



PERSONAL SUPPORT & SOCIAL WORK SERVICE RAF

IMPACT REPORT 2015-2016

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF SPECIALIST WELFARE SERVICE FOR THE RAF

ssafa | the
Armed Forces
charity

Lifelong support for our Forces and their families

 **ROYAL
AIR FORCE**

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Welcome to the Impact Report on the SSAFA Personal Support and Social Work Service RAF (PS&SWS

RAF). The purpose of this report is to provide our stakeholders with an overview of our work and achievements over the last year and to celebrate 25 years of SSAFA providing specialist social work support for the RAF community.

AIR VICE-MARSHAL DAVID MURRAY CVO OBE
CONTROLLER

The original objective of the service was that by looking after the welfare needs of serving personnel, their spouses and their families this would in turn ensure an efficient and excellent Air Force – something that still holds true today.

Our aim, still echoing our ethos established 25 years ago, is to ensure that high quality and responsive front line services are available to those who may be vulnerable and/or are in need of our support, for whatever reason, regardless of rank or circumstance.



SSAFA's social work service for the RAF began in 1990 with a two year trial to provide welfare advice to the RAF with

three Social Work Advisers; the rest, as they say, is history.

NIGEL HOLLAND-WILLIAMS
HEAD OF SERVICE SSAFA PERSONAL SUPPORT & SOCIAL WORK SERVICE RAF

These 25 years have seen great changes requiring us to adapt our services to meet the changing needs of the RAF. Whilst my time with SSAFA and the RAF is coming to a close, I am proud to have been part of a service which has and will continue to make a significant positive impact on the RAF community.

The RAF is now busier than ever before. SSAFA's team of specialist social workers embedded in the RAF community are:

- dealing with increasingly more complex cases
- reaching reservists as well as regulars
- seeing more demand from families of serving personnel
- integral to the delivery of the services of the RAF
- part of the wider SSAFA family and the benefits that provides
- continuously monitoring service and seeking client feedback

OUR VISION

To be the RAF's Personal Support and Social Work Service provider of choice, to achieve best value for money whilst maintaining high-quality services, which encompass the wider RAF community in the UK and overseas.

2015 IN NUMBERS



TOP THREE REFERRAL REASONS



TOP THREE BUSIEST RAF STATIONS FOR REFERRALS





Viki lives at RAF Leeming with her husband, Corporal Tom Lake, who has served 10 years with the RAF so far. Prior to the birth of her second son Viki suffered from pre-natal depression.

“I didn’t tell anybody what I was going through at the time. It took over my life completely. Andrea, our SSAFA Senior Social Work Practitioner, really helped take some of those worries away from

me and got me to the end of my pregnancy. I just hope that if I talk about what happened to me someone else might realise that they can go and get help too.”



We are the oldest national **tri-service charity** and were founded in 1885

We focus on **supporting families** as well as serving personnel, reservists and veterans

We have the greatest **presence behind the wire** on military establishments

We have the **broadest reach** on the ground in local communities across the UK

QUALITY ASSURANCE

The quality assurance group supports frontline staff and managers. We conduct audits in relation to casework and convey the findings every quarter. This stimulates healthy discussions within a learning culture where we develop robust plans to develop or improve practice. This mitigates against risks, challenges decision-making and identifies any gaps in service.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The first Service Development Conference for PS & SWS RAF staff was held in September 2015. The event provided a platform to share innovative, evidence based practices, resources and tools for staff to apply to their day to day work and delivery of service to the RAF community. It was also an opportunity to ensure staff were updated on legislation changes.

UTILISING TECHNOLOGY TO ENSURE CONTINUITY OF CARE

Our specialist Health and Social Care software, Care Director, has transformed how we deliver our service and support to the RAF community.

No matter where a person has been transferred in the UK or internationally, we are able to ensure that their support from SSAFA is also transferred as seamlessly as possible. We know that continuity of care is vitally important and we aim to meet our client's needs with as little disruption as possible.

Care Director also supports all established assessment frameworks for Adult and Children's Services in the UK as well as other legal requirements and improved data reporting. It gives a greater degree of accountability for the services we offer and accountability to our clients, wherever they are based.





ADVICE AND SUPPORT

We offer practical, financial and emotional support to individuals through a confidential telephone helpline (SSAFA Forcesline) as well as a trained network of over 7000 volunteers.

ADOPTION SERVICE

Our adoption service is designed for military families that would like to adopt but face the additional challenge of being regularly relocated.

FORUM FOR ADDITIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (FANDF)

We also run a forum for families with additional needs and disabilities so serving parents can share information and advice.

SHORT BREAKS FOR CHILDREN

We organise short breaks for children with additional needs and disabilities, so they can enjoy new experiences while their families have some essential respite.

SPECIALIST SERVICES

We know that life in the Forces can present different challenges for different people, so we have a range of specialist services that provide unique solutions when they are most needed. These include support groups, mentoring and providing equipment or home redevelopment.

In 2015 SSAFA celebrated providing 25 years of specialist welfare service to the RAF; in addition, the charity also celebrated serving the Armed Forces community for over 130 years.

As the UK's oldest national tri-service military charity, we understand the unique demands of service life. This also means our PS&SWS staff have access to SSAFA's other specialist services.



Aircraft Engineer Steve's life changed forever after he was left paralysed following a motorbike accident. The injuries Steve sustained meant the father of two, and his wife Mari, were forced to change everything they knew and the lives they had been living.

Mari says, "We can't thank SSAFA enough for their support. I am not sure how I would have coped supporting Steve, looking after our daughter and new-born son without them. They made everything fit into place for us so I could focus on my family and know that I had the support with the practical elements of everyday life like finances and accommodation."



RAF Comment from ACOS Pers Pol



This report provides a concise yet valuable flavour of the extent and complexity of welfare

provision that SSAFA has once again provided to the RAF over the past 12 months. I am grateful to SSAFA for their endeavours and, particularly, for their unstinting support to the RAF over the past 25 years.

During this time, a great deal has changed in the size, shape and distribution of the service, but what has remained constant is the enduring requirement to

look after the wellbeing of our personnel and their families. For SSAFA, this has translated into over 75,000 cases on a wide range of welfare and domestic issues including bereavement, adoption, relationships, addiction, illness and disability. Throughout, the dedication of the field workers has been unfaltering, highly professional and invaluable in its impact.

Although more change is inevitable, the RAF can look to the future with great confidence. Whenever our people need help, it is deeply reassuring to know that SSAFA will be at their side as they have been for the past quarter of a century.

AIR COMMODORE ALAN OPIE

SSAFA has been providing lifelong support to our Forces and their families since 1885. Every year our staff and network of volunteers help around 60,000 people through our charitable services – from World War Two veterans to the young men and women recently returned from Afghanistan, and their families.

NEED TO TALK?

SSAFA's Forcesline is a free and confidential helpline providing advice and information for serving personnel, reserves, veterans and their families. It is completely independent of the chain of command.

- Call **0800 731 4880** Lines open 9.00 to 17.30 weekdays
- Visit **ssafa.org.uk/forcesline**

HELP US SERVE THOSE WHO SERVED

To make a donation and help us provide lifelong support to our Forces and their families:

- To donate **£5**, text '**SSAF44 £5**' to **70070**
- Call **020 7403 8783**
- Visit **ssafa.org.uk**

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