

Your Say

The 1999 Defence Attitude Survey



June 2000

We are delighted that so many of you took the opportunity to give us your thoughts about our performance by responding to the 1999 Defence Attitude Survey. The survey has realised our goal of having a common method of staying in touch with the attitudes and beliefs of our people, whether they be military or civilian. This publication summarises the results of the survey. You can see what was said collectively about your feelings towards working for Defence.





The good news from the survey is that there are significant levels of satisfaction about some aspects of working for Defence. For instance, attitudes towards immediate supervisors, whether they be military or civilian, seem generally very positive. Most people believe that Defence is a fair and equitable place to work. Areas with moderately good results but which still require improvement included perceived stress, attitude to Service life and communication. This is useful feedback and it is reassuring to hear that we have areas of strength on which to build so we can achieve our overall objective of making Defence more effective and efficient.

We acknowledge it wasn't all good news. You have identified areas where we aren't doing so well and you think we need to do better. We have already embarked upon initiatives to help us improve some areas. On the other hand, some of the feedback was quite revealing and we plan to focus on those issues in the near future. We are developing a plan of action to help address the major areas of concern. Although leaders and executives cannot do this alone, we know that together we can meet the challenge of improving these results in the future and making Defence both more effective and a better place to work.



Thankyou for taking the time to give us your views. We are listening and we value your feedback. These results are important to help formulate better ways of doing business. Given the valuable feedback you have provided us with, we have decided to seek your views again in March next year. If you are asked at that time for your views we would urge you to make the extra effort to speak up and give us your views. In this process you will help us all to make Defence a better place for us all to work.


Chris Barrie
Chief of Defence Force


Allan Hawke
Secretary

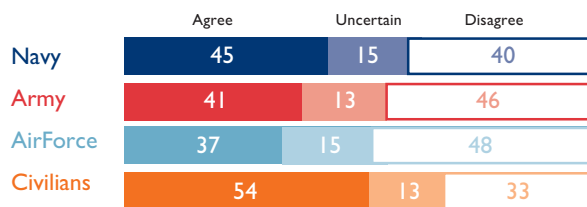
This newsletter summarises the findings of the 1999 Defence Attitude Survey. The survey items were grouped into seven sections including Management and Supervision, Career Management and Postings, Change, Work and Service Issues, Conditions and Equity, Family and Career Intentions and Topical Items.

Some items on performance appraisal, service life and locational stability did not have a civilian counterpart.

The information below compares the three Services and Defence civilians on indicative items from the main sections of the survey, as well as on intention to leave, perceived personal and unit morale, and perceived stress.

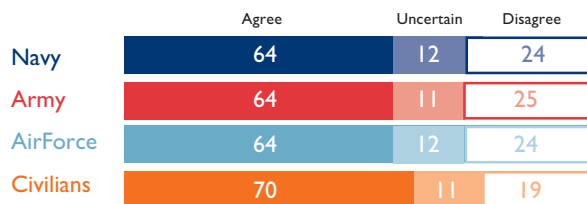
For each item, bars represent the response patterns of Navy, Army, RAAF and civilian respondents. The figures within each bar are the percentage of survey respondents who responded as per the scale indicated for each item eg. Item 1 Agreed, Uncertain and Disagreed.

1. 'Senior management keeps members informed about matters that affect their work and personal lives'.



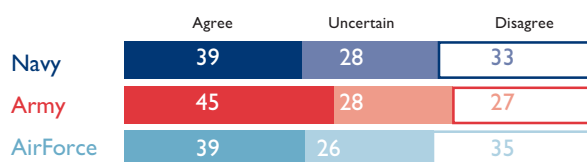
- 40% of uniformed staff and over half of civilian staff felt that senior management keeps them informed about matters that affect their work and personal lives.

2. 'My immediate supervisor always shows good leadership'.



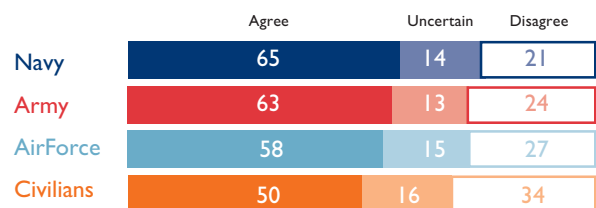
- Nearly two thirds of uniformed respondents and 70% of civilian respondents agreed that their immediate supervisor always shows good leadership.

3. 'My work is fairly assessed by the performance appraisal system'.



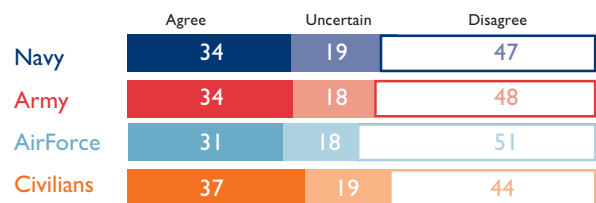
- Over one third of all uniformed survey respondents felt that their work is fairly assessed by the performance appraisal system.

4. 'My career development has generally been good'.



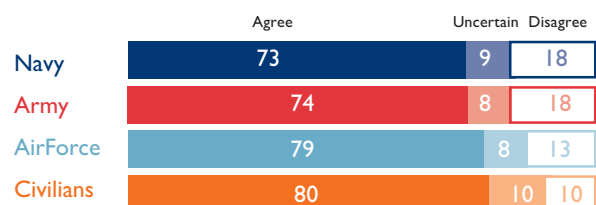
- 60% of Service respondents and half of civilian respondents felt that their career development has generally been good.

5. 'I am satisfied with the information that has been communicated to me about changes to the (Service)'.



- Approximately one third of Service and civilian respondents felt satisfied with the information that has been communicated to them about changes to their Service/Department.

6. 'I like the work in my present posting'.



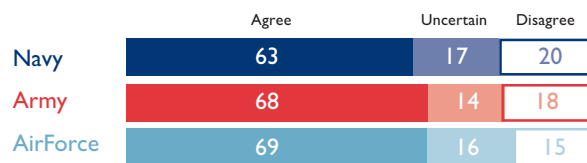
- Over 70% of Service respondents and 80% of civilian respondents like the work in their current posting/position.

A range of demographic information was also collected by the questionnaire. This included gender, age, rank, specialisation, permanency status, education level, current posting and functional area.

The core attitude and belief items were measured on a five point scale from 'Strongly Disagree' to 'Strongly Agree'. Additional, topical items were included and facilitated the collection of information on morale, Defence Reform Program, stress,

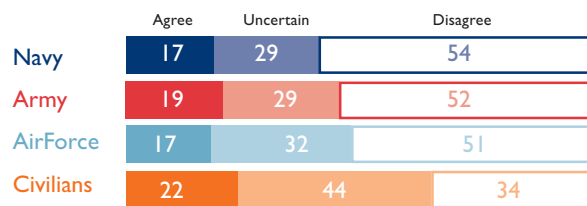
Y2K issues and 'going to sea' for Navy personnel. Morale items were measured on a five point scale which ranged from 'Very Poor' to 'Very Good' and stress items were rated from 'None at All' to 'Extreme'.

7. 'Life in the (Service) is enjoyable'.



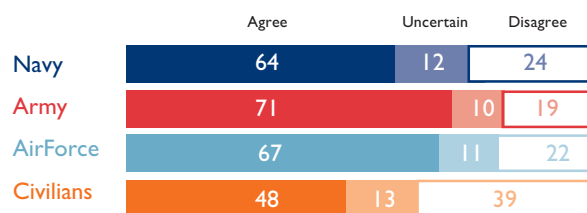
- Two thirds of Service respondents agreed that life in their Service is enjoyable.

8. 'The (Service) is the best of all possible organisations for which to work'.



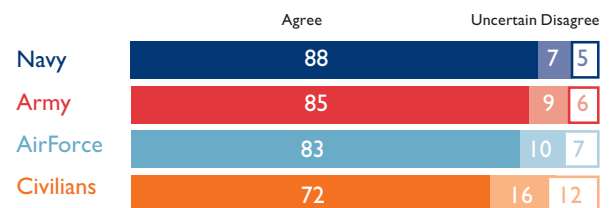
- Almost one fifth of Service respondents agreed that their Service is the best of all possible organisations for which to work.

9. 'We never seem to have enough resources to do our job properly'.



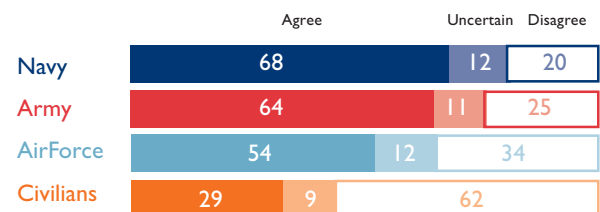
- Two thirds of Service respondents and nearly half of civilian respondents stated that there never seems to be enough resources to do their job properly.

10. 'I know what support services are available to me if I were being harassed at work'.



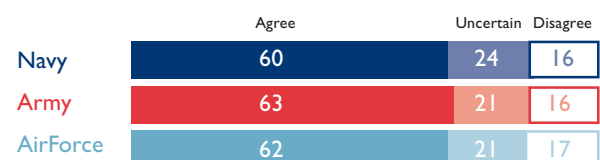
- A high proportion of Service respondents and 72% of civilian respondents agreed that they know what support services are available to them if they were being harassed at work.

11. 'The demands of my work interfere with my home and family life'.



- 62% of Service respondents stated that the demands of work interfere with their home and family life. Whereas just over one quarter of civilians felt this way.

12. 'I want more locational stability for my family'.



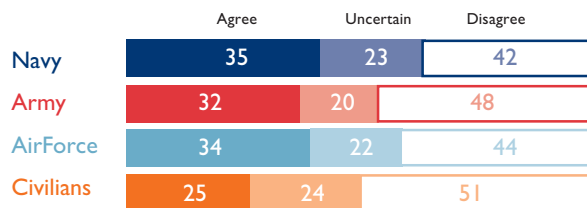
- A little over 60 % of uniformed respondents wanted more locational stability for their family.

1999 Defence Attitude Survey – Facts & Figures

- **20% representative sample** 16,328 surveys sent out
Navy 3,292; Army 6,359; Air Force 3,508; Civilian 3,169
- **Completed & returned** 9,519
Navy 1,731; Army 3,685; Air Force 2,366; Civilian 1,737
- **Response Rate** 58%
Navy 59%; Army 62%; Air Force 72%; Civilian 61%

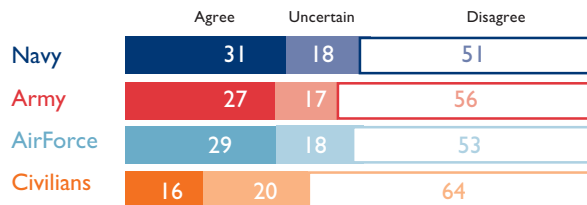
2001 Defence Attitude Survey will be sent out in March 2001, once again randomly sampling the attitudes of 20% of ADF full-time personnel & Department of Defence civilians.

13. 'It would take very little change in my present circumstances to cause me to leave the Service'.



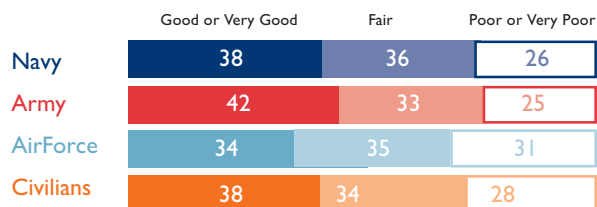
- Approximately one third of Service respondents agreed that it would take very little change in their present circumstances to cause them to leave their Service.

14. 'I am actively looking at leaving the Service'.



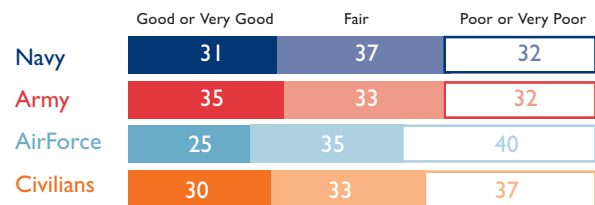
- Just under one third of uniformed personnel surveyed stated that they had formed an intention to leave the Service. 16% of defence civilians agreed.

15. 'How would you rate your current level of morale?'



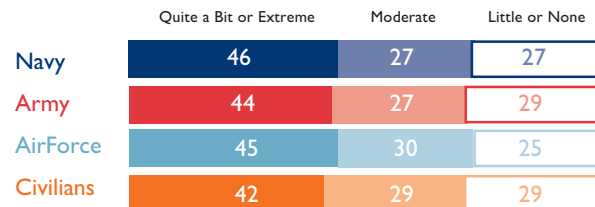
- Over one third of all respondents stated that their personal morale was good.

16. 'How would you rate the current level of morale in your unit/section?'



- Just under one third of all respondents stated that their unit / workplace morale was good.

17. 'Think about your life over the last week. On the whole, how much stress do you think there is in your life right now?'



- Almost half of all respondents stated that they had experienced quite a bit, or more, stress over the last week.

For further information concerning the Defence Attitude Survey or to provide feedback on these figures, please contact the members listed below at the Directorate of Strategic Personnel Planning & Research.

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