

People Matters



by Admiral Sir John Brigstocke KCB ADC
Second Sea Lord and Commander-in-Chief
Naval Home Command

In taking up the reins as Second Sea Lord, I am delighted that the long gestation of the Bett Review is coming to fruition with the introduction of an allowance package that more accurately meets the realities of Service life as we approach the Millennium. The next step is to finalise the revised pay package with the long awaited benefits in areas such as incremental pay, whilst at the same time maintaining the pressure to improve equity for the single person. Together with professional satisfaction, these measures should help to keep our people in the Navy for longer.

But retention is just one of the three key levers needed to deliver my end product - the timely provision of trained and motivated manpower to the front line. So, in

addition to our increasingly successful drive to recruit to our maximum training capacity (the second key lever), I am looking at everything which might reduce the loss of trainees in the initial stages of their careers by focusing, in particular, on those who are struggling to get to grips with the transition from civilian to Service life.

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It is through this process of continuous review of retention, recruiting and training, with early action to correct imbalances - that I believe we shall be able to overcome the kind of manpower shortages currently being experienced, and the problems of stretch that accompany them. Meanwhile our people remain our greatest asset, and evoke the highest praise from all who meet them.

Equal Opportunities *in the Naval Service*

A number of Equal Opportunities initiatives have been introduced recently with the express purpose of eliminating all forms of potential discrimination within the Naval Service. The rationale for these initiatives and the Navy Board's commitment to the principles of Equal Opportunity is shown here.

In 1995, a Naval Service policy on sexual harassment was published in response to growing concern over the number of reported incidents of this nature. Subsequently, an Equal Opportunities policy, covering all aspects of race and sex discrimination, harassment and bullying, was developed and published as a Defence Council Instruction in June 1996. A leaflet, explaining the policy and the complaints procedure has also been issued to every member of the Naval Service.

During the course of this work, the Commission for Racial Equality carried out an investigation of alleged racism in the Household Cavalry and many of the recommendations of their report have been adopted by the Ministry of Defence. One, which affects all three Services, was to conduct a survey of the ethnic origin of all personnel - this was completed recently. In addition, earlier this year the Office for Public Management, who were contracted to produce a report on ethnic minority employment initiatives in the Ministry of Defence, had their report published.

Two key points emerge from these reports: that, in the Naval Service, people from ethnic minority groups are under-represented compared with the UK population as a whole and that management practices within the Armed Forces were, before analysis of the statistics from the ethnic origin survey, unable readily to identify whether there was discrimination in the

fields of recruitment, training, advancement or employment.

The Equal Opportunities policy in the Naval Service is:

There shall be no discrimination against any person on grounds of sex except where being male is either a genuine occupational qualification or necessary to maintain combat effectiveness, or against a married person. There shall be no discrimination on grounds of an individual's race, ethnic origin, colour or religion. All serving personnel shall have equal opportunity for employment and advancement within the Naval Service on the basis of their ability, performance and aptitude for work. All personnel shall have the right to work in an environment free from intimidation, humiliation, harassment or abuse.

The Navy Board is fully committed to this policy and to ensuring that recruitment fully considers and draws upon the talents and skills of all individuals to be found across the whole community. Every effort will be made to ensure that everyone is treated equally and fairly and that decisions on recruitment, selection, training, promotion and career management are based solely on objective and job-related criteria. Any allegation of discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying will be investigated and, where there is sufficient and reliable evidence, disciplinary or administrative action

will be taken.

Education plays a key role in the implementation of any Equal Opportunities policy. The Royal Naval School of Leadership and Management now provides instruction to the Divisional Officers' course entitled 'Equal Opportunities in the Naval Service'. In addition, this school provides an appropriate level of instruction across a wide range of many of their other ranks' leadership and promotion courses. As the lead School, the Royal Naval School of Leadership and Management also provides advice for and monitors the standards of course content for the instruction of Equal Opportunities at the New Entry Training Establishments which include HRNC Dartmouth, HMS RALLIGH and CCRM Lympstone.

Prior to entry, the Directorate of Naval Recruiting plays an active role in ensuring that potential recruits and their parents are informed of the Equal Opportunities within the Naval Service. The Equal Opportunities policy appears in recruiting literature and pamphlets in 5 languages; it is provided to parents of recruits from all ethnic minority groups.

The publication of an Equal Opportunities policy, the production of training modules, and the collection of ethnic origin data will not in themselves prevent discrimination. However, they set and communicate the necessary standards, provide the data to assist with monitoring the effectiveness of the policy and are essential management tools to combat this unacceptable behaviour.

The maintenance of an environment free from discrimination, harassment or abuse is the responsibility of all members of the Naval Service, regardless of rank or rate.

With its origins in the recommendations of Sir Michael Bett's Independent Review of the Armed Forces Manpower, Career and Remuneration Structures published in 1995, work to develop and refine the future Personnel Strategy for the Royal Navy continues apace.

Radical and Innovative Thinking

Some radical and innovative thinking has been conducted, in areas hitherto unexplored in terms of Royal Naval personnel management and an opportunity has been taken to incorporate the findings of other recent studies addressing conditions of service.

Where existing structures no longer contribute to the morale, efficiency or career development of our people in the way originally intended they have been deemed overdue for change. Perhaps more significantly, the need to reach tri-Service agreement on many issues has brought the 3 Services more closely

together in the personnel field than ever before.

The far-reaching changes envisaged were set out in a Ministry of Defence document entitled 'The Armed Forces of the Future - A Personnel Strategy', published in February 1997 and given wide distribution within the Naval Service. With chapters on career and rank structures, pay structures, revised allowances and career management, no subject was left untouched.

Three Tier Commission

A major element affecting Officers has been the introduction of a 3-tier commission, planned to replace the

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familiar General, Supplementary and Special Duties list systems with effect from 1 April 1999.

Ratings Engagements

The existing types of Ratings engagements are seen as being sufficiently flexible to adapt to the new strategy and are unchanged, although career progression will in future be through selective promotion based on merit and qualifications rather than advancement by roster.

Career Development

Many of the issues are complex and interrelated, with a greater emphasis overall on rewarding skill, experience and satisfactory performance. The new strategy will be underpinned by a new pay and allowances package, on which work is continuing in parallel.

While these changes may have varying effects on individuals or groups according to circumstances, a well

balanced package has been effected. It will allow people properly to develop their careers on engagements which are sufficiently flexible to meet future trends in employment, with pay and allowances tailored to reflect the unique nature of Service life, and opportunities provided to gain recognised qualifications for any future career beyond the Navy.

Feedback

Results from feedback on the Personnel Strategy have been analysed and incorporated, where possible, into its continuing development. A Second Sea Lord sponsored 'roadshow' toured RN establishments in the autumn of 1997, to inform as wide an audience as possible of progress to date.

Significant progress has been made on the detailed rules of the allowance package and the Three Tier Commission, but there is still some way to go on the other areas, such as Pay and Pay As You Dine; however, the basic shape of our future Personnel Strategy is already well established.

Investors in People

The Second Sea Lord's additional commitment to achieving 'Investors in People' accreditation through Training and Enterprise Councils by December 1999 is wholly complementary to the new strategy; it serves to enhance further communication to, and personal development within, the Naval Service.

The interests of our people have never been subject to a more thorough examination and, with continuing careful management, the benefits to the Royal Navy will be felt well into the 21st Century.

Recruiting *Challenges*

The Climate for Recruiting

The climate in which the Royal Navy and Royal Marines recruit gets no sunnier. Demographic and attitude surveys show that there is a fairly static pool of young people which is unlikely to enlarge until after the year 2010, an increasing trend for youngsters to be attracted to further or higher education, and continuing concerns by potential recruits that the Service has not seen the last of downsizing.

An intermittent drizzle of media reports alleging military wrongdoing in areas like racism or sexism continues to dampen the outlook which encourages parents to influence their offspring against a military career. In addition, recent surveys examining young people's attitudes and life styles indicate that while 16 to 24 year olds smoke less they drink more. They also exercise less than previous generations.

They live at home with their parents longer, consume more fast-food snacks, experiment with drugs and form serious relationships much younger than ever before. Moreover, the words "I want to serve my country" are unlikely to pass their lips. All these indicators and others beside make the long range recruiting forecast look somewhat bleak.

Responding to the Challenge

The Directorate of Naval Recruiting is tackling these challenges with determination and vigour in the knowledge that, whatever the characteristics of our new generation, history has shown that the Royal Navy and Royal Marines can make heroes of them all.

There are still significant numbers of valuable potential officers, ratings and RM Other Ranks recruits in the market

place and our aggressive marketing campaign is succeeding in getting them to look in the RN's direction - 43,000 did so last year. The Royal Navy aspirational advertisements, which encourage youngsters to consider what they could have been if they had joined the Service, have worked well and a new wave of RN advertisements are being prepared.

Although it is now the trend for youngsters to look at as many career options as possible, the Directorate of Naval Recruiting's field force is actively "selling" the Service rather than just creating the impression that we are recruiting again - or merely 'open for business'. Young loan Ratings from the Fleet and 'Satisfied Sailors and Marines' from Training Establishments have provided a youthful interface with enquirers to supplement the sage advice, based on a fuller experience of

Service life, of the more mature Careers Advisors.

An exciting new series of Royal Marines Commando advertisements is now appearing in those finely targeted media outlets which hold the attention, especially the cinema, life style and sports magazines as well as commercial television and national and regional press. These emphasise the unique 30 weeks training which sets the Royal Marines apart from other forces and reassures the potential recruit that the Commando Training Centre Lymstone ethos is to pass recruits - rather than try to fail them.

Spotlight Campaign

In addition to national strategic advertising designed to cast its ambient light over the whole of the UK, the DNR Spotlight campaign is intensifying marketing activity in selected areas of the country at those times when career decisions are being made. Regional and local advertising is being supported by more appearances of the RN Students' Presentation Teams at local schools and colleges.

The Royal Marines Visibility Teams are raising the profile of the Corps at sports centres, shopping malls, holiday resorts and anywhere that the young congregate. In areas containing

Whatever the characteristics of our new generation, history has shown that the Royal Navy and Royal Marines can make heroes of them all

significant numbers of ethnic minorities. The Ethnic Minorities Liaison Officer and his assistant are making inroads among the local communities, alerting both the "gatekeepers" and the young ethnics to what we have to offer.

Our impressive exhibition stands are drawing much interest at careers fairs and job search exhibitions and our exhibition trailers can be seen at many public events throughout the UK. The DNR Internet site is doing a brisk trade - nearly 30,000 people have visited the site and 28% of these were from the UK. The value and relevance of this modern medium is still gaining momentum and has yet to reach its full potential.

We have increased our presence in schools and colleges with strongly branded action packs which are popular with teachers and students alike. Action Engineering, which includes a CD ROM written around engineering aspects of HMS ARK ROYAL, has been very well

received. Health Related Fitness, carrying the Royal Marines Commando brand, has been a huge success and is now in over 4,000 educational establishments - over 98% of these are secondary schools. We are also communicating with teachers through "Navy Link" newsletter and with students direct though a new up-beat publication, "The Link". Plans are well advanced to attract the attention of those students who have left universities, schools and colleges without completing their courses.

Can You Help?

Because there are now fewer people who have experienced life in the Royal Navy and Royal Marines, help is needed from retired Servicemen and Servicewomen to spread the word among the young.

Your help in telling young people about the new and exciting opportunities which are available in all branches of the Royal Navy and the Royal Marines would help us as we seek to take them on and on in a career at sea. A career which will train them to the highest standards with challenges of adventure, travel and excitement.

We are only a 'phone call away: (01705) 727735.

Gapping of uniformed posts in the Naval Service has become a problem which not only threatens the maintenance of Operational Capability in the front line but also causes significant difficulties to the shore employer and a deterioration in conditions of service for the individual.

While gapping has been a consistent feature in naval manning for many years, save for short periods of surplus, it is only since the 1992-1996 downsizing and the introduction of finely honed schemes of complement, with attendant changes to the manning environment, that gapping has developed potent impact.

Present Gapping - Origins

The present manning state in the Naval Service, with global gapping of 11% in the Royal Navy and 16% in the Royal Marines, predominantly other ranks, still shows gapping continuing to rise, although Second Sea Lord initiatives to improve recruiting, reduce wastage and control Premature Voluntary Release should see an easing of the situation from 1998.

The origins of this gapping are complex but the main causes were: downsizing; inability to recruit against much increased targets; risk taken against manpower in reducing allowances for margin activities such as time awaiting draft, medical and leave; and largely shutting down the recruiting system post Defence Cost Studies.

Between 1990 and 1998, the Naval Service (RN and RM) reduced from 60,000 to some 40,000. Although the scale of downsizing of the RM was significantly smaller than for the RN, some 10% of Corps strength, the high 80:20 RM 'teeth to tail' ratio has resulted in a disproportionate effect. The RM were able to employ 'normal' manpower regulators, principally the use of recruiting targets to reduce numbers, and although the origins of the present RM situation have similarities with the RN, the following downsizing analysis focuses on the RN situation, drawing salient points from the RM experience. The size and pace of the RN reduction of 30% exceeded the capabilities of normal regulators as some 18,000 had to be removed from the RN strength in 4 years from 1992-1996. Natural wastage, normal time expiry and Premature Voluntary Release accounted for some 6,000, so the remaining 12,000 had to be removed by exceptional means. Redundancy became unavoidable but the dilemma was how much to reduce by redundancy and how much by reducing recruiting, the two major controlling factors.

Wide experience in the civilian sector shows that downsizing of this extent must be achieved predominantly by redundancy if a satisfactory balance is to be achieved at the conclusion. This purist manning argument would have suggested some 10,000 redundancies, with a limited recruiting turndown saving a further 2,000. This path would have built a manpower surplus necessary to fill shortfalls when the requirement bottomed out. However, the number of redundancies would have been 4,000 greater than those

actually made, and most of these would have been non-voluntary. This would have had a highly damaging affect upon the morale and culture of the RN, far greater than that which actually occurred; it would also have been expensive.

The combination of a natural reluctance to engage in more redundancies than absolutely necessary and the additional pressure of Front Line First to maximise spend on the Front Line, led to the decision to use reduced recruiting as the major downsizing factor. The result of that decision has been the significant gapping that we now have, mainly due to the inability to re-establish our recruiting market position and thus increase manpower flow to compensate for shortages when the requirement stabilised and a high flow was demanded.

Efficiency not Flexibility

The manning environment that has been built is designed for efficiency, not flexibility, and to operate on many fronts at or near maximum capacity. Essential manpower overheads, those periods when individuals are not in a complement billet, are not all manpower funded so even with steady state balance, some gapping will remain.

With current recruiting performance, training wastage and Premature Voluntary Release, gapping will get worse in the short term. If recruiting can meet targets and if wastage, both from the trained and untrained strength can be reduced, then gapping will decrease and by the millennium should have reduced to more manageable levels as shown below.

The reality is that the Naval Service now runs manpower on a highly efficient but higher risk basis, incorporating a fundamental level of gapping. To protect the front line this is entirely sensible but management, employers as well as planners, managers and deployers, will have to accept this new situation.

Second Sea Lord has in hand a number of initiatives to manage and control this new era, he has developed a potent anti-gapping strategy to match the new manning environment and has the problem firmly at the top of his priority list.

Recruit and Retain

Whilst many problems lie ahead, there is a good understanding of what needs to be done and what realities face manning in the RN and the RM over the next few years. We have arrived in our current situation as a result of achieving a large and rapid downsizing, while at the same time protecting our essential front line capability. This has not been achieved without pain and there is some way to go before balance is re-established. However, balance can, and will, be achieved for the future; what we must do is to recruit, retain and keep our eye firmly on the manpower ball.

Naval Manning Agency

One Year Old

To ensure that sufficient manpower is available on the trained strength and effectively deployed in peace, crisis, major crisis or war

CUSTOMER INPUT

Since its launch in July 1996, the Naval Manning Agency has been through a busy period of organisational change designed to enhance the services it provides to the Naval community. Central to this has been a programme to provide its customers with a far higher degree of visibility into the ways and means by which the Agency conducts its business.

Customer Advisory Board

At the front line of this initiative has been the establishment of a Customer Advisory Board, attended at Captain/Commodore level by representatives of employers of individual Naval personnel.

This Board meets twice a year to review the Agency's performance and provides an opportunity for the users of Naval manpower to express their satisfaction, or otherwise, directly to the Naval Secretary and his principal Directors. At the same time, the Board provides the Agency with an opportunity to discuss current manning issues and clarify 'the art of the possible'. The Customer Advisory Board has now met twice and already has been successful in airing and resolving a range of current issues. The individuals themselves are, of course, also customers of the Naval Manning Agency and their interests are represented on the Customers Advisory Board by Director Naval Service Conditions.

POLICY GUIDANCE

In concert with the Customer Advisory Board, the Naval Manning Agency has issued a number of documents to the manpower planners in the Fleet.

The Manning Strategy

The Manning Strategy highlights how the process of manning the Naval Service is conducted together with an insight into the progress of various projects - many stemming from the work of the Independent Review and the Officers' and Rating Corps Study Groups.

The Manning Plan

Additionally, the Manning Plan provides a statement of current deployment of RN and RM manpower together with a forecast of the likely changes in deployment in the short term.

BRANCH STRUCTURES

The Naval Manning Agency has sought to strengthen the role of the Structural Policy Advisory Groups in the management of Service manpower. These groups, which comprise all desk officers involved in the deployment and training of individual Branches, play a critical role in ensuring a Branch's sustainability and its efficient development.

Manpower Coordination Group The Manpower Coordination Group, a desk-level sub-group of the Customer Advisory Board, has additionally been created to bring the Naval Manning Agency and the Top Level Budget holder manpower managers together.

INTERNAL INITIATIVES

Internally, the year has seen the implementation of a number of management initiatives, including a study into the Agency's Management Information Systems requirement, an examination of its training needs and completion of the initial stages of working towards Investors in People accreditation, which the Agency aims to achieve by 1 April 1998.

The chain of command and line management within the Agency has been improved by the introduction of



Rear Admiral Fabian Malbon
Naval Secretary / DG Naval Manning

the post of Commodore Naval Officer Appointing which will provide a central focus for all appointing business. This post is currently dual-hatted with that of Director Naval Officer Appointments (Seamen) and like his counterparts, Naval Assistant, Director of Naval Manning and the Commodore Naval Drafting, this is a common appointment which is open to a Commodore of any Branch.

CLOSER TIES WITH INDUSTRY

The Board of Management has been considerably strengthened by the appointment of Mr Michael Hoffman as a Non-Executive Director, whose wide and current experience in the private sector will provide a valuable contribution to the conduct of the Agency's business. As a further means of keeping abreast of best practice, the Agency is also maintaining and developing its contact with the civilian world, primarily with Portsmouth University and the Institute for Employment Studies at Sussex University.

FOCUS ON THE FUTURE

Formation of the Agency has provided an opportunity to draw together, to focus on, and to re-examine critically processes and priorities of manning and deployment, and to change those that do not fit with the new Naval environment.

The changes that are being implemented by the Naval Manning Agency will benefit all those engaged in the management of Naval Service manpower.

One Star Rising

The 'Commodore', once described as 'the most anomalous of Naval Officers' is, after centuries of debate and deliberation, finally being established as a substantive (One Star) rank. The title 'Commodore' (which hitherto has been recognised only as a 'temporary rank'), is being made substantive to bring the Royal Navy into line with the other Services and our Allies. But the fight for the rank has been a long and arduous affair with many a twist and turn.

History

The story begins in July 1652, at the outbreak of the First Dutch War, when the States-General and Zealand Admiralty found themselves short of flag officers. Unwilling to create more Admirals, primarily due to cost they appointed a number of Captains to a new office entitled 'Kommandeur' and placed them in temporary charge of squadrons. It was not until 1669, when William of Orange crossed the North Sea to become William III, that a corresponding title was adopted by the Royal Navy. Although the British adopted the name, they were unable to cope with the Dutch pronunciation and thus the title 'Commodore' was born and applied vaguely to any senior Naval officer of a single ship on convoy duty. Later the title came into more general use to signify the senior Captain of a minor squadron, or a Commander-in-Chief of a small station when no flag officer was present.

In 1731, a stagnation in promotion due to continuing peace caused the Admiralty to propose the creation of three 'Commodore' (spelt thus for the first time) posts. This initiative was rejected by the Privy Council. Following further staffing - and passage of some 93 years - official recognition was finally achieved with approval for two classes of non-substantive Commodore. Even so, Commodores essentially remained Captains, for if two or more Commodores served together, they took precedence according to the dates of

their Commissions as Captains - not the date they were given the post of Commodore. The 'first class' designation was dropped in 1958.

The title of Commodore continued to remain an oddity, with length of service and availability of appropriate posts dictating who was to gain this 'temporary' rank. Despite bearing the distinctive "flag officer" hall-mark in the shape of the one and three-quarter inch ring (4.43cm for those who work only in metric measurement), the Commodore continued to be found in the Navy List under 'Captain'.

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In recent years

In recent years a growing number of One Star Tri-Service rotational posts, and more joint-Service staff posts, has increased the requirement for appointments requiring the naval incumbent to be a Commodore. Until the introduction of the most recent changes, Captains assumed the title of Commodore when appointed to a specific One Star post for the duration of that appointment only. Similarly, Colonels in the Royal Marines have assumed the title of Brigadier when in certain appointments. In the other two Services, however, Brigadier and Air Commodore are substantive One Star ranks and all promotion to these ranks is by selection from Colonel and Group Captain.

In 1993, work by civilian management consultants for the Officer's Study Group confirmed that the job-weighting span of Captains' appointments showed the need for 2 substantive ranks between Commander and Rear Admiral. This factor, coupled with an increasing over-bearing of Captains with over 8 years' seniority in

relation to the number of One Star posts, particularly following the Defence Costs Study, persuaded the Navy Board to introduce a substantive One Star rank, thereby matching remuneration more closely to job weight. Implementation has been delayed pending the outcome of wider consideration being given to Sir Michael Bett's Independent Review of the Armed Forces Manpower, Career and Remuneration Structures. However, in February 1997, publication by the Secretary of State of an Information Document entitled 'The Armed Forces of the Future: A Personnel Strategy' allowed introduction of the change to proceed.

Transition

There is a transition period for officers promoted to Captain under former arrangements so that no one is unfairly penalised by the changes. The first selection boards for promotion to the substantive rank of Brigadier Royal Marines and Commodore Royal Navy will take place in 2000 and 2001 respectively.

Job weighting obtained for all Captain and One Star appointments has guided and informed an auditing process. With this validation the Navy Board agreed that as well as all Tri-Service posts, all the RN One Star appointments would, in future be filled by officers wearing the rank of Commodore. However, included amongst such posts are the Commanding Officers of the aircraft carriers; but, in order to conform to international custom, One Star warship commands will retain the title and uniform of Captain Royal Navy.

For a post that has changed less than any other since its inception, the establishment of a substantive One Star rank is a major achievement, no longer recognised as an incumbent of a specific post, the 'Commodore' will formally be acknowledged as a rank, not just a temporary title. About time too!