

Reserve Forces training: a guide for employers

Annual Camp



Overview of the training

Each year (running from April to March) every member of the Territorial Army (TA) has to attend a two-week continuous training period. The only exceptions are those who have been mobilised for full-time service during the year and a few specialists.

This annual period of intense training is critical to the development of the Reservist's skills and for building experience.

This continuous training period can either be a course run by an Army training establishment, usually leading to a particular military qualification, or a fortnight of training provided by the Reservist's unit, which is commonly known as 'Annual Camp'.

The nature of each Annual Camp varies according to the role of the unit the Reservist belongs to and from year to year, but typically it will follow a programme such as the illustration below. It can take place in the UK or overseas, with overseas Camps being used to train the Reservist to operate in extreme climates or alongside foreign allies.

Annual Camp is an intense period of learning for any Reservist, whatever their rank or level of experience. They are all expected to assimilate a great deal of information and to then put it into practice in demanding practical environments.

For more junior members of the TA this will focus on both the basic skills they need as a soldier (such as first aid, map reading, weapon handling and low-level tactics) and the additional skills they need for their particular trade (such as driving, operating radios or firing artillery). In many cases the first week of training will build up to exercises using live ammunition in simulated combat.

In addition to the fortnight itself, Annual Camps require a great deal of preparation and planning, both by the senior staff in the Unit who plan the overall programme and logistics and by the individuals who will be conducting the training lessons and exercises. All the Reservists attending will undertake preparatory training in the months leading up to Annual Camp.

Illustrative structure of an Annual Camp

Saturday	Report to local TA Centre, draw weapons and the other equipment needed Move to the training location (in the UK or overseas)
Sunday	Briefings on the programme ahead, assessments on basic skills
Monday and Tuesday	Training in individual skills appropriate to the Reservist's role
Wednesday to Friday	Training in group skills appropriate to the Unit's role
Saturday	Day off
Sunday	Orders, rehearsals and equipment issue for the field exercise
Monday to Thursday	Field exercise to test and develop individual and group skills under pressure, day and night
Friday	Field exercise ends, debrief and clean equipment
Saturday	Return to local TA Centre, return and account for all equipment, dismiss

How do employers benefit?

Throughout Annual Camp, the Reservist needs to be organised and self-motivated, so that they and their equipment are suitably prepared for an intense timetable of activities.

They need to learn rapidly and develop their skills to a high standard so that they are proficient and can operate safely in hazardous situations (eg: when heavy machinery, live ammunition or explosives are used). From this training the Reservist will gain development in many areas which are relevant to their civilian employment, including:

- Personal administration
- Ability to acquire new skills
- Teamwork
- Reliability and self-confidence

During the first part of Annual Camp the junior Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs, such as Corporals) and junior officers (such as Lieutenants) will mainly be engaged in delivering the training through theory and practical lessons.

This develops their:

- Skills in planning and delivering effective training sessions against set objectives, including arranging the necessary resources
- Self-confidence and the ability to manage the group and motivate students
- Presentation skills

During the field exercise in the second week they themselves will be tested on their ability to:

- Plan, based on situational analysis and set procedures
- Make decisions in high-pressure, challenging situations
- Lead a team of between seven and 27 other Reservists in physically demanding conditions
- Communicate plans clearly to others to ensure delivery

The more senior ranks within the Unit, such as Warrant Officers and Majors, are responsible for the overall planning and delivery of the training. They will develop their skills in:

- Planning and managing complicated programmes of activity
- Arranging and managing the supporting logistics, including transport, accommodation, feeding and the management of hazardous materials
- Conducting inherently dangerous activity in a safe and effective manner according to strict rules
- Leading large groups of Reservists, with a responsibility for their training and welfare

How much would this training cost you to buy?

£1,500

Annual Camp is not an assessed course, and the content varies considerably from Camp to Camp. However, according to research endorsed by the Chartered Management Institute, if you were to pay for training to deliver equivalent employee development it would cost you in the order of £1,500.

This relates just to the development which is relevant to a civilian workplace.



This document has been published by SaBRE (Supporting Britain's Reservists and Employers), the Ministry of Defence campaign which explains the benefits, rights and obligations associated with employing a member of the Reserve Forces.

The Reserve Forces include the Royal Naval Reserve, Royal Marines Reserve, Territorial Army and Royal Auxiliary Air Force.

Reservists are civilians who train for their military role in the evenings, at weekends and normally for a two-week period each year. In times of need, the Government can mobilise them for full-time military service alongside the Regular Forces – and many thousands have served in Iraq or Afghanistan.

Reservists carry out a huge variety of roles which mirror those in the Regular Forces, including serving in combat units and providing essential medical and logistical support.

They are critical to the success of our Armed Forces.

This course has been endorsed by the Chartered Management Institute – the only chartered professional body in the UK dedicated to promoting the highest standards in management and leadership. It delivers training and skills development that is as applicable and relevant to civilian work as it is to military life.
www.managers.org.uk

If you want to know more about the benefits, rights and obligations related to employing a Reservist, or have a particular issue you would like to resolve, please contact SaBRE.

www.sabre.mod.uk
0800 389 5459