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Subject: WWW Submission: 7. Reserves [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

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Submission: Reserve personnel make up approximately 1/5th of people involved in the Defence workforce. They represent a ready work force of skilled people who can be deployed at short notice if the need arises. More needs to be done to encourage ex-service men / women to come back into uniform.

Reserve personnel often come back into uniform with skills and experiences that are needed by the Defence force. When these skills and experiences are not recognised by Defence, there can be a disparity between the individuals capabilities and the position that they fill. This can be at the detriment of both the individual and Defence as a whole.

From my own experience, I was a Quality Engineer within Defence Industry before getting back into uniform early 2008. Without the assistance of my hierarchy it would not have been possible to maintain my qualifications, even though these skills are highly sought after not only external to Defence but also internally.

There is a distinct disparity between the work that I am capable off and the rank that I wear. Since rejoining, my skills have been utilised to set up a robust system for security and ensuring that the directorate met all of its financial requirements. Due to my experience and training I recently led a 2 day audit on behalf of DMO and a foreign government. The audit was well received and all objectives were achieved.

Whilst I am capable of performing work to a much higher level than that of a Junior Sailor, I am bound by my previous time in uniform. This means that a much needed requirement of Defence is under utilised, at the detriment to not only Defence but to me.

By reviewing the work that the individual was performing out of uniform, it may be possible to offer incentives to them to get back into uniform. An increase in seniority, promotion or placement in a more appropriate position could be some of the options available to Defence.

Defence Industry has many good practices that could be utilised by the Defence Force. They set an example of how a stream-lined organisation can meet objectives effectively on time and on budget. These lessons could be adapted to compliment the practices and traditions already in place. If there was a system in place to assess an individual's skills and experience and then match them to the requirements of Defence, a better utilisation of skills could be achieved.

Defence needs to be more flexible with its manning and allow a reservist to be acknowledged for the experience that they have. Whilst it is impossible to get away from rank entirely, a process were a reservist is placed on probation with acting higher rank could be a suitable method of handling a skilled member coming back. Just like in industry, if the member is not able to perform the work to an acceptable level, they would be reverted back to their previous rank.

I agree to my submission being published on the Defence website

I agree to my submission being quoted in the Community Consultation Report