

# HMRC – A Forces Friendly Employer and Service Provider

Delivering improvements for service families through multi agency partnership working

**Armed Forces Covenant Conference 2026**  
23 June 2026



HM Revenue  
& Customs

**ARMED FORCES  
COVENANT**

## HM Revenue & Customs

We, the undersigned, commit to honour the Armed Forces Covenant and support the Armed Forces Community. We recognise the value Service families both Regular and Reservists, Veterans and their families contribute to our business and the wider community.

HM Revenue & Customs

Signed:

Name: Jim Harra

Position: Chief Executive and Permanent Secretary

Secretary

March 2020

The Ministry of Defence

Signed:

Name: David ...

Position: SO1

London

Date: 10 March 2020



# David Stockton VR

HMRC Dy Head of Protective Security

Departmental Armed Forces Champion

Departmental Armed Forces Covenant Advocate

Civil Service Armed Forces Network Chief of Staff

Serving RNR Chief Petty Officer



## 30 years Volunteer Reserves Service

- 1996-1999 Army Reserve Royal Artillery
- 1999 – 2002 RAF Reserves Force Protection
- 2002 – 2021 RAF Reserves Intelligence
- 2021 - Royal Navy Reserve MRIS

## 35 years Public Sector Leadership

- 1989 - 1996 Navy, Army and Air Force Institute (NAAFI)  
Manager - European Service
- 1997 - 2000 Head of Security, Youth & Childcare Services (College)
- 2000 - 2004 Operations Director (Housing Association)
- 2004 - 2005 Head of Performance Management (Local Authority)
- 2005 - 2010 Director of Environmental Services (Local Authority)
- 2010 - 2026 G6 Civil Service operational, crisis management and security roles






# HMRC Support to the Armed Forces

- Armed Forces Covenant Signatory (non ministerial government department)
- Adapt service models where applicable to remove disadvantage
- Consideration of policy exemptions e.g. for new accommodation model
- Armed Forces Advocacy
- 35 Armed Forces Advocates across the business
- Veterans Employment initiatives (RISE/GFIE)
- ERS Silver Award (and met Gold standard)
- Internal Armed Forces Network (employees)
  - 200 serving part time volunteer reservists
  - Several hundred veterans
  - Circa 50 CFAVs
  - Spouses/forces family network
- Civil Service and ministerial engagement e.g. CS Live






# The Issue

-  Send original documents
-  Delays in processing
-  Payment delayed

- Overseas armed forces families had to send original passports/birth certificates to UK for Child Benefit claims
- Long delays due to international postal times
- Risk of losing original documents in transit
- Families unable to travel while documents unavailable
- Digital service still required originals
- Extended back-and-forth enquiries
- Overall experience was slow, inconvenient and high risk
- In January 2026, AFF raised with DWP and HMRC's Armed Forces Champion
- A task force was formed to collaborate on a faster, safer solution


# The Solution

-  Call route
-  Paid within 5 days
-  Evidence checked later

## Award Now, Check Later

- Identified pain points
- Designed a proportionate, practical solution
- Introduced a dedicated telephony route due to digital limitations
- No longer requires original docs to be sent at point of claim
- Straightforward claims paid within 5 working days
- Follow-up request for certified copies within 12 weeks
- Avoids delays in the existing digital journey
- Maintains appropriate verification and control measures

# Next Steps

-  Monitor volumes/experience
-  Gov.uk / signposting
-  Compliance oversight

- Sustain guidance and telephony scripts
- Monitor demand and customer experience through user research
- Assess for wider digitisation
- Consider enhancement of the digital service to enable this customer group to apply online
- Improve signposting by updating GOV.UK and internal MoD comms to direct customers to telephony route
- Maintain compliance oversight