

# Reserve Forces training: a guide for employers

## Platoon Tactics Course (Section Commanders)



# Overview of the training

The Section Commanders Course is aimed at experienced Lance Corporals. Successful participants will go on to be promoted to Corporal and command a 'section', which is composed of seven other soldiers. The section is the basic building block of the infantry and three together make a platoon commanded by a junior officer.

The two week course is aimed at developing, and is a real test of, leadership: a quality that the Army is well respected for engendering in its people. It also develops skills in areas such as planning, organisation and communication.

Passing the course qualifies the student to command a section in an operational theatre such as Afghanistan, where he will be responsible for the tasks, welfare and effectiveness of the section's members

## Content of the course

The training is a residential course that lasts for 15 consecutive days. Each day consists of at least 12 hours training (excluding any individual preparation).

On the course, 10 days of the training are conducted through practical exercises outdoors and, of these, four consecutive days and nights are conducted on an assessment exercise in the field.

The course includes lectures and individual tuition sessions covering topics such as leadership, tactical planning and communication.

This theory is then put into practice during the field exercises which test students in a range of military scenarios during the day and at night, such as platoon attacks, patrolling, defensive operations, fighting in built up areas and casualty evacuation.

24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Taking on this responsibility means that students must be highly motivated with the ability to inspire others.

The training takes place at the Infantry Battle School in Brecon in Wales (which also trains the Regular Army) and is both mentally and physically demanding.

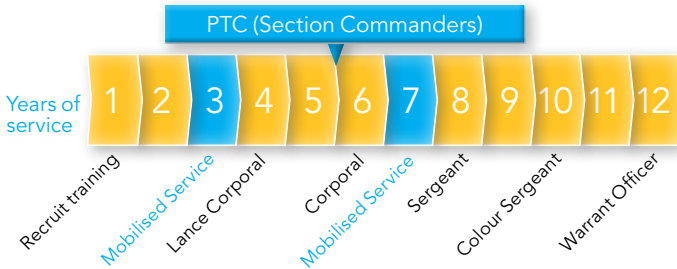
The prospective Section Commanders must demonstrate they are dynamic leaders and real team players. They are marked on, among other criteria, their attitude to the training and the effort they put in. The course involves a great deal of theory and tactics as well as adherence to procedure, which is all assessed.

During these exercises the student practices and is tested on performing the role of Section Commander. The TA Lance Corporal is trained alongside TA officers and Corporals who are simultaneously being trained in the roles of Infantry Platoon Commander and Platoon Sergeant respectively, which enables the student to practice the role within a real team.

There is continuous assessment of core competencies throughout the course as well as specific assessment of performance on exercises and a final written examination. These competencies include: command and leadership; management of subordinates; physical robustness; attitude and effort; and specialist knowledge.

## Position in a Reservist's career

The Platoon Tactics Course for Section Commanders is normally undertaken by a Lance Corporal, who will typically have been in the Territorial Army for around five years and have completed a period of full-time, mobilised service.



## How do employers benefit?

The Section Commanders Course develops skills and competencies which are central to all organisations: leadership, team working, planning and communication.

The course does this in a gruelling and high-pressure environment where the student is stepping up to a new level of responsibility.

Students become more robust, self-sufficient, reliable, confident and motivated over the two weeks.

They learn to take difficult command decisions, work under pressure, produce well thought out plans and deliver written and oral briefings.

The training specifically develops the following skills and qualities:

- Self-motivation and confidence
- Leadership – taking responsibility for a group of seven colleagues and building a team
- Decision-making in high-pressure, challenging situations
- Planning based on situational analysis and set procedures
- Clear communication – of plans to others to ensure delivery and of information gained during operations

## How much would this training cost you to buy?

£3,275

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 £3,275.

This relates just to the leadership and skills development which is relevant to the 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.

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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](http://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](http://www.sabre.mod.uk)  
0800 389 5459

