



JUSTICE UNIONS PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

Chair: Elfyn Llwyd

Secretary: John McDonnell

Vice Chairs: Anna Soubry (Con), Maria Eagle (Lab)

Baroness Gibson of Market Rasen, Lord Ramsbotham of Kensington

Veterans in the CJS: Coordinated National Action Plan

INTRODUCTION

Successive surveys conducted since 2000 have concluded that there were thousands of former armed forces personnel either under the supervision of the Probation Service, on parole or in prison. It is very clear that this is a long term problem and one that is not limited to the United Kingdom.

Responsibility for the solutions do not lie therefore solely with the Ministries of Defence or Justice. Many soldiers clearly had problems before they enlisted. Many experience difficulties, including depression and reliance on alcohol when they leave the structured environment of the Forces and return to civilian life. Others, a much smaller number, suffer symptoms of post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

A national strategy is needed to deal with the situation. The strategy has two aims:

- (a) to ensure that counselling and advice facilities are available during and immediately after service to minimise the chances of individuals entering the criminal justice system**
- (b) strategies to ensure that help and advice is available for those who do enter the criminal justice system to avoid reoffending.**

ACTION PLAN

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To appoint a Minister, to reside within the Cabinet Office, with responsibility for the welfare of current and former military personnel. 2. As a matter of priority, the Ministry of Justice must conduct a scoping study, possibly involving a 10% sample of jails, to ascertain how many former armed services personnel are currently on probation, on parole or in prison. It is 	MoJ
---	------------

Simeon Andrews

Co-ordinator, Justice Unions Parliamentary Group

c/o G10 Norman Shaw South, House of Commons, London SW1A 2JF

☎: 020 7219 1626 / andrewss@parliament.uk



JUSTICE UNIONS PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

Chair: Elfyn Llwyd

Secretary: John McDonnell

Vice Chairs: Anna Soubry (Con), Maria Eagle (Lab)

Baroness Gibson of Market Rasen, Lord Ramsbotham of Kensington

<p>recommended that such a survey should involve former armed services personnel who are now employed as prison or probation officers to enhance cooperation and accuracy. Until the size of the problem is ascertained, properly resourced solutions are difficult.</p>	
<p>3. All relevant armed services personnel should receive a psychological assessment immediately prior to leaving the armed forces. Attention should also be given to issues of drug and alcohol misuse.</p>	<p>MoD</p>
<p>4. A resettlement assessment should take place six months prior to discharge.</p>	<p>MoD</p>
<p>5. Where need is indentified help should be individually available and this should be followed up by an independent assessment no later than six months after discharge.</p>	<p>MoD/NHS</p>
<p>6. All services personnel should have access three to four months prior to leaving, regardless of service length, to advice from relevant voluntary organisations where one of the following is identified as a need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) welfare benefits (b) housing (c) educational courses and training (d) employment advice (e) budgetary and life skills (f) debt management (g) general health including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. physical health (primary care) ii. mental health iii. substance misuse issues (alcohol and drug greatment) (h) relationship skills/domestic violence courses for 	<p>MoD/ Service Vol. Orgs.</p>

Simeon Andrews

Co-ordinator, Justice Unions Parliamentary Group
c/o G10 Norman Shaw South, House of Commons, London SW1A 2JF

☎: 020 7219 1626 / andrewss@parliament.uk



JUSTICE UNIONS PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

Chair: Elfyn Llwyd

Secretary: John McDonnell

Vice Chairs: Anna Soubry (Con), Maria Eagle (Lab)

Baroness Gibson of Market Rasen, Lord Ramsbotham of Kensington

perpetrators and victims	
<p>This should be done if at all possible by a one-to-one interview.</p> <p>7. Backup and advice in person and by telephone should be made available where appropriate to all personnel over the six month period following discharge.</p> <p>8. In the case of arrest or charge, all individuals should be asked in the custody suite whether they have a service record. If they indicate that they have they should be given assistance with referral to relevant agencies. This is already being piloted in two police areas.</p> <p>9. Each Probation Service should consider appointing a veterans link who would ensure that all information is available to court report writers and probation supervisors. A service record should become an automatic part of any court report. This is already being piloted in Cheshire Probation Service.</p> <p>10. On reception into custody services personnel should be identified and signposted to sources of advice and counselling. This is already being piloted in HMP Everthorpe, HMP Grendon and HMP Spring Hill and is in the process of being rolled out to other jails.</p> <p>11. Staff involved in offering advice, either in police stations, probation service or prisons, should be given facility time to enable them to carry out their role effectively and efficiently.</p> <p>12. Funding should be made available for a national Veterans Support Officer in both the prison and probation services. This will provide continuation of support in the criminal justices system.</p>	<p>MoD/ Service Vol. Orgs.</p> <p>Home Office/ Police</p> <p>MoJ/ Probation Service</p> <p>MoJ/ Prison Service</p> <p>MoJ/ Home Office</p> <p>NOMS</p>

Simeon Andrews

Co-ordinator, Justice Unions Parliamentary Group
c/o G10 Norman Shaw South, House of Commons, London SW1A 2JF

☎: 020 7219 1626 / andrewss@parliament.uk



JUSTICE UNIONS PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

Chair: Elfyn Llwyd

Secretary: John McDonnell

Vice Chairs: Anna Soubry (Con), Maria Eagle (Lab)

Baroness Gibson of Market Rasen, Lord Ramsbotham of Kensington

13.	Regular group meetings should occur in prisons, preferably on a monthly basis, for armed services personnel. This should be resettlement based and guest speakers from relevant agencies should be invited into the prison.	MoJ/ Prison Service
14.	Statutory funding for veterans groups within the community should be made available to allow them to carry out proper aftercare and support.	NOMS/Probation Service
15.	The 1999 protocol between the Ministry of Defence and the Prison Service, which would have led to the identification of service personnel, should be implemented forthwith.	Cabinet Office
16.	Consideration should be given to establishing distinct aftercare hostels for former prisoners with a military background.	NHS
17.	GPs should be encouraged to ask if a patient has served in the armed forces, and provide information to sign post veterans into support services if required.	NHS
18.	GPs and health services should be assisted in becoming aware of the Medical Assessment Programme. This would provide early identification of health and mental health needs of the veteran.	NHS
19.	There should be a general public awareness campaign to highlight veterans support organisations and help available.	Cabinet Office
20.	It is also essential that all the action points are rigorously followed through and appropriate referral pathways are developed for and utilised by those individuals who are dishonourably discharged.	Cabinet Office
21.	To launch a forum to allow an interface between policy	Cabinet Office

Simeon Andrews

Co-ordinator, Justice Unions Parliamentary Group
c/o G10 Norman Shaw South, House of Commons, London SW1A 2JF

☎: 020 7219 1626 / andrewss@parliament.uk



JUSTICE UNIONS PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

Chair: Elfyn Llwyd

Secretary: John McDonnell

Vice Chairs: Anna Soubry (Con), Maria Eagle (Lab)

Baroness Gibson of Market Rasen, Lord Ramsbotham of Kensington

makers and practitioners.	
22. Produce a briefing detailing current bottom-up initiatives, for submission to Ministers.	Napo

Harry Fletcher
Assistant General Secretary

*** Addendum to Co-ordinated National Action Plan ***

BOTTOM-UP INITIATIVES

Kent Police

From 12 April, Kent Police as a matter of routine ask arrestees whether they had served in the military. If the answer was yes, after being processed they are referred to service organisations. The question is asked in all nine custody suites across Kent. Individuals identified as military are given a leaflet.

Early data – of 7,600 arrestees 232 had served. Over half were aged 18 to 25. The most common offence (30%) was violence against a person.

Each individual is followed up by a phone call from a police officer. It is likely that a significant percentage will not have declared their service record, so the figures will be an underestimate.

There has been interest from at least nine other police forces.

Cheshire Probation

Probation management in Cheshire has set-up a Veteran Support Officer role. Persons seen by the Probation Trust are now routinely asked if they have served in the armed forces and are then signposted to relevant agencies. Leaflets have been produced. Relevant offenders are asked for service number so it can be verified. The scheme will be piloted to March 2011 to all probation offices. Estimates are that

Simeon Andrews

Co-ordinator, Justice Unions Parliamentary Group
c/o G10 Norman Shaw South, House of Commons, London SW1A 2JF

☎: 020 7219 1626 / andrewss@parliament.uk



JUSTICE UNIONS PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

Chair: Elfyn Llwyd

Secretary: John McDonnell

Vice Chairs: Anna Soubry (Con), Maria Eagle (Lab)

Baroness Gibson of Market Rasen, Lord Ramsbotham of Kensington

at least 150 to 200 offenders out of a caseload of 4,000 are veterans. Again this could be an underestimate. It is intended to evaluate the work and possibly develop it as a regional resource. There is a need to liaise with the Prison Service to smooth-out the transition from custody to the community. Staff have discovered that occupational and war pensions are automatically suspended on admission to custody.

HMP Everthorpe

Staff at HMP Everthorpe developed a custody referral scheme in 2008. This involved producing literature and distributing it to individuals identified as having a service background. This has now spread to numerous other jails and will hopefully be a national resource. However, the lead officer involved at Everthorpe has now been returned to normal operation duties, which is of concern.

Domestic Violence

Domestic violence programmes are now being developed in a number of barracks across the country. This consists of teaching skills to manage anger and address the causes of domestic violence and prevent further offending.

Simeon Andrews

Co-ordinator, Justice Unions Parliamentary Group
c/o G10 Norman Shaw South, House of Commons, London SW1A 2JF

☎: 020 7219 1626 / andrewss@parliament.uk