

# It's time to tell...

**From 1 April 2004, all members of the Volunteer Reserve Forces are subject to a new procedure called 'Employer Notification'.**

**It means that you will have to tell your employer that you are in the Volunteer Reserve Forces unless you have a very good reason for not doing so.**

**It is vital that you receive the support you deserve from your employer. Recent experience shows that they are much more likely to support you if you are open and honest about your membership of the Volunteer Reserve Forces.**

**This is your guide to why Employer Notification has been introduced, how it works and how you can get help if you need it.**

**Much more information and support is available from the contacts listed on the back of this guide.**

## Where can I get help?

Your first point of contact should be your normal commander. He or she will usually refer you to either your Unit Employer Support Officer (UESO) or your administrative staff.

They will be able to help with many issues themselves but they can also call upon advice and support from a range of other sources, including the full time SaBRE representative for your region.

There are also two websites which provide comprehensive information:

**www.en.mod.uk** This is a special website which explains a lot more about Employer Notification, including samples of the materials which may be sent to your employer.

**www.sabre.mod.uk** The SaBRE website provides a great deal of information about all aspects of employer relations.

## Who can my employer contact for advice?

As well as the website ([www.sabre.mod.uk](http://www.sabre.mod.uk)) SaBRE also operates a helpline for employers: 0800 389 5459.

Employers can also contact SaBRE's regional representatives as follows:

Highlands	01382 668 283
Lowlands	0141 945 4951
North of England	0191 384 7202
Yorkshire and Humber	01904 623 081
NW of England and Isle of Man	0151 728 2069
Wales	029 2022 0251
West Midlands	0121 427 5221
East Midlands	0115 947 6508
Wessex	01823 254 571
East Anglia	01245 354 262
Greater London	020 7384 4676
South East	01252 357 624
Northern Ireland	028 9066 4902



## What is 'Employer Notification'?

You are already required to declare your employment status and, if you have one, provide details of your employer to your Unit.

You are now strongly encouraged to give your permission for the MOD to write directly to your employer to tell them that you are in the Volunteer Reserve Forces, and to make sure that they are aware of the related benefits, rights and obligations.

Employer Notification is the automatic communication to your employer by the MOD that you are in the Volunteer Reserve Forces so that he or she is aware of their rights under the Reserve Forces Act 1996.

## Do I have to give my permission?

Not necessarily straight away but granting permission for your employer to be contacted will be a compulsory requirement for anyone joining the Volunteer Reserve Forces or re-engaging after 1 April 2004.

## Why does my employer have to know I'm in the Volunteer Reserve Forces?

Experience shows that the more employers know not only about the benefits but also about the rights and obligations which come with employing a Reservist, the more supportive they are likely to be.

It is also unreasonable to expect employers to support mobilised employees if they didn't previously know that they were in the Volunteer Reserve Forces. As well as leaving employers feeling deceived, it also means that they are unable to make any contingency plans in advance or even familiarise themselves with their rights and obligations.

## Can I avoid telling my employer?

You can apply for a temporary waiver if you think you have a good reason for not informing your employer, and you have a right of appeal if your application is turned down. Your commander or administrative staff can advise you on how to apply for a waiver.

If you are mobilised, the MOD must contact your employer, irrespective of any waiver, so that he or she can exercise their legal rights under the Reserve Forces Act 1996 if they wish to.

## How do I tell my employer?

Make sure you do your homework first. Find out whether your employer has any policies in place relating to the Volunteer Reserve Forces or other similar activities. Also make sure that you know about your rights and those of your employer. Your Unit can advise you on these or visit [www.sabre.mod.uk](http://www.sabre.mod.uk).

Stress the benefits that your membership of the Volunteer Reserve Forces brings in terms of new skills and the development of leadership, initiative and teamwork. You should also explain about the role of the Volunteer Reserve Forces, including providing the Civil Contingency Reaction Forces.

Make sure that you tell your employer about SaBRE (the MOD campaign which provides information for employers) and provide details of how your employer can find out more information, including responses to detailed questions which you may not be able to answer. Copies of SaBRE's brochures for employers are available from your Unit.

Finally, remember that Britain's Armed Forces are widely respected and that being a member of them should be something of which you are proud.

## What are my rights and those of my employer?

In summary, you are entitled to receive your job back when you are demobilised and your employer is entitled to various forms of financial support while you are away. Either of you can apply for the mobilisation to be cancelled or delayed if you think you have particularly good reasons. Further details are available from your Unit or [www.sabre.mod.uk](http://www.sabre.mod.uk).

## Can my employer object to me being in the Volunteer Reserve Forces?

You have legal protection under both general employment legislation and legislation specifically relating to the Volunteer Reserve Forces. It is illegal for your employer to terminate your employment because you have a liability to be mobilised.

If you have not already done so, you should check your civilian employment contract. Many contracts require you to tell your employer if you have a second job. If your contract includes this and you have not declared your membership of the Volunteer Reserve Forces, you are already in breach of contract and you should discuss the situation with your employer as soon as possible.

The MOD cannot condone any breach of a contract of employment. This situation does not provide grounds for a waiver from Employer Notification to be granted.

## What will the MOD send my employer?

After you have given permission, your Unit Commander will write to your employer, explaining that you are a member of the Volunteer Reserve Forces and your liabilities for training and mobilisation. The letter will also summarise your employer's rights and obligations, and the benefits of employing a member of the Volunteer Reserve Forces, and will usually be accompanied by a printed SaBRE brochure.

An example letter and SaBRE's literature is available from your Unit or can be downloaded from [www.en.mod.uk](http://www.en.mod.uk).

## What happens if I don't have an employer?

You are still required to tell your Unit what your employment status is (student, unemployed, self-employed, etc.) and you may be asked for evidence to support this. If your status changes you must inform your Unit straight away.

## What happens if I have a short term contract?

If your contract is for six months or less, your employer will not be contacted unless you are mobilised.