

2,000 Signatures So Far !

<http://www.ipetitions.com/petition/protect-our-military-pensions/>

The petition is non-political - It is about fairness to those who served



What Is The Aim Of The Petition ?

Reinstate Retail Price Index (RPI) as the link to Military Pensions, automatically including War Widows pensions and other payments to injured personnel.

Politics !

At the launch a conscious decision was made to distance the petition from politics, that intention remains. Regardless of which political party is in power our theme remains the same...reinstate RPI.

Politicians have a moral obligation to respect the Armed Forces Covenant. They send the Forces to war where they face the real threat of injury or death.

This newsletter is a call to assist our efforts to date. It also sets out the Military Covenant and lists the government's actions that have an impact on those that serve their country, while attempting to remain outside the world of politics. Finally, it seeks your help by listing how you could assist in making this petition work.

SO, WHY IS A MILITARY PROFESSION DIFFERENT FROM OTHER FORMS OF EMPLOYMENT?

All persons enlisting into the British Army and Royal Marines attest to the following oath or equivalent affirmation:

I ... *name* ... swear by almighty God that I will be faithful and bear allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second, Her Heirs and Successors, and I will, as in duty bound, honestly and faithfully defend her Majesty, her Heirs and Successors, in Person, Crown and Dignity against all enemies, and will observe and obey all orders of Her Majesty, Her Heirs and Successors, and of the generals and officers set over me. So help me God.

The same oath is made by recruits to the Royal Air Force with the substitution of the words “air officers” for “generals”. No oath of allegiance is sworn by members of the Royal Navy which is not maintained under an Act of Parliament but by royal prerogative, or by Royal Marines officers, who unlike their army counterparts are not enlisted before they are commissioned.



16/5 The Queens Royal Lancer drive and fly past Jubilee Parade 7th July 1977

WHAT DECISIONS HAVE THE COALITION GOVERNMENT TAKEN THAT AFFECTS FORCES PENSIONS

Since coming to power in May 2010 the Coalition Government have announced a number of actions

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Cut the war widows pension and the annual Guaranteed Income Payment by pegging it to the Consumer Price Index (CPI).
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Cut the injured soldiers pension by pegging it to CPI. (example: A Cpl losing both legs in a bomb blast will lose about half a million pounds in pensions and benefits-related payments during his lifetime.)
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Devalued the veterans pension by changing the link from RPI to CPI, thereby removing any future increases to the cost of housing from pensions.



WHAT IS THE MILITARY COVENANT ?

Britain has a 'duty of care' to its armed forces. This began as an unspoken pact between society and the military. It was formalised by the Government in 2000.

Army Doctrine Publication Volume 5
Soldiering: The Military Covenant Chapter 1

0103. **Soldiers will be called upon to make personal sacrifices - including the ultimate sacrifice - in the service of the Nation.** In putting the needs of the nation and the Army before their own, they forgo some of the rights enjoyed by those outside the Armed Forces. In return, British soldiers must always be able to expect fair treatment, to be valued and respected as individuals, and that they (and their families) will be sustained and rewarded by commensurate terms and conditions of service. In the same way, the unique nature of military land operations means that the Army differs from all other institutions, and must be sustained and provided for accordingly by the nation. This mutual obligation forms the Military Covenant between the nation, the Army and each individual soldier; an unbreakable common bond of identity, loyalty and responsibility which has sustained the Army and its soldiers throughout its history. It has perhaps its greatest manifestation in the annual commemoration of Armistice Day, when the nation keeps covenant with those who have made the ultimate sacrifice, giving their lives in action.....

reproduced from an article in 'The Airborne Network' Website and ADP Volume 5 and can be read in full at:

www.abnetwork.org/articles/military-covenant/



WHAT HAVE WE DONE SO FAR ?

- Achieved over 2,000 signatures in six weeks.
- Had Dialogue with various military associations, corps, regimental, unit forums and federations, including the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, Army and Royal Air force.
- Discussed the problems with the Forces Pension Society, War Widows Association, Naval Families Federation and other military family associations.
- Written to the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, Secretary of State for Defence, Under Secretary of State for Defence, Leader of the Opposition, Shadow Defence and Pensions Ministers, 60 % of all Labour MP's as well as our own local MP's.
- Copied all correspondence to the national press and TV news media.
- Produced three newsletters to promote and explain the petition and provide assistance for people to write to their own MP or ministers.





WHAT ARE OUR PLANS FOR THE FUTURE ?



We aim to continue to publicise the petition by all means possible and obtain as many electronic and actual signatures as possible.



We aim to continue a dialogue with members of the coalition and opposition.



We aim to close the petition in November 2011 and hand it to number 10 prior to the Cenotaph weekend.



WHAT CAN YOU DO ?

- ~ Point out that this is NOT a political Issue.
- ~ Don't think, that as a serving member of the Forces, it doesn't concern you, it does because what is happening to your pension now is for life.
- ~ Convince more people to sign the petition - family, friends and work colleagues
- ~ Write or Contact the Prime Minister.
(See Newsletter two for tips)
- ~ Write to your MP or a Minister.
(See Newsletter two for tips)
- ~ Tell the team about any relevant points you may think that are not currently being dealt with by the team.
- ~ Collect actual signatures and send the completed sheets back to me. **
- ~ Help the team by coming up with ideas to promote or publicise the petition. **
- ~ Promise to join us in November when we deliver the Petition to Number 10. **

****Just contact me via the facility on the petition site.**

