



An Roinn Cosanta  
Department of Defence



Óglaigh  
na hÉireann  
IRISH DEFENCE FORCES

# Reserve Defence Force

Regeneration and Development  
Plan (RDFRDP)

Office of Reserve Affairs 2024



# Reserve Defence Force

## Regeneration and Development Plan (RDFRDP)

---

The creation of a Reserve that can seamlessly train, operate and deploy with the Permanent Defence Force nationally and internationally.

Office of Reserve Affairs 2024





# Contents

---

<b>Foreword An Tánaiste, Micheál Martin TD, Minister for Defence</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Section 5 Reserve Force Design</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Foreword Lieutenant General Seán Clancy, Chief of Staff</b>	<b>2</b>	5.1 Overview	41
<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>4</b>	5.2 Defence Forces Transformation	42
<b>Section 1 Introduction</b>	<b>7</b>	5.3 First Line Reserve	44
<b>Section 2 Background and CoDF Implementation Overview</b>	<b>13</b>	5.4 Army Reserve (Second Line)	44
2.1 CoDF Implementation	13	5.5 Navy Reserve (Second Line)	46
2.2 Recommendations of the CoDF – The Intent	15	5.6 Air Corps Reserve (Second Line)	47
2.3 The End State	15	5.7 Specialist Reserve	47
2.4 Single Force Concept	16	<b>Section 6 The Action Plan</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>Section 3 Context</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>Section 7 Implementation</b>	<b>56</b>
3.1 Overview	20	7.1 Overview	56
3.2 Government Policy on Defence	20	7.2 Operational Objectives	56
3.3 Defence Force Regulations	23	7.3 Campaign Lines of Operation	57
3.4 Defence Force Regulations – Ongoing Review and Update	23	7.4 Phased Approach to Actions	58
3.5 Culture and Ethos	24	7.4.1 Initiate	59
<b>Section 4 Key Principles and Enablers</b>	<b>28</b>	7.4.2 Implement	59
4.1 Overview	28	7.4.3 Deliver	59
4.2 Principles	28	7.5 Oversight and Governance of the Three Phase Approach	60
4.2.1 Voluntary Nature of Service	28	7.6 Action Initiation	62
4.2.2 Single Force Concept	30	7.7 Action Management Process	62
4.2.3 The Reserve Defence Force – Centre of Gravity	32	7.8 Risk Management	64
4.3 Enablers	34	7.9 Action Implementation	65
4.3.1 Recruitment and Retention	34	7.10 Follow on and Additional Actions	65
4.3.2 The Office of Reserve Affairs	36	<b>Annex A Recommendations of the Commission on the Defence Forces</b>	<b>67</b>
4.3.3 Integration	37		
4.3.4 Regulatory Underpinning	39		
4.3.5 Resources	39		



# Foreword

---

AN TÁNAISTE, MICHEÁL MARTIN TD  
MINISTER FOR DEFENCE



I am delighted to welcome the publication of the Regeneration and Development Plan for the Reserve.

The Reserve Defence Force (RDF) makes an invaluable contribution to the Defence Forces and wider society. Members of the Army Reserve and Naval Service Reserve are volunteers who undertake training in their spare time in the service of the State. The training that goes into being prepared to augment the Permanent Defence Force (PDF), takes commitment and selfless dedication, characteristics that are valuable beyond military life.

The Government's commitment to the RDF has been demonstrated by a number of initiatives already implemented. It is heartening to see that initiatives such as the establishment of the Office of Reserve Affairs; increased recruitment and retirement ages; the progression of promotion competitions are impacting very positively on the Reserve Defence Force (RDF). Concerted efforts to streamline the induction process are also starting to pay dividends with significant increases in numbers being processed this year to date.

These and additional enabling work streams contained in this plan prioritising recruitment and retention; resourcing; training and education; and, integration and deployment will ensure attainment of the strategic objective of the development of a Reserve Force that can seamlessly train, operate and deploy on a voluntary basis, with the Permanent Defence Force, both domestically and overseas.

Other initiatives such as the introduction of supplementary military service and the ability for Reservists to serve overseas demonstrate the efforts being made to enhance the role of the RDF.

The wider transformation of the Defence Forces, already well underway, is focusing on cultural change to ensure the Defence Forces is an equal opportunities employer for both Permanent Defence Force personnel and members of the Reserve Defence Force, where self-worth is actively promoted; mutual respect becomes a dominant feature; and all members are treated with dignity in the workplace.

The transformation of the organisational culture, as enshrined in the Strategic Framework, shall be a fundamental principle in the implementation of this Plan. The Reserve Defence Force, based on a more dynamic recruitment strategy and service commitment, can be an exemplar in this regard.

As the Plan rightly states, the modern Reservist should be reflective of the nation as a whole and reflect the diverse nature of Irish society. This plan will seek to recognise the nature of service in the Reserve Defence Force and create an environment which provides a fulfilling experience for all those who make this commitment.

Micheál Martin TD  
Tánaiste and Minister for Defence

# Foreword

---

LIEUTENANT GENERAL SEÁN CLANCY  
CHIEF OF STAFF



I very much welcome the publication of the Reserve Defence Force Regeneration and Development Plan which represents a significant initiative in the transformation of the Defence Forces.

Since the foundation of the State, volunteer members of the Reserve Defence Force have played a key role in the provision of our military capability and the defence of our sovereignty. This support has been evidenced most recently during Operation FORTITUDE, the Defence Forces response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Throughout the operation, Reservists augmented their Permanent Defence Force colleagues thus ensuring a robust response was possible while maintaining our framework operations. It has been this volunteer ethos and devotion to service that marks the Reserve Defence Force out as a unique feature of Irish society.

Our vision for 2030 is that Óglaigh na hÉireann will be a joint, agile and fit-for-purpose military force, postured to defend our sovereignty, protect Irish citizens, and secure Ireland's interests.

This will be achieved by: Transforming our culture; modernising our force to have the capability to deter threats across multi-domain operational environments; valuing and respecting our people's dignity, empowering them to 'Be More', and delivering exciting and fulfilling careers for all who serve.

Realising our Vision will allow us to: Defend Our State, Transform Our Forces, and Value Our People.

Fundamental to this transformation will be a regenerated, trained and capable Reserve Defence Force that can support the Permanent Defence Force in all of its tasks. The 27 actions outlined in this plan will inculcate the Reserve Defence Force at all levels of the Defence Forces and deliver an enhanced integration through the application of the Single Force Concept.

It is my firm belief that an integrated Defence Force, whereby permanent and reserve personnel are serving side by side domestically and internationally will ensure the Defence Forces are poised to meet the many challenges that we face in our operating environment.


The implementation of this plan, coordinated by the Office of Reserve Affairs, will ensure that the Reserve Defence Force can seamlessly train, operate and deploy with the PDF nationally and internationally.

I look forward to witnessing this regeneration in the coming years.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Seán Clancy".

Seán Clancy  
Lieutenant General  
Chief Of Staff



A close-up photograph of a soldier in full combat gear, including a camouflage bucket hat and face paint. The soldier is aiming a rifle, with the barrel and scope visible in the foreground. The background is a dense, green forest.

“To create a reserve force that can seamlessly train, operate and deploy with the Permanent Defence Force, nationally and internationally.”



# Executive Summary

The Reserve Defence Force Regeneration and Development Plan (RDFRDP) seeks to operationalise the intent outlined in the Commission on the Defence Forces (CoDF) report pertaining to the Reserve Defence Force (RDF). The RDFRDP will contribute to, and complement, the broad spectrum of transformation initiatives that are being implemented across the Defence Forces and ensure the RDF is a fit for purpose, resilient and agile element of the Defence Forces. The campaign plan that has been developed will initiate, implement and deliver a range of actions that will regenerate and develop the RDF while also contributing to the wider transformation of the Defence Forces.

The RDFRDP provides a framework for the revitalisation of the RDF. A comprehensive campaign will deliver 27 actions to create the effects necessary to achieve the strategic objective. Some of these actions will require further research and will be exploratory in nature. Other actions will address administrative issues that have affected the operation of the RDF in the past and thus enable a more efficient and effective functional organisation. These actions will ensure the RDF is a fit for purpose force that can deliver enhanced military capabilities where and when required.

The 27 actions are organised within four objectives listed as:

<b>Recruit &amp; Retain</b>	Enhance recruitment into the RDF while concurrently implementing measures to retain personnel and build the effective strength
<b>Resource</b>	Provide Reservists and Reserve Units with appropriate resources to enable them to deliver enhanced military capabilities where and when required
<b>Train &amp; Educate</b>	Provide Reservists with the highest standard of training and education to enable them to maximise their potential
<b>Integrate &amp; Deploy</b>	Enable the RDF to seamlessly train and deploy with the PDF

Fundamentally, all 27 actions will seek to inculcate the RDF in all aspects of Defence Forces operations, training and support functions. The implementation campaign will create initiatives and actions that will develop an enhanced role, and the associated capabilities, for the RDF in the defence of the State. To that end, the strategic objective of the RDFRDP is stated as follows;

**“To create a reserve force that can seamlessly train, operate and deploy with the Permanent Defence Force, nationally and internationally”**

**(CoDF Report, p116).**

A key priority for the regeneration and development of the RDF will be the implementation of a broad spectrum of recruitment and retention initiatives. These initiatives will achieve year on year increases that will bolster the effective strength by 2028. Ongoing recruitment through multiple induction streams will ensure the RDF can deliver enhanced military capabilities where and when required. Personnel will be inducted through general enlistment, direct entry schemes, re-entry schemes and lateral entry from the Permanent Defence Force and the First Line Reserve. Retention initiatives will focus on ensuring that Reservists are enabled to make a meaningful contribution to our national resilience through their commitment and service.

The development of the RDF will be achieved through a transformation of the force structure. The Army Reserve will be considered in this context through the ongoing work of the Army Force Design Office. The Naval Service will consider a new structure and disposition for the Naval Service Reserve while increasing its establishment to a minimum of 400 personnel. An Air Corps Reserve will be established for the first time with a minimum establishment of 200 personnel. In addition, an action will be initiated to develop RDF specialist capabilities. This action will also include the exploration of the establishment of a

‘Third Line’ Reserve that would provide expertise for the development of specialist capabilities based upon new and emerging technologies. Likewise these specialists could provide support to existing Defence Force capabilities that require input from personnel with very specific skillsets. This Reserve may have greater accessibility to all members of society with the skills and experience necessary to build specialist capabilities. This will necessitate a new and novel approach to the induction of personnel to the Defence Forces.

The implementation of this plan will be led by the Defence Forces and coordinated by the Office of Reserve Affairs (ORA). The inculcation of the RDF across all aspects of Defence Forces operations, training and support will ensure the full integration of the RDF and a robust implementation of the Single Force Concept (SFC).

This document outlines the context within which the regeneration and development of the RDF will take place. Also included is a summary of the 27 actions that will implement this change and operationalise the intent of the Commission on the Defence Forces (CoDF). Complementary to this document is a comprehensive military campaign that will be coordinated by the Office of Reserve Affairs to implement the 27 actions outlined. These actions will generate the effects to create the conditions essential for the achievement of the four objectives. These four objectives will deliver the end state as articulated in the strategic objective.





## Section 1 – Introduction

---

The Tánaiste and Minister for Defence outlined the Government's priorities for the transformation of the Defence Forces in the Strategic Framework. Principal amongst these was;

- » The implementation of the IRG Report recommendations.
- » The implementation of the Commission on the Defence Forces (CoDF) recommendations as approved by Government.
- » Actions to support the recruitment and retention of personnel to our Defence Forces.
- » Actions to enhance the physical working environment and equipment of our personnel.
- » Legislative changes to underpin the transformation agenda.

The Government's commitment to this transformation agenda has been evidenced across the many initiatives already implemented. These initiatives, such as the increased induction and retirement age has impacted very positively on the Reserve Defence Force (RDF) by enhancing induction and retention of personnel. Other initiatives such as the introduction of supplementary military service and the ability for Reservists to serve overseas demonstrates the efforts being made to enhance and integrate the RDF into the Defence Forces.

The CoDF Report highlighted the important role that the RDF plays in the defence of the State. However, the report also noted that the RDF is "in an extremely weakened state" (CoDF Report, p101) and would require particular attention to regenerate to a level whereby it can provide an enhanced level of military capability where and when required in support of the achievement of Level of Ambition (LOA) 2.

The report stated that the RDF "can be revived and refocused in a way that will allow it to play an active and effective role in support of the PDF in all its functions, including in challenging new domains" (CoDF Report, p05). The potential for the RDF to deliver enhanced military capability and therefore strengthen our national resilience is widely recognised and fully understood at all levels of Command. This intent will be reflected in the enhanced utilisation of Reservist's skillsets and the development of specialist capabilities utilising existing and potential future reserve elements.

# “Ensure the Reserve Defence Force is a fit for purpose, resilient and agile element of the Defence Forces.”

The CoDF report recommended significant changes for the Defence Forces and to the level of defence provision in Ireland. The programme of transformation included a comprehensive change to Defence Forces' capabilities, culture, high-level command and control structures, HR and staffing. In this context the Government approved a decision to move to LOA 2, as outlined in the CoDF Report. *LOA 2 Enhanced Capability* is outlined as follows:

“Building on current capability to address specific priority gaps in our ability to deal with an assault on Irish sovereignty and to serve in higher intensity Peace Support Operations”

**(CoDF Report, p112).**

The RDFRDP seeks to contribute to and complement these transformation initiatives and ensure the Reserve Defence Force is a fit for purpose, resilient and agile element of the Defence Forces. The campaign plan that has been developed to operationalise the intent outlined in the Commission on the Defence Forces Report will initiate, implement and deliver a broad range of actions that will contribute to the wider transformation of the Defence Forces in line with Government policy.

An early action of this implementation has been the establishment of the Office of Reserve Affairs (ORA). The role of the ORA will be to support this implementation and operationalise the intent of the CoDF. The ORA will lead the implementation of the RDFRDP through the application of the Single Force Concept and be supported by the Department of Defence in the provision of key enablers. Governance will be achieved through a further cascading of the CoDF implementation mechanisms already established. Concurrently, the ORA will also support the ongoing day-to-day management of the RDF, facilitating the inculcation of the RDF at all levels of the military planning process.

The RDF is recognised as a force multiplier for the Permanent Defence Force (PDF) by providing enhanced capabilities and augmentation where and when required. The retention of existing personnel, the recruitment of new personnel and the equipping and training of the Reservists shall be the key focus of the RDFRDP. In this context it is important to understand what a modern-day Reservist is. Fundamentally Reservists make a commitment and enlist for military service in the Reserve on a voluntary basis. Those who enlist for service, nevertheless, do so on the understanding that there is a commitment to training and developing of oneself, which must be undertaken at training nights, weekends and full-time training blocks.



The modern Reservist should be reflective of the nation as a whole and reflect the diverse nature of Irish society. This plan will seek to recognise the nature of service in the Reserve Defence Force and create an environment which provides a fulfilling experience for all those who make this commitment.

The plan, and associated actions, contained herein articulates the high-level campaign that will guide the work necessary to regenerate and develop the RDF and enable it to deliver the enhanced capabilities necessary for the achievement of LOA 2. Complementary to the achievement of the strategic objective outlined above, the ultimate aim of the actions outlined in this plan will be to:

*Unlock the Potential of the Reserve Defence Force, Build the Capability and Enhance National Resilience.*

The RDF will be a critical component of Ireland's future defence capability. Reservists will provide enhanced military capabilities where and when required, beyond that which they currently maintain. The RDF will deploy with their PDF colleagues as part of an integrated single force. The RDF of the future will also provide specialist and possible standalone capabilities whereby Reservists skillsets are leveraged to support DF operations in the multi domain operating environment.

The transformation of the RDF will include an enhanced disposition and combat function of Army Reserve units, a larger Navy Reserve with a greater geographical presence and the establishment of an Air Force Reserve. The future RDF will reconnect with local communities and provide the opportunity for a greater cross-section of society to contribute to our national resilience and defence capabilities.

**“The RDF will be a critical component of Ireland’s future defence capability. Reservists will provide enhanced military capabilities where and when required, beyond that which they currently maintain.”**



The implementation of this plan will be undertaken in line with the Single Force Concept (SFC). The monitoring and management of the implementation of the plan and the achievement of the outcomes shall be provided by the ORA in cooperation with the owners of the relevant business functions.

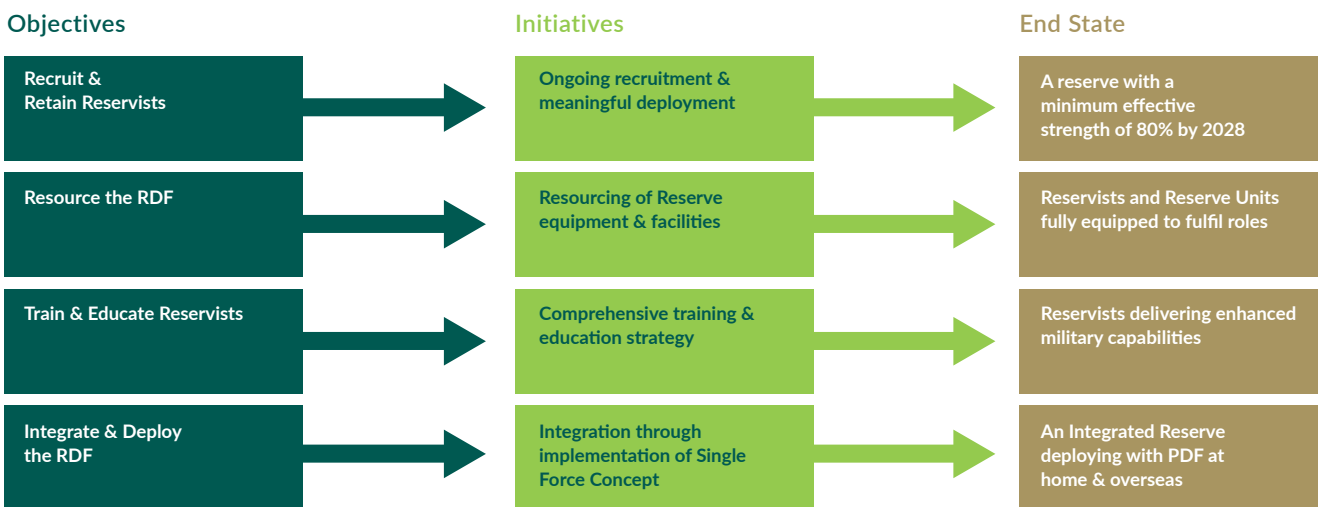


Fig 1.1 – Campaign Plan Overview.



### LIEUTENANT LISA O'HALLORAN – 1 CN COIS, GALWAY

My name is Lisa O'Halloran, I am a registered general nurse and registered midwife for over 13 years. I am currently working as a Clinical Midwife Manager in the labour ward and maternity day assessment unit in University Hospital Galway. My work involves caring for women throughout their pregnancy, managing complications that may occur, and providing care throughout labour and delivery. While I would consider my job challenging, and stressful at times, it is incredibly rewarding.

Outside of my civilian job, I have been a member of the Army Reserve for over 20 years. I initially joined after a recruitment talk at my secondary school. I enjoyed the training from day one. The mix of physical training, weapons and tactical training was so different to anything I had ever experienced.

I have had an extremely positive experience in the Defence Forces. I have completed several weapons courses, including a rifle marksmanship course, pistol, General Purpose Machine Gun (GPMG), GPMG Sustained Fire, M203 grenade launcher and a grenade course. I have instructed on a number of courses and was a member of the winning 1 Cn Cois (AR) falling plates shooting team in 2019. I play Gaelic football and camogie with the Defence Forces teams and partake in orienteering competitions. I had the opportunity to attend An Campa Gaeilge, a DF course in the Gaeltacht promoting the use of the Irish language. I have also completed the DF Open Water Swim Camp, where my confidence in sea swimming was developed. I am currently a Platoon Commander and Recruit Liaison Officer in 1 Cn Cois.

I was commissioned as an Officer following completion of the 5<sup>th</sup> Army Reserve Potential Officer course in 2021. My goal is to enable soldiers of the Army Reserve to achieve their potential through high standards of training and encouraging them to take on every opportunity presented to them. I have thoroughly enjoyed my training in the Army Reserve, and it has been of huge benefit to my civilian career. I hope to enable others to have the same experience.





## Section 2 – Background and CoDF Implementation Overview

### 2.1 CoDF IMPLEMENTATION

The Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP) outlines five strategic objectives that will be operationalised concurrently for the achievement of an appropriate level of defence capabilities as outlined in Level of Ambition (LOA) 2.



Fig 2.1 – CoDF Implementation Strategic Objectives

Each of these five areas have a mutual dependency if LOA 2 is to be achieved and, as such, necessitate a collaborative approach across all aspects of the implementation process. Recognising this interdependency, this plan has been prepared with the inherent agility and flexibility that will be necessary to transform the RDF towards the achievement of LOA 2.

The recommendations of the CoDF have been organised into themes that are aligned with each of these strategic objectives. The revitalisation of the RDF has four associated themes as illustrated in Fig 2.2 below.

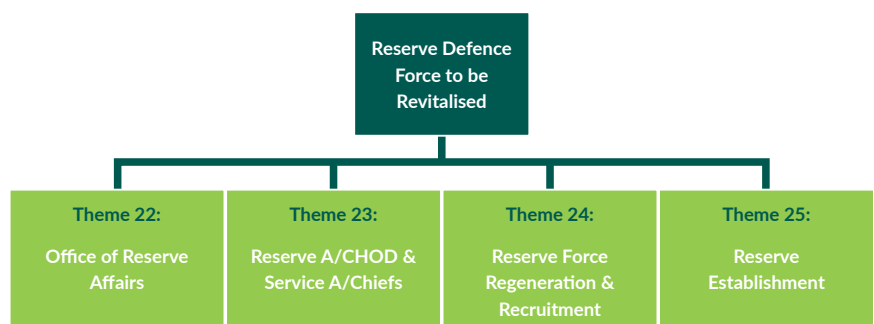


Fig 2.2 – RDF Strategic Objective and Associated Themes.



The DIP further outlines the specific work packages to be undertaken to achieve the strategic objectives. These work packages are integrated within the RDFRDP and will be delivered in the specific work packages as outlined in the Action Plan.

The transformation effort necessary for the regeneration and further development of the Reserve is significant, not least is a fundamental re-setting of the organisational culture whereby the Reserve shall be a standing component of the military planning process at all levels of the DF. The cultural change and the inculcation of the Reserve in this context will be delivered through the implementation of this plan across several action areas as illustrated in Fig 2.3 below.

The cultural and organisational transformation that is essential to unlock the potential of the RDF shall be enabled through the provision of an appropriate regulatory and policy environment. The review and updating of such regulatory provision shall be the responsibility of the Department of Defence supported by the Defence Forces. Policy and regulatory amendments shall be developed by the Department of Defence taking account of military advice.



Fig 2.3 – Implementation Enablers.

## 2.2 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CoDF – THE INTENT

The CoDF recommended that the RDF are tasked to provide a credible contingent capability to enhance societal and organisational resilience. In particular, the CoDF states that “in areas where redundancy is unaffordable, credible plans to surge capacity must be in place” (CoDF Report, p.6). The CoDF further outlined that the RDF should be a “critical asset in this regard” (CoDF Report, p.6).

The fundamental role of the RDF is to provide a credible contingent capability to enhance societal and organisational resilience. This will be achieved through the delivery of a robust set of capabilities where and when required. The regeneration and development of the RDF that is necessary to deliver this capability requires a clear vision, articulated formally in line with Government policy. The fulfilment of this vision shall be guided by a mission and a pathway outlined in the RDF Regeneration and Development Plan.

The fifteen recommendations pertaining specifically to the RDF are outlined in Annex A of this document.

## 2.3 THE END STATE

The revitalisation of the RDF is one of five strategic objectives that must be addressed in the implementation of the recommendations of the CoDF. The regeneration and development of the Reserve is recognised as a key component in the achievement of LOA 2. To this end the CoDF outlined a strategic end state of a regeneration of the Reserve Defence Force;

**“Create a reserve force that can seamlessly train, operate and deploy with the Permanent Defence Force, nationally and internationally”**

**(CoDF Report, p116).**

This strategic end state has been the guiding principle in the development of the RDFRDP and defines the desired operational end-state to be delivered by this plan. Each of the 27 actions contained in this document will contribute to the achievement of this end-state.

## 2.4 SINGLE FORCE CONCEPT

As part of the re-organisation of the Defence Forces in 2013 the RDF was configured into a structure referred to as the Single Force Concept (SFC). The general principle of the SFC saw Army Reserve Units become Sub-Units of PDF Units. The four NSR Units remained standalone Units within Naval Operations Command. The SFC sought to integrate the RDF into their parent PDF Units to create a single chain of command and thus enhance the utility and availability of the RDF to operational commanders. In their review of the Defence Forces, the CoDF determined that the concept has not been fully realised:

“It was apparent that the SFC has not been fully inculcated within the Defence Forces, and in some cases there have been inconsistencies in terms of how it is implemented at unit level” (CoDF Report, p.102).

While the implementation of the SFC has had mixed degrees of success, the CoDF recommended its retention stating that it:

**“Provides an appropriate structural model, if properly understood and implemented”**

**(CoDF Report, p.102).**

In order to provide a clearer understanding of the SFC the CoDF proposed an appropriate definition as:

**“A series of policy, regulatory, training and operational initiatives that allow the Defence Forces to remain agile, flexible and adaptive in the delivery of effective and resilient military capabilities using an integrated mix of permanent, reserve and civilian personnel”**

**(CoDF Report, p.102).**

In this context, the full implementation of the SFC will require action at all levels of the Defence Forces. Implementation and inculcation will be enabled through the provision of appropriate regulation and policy. Accordingly, the RDFRDP will put in place the mechanisms to provide these enablers. These structures will promote a culture that places the RDF as a standing element within all levels of the military planning process.

# “The SFC shall remain as a fundamental tenet to the strategic vision of the RDF, now and into the future.”

Based upon the recommendation of the CoDF, the SFC shall remain as a fundamental tenet to the strategic vision of the RDF, now and into the future. It is the core design principle for the regeneration and development of the RDF going forward. The retention of the SFC is, however, based upon a meaningful implementation at all levels of the DF. These efforts will be supported by the RDFRDP through the establishment of Reserve Management Offices within Formation HQ's. This management function will also cascade to Unit level with the introduction of a Reserve staff function. This staff will support the Unit Commander in the full utilisation of the Reserve capabilities available to them.

While the CoDF supported the retention of the SFC it also stated that the development of an enhanced role for the RDF may necessitate some structural reform,

“The Commission recognises that operationalising this enhanced role for the RDF will require detailed planning, including reforms to the extant RDF force structure”

**(CoDF Report, p.102).**

This reform will be considered in the context of the work being carried out by the Army Force Design Office. Changes to the structure of the Naval Service Reserve will be considered in the context of an increased establishment of the NSR as recommended by the CoDF. The establishment of an Air Force Reserve will also be developed in line with the specific CoDF recommendation.



## CORPORAL CIAN LYNCH – 1 BRIGADE ARTILLERY REGIMENT

My name is Cian Lynch. I am currently undertaking a PhD in History in University College Cork focused on commerce raiding in Irish waters during the First World War. I also tutor history, politics, and academic skills. Outside of my studies, I love to hike, run, swim, sail, and scuba dive.

Having a strong academic interest in military history and international relations, and a love of sport and the outdoors, the Army Reserve seemed to be a natural fit for me. I joined the minute I turned 18 and haven't regretted a minute of my time in uniform. The Army Reserve offers a broad range of unique opportunities such as artillery shoots, challenging and enjoyable training, and the privilege of serving in uniform, however the greatest reason I have chosen to stay is the sense of camaraderie and the many friendships formed by time in the Army Reserve.

Having been attested in January of 2019 and completing a recruit course and three star course, I completed the fantastic 120mm/81mm mortar course before the Covid-19 pandemic began. I had the

privilege of assisting my community during Operation FORTITUDE by facilitating the transfer of suspected Covid cases to testing centres as an assistant driver. Following Operation FORTITUDE, I have completed a Potential Non-Commissioned Officer course; the M203 Grenade Launcher course; a Regimental Signallers course; Foxtrack Radar course; an RTAS Laser Designator course. The highlight of my time in the Army Reserve however has been the 105mm Artillery course. I was fortunate also to publish an article in the *Defence Force Review 2023*, combining my academic interests and interest in this organisation. I am now undertaking the challenging but thoroughly enjoyable 6<sup>th</sup> Army Reserve Potential Officers course.

I hope now to complete the Potential Officers course, and should I be successful, to one day qualify as a Reserve Artillery Officer. Having a thorough interest in the academic elements of defence and security, I would welcome the opportunity to write again for future editions of the *Defence Force Review*. Most of all, I hope to continue serving in the Army Reserve for many happy years to come.





## Section 3 – Context

---

### 3.1 OVERVIEW

The Defence Forces is comprised of the Permanent Defence Force (PDF) and the Reserve Defence Force (RDF). The RDF currently has three elements: the Army Reserve, Naval Service Reserve and the First Line Reserve. The First Line Reserve (FLR) is comprised exclusively of former members of the PDF and has no defined establishment. The Army Reserve and Naval Service Reserve represents the Second Line Reserve and has a combined establishment of 4,069. The RDF is organised on a regional basis as part of a single force concept whereby RDF elements exist generally as Sub-Units of parent PDF units. 15 of these Units exist in locations outside of Defence Force facilities occupied by the Permanent Defence Force. This local disposition is a key consideration in the revitalisation of the RDF going forward.

### 3.2 GOVERNMENT POLICY ON DEFENCE

The current Government policy in relation to Ireland's national defence and in particular the Defence Forces is, in the main, articulated in the White Paper on Defence 2015 and the White Paper Update 2019. This policy framed a backdrop for the work of the Commission on the Defence Forces. The recommendations of the CoDF reflect current defence policy and make comment in specific areas where policy may need review.

In line with the recommendation of the CoDF this plan seeks to revitalise all elements of the RDF and enable them to deliver enhanced military capabilities in support of the PDF where and when required.

The roles of the RDF are outlined in the White Paper on Defence 2015. Currently, the primary role of the RDF is to augment the PDF in crisis situations and to contribute to State ceremonial events. In non-crisis situations the White Paper outlines that the RDF shall focus on training and preparation for the primary role. In this context, examples of potential taskings in the primary role are as follows:

- » Conventional military operations in defence of the State.
- » ATCP<sup>1</sup> support, including port security tasks.
- » ATCA<sup>2</sup> support.
- » Barrack security or other supports that facilitate the release of members of the PDF for operational duties.

1 ATCP – Aid To The Civil Power. Provision of capabilities for security purposes. Initiated at the request of An Garda Síochána.

2 ATCA – Aid To The Civil Authority. Provision of capabilities to Local Authorities and other State Agencies in crisis or emergency situations.





Historically, the RDF has deployed in a limited capacity to support the PDF. A recent example was during Operation FORTITUDE, the Defence Forces response to the Covid-19 pandemic. During this period members of the RDF deployed in various roles directly and indirectly in support of the PDF. Outside of crisis situations the RDF is focused on the conduct of routine training in preparation for their primary role. The CoDF considered this to be a significant underutilisation of such a valuable resource and stated;

**“The Commission sees no reason that the RDF should not be available routinely for a much wider range of taskings by unit commanders”**

**(CoDF Report, p.102).**

Appropriate policy and regulations shall be the key enablers for the regeneration and development of the Reserve. Government policy and robust regulatory provision will shape the operating environment and directly influence the achievement of the strategic objective to create:

**“A reserve force that can seamlessly train, operate and deploy with the Permanent Defence Force, nationally and internationally”**

**(CoDF Report, p116).**

To facilitate and support this function a standing regulatory review mechanism will be established. The provisions in this regard are outlined in the RDFRDP Action Plan.



### CORPORAL CONOR MCAULEY – 1 MECH INF COY, DFTC

My name is Conor McAuley, I am an electrician. I work for a family business and I love what I do. I work in a range of environments including domestic, commercial and industrial.

I was interested in the Army from a young age. When I became old enough to join, I took the opportunity. I have always liked a challenge and the Defence Forces has a lot of challenging environments through a range of courses and experiences.

I have completed my Potential Non Commissioned Officer course and have helped out on a range of courses such as the RDF Potential Officer course with the Cadet School, the RDF Young Officers course with the Infantry Weapons Wing (IWW). There is also a class of RDF recruits with 1 MIC that I will assist with the training.

I would like to get onto the next Standard NCO course to get qualified for promotion to Sergeant. I am also interested in heavy machinery like trucks and would like to get some of the truck driving courses completed. If the opportunity arose to get on a Mowag driving course, I would jump at it.



### 3.3 DEFENCE FORCE REGULATIONS

The primary legislation that empowers the Reserve Defence Force is the Defence Act 1954 as amended. In addition to the primary legislation, the Minister for Defence is empowered to make Defence Force Regulations (DFRs) in relation to matters pertaining to the functioning of the Defence Forces. DFRs contain detailed provisions that support the day-to-day functioning of the Defence Forces. The primary regulations relating to the Reserve Defence Force include:

- » R1 – THE RESERVE OF OFFICERS (FIRST LINE) 1945 Edition.
- » R2 – THE RESERVE OF MEN (FIRST LINE) 1954 Edition.
- » R5 – RESERVE DEFENCE FORCE (ARMY RESERVE AND NAVAL SERVICE RESERVE) 2022.

All other matters of regulation pertaining to Reservists are provided for, as appropriate, in other DFRs. Regulatory provision within DFRs is applied as part of the Single Force Concept. The term ‘Defence Forces’ where used, is considered to mean the single force comprised of the Permanent and Reserve Defence Force unless otherwise stated.

### 3.4 DEFENCE FORCE REGULATIONS – ONGOING REVIEW AND UPDATE

The review and update of primary Defence Force Regulations (DFRs) and the accompanying catalogue of Administrative Instructions will be a key element in the policy formulation framework and to the regeneration and development of the Reserve Defence Force.

The Office of Reserve Affairs shall be responsible for the provision of military advice, through the chain of command, which will contribute to the formulation of a policy position and subsequent review and update of the DFRs. This monitoring and continuous improvement will ensure the Reserve Defence Force has any, and all, of the appropriate regulatory underpinnings necessary for them to fulfil their roles and responsibilities and therefore provide the enhanced military capabilities for the achievement of LOA 2.

To ensure the process of review and update is kept ‘live’, the standing mechanism to be put in place will provide a process for observations and recommendations on the regulatory provisions to be assessed and actioned as required. The mechanism will also facilitate a ‘bottom up’ process which will ensure the RDF can respond to the needs of the Defence Forces in an agile and robust manner.

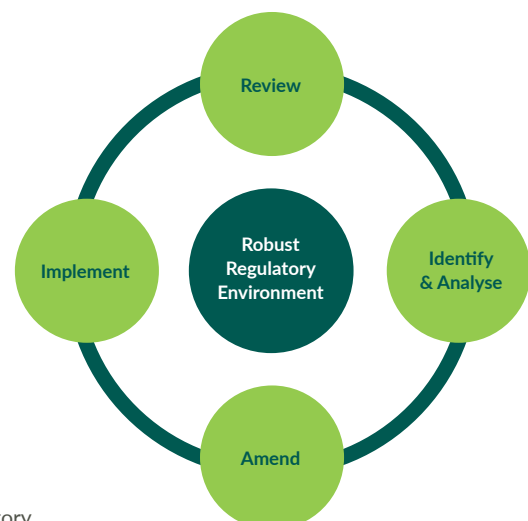


Fig 3.2 – Regulatory Amendment Mechanism.

### 3.5 CULTURE AND ETHOS

The wider transformation of the Defence Forces is focusing on cultural change to ensure the Defence Forces is an equal opportunities employer for both Permanent Defence Force personnel and members of the Reserve Defence Force, which is reflective of contemporary Irish society and where

- » Self-worth is actively promoted,
- » Mutual respect becomes a dominant feature,
- » All members are treated with dignity in the workplace.

The transformation of the organisational culture, as enshrined in the strategic framework, shall be a central tenet to the implementation of this plan. The representation of all elements of society shall be a key consideration in each of the actions necessary to achieve the strategic objective. The Reserve Defence Force, based on a more dynamic recruitment strategy and service commitment, can be an exemplar in this regard.

**“The Reserve Defence Force, based on a more dynamic recruitment strategy and service commitment, can be an exemplar in this regard.”**

The regeneration and development of the RDF shall be underpinned by a robust application of Defence Forces leadership doctrine and the values incorporated therein.

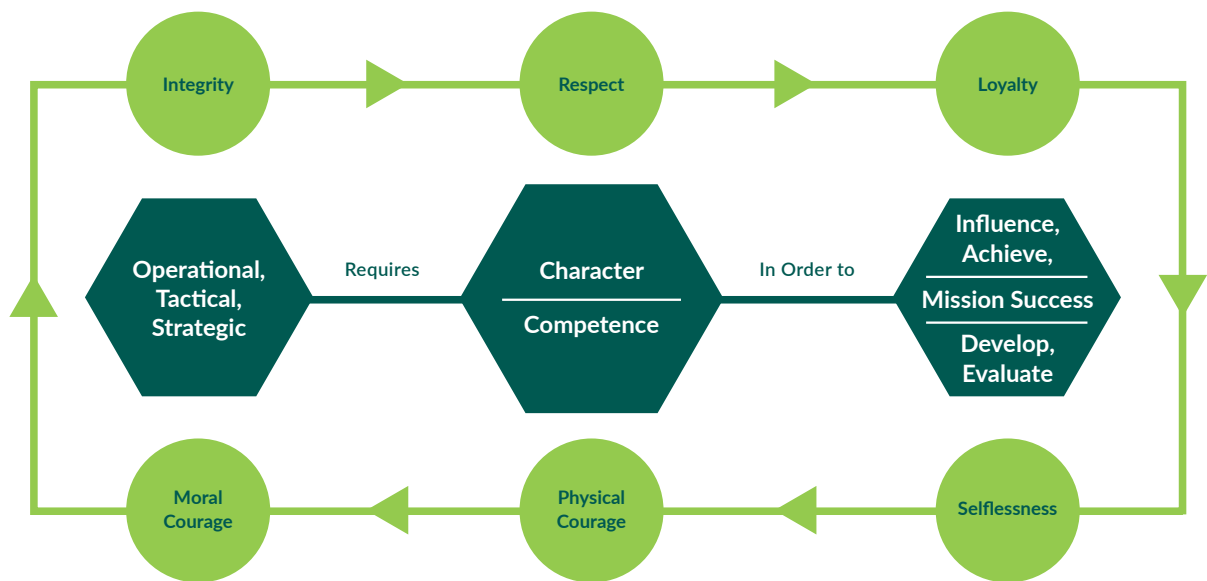


Fig 3.3 – Defence Forces Leadership Framework.

The Defence Forces organisational values are the constants that underpin values-based leadership and service in the Defence Forces. The unique context and characteristics of any military force necessitate specific values. Our values are respect, loyalty, selflessness, physical courage, moral courage and integrity. These values will be the principal guidance for behaviour, decisions and actions for all members of the Defence Forces be they permanent or reserve.

The ‘Volunteer ethos’ of the Defence Forces and in particular the Reserve Defence Force captures the essential spirit, strengths and values of Óglaigh na hÉireann. It recognises the heritage, customs and achievements of the organisation and it guides the behaviour of members of the Defence Forces - Óglaigh na hÉireann. Reservists will espouse this ethos and culture and thus contribute to our national resilience through the delivery of enhanced military capabilities where and when required.



### RECRUIT VICTORIA HASTINGS RAFFERTY – DUBLIN UNIT NSR

My name is Victoria Hastings Rafferty, I recently graduated from UCD with a degree in Geoscience and now work as a graduate environmental consultant in land contamination and hydrogeology. My role is hands-on, often spent outdoors on construction sites across the country. Outside of work, I spend my spare time following my passion for outdoor activities like climbing the Wicklow mountains and scuba diving with the UCD Sub-Aqua Club, where I also serve as the Public Relations Officer.

My lifelong love for the sea and the outdoors drew me to pursue a childhood dream of joining the Irish Navy. While initially considering the Permanent Defence Forces, discovering the Naval Service Reserve offered the perfect balance to pursue my geoscience career full-time while fulfilling my military aspirations part-time. The opportunities within the Defence Forces, including various courses and the camaraderie, further motivated my decision. Serving on one of our vessels for a patrol is my ultimate motivation.

Currently I am undergoing recruit training with my Unit. I've completed the Personal Survival Techniques (PST) course at the National Maritime College of Ireland (NMCI) which was a fun but a daunting experience, learning how to abandon a ship and survive. Additionally, I took a visit to the boatyard in Valentia Island in Kerry which provided a first-hand look at the construction of the new Naval Service Reserve motor launches, I was fascinated by the design and construction process of these vessels, fuelling my anticipation for future training opportunities.

In the short term, I aim to complete recruit training and pass out as an Ordinary Seaman soon. Moving forward, I aspire to contribute my skills to the Defence Forces Dive Club. In the long term I aim to progress into a leadership position within DUNSR. As one of the very few females in my unit, I am driven to serve as a future role model for females and advocate for greater female representation within our ranks.





## Section 4 – Key Principles and Enablers

---

### 4.1 OVERVIEW

The initiation and implementation of this plan will be supported by a robust governance mechanism coordinated through the Office of Reserve Affairs (ORA). The ORA will monitor and manage the actions that will create the transformative effects necessary for the achievement of the strategic objective. Momentum will be maintained through periodic reporting at all levels of the process. Outlined below are key principles and enablers that will drive the regeneration and development of the RDF.

### 4.2 PRINCIPLES

The development of this plan recognises some key principles that define the RDF. Not least is the part time and voluntary service the Reservists commit to.

#### 4.2.1 Voluntary Nature of Service


Members of the Reserve Defence Force make an important contribution to the Defence Forces and wider society. The training that goes into being prepared to augment the Permanent Defence Force takes significant commitment and dedication.

Central to this commitment is the level of training that members undertake, on a voluntary basis, in order to perform the roles assigned to them, for wider societal benefit. This voluntary service, paid and unpaid, has defined the development of this plan.

Members of the Reserve voluntarily undertake training in their spare time. In order to facilitate the nature of Reserve service and to maximise attendance of Reserve personnel, training continues to be delivered both in and out of normal working hours, at weekends and during academic and traditional holiday periods. This plan seeks to build on this principle and facilitate greater accessibility to training activities for Reservists to achieve their full potential.

It is essential that the Defence Forces recruit, retain, and develop for the future, skilled personnel and key specialists. The broad spectrum of actions contained in this plan will facilitate and support this principle.



A woman in a dark green military uniform stands in profile, looking to the left. She wears a dark green beret with a gold emblem and a green band. Her uniform is adorned with several medals and a blue braided cord. A shoulder patch on her right arm features a red and blue shield with a white cross and the word "CÚLLEN" above it. In the background, other soldiers in similar uniforms are visible, some holding flags.

“It is essential that the Defence Forces recruit, retain, and develop for the future, skilled personnel and key specialists.”

#### 4.2.2 Single Force Concept

The CoDF recommended the retention of the Single Force Concept (SFC) stating that it:

“Provides an appropriate structural model, if properly understood and implemented”

**(CoDF Report, p.102).**

To that end, the CoDF developed a definition for the concept as introduced in 2013. This definition is intended to create a better understanding of the framework provided by the SFC;

“A series of policy, regulatory, training and operational initiatives that allow the Defence Forces to remain agile, flexible and adaptive in the delivery of effective and resilient military capabilities using an integrated mix of permanent, reserve and civilian personnel”

**(CoDF Report, p.102).**

In this context, the full implementation of the SFC will require action at all levels of the Defence Forces. Its implementation and the inculcation will be enabled through the provision of appropriate resources, regulation and policy. Accordingly, the RDFRDP will put in place the mechanisms to provide these enablers. Initiatives developed through the 27 actions will be implemented through the SFC recognising and respecting the Chain of Command. These structures will promote a culture that places the RDF as a standing element within all levels of the military planning process.





### SERGEANT KIERAN CONMY – 2 BRIGADE CIS COMPANY

My name is Kieran Conmy, and I work as a Cyber Security & Forensics consultant with SAP, working to harden and bolster the application and network infrastructure security of multinational companies around the globe. I'm also a Sergeant in 2 Brigade Communication and Information Systems (CIS) Company in Cathal Brugha Barracks, Dublin. I started off in the Infantry 20 years ago and completed numerous weapons, tactics & career courses.

More recently, joining 2CIS has allowed me to utilise my civilian skillset and bring innovation and technological advancement to the Defence Forces. I was invited to participate in the Cyber Coalition global blue team cyber security exercise. This is designed to teach, develop and exercise the cyber security skillsets of the participating nations. DF personnel worked alongside national SME's to defend a simulated network attack and bolster and harden the simulated network.

This capability was utilised to the fullest when the HSE was subject of a cyber attack during the Covid-19 pandemic. Defence Forces CIS personnel were brought in to help investigate and help and assist in the recovery of systems in some of the nation's most critical hospitals including the National Children's Hospital.

During my time in CIS, I've also trained PDF personnel deploying overseas in navigation, Sitaware C4I tactical battlefield management system and radio communications. This has helped me to expand the innovation and technological advancements within the Defence Forces such as VR, Personnel tracking, expansion of Sitaware utilising mapping utilities and helping with cyber security development. I hope to continue help improve the Defence Forces operational excellence and effectiveness into the future.

**“The RDF is recognised as a force multiplier for the Permanent Defence Force by providing enhanced capabilities and augmentation where and when required.”**

#### **4.2.3 The Reserve Defence Force – Centre of Gravity**

The RDF centre of gravity has been identified as *well equipped, well trained, and highly motivated Reservists*. Without this, the RDF cannot achieve its strategic objective.

The CoDF placed particular emphasis on the importance of personnel as a key resource necessary for the enabling of defence capabilities:

**“The transformational change required to deliver on this vision will require the Defence Forces to put its people at the centre of the organisation”**

**(CoDF Report, p.iii).**

In this context, the Defence Forces recognises that each individual Reservist represents an element of defence capability. This fundamental military capability is based upon their skills and experience. Reservists are somewhat different in this regard in the context of the skills and experience they have gained in their civilian careers. This talent pool represents the true potential of the Reserve whereby specific skillsets not ordinarily available within the Defence Forces can be accessed and utilised in the delivery of enhanced military capabilities. This is an attribute that is somewhat unique to the Reserve. This resource will be targeted during the transformation of the Defence Forces and the delivery of LOA 2. The RDFRDP will develop mechanisms whereby this resource will become readily available for the support of defence capabilities.

The RDF is recognised as a force multiplier for the Permanent Defence Force by providing enhanced capabilities and augmentation where and when required. This is predicated on the availability of well trained, well equipped, and highly motivated Reservists. It is for this reason that the retention of existing personnel, the recruitment of new personnel and the equipping and training of the Reserve Defence Force shall be a key focus and central tenet of the implementation of this plan.

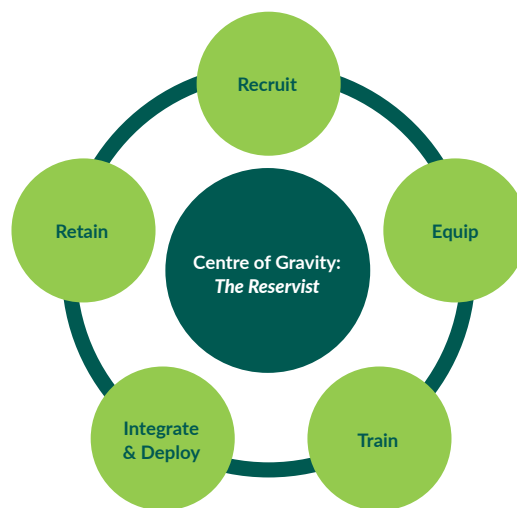


Fig 4.1 – RDF Regeneration and Development Centre of Gravity.

## 4.3 ENABLERS

### 4.3.1 Recruitment and Retention

The ability of the RDF to recruit and retain personnel will be fundamental to the regeneration of the force. A broad spectrum of initiatives will ensure the RDF achieve year on year increases that will bolster the effective strength by 2028.

The CoDF made specific recommendations around the recruitment and retention of personnel stating:

**“The Defence Forces should develop a clear and focused recruitment plan, with clearly identified milestones and annual reviews, targeted at meeting the full establishment of the RDF within eight years to include recruitment of specialists, Combat Support and Combat Service Support personnel”**

**(CoDF report, p.IX).**

A broad range of actions, that will be implemented concurrently, will create the conditions necessary for a robust and dynamic ability to recruit and retain personnel. These conditions will combine to bring the RDF to an effective strength whereby it has the capacity to deliver enhanced military capabilities where and when required. In this context, it is widely recognised that a strong and resilient RDF will enhance the capability of the DF as a whole.

In order to create these effects, recruitment and retention shall be considered in separate initiatives; however, they will not be mutually exclusive. Historically, a large cohort of personnel would have joined the RDF based on word-of-mouth recommendations from serving personnel. It is recognised therefore that an ability to retain personnel will in turn contribute to the ability to recruit new personnel. The maintenance of a robust centre of gravity - namely, well trained, well equipped, and highly motivated Reservists - shall be key to the delivery of an effective strength for the RDF.

One such initiative that will be explored in the development of the RDF recruitment strategy shall be the establishment of RDF Regional Recruiting Centres. This concept would see existing RDF Units establishing a footprint in urban centres within their catchment area. Limited training can be provided in these centres with the bulk of training being delivered in parent unit facilities. These centres would be a focal point for the RDF in local communities and provide enhanced accessibility for regional populations.

The retention of Reservists beyond their initial training will be contingent on their gainful deployment and the maintenance of a true sense of purpose whereby they are actively contributing to the enhancement of national resilience. This shall be achieved through the meaningful integration of the RDF with the PDF, regular training, and regular operational deployments.



**“This concept would see existing RDF Units establishing a footprint in urban centres within their catchment area.”**

Concurrent to the retention of existing personnel and the recruitment of new personnel shall be the re-induction of personnel with previous PDF or RDF service. The mechanisms that will facilitate this induction stream shall be subject to an assessment of the necessary legislative underpinning. These mechanisms will be developed as part of an ongoing holistic recruitment process.

Recognising the importance of recruitment to the regeneration and development of the RDF a recruitment campaign was launched in October 2023. Reservists applying to join the PDF, will be rewarded for their commitment through initiatives embedded within PDF induction mechanisms. Such an initiative would see RDF personnel receiving a percentage bonus on their marks as recognition of their prior service. The delivery of the RDF recruitment strategy will be a priority for the ORA and associated stakeholders in 2024.

The resourcing of a robust induction system will be critical to the achievement of an increase in the overall strength of the RDF. The provision of medical, fitness and administrative support will be provided as part of the Single Force Concept and will be coordinated by the ORA. The out of hours nature of RDF service will also need to be recognised to ensure the induction system facilitates as many candidates as possible.

A revitalised First Line Reserve shall also contribute to the reserve capability. Induction and assignment shall be streamlined to ensure that the Defence Forces have access to the experience and expertise of former PDF personnel who still wish to serve the State.



#### 4.3.2 The Office of Reserve Affairs

The Office of Reserve Affairs (ORA) has been established as one of the early actions of the implementation of the CoDF. The CoDF intent for the ORA is outlined as follows:


*“A joint Office of Reserve Affairs (ORA), with senior staff from RDF and with support from the PDF, be established which should report regularly to the CHOD and senior commanders on all reserve matters. Command authority should remain with the integrated PDF/ RDF Unit Commanders in conformity with the SFC”*

**(CoDF Report, p.103).**

In line with this intent, the ORA is a fully integrated office of PDF and RDF personnel that are tasked to provide advice on the management and governance of the RDF. The ORA currently operates as part of DCOS (Ops) staff. It is anticipated that the ORA will migrate to the CHOD staff once established. The ORA has no command function.

The ORA has a stated mission of:

*“Unlock the potential of the reserve force, develop their capability and enhance national resilience”.*



**“Full integration will be achieved when the RDF is inculcated into the planning and decision-making process at all levels.”**

#### 4.3.3 Integration

The CoDF recognised that a holistic integration of the Reserve Defence Force in operational Commander’s decision-making processes has not taken place. The CoDF stated that full integration into a single force, following the 2013 reorganisation, has not been achieved. The CoDF outlined that a change in culture is required and stated:

**“To instigate the necessary organisational culture will require a significant change in mind-set in the Defence Force at all levels of leadership”**

**(CoDF Report, p.108).**

Full integration will be achieved when the RDF is inculcated into the planning and decision-making process at all levels. The RDFRDP will address this issue through a cross section of the actions. Principal of these actions will be the establishment of Reserve Management Offices (RMOs) within each Brigade and Formation. The RMOs will be located within HQs and provide a conduit between the ORA and the

operational and tactical level. This function will be further cascaded to the tactical level with the establishment of a Reserve Staff within Unit HQs. These offices shall be staffed by PDF and RDF personnel and will provide a management function in support of Unit Commanders utilisation of the reserve capabilities available.

The day-to-day functioning of RDF Units shall be supported by the existing Cadre Staff established following the 2013 re-organisation.

The ORA will have no command function but will support and enable the day-to-day functioning of the RDF.

The integration of the RDF shall be monitored through monthly activity reports. These reports shall be compiled by the ORA and be reported on to the Deputy Chief of Staff (Operations). An end of year overview of the activity of the RDF shall be compiled for submission through the Chief of Staff to the Minister for Defence. This level of management is in line with the intent of the CoDF and is contained within the *Detailed Implementation Plan*.



### COMMANDANT LAR JOYE – DEFENCE FORCE HEAD QUARTERS

My name is Lar Joye, I am part of the Executive Management Team (EMT) at Dublin Port, Irelands largest Port, responsible for Heritage and Special Projects. This includes a 300 year old Archive and developing a new cultural quarter and distributed museum network in the Port connected to Dublin city through a series of new greenways. Previously I have worked as a film archivist and curated the award-winning 'Soldiers & Chiefs - the Irish soldier at home and abroad from 1550' exhibition at the National Museum of Ireland, Collins Barracks, described as a museum within a museum.

Like many who join the Defence Forces I had a family tradition of joining the military, of two granduncles, one served as an Army Doctor in Gallipoli and Western Front, while the other was killed fighting with the IRA in Limerick in 1920.

I joined as a Gunner in the 1<sup>st</sup> Air Defence Regiment in 1987, later promoted to Cpl and Sgt before being commissioned as an Officer in 1997. With the introduction of the Single Force Concept in 2013, I served as Staff Officer in Defence Forces PR Branch, in 2 Brigade HQ and the Directorate of Reserve Forces, where I served for three months in the Joint Task Force coordinating operation FORTITUDE as part of the DF response to the COVID 19 pandemic. During this time, I also served on several Military Boards including, the Defence Forces Centenary History Book, the Civil War 18pdr conservation project and 1916-2016 Centenary Medal.

I am excited by the proposed revitalisation of the Permanent and Reserve Defence Forces. Over the last three years my civilian and military career have merged as I have lectured on the International Cultural Property Protection Course in the United National Training School. I am particularly looking forward to this year's course in September.



#### 4.3.4 Regulatory Underpinning

The provision of robust regulatory underpinning will be a key enabler for the revitalisation of the RDF. This shall be the responsibility of the Department of Defence who will consider the military advice and bring forward provisions as appropriate. The ORA will maintain a standing mechanism within its organisation to support the formulation of the military advice and the provision of staffing support as required.

#### 4.3.5 Resources

The budget available for RDF training has been maintained at a consistent level of €2.150m in recent years in order to support planned training. The budget was increased for 2024 in line with the positive growth in the numbers of training days being completed by an increasing number of Reservists.

The resourcing of Reserve Units and individual Reservists will be achieved through application of the principles of the Single Force Concept. The provision of equipment necessary for the RDF to provide enhanced military capabilities shall be inculcated into all DF procurement plans and initiatives.

Reservists will be provided with all the personal equipment, including uniforms, necessary for them to carry out their roles and responsibilities. This shall be on a par with their colleagues in the Permanent Defence Force.

RDF Units and Sub-Units shall be equipped to an appropriate level that will enable them to carry out their taskings and provide the capability necessary to achieve the level of ambition set by Government.

The integration of Reservists across DFHQ in a transformed command structure shall ensure the intent in this regard is delivered.



## Section 5 – Reserve Force Design

---

### 5.1 OVERVIEW

The RDFRDP will provide a coordinated framework for the actions necessary to regenerate and develop the RDF into a force that is fit for purpose, resilient, agile, and flexible. The RDF will be a force that can deliver enhanced military capabilities where and when required to bolster our national resilience.

The RDF force design will be developed by the Defence Forces to ensure the RDF is capable of supporting the PDF in all its tasks. An inherent agility and flexibility will be a key design principle in this regard, particularly given the voluntary nature of RDF service.

The RDF will also be one of the mechanisms whereby a latent defence in depth capability can be developed. Personnel who serve in the RDF will undergo professional military training. The skills learned are life-skills which they will retain beyond their discharge from the RDF. This latent pool of trained personnel could, in times of emergency, be very quickly re-activated and utilised to scale the Defence Forces in a short period of time. Mechanisms for rapid induction shall be maintained to support this capability should the need arise.

**“The RDF will also be one of the mechanisms whereby a latent defence in depth capability can be developed.”**

## 5.2 DEFENCE FORCES TRANSFORMATION

The implementation of the CoDF recommendations, as accepted by Government, will see the Defence Forces developing enhanced military capabilities towards the achievement of Level of Ambition 2 (LOA 2). The associated capabilities and the achievement of same is outlined by the CoDF as follows:

**“Building on current capability to address specific priority gaps in our ability to deal with an assault<sup>3</sup> on Irish sovereignty and to serve in higher intensity Peace Support Operations”**

**(CoDF Report, p.27)**

This transformation will take place across the Defence Forces in all domains. The level of ambition would allow the Defence Forces to:

- » Identify and detect infringements, incursions and attacks on our sovereignty, people and resources and would provide at least a limited capability to respond to these;
- » Rapidly deploy forces at home and overseas with an increased ability to sustain and protect these forces;
- » Remain a partner of choice for international peace support operations and allow the State to make more impactful overseas contributions; and
- » Meet their regular ATCP and ATCA tasks and provide a significant contribution to national resilience.

The RDF will play a key role in this transformation and will develop enhanced military capabilities in support of the PDF.

The CoDF recommended the retention of the Single Force Concept as an appropriate structural model and made specific recommendations for a “harmonisation across the PDF and RDF of routine matters”. The CoDF also recognised the importance of the wide geographical disposition of the RDF beyond that of the PDF.

**“The future establishment should be reconfigured to reflect local demographics and the potential to recruit and fill vacancies. The Commission further recommends the establishment of Reserve Sub-Units in areas of large population density where no Units currently exist and that specialist Units should be relocated or created in locations where they are likely to recruit the specialists required”**

**(CoDF Report, p.103).**

Working closely with the offices tasked with the wider implementation of the CoDF, this plan will initiate the mechanisms necessary to operationalise this intent where it applies to the RDF.

The ORA will act as the focus conduit for collaboration with such offices as the Army Force Design Office and the Capability Development Branch.

<sup>3</sup> An assault is a single/limited attack designed to intimidate/pressure the Government to make certain decisions or consents (CoDF Report, 2022).





## ORDINARY SEAMAN NABIN BHANDARI – DUBLIN UNIT NSR

My name is Nabin Bhandari. I am working as an Internal Sales Account Manager at Hilti. I joined the NSR in 2019. Military was one of the most popular career choices in Nepal. I have a lot of extended family members serving in various forces. The military is something that I have always dreamt of joining since a young age.

I love being part of the Defence Forces, we get to experience and do various things that we wouldn't get to do otherwise in our day-to-day life. RHIB Coxswains, Manual Handling, Personal Survival Techniques, Damage Control and Fire Fighting are some of the courses that I have completed so far.

I was fortunate enough to be part of Operation FORTITUDE during the COVID-19 pandemic and have served onboard a ship for over five weeks. I am hoping to undergo a driving course and take part in various opportunities that are coming as part of serving in the RDF.

### 5.3 FIRST LINE RESERVE

The First Line Reserve (FLR) is constituted to maintain a pool of trained military personnel with prior service in the Permanent Defence Force (PDF). The FLR is intended to augment PDF Units in times of emergency. The FLR is comprised of two components: the Reserve of Officers (First Line) and the Reserve of Men (First Line). Membership of the FLR is restricted to personnel who have completed a term of engagement with the PDF and have undertaken, either voluntarily or on foot of a contractual commitment, to complete a period of service in the FLR.

The FLR has been utilised in a limited manner for many years, however, the potential for the FLR to deliver enhanced capabilities is recognised and, as such, the regeneration and development of the FLR will be a key initiative in the context of regenerating and developing the RDF. *The Strategic Framework – Transformation of the Defence Forces (September 2023)* identified this as one of its four key actions:

**“The Defence Forces to prepare proposals to provide for a Fast Track Process for First Line Reserve”**

**(CoDF Report, p.106).**

Initial work in this regard will constitute a comprehensive review of the current legislative provisions pertaining to the FLR. The ORA will work closely with the Department of Defence to make amendments where required to create a fit for purpose mechanism to enable personnel to make a lateral entry from the PDF to the RDF. The revitalisation of the FLR will be prioritised as one of the early actions of this plan.

### 5.4 ARMY RESERVE (SECOND LINE)

The Army Reserve (AR) is organised in 26 locations throughout the country. AR Units are integrated across the Army Corps and maintain capabilities across all functions of combat, combat support and combat service support. The majority of AR Units are light infantry companies within the seven infantry battalions of the two Brigades. AR personnel are also located in staff roles within DFHQ and Brigade/ Formation HQ's.

The primary role of the AR is to train for augmentation and support of the PDF in the defence of the State against armed aggression. The role of the Army Reserve will be considered as part of the transformation being developed by the Army Force Design Office. The current taskings assigned to the Army Reserve include;

- » Augmentation/reinforcement of the PDF.
- » Provision of logistic support.
- » Provision of armed escorts.
- » Staffing of Military Posts during periods of PDF deployment.
- » Radiological Monitoring.
- » Ceremonial Duties at national and local events.

Army Reservists are liable to be called up on permanent service by ministerial order in times of emergency.

The CoDF recommended that the current force design in terms of combat functions of AR Units be reviewed and stated that a ratio of 50% combat to 50% combat support and combat service support should be considered.

The force design transformation of the Army Reserve will be undertaken by the Army Force Design Office who will consider the Reserve Defence Force in the context of their work to restructure the Army for operations at home and overseas.



**“The role of the Army Reserve will be considered as part of the transformation being developed by the Army Force Design Office.”**



## 5.5 NAVY RESERVE (SECOND LINE)

The NSR is organised across five units, one each in Cork, Dublin, Limerick, and Waterford. The fifth unit is the Technical Support Unit which is not location specific. It is assigned to Naval Service HQ and is designed to provide specialist support to the Defence Forces where and when required.

The primary role of the NSR is to augment the Naval Service and provide support as required. This includes the augmentation of ships' crews during operational patrols of Ireland's maritime domain. It also includes the provision of logistical support to NS ships in ports around the coast.

The NSR also has a limited security role and conducts its own stand-alone operations within their respective ports, such as sighting reports and intelligence gathering.

The NSR provides support for ceremonial activities and recruiting events. This is a key aspect of Naval Service local and regional engagement activities. This

local engagement and the visibility of the NSR is key to the achievement of a heightened level of awareness of the work of the NS.

The NSR plays a key role in the support of visiting foreign ships to ports around Ireland. NSR personnel often fulfil the ceremonial and liaison aspects of such visits.

As is the case with Army Reservists, members of the NSR are liable to be called up on permanent service by ministerial order in times of emergency.

The CoDF recommended that the establishment of the NSR be increased to a minimum of 400 personnel. They further recommended that the current disposition be considered to include the maritime communities in the West, North West and North East of the country.

The force design transformation of the NSR will be considered by FOCNS who shall make recommendations as required





## 5.6 AIR CORPS RESERVE (SECOND LINE)

The CoDF recommended the establishment of an Air Corps Reserve with a minimum establishment of 200 personnel.

The establishment of an Air Corps Reserve including the organisation and disposition will be considered by GOC AC who shall make recommendations as required.

## 5.7 SPECIALIST RESERVE

The CoDF recognised the potential for the Defence Forces to leverage Reservists skillsets in the development of specialist capabilities across the multi domain operational environment. The implementation of CoDF Recommendation #75 necessitates a profiling of existing Reservists skillsets and an assessment of desirable skillsets that could support the development of enhanced military capabilities. This process will explore specific capabilities that could be developed through the utilisation of skillsets available amongst serving Reservists but also outside the DF within industry and academic settings. Concepts of operation for the development of such capabilities will be explored with key stakeholders to enable mechanisms whereby Reservists can deliver and support specialist military capabilities.



**“This process will explore specific capabilities that could be developed through the utilisation of skillsets available amongst serving Reservists.”**

The ORA, through Action 25 outlined below, will explore mechanisms for the development of specialist capabilities to augment and support PDF operations in the multi domain operational environment. This exploration will also consider the establishment of a new class of reserve with an alternative approach to effectivity criteria. This new approach could provide a mechanism for people that are currently precluded from serving in the Defence Forces due to their ability to satisfy physical and cognitive induction assessments. This action will have the potential to create a model of diversity through the implementation of significantly modified conditions of service. This will enable accessibility to

elements of society that have previously been unable to contribute to our national resilience through service in the RDF. Fundamentally, this new class of reserve will deliver specialist capabilities based upon the individual’s expertise regardless of their neurodiversity or physical ability.

International examples will be examined along with new models of service such as non-uniformed and non-ranked service. Work in this regard will be undertaken in close cooperation with the Capability Development Branch, the Office of Strategic HR and other key stakeholders across the Defence Forces.

**“This new class of reserve will deliver specialist capabilities based upon the individual’s expertise regardless of their neurodiversity or physical ability.”**



### LIEUTENANT CHRISTINA FOX – 1 MECH INF COY, DFTC

My name is Christina Fox. I am a Chartered Civil Engineer working for an engineering consultancy. I completed a Bachelor of Engineering in NUI Galway and a Master of Science in Trinity College and have worked on major projects both nationally and internationally across Europe and Africa. As a Chartered Engineer, the training I undertake with the Defence Forces contributes significantly to my annual Continued Professional Development (CPD) hours recognised by Engineers Ireland. Developing my skills in teamwork, leadership, and communication has not only benefited my advancement within the Army Reserve but has also enhanced my prospects in civilian roles.

My interest in a career in Army Reserve piqued after speaking with a serving member about their experiences, sparking a desire to try something new and different. The Defence Force's diverse training options greatly appealed to me, driving my decision to enlist. Since joining, I have engaged in an array of training, including weapons proficiency, tactical manoeuvres, driving courses, first aid, leadership development, Crowd Riot Control training, and much

more. Among the many aspects I cherish about the Army Reserve, the camaraderie is unparalleled. The Defence Forces attracts exceptional individuals and I have made many lifelong friends.

I joined the RDF in 2008 signing up to an infantry unit in Finner Camp in Donegal. Following the completion of my basic training, I went on to become an NCO. I instructed on career courses training dozens of Recruits while continuously seeking to personally develop through various skills courses and tactical exercises. With over 10 years' experience as an NCO, eager to challenge myself further, I applied for a Potential Officers Course and was commissioned as a Lieutenant in 2021. Following my commissioning, I was posted to 1 Mech Inf Coy. I have conducted several exercises and courses with my unit, as well as instructing with the NCO Training Wing as Second in Command of the RDF Senior NCO Course. I am currently instructing with the Cadet School on the current Army Reserve Potential Officer Course and I am also a Recruit Liaison Officer and Course Commander for the current DFTC Recruit class.







## Section 6 – The Action Plan

The table below outlines the 27 actions to be taken forward by the Defence Forces which will give effect to the change necessary to regenerate and develop the Reserve Defence Force.

The actions will be pursued in line with the single force concept with the ORA providing a focus for the initiation, implementation and delivery of the associated outcomes. The actions will be implemented as part of a comprehensive campaign that will be coordinated and monitored by the ORA.

#	Action	Action Components	Delivered by	Lead/Support
1	<b>RDF Recruitment Strategy.</b> Strategy to implement multiple induction streams for continuous recruitment into the RDF.	» Project initiated.	» Q3 2024	DF Lead
		» Annual recruiting framework developed.	» Q2 2025	
		» Recruiting strategy developed.	» Q3 2025	
		<b>Linked To CoDFR # 73(i), 74, 75, 76, 77, 78. Work Package 24.2 – Recruiting Process.</b>		
		24I – Existing process assessed.	24I- 30 Nov 2023	
		24J & 24K – Scope and timelines of recruitment process designed and resourced.	24J&K- 30 Apr 2024	
		24L – Recruitment process revised.	24L- 30 Jun 2024	
2	<b>Enabling of RDF Multi Induction Streams.</b> Regulatory provision be made for the induction of personnel via several mechanisms in addition to general service recruitment.	<b>Linked to CoDFR #76, #77, #78. Work Package 24.2</b>		DF Lead DOD support
		24U – Assessment of direct entry RDF recruitment mechanisms completed.	24U, Y & CC- 31 Aug 2024	
		24Y – Assessment of comparable lateral entry mechanisms completed.		
		24CC – Skills needs analysis conducted.		
		24V – Suitability for direct entry recruitment conducted for Services & Corps.	24V, Z & DD – 31 Jan2025	
		24Z – Lateral entry criteria developed.		
		24DD – Plan developed.		
		24W – RDF direct entry policies and T&Cs designed.	24W, AA & EE –	
		24AA – Lateral entry mechanism designed.	30 Apr 2025	
		24EE – Scope and timelines of recruitment plan designed.		
24X – Increased direct entry recruitment.	24X, BB & FF –			
24BB – Lateral entry mechanism open.	30 Jun 2025			
24FF – Recruitment plan delivered				
3	<b>RDF Master Messaging and Communication Strategy.</b> A strategy to coordinate an ongoing public awareness campaign highlighting the RDF.	» Project initiated.	» Q3 2024	DF Lead
		» Initial Operating Capability (IOC) achieved.	» Q4 2024	

#	Action	Action Components	Delivered by	Lead/Support
4	<b>Employer Engagement Strategy.</b> A communication strategy to increase the awareness and understanding of the RDF amongst key industries. Strategy will promote the mutual benefits of service in the RDF.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Project initiated.</li> <li>» Initial findings reported.</li> <li>» Industry engagement pilot project launched.</li> <li>» Review of pilot project conducted and strategy development considered.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Q3 2024</li> <li>» Q4 2024</li> <li>» Q1 2025</li> <li>» Q4 2025</li> </ul>	DF Lead
5	<b>Third Level Institution Engagement Strategy.</b> A communication strategy to increase the awareness and understanding of the RDF amongst third level students. Strategy will promote the benefits of service in the RDF.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Project initiated.</li> <li>» Initial findings reported.</li> <li>» Third level institute engagement pilot project launched.</li> <li>» Review of pilot project conducted. Development of strategy considered.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Q3 2024</li> <li>» Q4 2024</li> <li>» Q1 2025</li> <li>» Q4 2025</li> </ul>	DF Lead
6	<b>RDF Local Engagement Teams to promote the RDF.</b> A mechanism for the training, resourcing and deployment of RDF Local Engagement Teams to complement public awareness campaigns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Project initiated.</li> <li>» Initial Operating Capability (IOC) achieved.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Q3 2024</li> <li>» Q4 2024</li> </ul>	DF Lead
7	<b>RDF Diversity Strategy.</b> A strategy to ensure the RDF is a positive working environment that reflects contemporary Irish society.	<b>Linked to CoDFR #74. Work Package 24.2.</b> 24M – Assessment of societal diversity completed. 24N – Diversity and Inclusion targets & processes identified. 24O – Identified targets & processes incorporated in Recruitment plan. 24P – Mechanisms to support a diverse RDF implemented.	24M - 31 Aug 2024 24N - 31 Jan 2025 24O - 30 Apr 2025 24P - 30 Jun 2025	DF Lead
8	<b>Review of RDF Personal Kit Issue Requirements.</b> Reservists equipped appropriately.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Project initiated</li> <li>» RDF represented on all current procurement projects. Logistic regulations amended as required.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Q3 2024</li> <li>» Q1 2025</li> </ul>	DF Lead DOD support
9	<b>Review Logistics Regulations to Equip RDF.</b> The equipping of Reservists has robust regulatory underpinning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Project initiated.</li> <li>» Review complete. Requirements for amendment identified.</li> <li>» Proposed amendments submitted.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Q3 2024</li> <li>» Q3 2024</li> <li>» Q1 2025</li> </ul>	DF Lead DOD support
10	<b>Review RDF Unit Equipment Requirements.</b> An assessment of RDF Unit capabilities to ensure RDF Units are resourced appropriately.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Project initiated.</li> <li>» ORA represented on all current procurement projects. Logistic regulations amended as required.</li> <li>» ORA conduct assessment of RDF Unit resourcing.</li> <li>» Ongoing resourcing of RDF Units in place.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Q3 2024</li> <li>» Q4 2024</li> <li>» Q2 2025</li> <li>» Q4 2027</li> </ul>	DF Lead DOD support
11	<b>Review the Resourcing RDF Facilities.</b> An assessment of RDF Unit facilities to ensure RDF Units are resourced appropriately.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Project initiated</li> <li>» Assessment of RDF Unit facilities complete</li> <li>» Ongoing upgrading of RDF facilities resourced.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Q3 2024</li> <li>» Q2 2025</li> <li>» Q4 2027</li> </ul>	DF Lead DOD support
12	<b>Assessment of all resource requirements underpinning operationalisation of Single Force Concept.</b> A continuous assessment of resources required to underpin the Single Force Concept.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Project initiated</li> <li>» Assessment completed</li> <li>» Military Advice submitted to inform Departmental consideration and formulation Civilian-Military Management of policy position</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Q3 2024</li> <li>» Q3 2025</li> <li>» Q4 2025</li> </ul>	DF Lead DOD support

#	Action	Action Components	Delivered by	Lead/Support
13	<b>RDF Training and Education Strategy.</b> A whole of career training and education strategy for Reservists.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Project initiated</li> <li>» RDF Education and Training Strategy published.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Q3 2024</li> <li>» Q2 2025</li> </ul>	DF Lead
14	<b>Modularisation of RDF Training.</b> Modularisation and utilisation of blended learning to increase accessibility to training and professional military education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Project initiated</li> <li>» RDF training syllabi review complete and recommendations for modularisation submitted to DJ7.</li> <li>» Appropriate amendments to DFR R5, to provide underpinning for RDF courses which are to be modularised.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Q3 2024</li> <li>» Q2 2025</li> <li>» Q4 2025</li> </ul>	DF Lead DOD support
15	<b>Recognition and utilisation of Reservists Qualifications and Skills.</b> A mechanism for the assessment and recognition of civilian qualifications be established. Civilian to military bridging be introduced to facilitate the utilisation of Reservists qualifications, skills, and experience. This initiative to be complemented by introducing a skills database.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Project initiated</li> <li>» RDF PMS records updated</li> <li>» Skills search mechanism implemented</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Q3 2024</li> <li>» Q1 2025</li> <li>» Q4 2025</li> </ul>	DF Lead
16	<b>Monthly reporting of RDF activity.</b> RDF activity is recorded and reported monthly. Data used to assess performance and determine operational readiness levels.	<b>Linked to CoDFR #70(i) and Work Package 22.1.</b> 22F – RDF audit process developed 22G – Audit process & policies designed 22H – Auditing process implemented.	22F – 29 Feb 2024 22G – 31 Jul 2024 22H – 30 Mar 2025	DF Lead
17	<b>Establish RDF Management Offices in Brigades and Formations.</b> Develop COA for the provision of a staff function that will oversee the implementation of the RDFRDP within the Brigades and Formations. These staff will support the day-to-day functioning of RDF Units.	<b>Linked to CoDFR #70(i) and Work Package 22.1.</b> 22B – Purpose and responsibilities of ORA defined; RDF alignment with Services identified. 22C – Additional resources inducted. 22D – Full suite of ORA capabilities and processes delivered.	22B – 29 Feb 2024 22C – 31 Jul 2024 22D – 31 Mar 2025	DF Lead
18	<b>Review of Defence Force Regulations.</b> A standing mechanism comprising of key stakeholders established to facilitate the provision of appropriate regulations to enable the regeneration and development of the RDF.	Standing mechanism within the ORA agreed and implemented, as part of the overall policy formulation framework including the provision of military advice.	Q4 2024	DF Lead DOD support
19	<b>RDF Domestic Deployment.</b> Review of the application of the Single Force Concept. Initiatives developed to enable operational deployment on a routine basis.	<b>Linked to CoDFR #65 and Work Package 24.1</b> 24F – RDF deployment policy developed. Practices and policies will be in line with the legislative provisions. 24G – Policies and decision-making process updated. 24H – RDF Deployment Policy revised & implemented.	24F – 31 May 2024 24G – 30 Sep 2024 24H – 31 Dec 2024	DF Lead DOD support
20	<b>RDF Overseas Deployment.</b> Protocols for the deployment of Reservists overseas developed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Project initiated.</li> <li>» Practices and policies will be in line with legislative provisions.</li> <li>» Mechanism developed and implemented.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Q3 2024</li> <li>» Q2 2025</li> </ul>	DF Lead DOD support

#	Action	Action Components	Delivered by	Lead/Support
21	<b>RDF Transformation – Army Reserve.</b> The Army Reserve force structure to be reviewed and transformed to support the wider transformation of the Army.	<b>Linked to CoDFR #69 Work Package 25.2</b>		DF Lead
		25E – Assessment conducted of existing structure, strength, and capabilities of Army Reserve.	25E - 31 Oct 2024	
		25F – High level structure developed.	25F - 30 Apr 2025	
		25G – Detailed Army Reserve structure designed.	25G - 30 Sep 2025	
		25H – Army Reserve restructured.	25H - 31 Jan 2028	
22	<b>RDF Transformation – Naval Service Reserve.</b> The establishment of the NSR to be increased to a minimum establishment of 400 personnel. Disposition and organisation to be considered.	<b>Linked to CoDFR 68(ii). Work Package 25.3.</b>		DF Lead
		25I – Assessment conducted of existing structure, strength, and capabilities of Navy Reserve.	25I - 31 Oct 2024	
		25J – High level structure developed.	25J - 30 Apr 2025	
		25K – Detailed Navy Reserve structure designed.	25K - 30 Sep 2025	
		25L – Navy Reserve restructured	25L - 31 Jan 2028	
23	<b>Reserve Transformation - Air Corps Reserve Establishment.</b> An Air Corps Reserve with an establishment for a minimum of 200 personnel be developed.	<b>Linked to CoDFR #79 Work Package 25.1</b>		DF Lead DOD support
		25A – Assessment conducted of comparable Air Force Reserve roles, responsibilities & structures; Recruitment commenced.	25A – 31 Dec 2024	
		25B – High level structure developed; IOC reached.	25B - 30 Apr 2025	
		25C – Detailed Air Force Reserve structure designed; Recruitment continued.	25C – 30 Sep 2025	
		25D – Air Force Reserve Established.	25D – 31 Jan 2028	
24	<b>FLR Induction Re-established.</b> Former and retiring members of the PDF be invited to apply to the FLR. Mechanism for the assignment of personnel of the FLR to parent units.	<b>Linked to CoDFR #73(ii). Work Package 24.3.</b>		DF Lead DOD support
		24GG – Fast track FLR mechanisms developed.	24GG – 31 Dec 2023	
		24HH – Processes designed & any legislative amendments identified.	24HH – 30 Apr 2024	
		24II – Communications & Guidance for PDF members issued.	24II – 31 Jul 2024	
25	<b>Specialist Reserve Capabilities.</b> Develop enhanced military capabilities across all domains utilising Reservist skillsets. Explore appropriate conditions of service for such specialists.	» Initial discovery of capability requirements will be completed by Q4 2024.	Q2 2025	DF Lead DOD support
		» Concepts for new specialist reserve will require further evaluation.		
		» The timeline for subsequent CAPDEV projects will be developed thereafter.		
26	<b>Reserve A/CHOD, Service A/Chiefs and Senior Enlisted Leaders.</b> Reserve A/CHOD, Service A/Chiefs and Senior Enlisted Leaders Appointed.	<b>Linked to CoDFR #67 and Work Package 23.1.</b>		DF Lead DOD support
		» International research conducted.	» 31 Aug 2024	
		» Options delivered.	» 31 Oct 2024	
		» Job descriptions and processes designed.		
		» Selection process implemented.	» 30 Apr 2025	
» Necessary consideration for potential regulatory amends.	» 31 Mar 2025			
27	<b>Application of the Working Time Directive.</b> RDF deployment and activities conducted in accordance with the provisions of the WTD as it applies to the DF.	The application of the agreed management of the RDF as part of the overall implementation of the WTD across the Defence Forces.	In line with application for the PDF.	DF Lead DOD support





## Section 7 – Implementation

---

### 7.1 OVERVIEW

The 27 actions outlined in Section 6 have been developed utilising the Defence Forces common operational planning framework. This process of analysis identifies the actions necessary to create effects and conditions that will lead to the fulfilment of the objective of the plan. These actions are organised into Lines of Operation that facilitate a comprehensive coordinated and sequenced implementation.

Four operational objectives have been identified that will lead to the achievement of the strategic objective which is:

**“To create a reserve force that can seamlessly train, operate and deploy with the Permanent Defence Force, nationally and internationally”**

**(CoDF Report, p116).**

### 7.2 OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES

The RDFRDP has four operational objectives that have been developed to deliver the desired end state as outlined in the strategic objective. These four objectives will be achieved through the coordinated implementation of the actions and effects that will create the decisive conditions necessary for success. These operational objectives have defined the four Lines of Operation that represent the pathways to creating the acceptable conditions that will deliver well trained, well equipped, and highly motivated Reservists that can be deployed where and when required.

#### **Objective 1 – RDF at Full Strength**

The RDF will achieve a minimum of 80% effective strength by 2028. This will be achieved by the maintenance of a robust and dynamic induction process and enhanced retention measures implemented concurrently.

#### **Objective 2 – RDF Fully Resourced**

RDF Units and personnel are fully resourced to enable them to carry out their roles and responsibilities.

#### **Objective 3 – RDF Trained and Educated**

Members of the RDF are fully trained and educated to enable them to fulfil their roles and responsibilities.

#### **Objective 4 – RDF Integrated and Deployed**

The Single Force Concept is fully implemented.

### 7.3 CAMPAIGN LINES OF OPERATION

The four operational objectives within which the 27 specific actions will be coordinated are represented in the campaign plan as Lines of Operation (LOO).

**LOO 1:** Recruitment and Retention – Recruitment will be conducted on an ongoing and rolling basis as part of a holistic RDF recruitment strategy. Several induction streams will be developed that will ensure sufficient skilled personnel are available to provide enhanced military capability where and when required. General enlistment recruitment will be based on regular planned inductions. Concurrent to an active recruitment campaign will be the introduction of a suite of enhanced measures to retain personnel. This will be achieved across a range of initiatives that will energise a new sense of purpose whereby Reservists are making a meaningful contribution to the delivery of enhanced military capabilities and a robust national resilience. The delivery of quality training on a centralised basis is also recognised as a key requirement in this regard. Initiatives to provide such training will be addressed within the Training and Education LOO. This demonstrates the interdependence of initiatives across the campaign plan. Recruitment and retention initiatives are central to the regeneration and development of the RDF.

**LOO 2:** Resourcing – The resourcing of the RDF will be undertaken in line with the principles of the Single Force Concept. The provision of equipment necessary for the RDF to provide enhanced military capabilities shall be inculcated into all DF procurement plans and initiatives. In the first instance Reservists will be provided with all the personal equipment, including uniforms, necessary for them to carry out their roles and responsibilities. This shall be on a par with their colleagues in the Permanent Defence Force. Secondly, RDF Units and Sub-Units shall be equipped to an appropriate level that will enable them to carry out their tasks and provide the capability necessary to achieve the level of ambition set by Government. The integration of Reservists across all aspects of Defence Forces operations, training and support shall ensure the intent and commitments in this regard are delivered.

**LOO 3:** Training and Educating – The CoDF made clear recommendations in relation to the requirement for more robust and integrated PDF/RDF training. The ability to deploy and provide the required military capabilities will be dependent upon personnel being trained to an appropriate standard. Quality training delivered on a centralised basis is recognised as a key requirement in this regard. This will be achieved through an RDF training and education strategy that will be appropriately resourced and supported. This strategy will embrace new and innovative ways of ensuring personnel achieve the standards required. The RDF training and educating strategy will also provide opportunities for Reservists to undertake professional courses. International training opportunities shall also be explored.

**LOO 4:** Integrating and Deploying – The Defence Forces as a whole is undergoing a period of transformation in order to achieve the Government level of ambition. In this context the RDF will also undergo a period of transformation. This will see the RDF being inculcated in all aspects of defence planning, operations, and training. This integration will be facilitated primarily through the ability of operational commanders to deploy the RDF where and when required. Integration will also be enhanced through the ability to deploy Reservists overseas. Notwithstanding the requirement for a full integration of the RDF, operational commanders will be able to task the RDF on a standalone basis to carry out operations in support of the PDF.



Fig 7.1 – Lines of Operation, Centre of Gravity, and Operational End State.

#### 7.4 PHASED APPROACH TO ACTIONS

This plan has been organised into three phases that are aligned with the requirements of the *Detailed Implementation Plan*. The phasing of actions has been designed to ensure that the necessary effects are delivered in a sequence that will enable future actions as required. The three phases are:

- » Initiate.
- » Implement.
- » Deliver.

A fundamental principle of this plan is the concept of continuous concurrent activity at all levels. This is characterised by the work that has been undertaken prior to the publication of this plan, such as the implementation of a recruiting plan and the ongoing induction of personnel into the RDF.

A second principle of the initiation and implementation of this plan shall be, in so-far as possible, the de-coupling of inter-dependencies of actions. This will be necessary to advance this plan in an efficient and timely manner. This de-coupling will ensure momentum is maintained in instances whereby specific actions experience delays.

A constant focus on the achievement of the strategic objective shall be maintained at all levels of this plan. This focus will lead to the achievement of LOA 2 and a Reserve that can train, operate, and deploy seamlessly with their PDF colleagues across the full spectrum of DF capabilities.





#### 7.4.1 Initiate

This phase will focus on the establishment of the 27 specific actions that will create the desired effects. Each action will represent a specific work stream with clearly defined terms of reference. The end of this phase will be marked by the initiation of each of the actions.

#### 7.4.2 Implement

This phase will focus on the implementation of each of the actions and associated work streams. Regular reporting and performance management will ensure momentum is maintained throughout this phase. The end of this phase will be marked by the delivery of the work streams associated with the actions and the establishment of business functions.

#### 7.4.3 Deliver

The final phase will see the achievement of outcomes. Actions will be inculcated into the day-to-day functioning of the Defence Forces. Responsibility for each function will be handed over to the appropriate owner as part of the conduct of their routine roles and responsibilities.

### 7.5 OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNANCE OF THE THREE PHASE APPROACH

The implementation of this plan will be successful if there is clear accountability and transparency for each of the actions outlined. Under the framework provided in this plan, individual actions will be tasked to appropriate owners who will be responsible for the completion of the work streams that will deliver the actions and in turn create the desired effects.

Oversight and governance shall be coordinated on behalf of the Deputy Chief of Staff (Operations) by the Director of the Office of Reserve Affairs in accordance with the structure outlined in Fig 7.2 below. The periodic reporting of progress shall be made as appropriate and will be outlined in an Action Initiation Document.

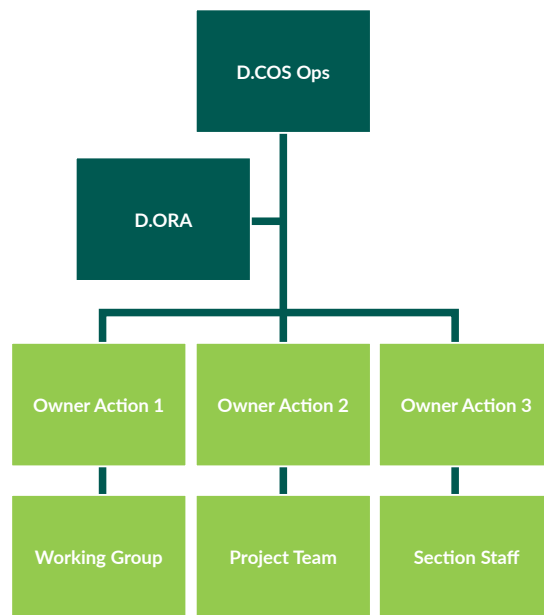


Fig 7.2 - RDF RDP Action Organisation.



### PRIVATE JULITA STACHEKA – 1 MECH INF COY, DFTC

My name is Julita Stachecka. I joined the RDF in 2019 just before the pandemic so I have only really started my training in 2022. I am originally from Poland and have been living in Ireland since 2009. My Father was a soldier in Poland all his life. I have always enjoyed challenging activities such as kickboxing and hiking.

I am currently working as a truck driver in my civilian life. Before that I worked for Dublin Bus as a driver. I chose this career as I like driving and being out and about.

I have always had an interest in the armed forces stemming from my father's service. I also like the challenge of the reserves as well as the chance to learn new skills. What I didn't realise was the great friends and memories I would make. The training can be hard sometimes but you very quickly form into a close knit team who support each other and have a laugh along the way.

I have completed my basic training which consisted of doing my weapons (Steyr rifle) training as well as doing a 24 hour exercise out on the ground which consisted of attack drills. I am now a 2-star Private and I am working on my 3-star Private training which I will be trained on the General Purpose Machine Gun (GPMG) as well as completing 72 hour exercise on the ground including night attacks using night vision equipment.

I hope after I complete my 3-Star training I would like to apply for a driving course as well as becoming a fitness instructor. I hope to maybe one day become a Non-Commissioned Officer and get the opportunity to lead a team.

When I started my basic training, I was the only female in the platoon and much older, I was a bit worried I would be on my own for the week but the lads I was doing the training with were very welcoming. It would be great to have more females in the RDF.

### 7.6 ACTION INITIATION

Actions will be initiated utilising project management principles laid down in the PRINCE 2 methodology. Action initiation will be coordinated and supported by the ORA.

D COS (Ops) shall designate 'Action Owners' who will be responsible for the delivery of the work necessary to create the desired effects. Where work streams necessitate the establishment of project teams, the ORA will provide administrative support in terms of the drafting of formal convening orders.

Each Action Owner can, where appropriate, assign an Action Manager who shall be responsible for the day-to-day management of the work package.

Actions will be initiated utilising the Action Initiation Document attached at Annex B. Initiation will take place by agreement as to the products to be delivered, the process to be undertaken and an understanding of the resources required. All parties should also understand the associated risks and agree a process by which risk can be removed or minimised.

### 7.7 ACTION MANAGEMENT PROCESS

The Action Management Process outlined below is based on PRINCE 2 project management principles. The approach that has been adopted is referred to as 'product-based planning' whereby the products and not process is the focus. Product-based planning requires the outputs to be identified before deciding what activities, dependencies and resources are required to deliver those products. The Action Initiation Document (Annex B) supports this initial process.

The Action Manager will have four guiding principles that they will consider at each stage of the work package delivery:

- » Work is authorised and agreed.
- » Clear understanding of the end-state.
- » Outputs meet expectations and deviations are within acceptable tolerance.
- » Provide regular progress updates.

Fig 7.3 below illustrates the action management process that will support the development of outputs and products necessary to deliver the desired effects.

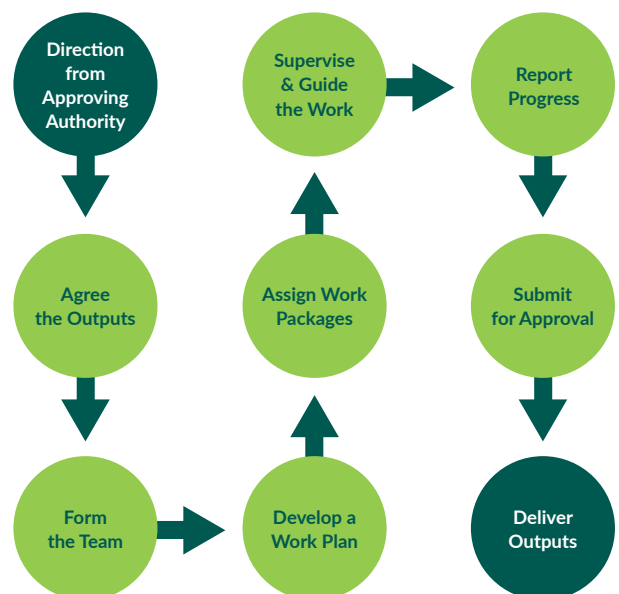


Fig 7.3 - Action Management Process.



1. **Direction from Approving Authority** – Action Manager is provided with a clear mandate and terms of reference. The purpose and objective(s) of the project must be clearly understood with a focus on the outputs to be delivered by the work team.
2. **Agree the Outputs** – The scope of the action and the expectations of the Action Owner must be clearly understood. The Action Manager must agree with the Action Owner the outputs to be delivered and the associated timelines. Deviations and the associated tolerances must also be clearly understood.
3. **Form the Team** – The Action Owner or Action Manager, where appropriate, will make recommendations as to the most appropriate structure of the team that will deliver the outputs. The team should comprise representatives of key stakeholders that will be necessary to deliver the output and achieve the outcome(s). Some actions may not require the formation of a team as the associated work package may be within the day-to-day operation of the business function.
4. **Develop a Work Plan** – The Action Manager will develop a work plan that will deliver the agreed outputs within the agreed timeline. The work plan should include decision points that will influence the achievement of the objectives.
5. **Assign Work Packages** – The Action Manager will assign specific elements of the work plan amongst the team. Personnel tasked should have a clear understanding of the expectations in terms of the outputs and the associated timelines.
6. **Supervise and Guide Work** – All work packages should be supervised and monitored to ensure progress is in line with agreed expectations.
7. **Report Progress** – Progress should be reported regularly regardless of gains that have been made. Reporting can be considered in terms of events or time. Event driven controls are based upon milestones being achieved or an event occurring that will cause a significant deviation from the agreed objectives. Time driven controls are based upon agreed periodic reports at agreed intervals. These reports are made regardless of progress.
8. **Submit for Approval** – Prior to delivery all outputs will be submitted for approval by the appropriate authority. The submission and review of the output by the approving authority should be considered in the timeline.
9. **Deliver Outputs** – Once approved the outputs will be ready for delivery. An implementation plan and supporting briefing and/or information pack should also be provided as required.

## 7.8 RISK MANAGEMENT

All actions will have an inherent level of risk that may hinder the achievement of the outputs. Risk, in this context, is defined as follows:

An uncertain event or set of events that, should it occur, will have an effect on the achievement of objectives. A risk is measured by a combination of the probability of a perceived threat or opportunity occurring, and the magnitude of its impact on objectives.

**(PRINCE 2. p120)**

The risk management process is illustrated in Fig 7.4 below. The implementation of this process and the management of risk will be the responsibility of the Action Manager.



Fig 7.4 – Risk Management Process.

1. **Identify** – The cause, uncertainty and likely effect should be identified as early as possible. The drivers of risk should be understood at the earliest stages of the action initiation.
2. **Assess** – The risk should be assessed based on the probability and impact. The effect of the risk being realised needs to be fully understood.
3. **Plan** – A response to the risk should be developed that removes the risk or reduces it to an acceptable level. Residual risk will require a directed management approach that ensures it remains within tolerance and does not affect the achievement of the objectives. A Risk Owner should be appointed who is responsible for the management, monitoring and controlling of the risk.
4. **Implement** – The risk response is actioned. It should continue to be monitored and additional actions taken where necessary. A Risk Actionee can be appointed at this stage to assist the Risk Owner in the delivery of specific actions to control the risk.
5. **Communicate** – Communication of risk should be undertaken continuously. Information should be passed to all stakeholders. This is fundamental to an effective risk management process.

## 7.9 ACTION IMPLEMENTATION

The delivery of action outputs should be accompanied with recommendations for the implementation and inculcation into business as usual. Consideration should be made in relation to:

- » Regulatory amendment if required.
- » Resourcing requirement.
- » Second order effects on other areas of operation.

It is anticipated that a significant amount of regulatory amendments will be required to effect the transformation necessary to achieve the end state. Recommendations in this regard will be considered and administered through the standing ORA/DOD regulatory review mechanism. The mechanism established will be a standing arrangement that will facilitate the ongoing update of regulatory underpinning as required.

Implementation of action outputs will be undertaken through the Single Force Concept. As such, responsibility for the effective implementation will be that of business function owners and the Chain of Command as appropriate. The ORA will support and monitor the implementation of action outputs to ensure a robust and complete inculcation is achieved.

## 7.10 FOLLOW ON AND ADDITIONAL ACTIONS

The RDFRDP provides a mechanism for the regeneration and development of the RDF. The comprehensive list of actions is considered the minimum effort required to operationalise the intent of the CoDF. It is likely that the requirement for additional actions may become apparent as the regeneration effort gains momentum. To this end, the ORA will keep the RDFRDP under constant review and will facilitate amendments and additions as required.





## Annex A – Recommendations of the Commission on the Defence Forces

#	Theme	#	Recommendation	Position
23	Office of Reserve Affairs		A joint Office of Reserve Affairs (ORA), with senior staff from RDF and with support from the PDF, be established which should report regularly to the CHOD and senior commanders on all reserve matters. Command authority should remain with the integrated PDF/RDF unit commanders in conformity with the SFC	
		70	The deployment of RDF personnel should be audited annually and documented by the ORA, with appropriate and effective follow-up, including in commanders' annual appraisals, to ensure best practice and accountability.	Accept
		71	The ORA should provide an annual progress report to the Minister for Defence on the implementation of the RDF regeneration plan.	Accept
24	Reserve A/CHOD & Service A/Chiefs	67	The CHOD be supported by a Reserve Assistant Chief of Defence and that each Service Chief should be supported by a Reserve Assistant Chief of Service.	Accept in Principle

#	Theme	#	Recommendation	Position
25	Reserve Force Regeneration	64	A new high-level vision be articulated for the RDF that clarifies its core purpose as being to support the PDF in all its roles.	Accept
		65	Decisions to deploy RDF personnel should be taken by the unit commanders and should not be limited by the overarching policy as at present.	Accept in Principle
		66	A detailed regeneration plan for the RDF, with clear and specific timelines, be developed and published by the end of 2022 setting out how a reformed RDF will be operationalised and funded.	Accept in Principle
		73	The Defence Forces should urgently develop revamped and efficient recruitment processes for the FLR, the Army Reserve, the Air Force Reserve, and the Naval Reserve. For the Army, Air and Naval Reserves, a maximum recruitment time of eight weeks, from application to initiation, should be set and a fast track system should be developed for those who wish to join the FLR on discharge from the PDF.	Accept in Principle
			<b>The Defence Forces should develop a clear and focused recruitment plan, with clearly identified milestones and annual reviews, targeted at meeting the full establishment of the RDF within eight years to include recruitment of specialists, Combat Support and Combat Service Support personnel. A part of its recruitment plan.</b>	
		74	Ensure that the RDF fully reflects the diversity of contemporary Irish society.	Accept
		75	Clarify the specific skillsets where targeted Reserve recruitment would be most likely to yield positive benefits and build the outcome into a sustained recruitment effort.	Accept
		76	Provide for increased utilisation of direct entry commissions and direct entry at NCO level to the RDF, including an expanded use of direct entry mechanisms to all services and Corps.	Accept
		77	Create lateral entry mechanisms for those with prior foreign military experience who wish to join the RDF.	Accept in Principle
		78	Focus the recruitment plan around attracting highly skilled people to staff an expanded range of clearly defined non-combat and specialist functions, as well as general recruitment to conventional combat units.	Accept
26	Reserve Establishment	79	Employment protection legislation should be considered and discussed with employer representative bodies and Trade Unions to protect reservists and ensure their availability when needed.	Further Evaluation
		68	The establishment of the RDF should include, at a minimum, an Air Force Reserve of 200 and a Navy Reserve of 400.	Accept in Principle
		69	The Army Reserve establishment should stand at 3,900 with a ratio of 50:50 between Combat / Combat Support and Combat Service Support.	Accept in Principle









# Notes

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---





Óglaigh  
na hÉireann  
IRISH DEFENCE FORCES



An Roinn Cosanta  
Department of Defence