers who used a billable service from the Career Transition Partnership (CTP) were unemployed six months after leaving service and 8% were economically inactive²³. The statistics for those who do not use the CTP however are less clear and it is likely that the number of Service leavers who are unemployed six months after leaving is higher than evidenced by the data. A recent report examining the employment outcomes of Service leavers aged 50 and over found that while most 50+ Service leavers find work, a minority experience long-term unemployment, under-employment or precarious work,

¹⁷ Shared Intelligence (2019): Benefit not Burden

¹⁸ Federation of Small Businesses (2019): A Force for Business

¹⁹ Op cit Deloitte (2016)

²⁰ Op cit GoodPeople (2020)

²¹ Op cit Federation of Small business (2019)

²² King's College London (2018) Veterans and Benefits

²³ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/868768/20200226_-_Statistical_Bulletin_v3_-_O.pdf

and 1 in 5 were working in non-permanent positions such as self-employment, portfolio work or casual employment.²⁴ In research examining the employment outcomes for female Service leavers, 22% of respondents reported that they were not working at the time of the survey²⁵. Another piece of research, conducted by Deloitte, found that 9% of Service leavers were either unemployed or not working.²⁶ We would therefore welcome an intervention which would help veterans who have just left the Armed Forces as well as those who have struggled to find work.

10. Do you agree that these conditions should apply? If not, what approach would be preferable?

We welcome the flexible approach proposed in the Consultation which would allow Service leavers who have not yet secured a job to benefit from the relief and the acknowledgement that that first role after leaving may not be a permanent one. Previous research has shown that some Service leavers do not find secure and suitable employment in the first job they undertake, and some find themselves underemployed and underpaid²⁷.

However, the condition that a veteran would be required to have no other employment in the period between leaving the Armed Forces and the first 'qualifying employment' would exclude a cohort of Service leavers who may have already decided to, or needed to, work in a temporary role which does not match their skills or talent since leaving. Whilst we acknowledge that this may need to be the case to ensure this relief is manageable both in process and cost, we would encourage the government to also look at how best to support Service leavers who have already left, found a job in a temporary role, but are now in need of support to find successful and sustainable employment.

Recommended Reports

We have referred to several reports that would merit further review and these are listed below with references included in the Bibliography as well as access links. If you would like hard copies of any of the report, please let me know.

- Deloitte (2018): Veterans Work: Moving on
- Warwick Institute for Employment Research (2018): Self-employment and the Armed Forces Community
- Kantar Futures (2017): Continue to work: The Transition Mapping Study
- Officers Association (2020): Understanding Service leavers 50+: Their challenges and experiences in the civilian jobs market
- Cranfield University (2019): Female Service leavers and Employment
- GoodPeople (2020): A Better Working Future for Ex-Service personnel – This report is due to be published in October 2020. If you would like a copy once available, please let me know.

We would also encourage you to read FiMT's Policy Statement on Employment²⁸ which you can find at the end of our submission. The Statement sets out our policy position on the employment of ex-Service personnel and their families, provides an overview of the evidence that exists to support it, the issues that inform it, and the changes that are needed to achieve it.

²⁴ *Op cit* Officers' Association (2020)

²⁵ *Op cit* Cranfield University (2019)

²⁶ Deloitte (2018) Veterans Work: Moving on

²⁷ The Royal British Legion (2016): Deployment to Employment

²⁸ <https://s31949.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/employment-policy-statement.pdf>



Ray Lock CBE
Chief Executive
Forces in Mind Trust
6 – 20 Elizabeth Street
London SW1W 9RB
E: ce@fim-trust.org



Thank you for providing the opportunity to comment on the Consultation. If you would like any further information, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Ray Lock' in a cursive, flowing script.

Ray Lock, Chief Executive, Forces in Mind Trust



Ray Lock CBE
Chief Executive
Forces in Mind Trust
6 – 20 Elizabeth Street
London SW1W 9RB
E: ce@fim-trust.org



Bibliography

- Cranfield University (2019): Female Service leavers and Employment <https://s31949.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/female-service-leavers-employment.pdf>
- Deloitte (2016): Veterans Work: Recognising the potential of ex-service personnel <https://s31949.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/veterans-work-recognising-potential-ex-service-personnel.pdf>
- Deloitte (2018) Veterans Work: Moving on <https://s31949.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/veterans-work-moving-on.pdf>
- Federation of Small Businesses (2019): A Force for Business <https://www.fsb.org.uk/campaign/a-force-for-business-service-leavers-and-small-business.html>
- GoodPeople (2020): A Better Working Future for Ex-Service personnel – due to be published in October 2020
- Kantar Futures (2017): Continue to work: The Transition Mapping Study <https://s31949.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/the-transition-mapping-study-2017-continue-to-work.pdf>
- King's College London (2018): Veterans and Benefits <https://s31949.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/veterans-and-benefits.pdf>
- Officers Association (2020): Understanding Service leavers 50+: Their challenges and experiences in the civilian jobs market <https://s31949.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/20200429-50-full-report-FINAL.pdf>
- RAND Europe (2020): Changing Our Approach to Veterans' Employment <https://s31949.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/20200117-Summit-report-final.pdf>
- Shared Intelligence (2019): Benefit not Burden <https://s31949.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/benefit-not-burden-improve-delivery-organisational-pledges-armed-forces-covenant.pdf>
- The Royal British Legion (2016): Deployment to Employment <https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/docs/default-source/campaigns-policy-and-research/deployment-to-employment.pdf>
- Warwick Institute for Employment Research (2018): Self-employment and the Armed Forces Community <https://s31949.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/self-employment-armed-forces-community.pdf>

Forces in Mind Trust - Policy Statement on Employment

Purpose

1. This Statement sets out FiMT's policy position on the employment of ex-Service personnel and their families. It provides an overview of the evidence that exists to support it, the issues that inform it, and the changes that are needed to achieve it.

Background

2. Forces in Mind Trust (FiMT) was established in 2011 by a £35 million endowment from the Big Lottery Fund. Our vision is for all ex-Service personnel and their families to lead fulfilled civilian lives. Our mission is to enable successful sustainable transition. We deliver our mission by commissioning and funding evidence generation to influence policy makers and service providers, and by improving the capability of the Armed Forces charities sector.

3. Gaining civilian employment is generally considered to be one of the indicators of a successful transition from military to civilian life²⁹. In adopting a programmatic approach to our work, based on our theory of change, our Employment Programme brings together a coherent set of projects with the aim of delivering tangible impact³⁰. It is supported and informed by our policy position on the employment of ex-Service personnel.

Policy issue

4. The transition from employment in the Armed Forces to civilian employment is one which most Service leavers make successfully. For a significant proportion though, it can be a challenge and issues associated with skills transferability and translation, employers' attitudes and personal identity can present barriers to securing sustainable and fulfilling employment. Transition also impacts on the employment and careers of spouses and partners, particularly if there is a relocation involved. The result is that employers are missing out on valuable skills and experience, and individuals are experiencing a loss of sense of purpose, with the knock-on effects on health and wellbeing, relationships and personal finances, all at considerable cost to society³¹.

Policy position

5. We believe that no ex-Service person, or their spouse or partner, should be disadvantaged in achieving successful employment outcomes, and that special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given the most such as the injured and the bereaved. Our vision is for all Service leavers seeking employment to be able to secure a satisfying job role which meets realistic expectations, provides fulfilment, and generates a sufficient source of income.

6. At present some Service leavers are experiencing disadvantage when they seek to enter employment in the civilian world. This disadvantage, caused by time (often many years) spent separated from the civilian world of work, is manifest in a failure to secure appropriate employment on transition. Working with others, we are using our evidence and knowledge base to ensure that such disadvantage ceases to exist. There is evidence to show that this will benefit Service leavers and their families, employers and the economy³².

²⁹ Wrexham Glyndwr University: Leaving the Armed Forces and living as a Civilian, 2018

³⁰ FiMT's 2018 Impact Report provides further information on our Change Model and is available here: www.fim-trust.org

³¹ Kantar Futures: Continue to work. The Transition Mapping Study 2017, 2017

³² UK Commission for Employment and Skills: Employer Skills Survey 2015: UK Results (Amended May 2018)

Overview of evidence and issues

7. We have commissioned and published research on employment needs, barriers and outcomes, and we support an ongoing programme of research on the employment of ex-Service personnel. This provides knowledge and insight into the issues that face ex-Service personnel in entering and remaining in civilian employment.

8. **Factors affecting employability.** A range of factors affects employability and impacts on the likelihood of Service leavers achieving successful employment. Some relate to employees (the supply side), and some to employers (the demand side). Our research evidence shows that the following factors impact on employment outcomes:

- **The transition process.** There are inevitable tensions in the transition process arising from the need to continue to meet the demands of Service life and at the same time find space for preparation and planning for post-Service life. These tensions may be exacerbated if the Service leaver is:
 - Deployed on operations away from their home base for a significant period in the last 2 years before discharge.
 - Confronted with a number of myths and mixed messages about civilian life from both within and without the Armed Forces³³.
- **Transferability of qualifications and roles.** Military qualifications are not recognized in the civilian labour market, even when they are for skills that are transferable and in demand³⁴. Employers tend to underestimate the skill-sets of ex-Service personnel³⁵. This can become a barrier, especially when combined with low levels of non-military qualifications.
- **Level of educational qualifications.** Veterans are less likely than non-veterans to be educated to degree level (19.4% versus 28.3%). Low literacy and numeracy rates are also an issue, most especially for Service leavers from the Army.
- **Employment.** Spouses' and partners' ability to secure employment impacts on the chances of a successful transition for ex-Service personnel³⁶. However, spouses and partners who have experienced frequent relocations are not in a position to invest in their education and career³⁷.
- **Employment readiness.** Those Service leavers who left service early are at risk not only of struggling to find employment, but also of being less employment-ready as a consequence of being more likely to have housing, mental health, caring and substance misuse issues³⁸.

9. **Profile of Service leavers who encounter barriers.** Evidence shows high levels of employment among veterans overall³⁹. However, some Service leavers are more likely than others to encounter barriers to employment. These include:

- Service leavers from UK Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds
- Female Service leavers⁴⁰

³³ Kantar Futures: Continue to work. The Transition Mapping Study 2017, 2017

³⁴ Ibid

³⁵ Business in the Community, Capitalising on military talent, FiMT, 2016

³⁶ Centre for Social Justice: Military families and transition, FiMT, 2016

³⁷ Ibid

³⁸ Anglia Ruskin University: Future Horizons Programme Final Report,

³⁹ Deloitte, the Officers' Association and Forces in Mind Trust: Veterans work: moving on, 2018

⁴⁰ Ibid

- Foreign and Commonwealth Service leavers who encounter barriers in obtaining the legal right to work in the UK⁴¹
- Service leavers who have been medically discharged
- Early Service leavers (who have served four years or less, or those who have served more than four years but been compulsorily discharged): the employment rate for ESLs is relatively low with only 52% reported to be in education, training or employment six months after leaving⁴²

In addition, those who served in the British Army are significantly more likely than those who served in the Royal Navy or Royal Air Force to be unemployed six months after leaving the UK Armed Forces.

10. **Quality and nature of employment.** The statistics on levels of employment do not present a full picture. Less is known about whether Service leavers are finding jobs that are suited to their skill levels and experience, either in the short or long term⁴³. Research conducted by the Royal British Legion showed that an estimated 60,000 members of the ex-Service community reported having to take a job for which they felt overqualified or underpaid⁴⁴.

Addressing the issues – where are we now?

11. We know that significant structural and cultural barriers still exist between employers and the transitioning Armed Forces community in terms of access to job opportunities, identification of talent and the bringing together of employees with skills and experience that match the needs of employers.

12. We recognise and welcome the range of positive developments in place that are helping to break down barriers. Government's continuing support and programmes of funding for the Armed Forces Covenant; the work of Defence Relationship Management on behalf of the Ministry of Defence to help employers better understand the value of signing the Covenant; and the support provided by the Career Transition Partnership are all helping. The newly launched Defence Transition Service is also likely to improve the outcomes for those Service leavers identified as being at enhanced risk of unsuccessful initial transition.

13. Government's support for overcoming barriers is brought together in Government's cross-departmental 'Strategy for our Veterans' published in 2018⁴⁵. We strongly support the principles that underpin the vision set out in this strategy, and the objective of encouraging and enabling veterans to maximise their potential as civilians. We look forward to the publication of the forthcoming Defence Transition Policy which will help to ensure that the MOD takes a more holistic approach to supporting successful transition to civilian life. We look forward also to the publication of an Implementation Plan to support the Veterans' Strategy, and to contributing to its development and delivery through provision of evidence-based research on what works best; we believe this is one of the key ingredients needed to further break down barriers to employment.

⁴¹ Pearson C, Caddick N: Meeting the Needs of Commonwealth Personnel and Families: A Map of Service Provision, FiMT Research Centre, Cobseo, Army Families Federation, 2018

⁴² Pike, A, Deployment to Employment, The Royal British Legion, 2016

⁴³ FiMT Research Centre, Snapshot Employment, 2018

⁴⁴ Royal British Legion: Deployment to employment: exploring veteran unemployment in the UK, 2016

⁴⁵ HM Government: The Strategy for our Veterans, 2018

14. Employers' engagement with and commitment to the Covenant and the Employers' Recognition Scheme are increasing⁴⁶, and some mostly large private sector employers have been leading the way through taking initiatives such as specific recruitment drives and adjustments to HR practices.

15. Progress is being made in the small business and self-employment sector. For example, in 2018 the Federation of Small Businesses appointed its first Armed Forces Champion, and the work of X-Forces Enterprise is having real impact by supporting people from the Armed Forces community into entrepreneurship and business start-ups.

16. In the public sector the Step into Health programme is offering a route into employment and career development opportunities for members of the Armed Forces Community, recognizing the transferable skills and values that Service personnel can bring to the NHS. Our view is that the 'Step into...' model is one which could be replicated in other parts of the public sector.

17. The positive change that is already underway is not enough to negate the need for support for those Service leavers who encounter barriers. The voluntary sector plays a critical role in addressing that need. Recent analysis of voluntary sector trends shows that there are 59 Armed Forces charities providing employment support. 61% of the support provided by those charities is in the form of advice, and 39 of the charities providing support offer recruitment related services⁴⁷.

Addressing the issues – what needs to happen?

18. While there is much that is positive which should be celebrated and shared widely, we know that there is still a long way to go. There are some specific changes and actions that are needed to overcome existing barriers. These include actions that we believe are achievable and can be delivered in the relatively near future, as well as more fundamental changes in attitudes that may take longer:

- **Including work placements in the resettlement process.** Service leavers would benefit from being better prepared to enter the civilian employment market. The recent positive changes that have been made to the process could be built on by enabling access to work placements through providing opportunities such as internships, apprenticeships or a period of contract work. The benefits of doing so have been highlighted in research we commissioned from the University of Warwick⁴⁸ and from Deloitte⁴⁹.
- **Skills translation and accreditation.** There is a need for Government to strengthen its strategy for translating and accrediting skills, experience and qualifications gained in the Forces for the civilian world. This will help to increase awareness and understanding among civilian employers of how Service leavers' skills fit their recruitment needs.

⁴⁶ Armed Forces Covenant Annual Report 2018 reports that the total number of employers of all types and sizes across the UK has risen to over 3,000, HM Government, 2018

⁴⁷ Directory of Social Change: Focus on: Armed Forces Charities – Sector Trends, 2019

⁴⁸ Warwick Institute for Employment Research: Self-employment and the Armed Forces Community, FiMT, 2018

⁴⁹ Deloitte: Veterans Work: Moving On, FiMT, 2018

- **Better recognition of transferable skills and competencies.** While some employers actively seek to employ Service leavers, many lack awareness and understanding of the skill-sets and transferable skills and competencies they can bring, such as efficiency and the ability to work under pressure⁵⁰. The Armed Forces Covenant has helped to raise awareness of transition issues and encourage fair treatment, including by employers⁵¹. However, evidence shows that negative stereotypes continue to be widespread, persistent and damaging to employment prospects⁵².
- **The benefits system.** Research evidence shows that for those ex-Service personnel who encounter difficulties in making a successful transition into civilian employment, the benefits system is difficult to navigate, and there are instances of benefits sanctions being inappropriately applied to veterans⁵³. Better identification of veterans and understanding of their complex needs are required. We are encouraged by the Department for Work and Pensions willingness to engage on this issue, but it will take time and a concerted effort by the Department to ensure that the necessary changes take place.
- **Attitudinal change and increased awareness and understanding.** In 2018 research showed that 39% of employers believe veterans are likely to be institutionalized, and 30% thought that serving in the Armed Forces ‘damages people’⁵⁴. There is a clear need to address these negative perceptions and to increase awareness and understanding of the benefits that veterans bring to the workplace. We recently published a research report on how to improve the delivery of organizational pledges made under the Armed Forces Covenant. This showed that there are many organisations across the public, private and voluntary sector who wish to support the Armed Forces Community, but who lack the knowledge and understanding of how to do so; our report shows how employers can support ex-Service personnel and benefit from their skills and experience⁵⁵.
- **Better data on employment outcomes.** Government statistics are published for those Service leavers who have used the services of Career Transition Partnership (CTP). These show that levels of employment among Service leavers are relatively high six months after leaving the Armed Forces (84% of Service leavers compared to the current UK employment rate of 75.5%)⁵⁶. However, they do not show the quality or longevity of that employment. Better data would improve knowledge of long-term career paths. While recognising the challenges involved, we need better data on the 20% of people who do not use CTP, and to better understand the outcomes for the 16% of Service leavers who have used CTP but are not in employment. CTP and MOD are working to address this, and we look forward to seeing fuller data becoming available, in order to ensure that employment support can be targeted towards those who have a need, but are not currently accessing it.

Measuring success

19. Changing policy and practice through evidence generation and influencing inevitably takes time, and requires changes in awareness, attitudes and understanding. The measures of success are therefore complex and comprise a mix of ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ indicators. We will continue to commission research and analysis to provide

⁵⁰ Kantar Futures: Continue to work. The Transition Mapping Study 2017, 2017

⁵¹ Ibid

⁵² Futures 4 Forces: UK employers’ perceptions on the employment and employability of ex-Service personnel, 2015

⁵³ University of Salford: Sanctions, Support and Service Leavers. FiMT, 2019

⁵⁴ You Gov: Public perceptions of veterans and the armed forces. FiMT, 2018

⁵⁵ NatCen, Shared Intelligence, Benefit not Burden. FiMT, 2019

⁵⁶ MOD: Career Transition Partnership Annual statistics: UK Regular Service Personnel Employment (published 31 January 2019)

evidence and insight into the progress made and challenges encountered in improving employment outcomes for ex-Service personnel. We will encourage other organisations to build success measures into their employment related initiatives. We will work closely with Government to help ensure that the current data is strengthened so that the profile of those people experiencing barriers to employment, or who have poor employment outcomes, is clearer.

20. We recognise that we will not be able to quantify absolutely the extent to which FiMT has contributed to positive change; our role is to influence and catalyze others, using an evidence-based approach to do so.

Reflections and next steps

21. If we are to create a society in which no Service leaver, or their spouse or partner, experiences disadvantage as a result of serving in the Armed Forces, we need to build on the positive changes that are already happening. Sharing success and telling the story of the skills and strengths that make ex-Service personnel a genuine asset to employers are key. The journey to embed lasting change will inevitably take time.

22. Our role at FiMT is to generate evidence that sheds light on the issues, and to use our convening power to bring together organisations and individuals to stimulate debate, engagement and action that leads to changes in policy, practice and attitudes. Our strategy is to enhance the readiness of ex-Service personnel for civilian employment and in parallel improve understanding of employers so that barriers are removed. In this way we are committed to ensuring that those who have served in the Armed Forces achieve successful employment outcomes when they transition from Service to civilian life.

Sources of Further Information

- All of the employment related research that we have funded can be found on our website: <https://www.fim-trust.org/reports/>
- FiMT's Veterans and Families Research Hub based at Anglia Ruskin University published an Employment Snapshot which is a summary of research and evidence relating to the UK Armed Forces and veteran community: <https://www.vfrhub.com/article/snapshot-employment/>