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DCI RN 102
2000



Defence Council Instructions

Royal Navy

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MINISTRY OF DEFENCE
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DCIs are automatically
cancelled after one year

References:

- A. BR 1283 Royal Marines Instructions.
- B. BR 8748 Terms of Service for RN, QARNNS and WRNS Ratings and RM Ranks.
- C. BR 1950 Naval Pay Regulations.
- D. BR 1066 Advancement Regulations.
- E. BR 8373 Officers Career Regulations.

Introduction

1. Opportunities exist for members of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines to serve in the UK Special Forces (UKSF). The primary route into UKSF for Naval Service personnel is as Swimmer-Canoeists (SCs) with the Special Boat Service (SBS) based at Royal Marines Poole in Dorset. However, opportunities do exist for Naval personnel to serve with the Special Air Service (SAS) based at Hereford. SF operations require men of courage who are determined, highly motivated, intelligent, reliable and at the peak of physical fitness. Service with UKSF demands much of the individual. Short notice deployments are the norm, however, this is balanced by greater stability for families and dependants in the Hereford and Poole areas. In accordance with current Government policy on the employment of women in the Armed Forces, service in the SAS and SBS is only open to male volunteers.

Aim

2. The aim of this DCI is to describe the fundamental entry requirements, selection process and Conditions of Service for RN/RM personnel seeking to serve in UKSF.

Responsibilities

3. Commanding Officers. Commanding Officers are responsible for forwarding applications from suitable volunteers to the NMA.

4. *Naval Manning Agency (NMA)*. The NMA is the central Naval authority, responsible for the recruitment and supply of RN/RM Officers and Ratings/Other Ranks to UKSF.

- a. *CNOA*. CNOA is responsible for receipt of officer applications, staffing within the NMA and forwarding to SBS /22 SAS.
- b. *CND*. CND is responsible for receipt of rating applications, staffing within the NMA and forwarding to SBS /22 SAS.
- c. *DNM*. DNM is responsible for ensuring the structural integrity of source branches serving the SF requirement and management of the Swimmer-Canoeist specialisation of the RM.

Entry Standards and Applications

5. The selection process for UKSF is open to ratings/other ranks under the age of 32 and officers under the age of 30 who have completed a minimum of two years service in a complement billet. Commanding Officers, Appointing and Drafting desks may NOT withhold applications on manning or structural grounds:

- a. *Officers.* Officers who wish to volunteer for UKSF should submit their request in writing to their CO. Following a personal interview with their CO, requests should then be forwarded through the chain of command to the appropriate desk in DNOA/DRMOA. Applications will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis and clearance will be granted by Appointing Directors. Clearance may only be denied in exceptional circumstances and then only with the personal approval of the Naval Secretary. Officers:
 - (1) Must be recommended for service in UKSF by their Commanding Officer.
 - (2) Must be capable of passing the standard Battle Swimming Test (BST).
 - (3) Must be capable of passing the Army Basic Combat Fitness Test (Infantry) Serial 1 (BCFT (I)).
- b. *Ratings/Other Ranks.* Ratings/Other Ranks should apply to CND on the form at ANNEX A accompanied by a form C240 (RM C233), which will initiate a manning clearance request. Applications will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis and clearance will be granted by the appropriate Branch Managers from the Directorate of Naval Manning (DNM). Clearance may only be denied in exceptional circumstances and then only with the personal approval of DNM. Commanding Officers should assess general suitability and motivation of the volunteer, before forwarding the application. Ratings/Other Ranks:
 - (1) Must have RORRs (or pre RORRs equivalents) conduct and effectiveness assessments of at least Grade "E" or better (Unspent Career checks will not necessarily be a bar to service with UKSF. These are to be reported for consideration together with a recommendation for service with UKSF, made by the CO).
 - (2) Must be recommended for service in UKSF by their Commanding Officers.
 - (3) Must be capable of passing the standard Battle Swimming Test (BST).
 - (4) Must be capable of passing the BCFT (I).

The minimum fitness and medical standards required by applicants are listed at ANNEX B.

Appointing/Drafting Action

6. The NMA will forward applications with supporting documentation to:
 - a. *For RN SBS volunteers only, and for RM SBS and SAS volunteers:* Original to T Sqn, RM Poole, Dorset, BH15 4NQ. Copy to Trg Sqn 22 SAS for SAS volunteers only.
 - b. *For RN SAS volunteers:* Original to OC Trg Sqn, 22 SAS Stirling Lines, Hereford HR4 7DD.
7. RN/RM candidates for the SBS will be loaded to SBS Aptitude by the NMA

Pre - Selection Briefings / Training.

8. SBS and SAS conduct a number of briefings to units designed to inform aspirants about service within UKSF. Furthermore both units sponsor individual training courses designed to assist individuals with their personal preparation. These courses are not "pre-selections". In addition candidates for SBS will be required to undertake a one-week aptitude course to assess their suitability for diving and operating in a maritime environment.
9. SBS. The pre-selection preparation available for SBS candidates includes:
 - a. *Annual Briefings.* The SBS conducts annual briefings to RM units to give officers and ORs an insight into how best to prepare properly for UKSF Selection, the selection process itself and subsequent career progression in the SBS. RN SBS candidates can be programmed to attend these briefings.
 - b. *SBS Diving and Swimmer Canoeist Aptitude.* A seven day aptitude course is held four times a year for all potential SBS candidates. The aim of the course is to assess an individual's suitability for further training as a diver and swimmer canoeist. It is mandatory for all SBS aspirants; RM SAS candidates will attend the briefings and carry out the basic fitness assessments, but not the diving and canoeing phases unless by choice. The course consists of
 - (1) Army Basic Combat Fitness Test (BCFT (I).
 - (2) *Swimming.* The Battle Swimming test (BST) and for SBS candidates only, a 600m freestyle swim in 15 minutes and a 25 m underwater swim.
 - (3) *Canoeing.* Introduction to the Kiepper canoe , progressive paddles up to a Course Performance Standard (CPS) of 20 nm in open sea conditions to be completed in eight hours and a 6.4 km portage (54.5+Kg).
 - (4) *Diving.* Six progressive air/oxygen dives culminating in a CPS dive of 1000m.

- (5) The course will include a comprehensive brief on all UKSF career options and terms and Conditions of Service.
- (6) CO SBS RM will inform the NMA of those SBS candidates who have successfully completed the aptitude and give guidance on whether individuals who are unsuccessful are deemed suitable to attend a further course. Only exceptionally will more than two attempts at the aptitude course be allowed. SBS candidates who voluntarily withdraw (VW) will not normally be allowed a further attempt. Successful candidates will be loaded to the UKSF Selection Course by the Appropriate Appointing/Drafting Authority. Where possible there will be a six month time lapse between SBS Aptitude and UKSF Selection to allow candidates to prepare for the latter.

c. *RM Individual Training.* Three weeks prior to the commencement of the UKSF Selection Course RM SF candidates will attend a three week individual training/administrative package at RM Poole. This course is designed for candidates to improve and refine navigation skills and fitness. During this period officers undergo a three day package at CTCRM, designed to give officers revision in the estimate process in preparation for the Officers' Week phase of UKSF Selection. RN SAS candidates are strongly advised to attend.

10. SAS. The pre-selection preparation available for SAS candidates includes:

a. *SAS Potential Officers Briefing Course (POBC).* The POBC, run by 22 SAS, aims to give officers who are interested in volunteering for service with the SAS a clearer understanding of what is involved, what the SAS expects of its officers and how to prepare properly for UKSF Selection. Officers should aim to attend POBC one year before UKSF Selection. Courses are run four times a year. Nominations should be made directly to 22 SAS and copied to NMA Portsmouth and SBS RM on a restricted signal with SICs BAJ/W2B giving the following detail:

- (1) SAS Potential Officer Briefing.
- (2) Number, rank, name of officer.
- (3) Number and date of briefing course.
- (4) Address to which joining instructions should be sent.
- (5) Remarks/special considerations.
- (6) PULHEEMS standard/date last tested.

b. *Special Forces Briefing Course (SFBC).* The SFBC, run by 22 SAS, is held in UK and Germany eight times a year and is designed to give ratings and other rank UKSF aspirants an insight into the preparation and selection process for UKSF Selection and subsequent career progression in the SAS. This course should be regarded as the first step in the selection process.

c. *All Arms Infantry Skills Course (AAISC)*. The AAISC is run by the Infantry Training Centre at Catterick and lasts for four weeks. It is designed to improve basic fieldcraft and weapon handling in preparation for the jungle phase of UKSF Selection and is most suitable for those without an Infantry background, including RN officers and ratings. Applications for AAISC should be made directly to 22 SAS and copied to NMA Portsmouth.

d. RN candidates should be aware that some Army Units also run pre-selection courses for those individuals under their command. An example is the Advanced Navigation Course run for members of the Household Division and parachute Regiment by the Household Division Centralised Courses department at ATR Pirbright. RN personnel may be allocated places subject to vacancies. Applications should be made directly to the training unit concerned.

11. *Course Dates*. Dates of POBC, SFBC, SBS Aptitude course and UKSF Selection courses dates are published in DCIs annually. Dates of SBS RM briefings to units can be obtained from Trg Squadron, RM Poole.

The UKSF Selection Course

12. The UKSF Selection Course is attended by volunteers for service with both SBS and SAS. The course consists of:

a. *Aptitude Phase - Four Weeks*.

- (1) The aptitude phase is designed to select those who are suitable for SF training. The initial three weeks are devoted to gradual physical training and controlled exercises (cx) designed to develop physical and navigational abilities. Candidates will be expected to complete the standard Army BCFT (I) on the first day and Ex High Walk on day six. This Ex takes the form of an escorted hill march over approximately 23 kms; timings will be dependent on weather conditions. High Walk identifies those who are not adequately prepared to continue the selection process. All other training during this period is directed at preparing individuals for the fourth and final week which is called Test Week. Test Week consists of five timed marches of between 23-28 kms followed by a final endurance march of 65 kms which must be completed in twenty hrs. The weight carried during "Test Week" increases from 18.2-25 Kgs for the endurance march. Candidates will also be required to pass a swimming test which consists of treading water for nine mins followed immediately by swimming 100m in three mins wearing lightweights, shirt and plimsolls.

- (2) It must be emphasised that a candidate must be physically fit at the beginning of the course if he is to stand any chance of success. The course requires far greater expenditure of physical energy than is normally required in other peace time training. It is essential that candidates arrive fully fit, carrying no injuries and with a sound grasp of basic navigational techniques.
- b. *Tactical and Jungle Training Phase - Nine Weeks.* Those who pass the aptitude phase undertake an intensive period of instruction and examination in SF weapons, SOPs and tactics. The majority of this period is spent in the jungle, an environment which is ideal for SF training. Much of the training is aimed at discovering an individual's qualities. Techniques can be taught; the necessary qualities of self discipline, self confidence, determination and humour are inborn. The suitability of candidates is judged by their reaction to, and ability to cope with a series of situations when under physical and mental pressure. Previous jungle experience is not necessary, however a good knowledge of and ability in basic military skills would be beneficial.
- c. *Officers Week - One week.* Officers week will take place whilst other ranks are preparing for the jungle phase. It is designed to identify those officers who display characteristics suited to SF employment. These principal characteristics include integrity, humility, determination, an aptitude for lateral thought, an ability to learn quickly and a prepossessing personality. In general the successful candidate will stand out from his contemporaries.
- d. *Combat Survival - Two Weeks.* All candidates must attend and pass the Army Combat Survival Instructors Course. SF students who may have attended the course before will still be required to pass the course as part of the selection process.
- e. *Continuation Training - Five Weeks.* Those selected will undertake a period of continuation training which will provide them with the individual skills necessary for SF service. The period starts with the SF Parachute (para) course at RAF Brize Norton which is mandatory for all students. On completion of the para course students are passed "badged" as SF. It should be noted that personnel joining the SBS will conduct additional Boat and Dive training to achieve the Swimmer-Canoeist (SC) qualification prior to joining an operational squadron. Only on completion of these various other phases of this section of Continuation Training will the candidate be posted to an operational Sabre Squadron or SBS Squadron.

Return To Unit (RTU)

13. Officers and Ratings/Other Ranks RTU from UKSF Selection will be appointed or drafted in accordance with drafting priorities and branch requirements. All ratings should submit a C240, and RMORs a C233 (Drafting Course and Record Card) prior to commencing UKSF Selection.

Terms and Conditions of Service in UKSF

Rank and Promotion

14. *Officers.* There are no changes to Officers' rank or seniority on entry into UKSF. Officers careers will continue to be managed by the parent service as will promotion. Subsequent tours with UKSF will be subject to the aspirations of the individual and Service requirement.

15. *Non-Commissioned Officers.* Non Commissioned Officers volunteering for service with UKSF will not have the experience or ability to serve in UKSF in their existing rank (although they may merit promotion within UKSF in the future). As a consequence, they will initially serve in the Able Rate/rank of Mne on joining 22 SAS or SBS RM and their substantive military rank will be placed in abeyance until superseded by SF worn rank or they are accepted for SAS Permanent Cadre. Seniority in their substantial Naval Service rank will continue to accrue and those returning to their source specialisation on completion of their first or second tour with UKSF, will return in line with their accrued seniority. Rules for subsequent promotion whilst serving with UKSF are at ANNEX C to this DCI.

Pay and Pension

16. Pay, pensions and service conditions within UKSF differ considerably from those in the remainder of the Armed Forces and are currently the subject of an ongoing MOD study. Regulations for Special Forces Pay (SSP) are laid down in BR 1950 Chapter 2 Article 2309, but it should be noted that for some individuals, the reduction in basic pay to that of AB/Mnel Scale A, even when combined with SSP may involve a reduction in their current overall daily rate of pay under present arrangements. On successful completion of the UKSF Selection, volunteers will revert to AB/Mne 1 Scale A, and SSP will commence. In addition, for those volunteers joining SBS, Group 2 Diving Pay will become payable on successful completion of the SF diving course. SSP will cease when an individual is unfit to carry out SF duties for medical reasons after a period of 91 days from the date first recorded as sick, or on return to source branch when no longer appointable to SF duties.

17. Pension rules for UKSF personnel are also under review and, until the outcome is known, UKSF personnel will continue to be paid under current regulations (ie based on time served in the paid rank within the parent service and not inclusive of any additional pay). Officers will be pensioned in their paid rank, whilst Ratings/Other Ranks will be pensioned either in their substantive rank within their source branch or specialisation, or their promoted rank gained within UKSF, whichever is the higher.

Return Of Service (ROS)

18. On successful "badging" into UKSF the ROS for SF training is an initial three yr tour of duty to run from the end of Test Week. This will run concurrently with any existing ROS. Personnel who have been "Badged" will be required to waive their right to voluntarily retire/give notice until the completion of three yrs service from the end of Test Week. If during subsequent training and before being appointed/drafted to 22 SAS or SBS an officer/rating/other rank should fail to meet the required standard and be RTU, the restriction on the right to voluntarily retire/give notice will be cancelled.

Type of Service

19. Service with UKSF will be counted as SEA service for the purposes of drafting and SEA service rosters.

Conditions of Service - Ratings/Other Ranks

20. *Tours of Duty.* RN/RM personnel serving with 22 SAS will be drafted to SBS HEREFORD for an initial tour of duty of three years calculated from 'Admin day'. Ratings serving with SBS RM will be drafted to SBS for the same period for their initial tour. Any Rating wishing to extend his tour of duty with 22 SAS/SBS should make a formal application to CO 22 SAS or CO SBS as appropriate, nine months before the end of his first tour. If recommended for a further tour, the application is to be forwarded to the NMA for action by the Manning Branch Manager who will give manning clearance for a further tour. Authority will normally be given, when the application meets the needs of the service. Manning and Drafting officers are to advise on any career implications within the individuals source branch/specialisation. During an extension of service seniority will continue to accrue in the source branch/specialisation.

21. *Premature Termination of Tour.* Ratings/Other Ranks may be returned to their source branch/specialisation at any time during their tour, should they prove unsuitable for further service with UKSF. On return to parent branch/specialisation, an application can be made to the NMA to lift the restriction on notice rights. Automatic premature termination of a tour is not used as a punishment for ill discipline. Any Officer/Rating/Other Rank leaving the service for medical, compassionate, or other reasons will be returned to their source branch/specialisation for discharge.

22. *SAS Permanent Cadre.* The SAS Permanent Cadre assists SAS soldiers with career planning by providing career security. Soldiers may not join the Permanent Cadre until they have served with the Regiment for six years. Applications are initiated at the five year point and acceptance is always subject to CO 22 SAS recommendation. Naval ratings/RM other ranks wishing to transfer to SAS Permanent Cadre, may do so without being required to transfer service, but transfer to the Permanent Cadre signifies an acknowledgement by the individual that he understands that his primary career path is now with UKSF. Such an application, subject to CO 22 SAS

recommendation should be forwarded to the NMA, who will put in place the necessary manning framework to enable such an arrangement. RN/RM manpower will be held against the 'SBS HEREFORD' SOC. Basic rules for promotion are at ANNEX C.

Discipline

23. RN personnel serving with 22 SAS or SBS will remain members of the RN and will continue to be administered by the RN. However, during their period of service with the SAS/SBS they will be subject to Military Law in addition to the Naval Discipline Act, under the provisions of the Naval, Military and Air Force (Attachment) Regulations 1964 Regulation 4. i.

Disclosure Contract

24. Due to the sensitive nature of their employment all personnel volunteering for UKSF are to be aware that they will be required to sign and abide by a confidentiality contract. Refusal to comply will result in an individual being deemed unsuitable for employment in SF. Full details of the provisions and conditions of the Disclosure Contract are given at UKSF briefings.

Related Publications

25. A copy of this DCI should be retained within the covers of the References.

26. This DCI supersedes Annex 35C to Chapter 35 of Reference A. Changes to References B and E, to accommodate terms of service for RN personnel serving with UKSF, will be incorporated following the SP Pol review of SF Pay and Service Conditions.

Summary

27. UKSF is open to all officers and ratings of the Naval Service. UKSF seeks to attract determined, highly-motivated, intelligent, reliable and physically fit individuals to serve with both the SAS and SBS. This DCI provides the basic information to allow individuals and their Divisional or Commanding officers to make an informed judgement before applying for selection.