



# PERSONAL SUPPORT & SOCIAL WORK SERVICE RAF

IMPACT REPORT 2017-18

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## OPENING MESSAGE

### A MESSAGE FROM SSAFA'S DIRECTOR OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

SSAFA is proud to have been providing Personal Support and Social Work Services to the RAF for over 27 years and are delighted to have been awarded the contract once more.

In 2017 we supported 3067 people from across the RAF community. The principle reasons people used the service were for support with relationships and family issues, physical health and disability, and personal support. Many cases were complex, requiring us to work closely with other agencies in order to achieve the desired outcomes for those involved. Whilst we continue to tailor services to meet these priorities, we are pleased to have introduced two new services: a single point of contact signposting service to make it easier for beneficiaries to get support,

and welfare provision to support HR personnel in the RAF. Both have been well received and we look forwards to expanding on these initiatives.

Whilst much has been achieved thus far, considerable work remains to be done. We look forwards to working with RAF and civilian colleagues, and of course the families of RAF personnel as we work towards our common goal of providing the very best personal support and welfare services to the RAF community that we can.



David Williams  
**Director of Health  
& Social Care**



“Across our UK-based RAF Social Work Service, we continue to deliver and develop the contract...”

# OUR VISION

## OUR APPROACH

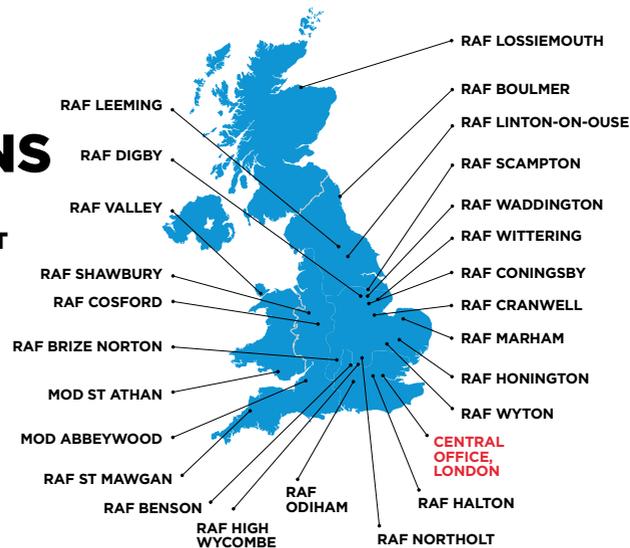
SSAFA wants to enhance the service we provide to the RAF community in the UK and overseas through technical and organisational change, as well as new and innovative programmes.

We want to maintain our high-quality services and continue to be the RAF's Personal Support and Social Work Service (PS&SWS) provider of choice.

Our team of specialist Personal and Family Support Workers and Social Workers are located on stations in the RAF community. Our approach seeks to tackle issues by going to the root cause and not just solving the presenting concern.

We are always working to provide a high level of support, including (not specifically in):

- cases of varying complexity;
- reaching reserves as well as regulars;
- meeting increased demand from families of serving personnel;
- continuously monitoring service provision and seeking client feedback.



## CASE STUDY BEN

A passion for motor racing is helping former RAF Chinook engineer Ben Norfolk come to terms with a diagnosis of complex PTSD and an abrupt end to his military career.

Ben completed two tours of Iraq and six of Afghanistan during his 18-year service career but is now adjusting to life as a civilian following his medical discharge in November 2017. Supported by military charities including SSAFA, he is getting his life back on track with Invictus Games Racing and planning for a new career.

“It all relates back to an incident I was part of in 2008,” he said. “The role the Chinooks were doing was a lot of casualty recovery with the medical emergency response teams. I think

my core beliefs, my understanding of people and of life, were challenged by what I saw, particularly because I was not expecting it.”

A medical discharge followed and it was while he was struggling to deal with his transition that Ben first called on SSAFA for support, contacting SSAFA's Personal Support & Social Work Service RAF. He said: “I spoke to the SSAFA rep and she went into a welfare meeting and fought my corner for me. I didn't feel I could confront them directly. From that point onwards it was a bit easier because she had kickstarted the process for me.”

Ben went onto to say “Because of what has happened something positive has come into my life.”

## OUR IMPACT IN 2017

# 60

Staff across the UK

# 3,067

People supported in 2017



### TOP 3 REFERRAL REASONS:

# 23%

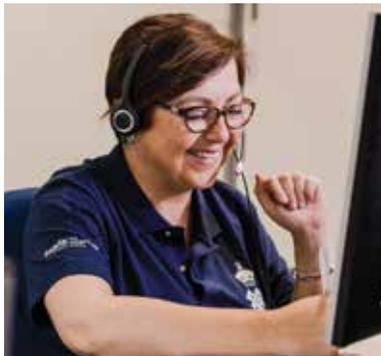
Relationships/family

# 19%

Physical health/disability

# 16%

Personal support



### ACCESS TO OUR SERVICE BY CATEGORY:

# 2,257

Serving

# 757

Dependent

# 30

Veteran

# 43

Reserves

# 105

enquiries answered through the single point of contact

# 21

referrals made as a result of clients contacting the single point of contact

# 158

face-to-face welfare supervision sessions completed

## SUPPORTING RAF SERVICE PERSONNEL

A servicewoman whose marriage ended suddenly the day before she was due to leave the RAF received vital practical and emotional support from SSAFA.

Staff from SSAFA's Personal Support & Social Work Service – RAF were contacted when SAC X and her two young children, aged six months and two, moved into the local contact house.

After SAC X had overcome her initial shock and disbelief at her marriage breakdown, she decided to remain in the RAF. SSAFA staff

encouraged her to seek specialist help to enable her to address the emotional abuse she had suffered during her relationship. They later applied for funding on SAC X's behalf to pay for new bedroom furniture for her children and a much-needed family holiday. Further signposting to legal and mediation services empowered SAC X to take these matters forward herself.

She and her children are now settled, the children have places in the local nursery and SAC X is due to return to the workplace shortly.



# PERSONAL SUPPORT & SOCIAL WORK SERVICE

## QUALITY ASSURANCE

The Quality Manager is an integral post within the SSAFA PS&SWS RAF service. They provide additional support in respect of improving practice across our service, conducting audits of all aspects of the work undertaken and ensuring that good practice is shared throughout.

Assurance visits are made to a cross-section of stations throughout the year. Service personnel, service users, staff and other agencies are all spoken to as part of the process – identifying good practice and any areas that may need to be improved.

## LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

As the service evolves, we are faced with a wider variety of cases. We need to ensure all our staff are trained to handle them in the best possible way. The continuous learning and development of our team ensures that we stay innovative in our delivery of services and align with any legislative changes.

“As the service evolves, we are faced with a wider variety of cases. We need to ensure all our staff are trained to handle them in the best possible way.”

## USING TECHNOLOGY TO ENSURE OUR CONTINUITY OF CARE

Our service and support to the RAF community has continued to evolve through Care Director, our specialist health and social care software. Care Director allows easy access to the digital records of our clients' data. This gives more robust reporting and effective monitoring of the personal support and social work service that we provide. Our priority is always the individual and making sure their needs are met with a continuity of care.

Using Care Director and our digital capabilities allows us to seamlessly transfer clients required data wherever they are based. This ensures we can continue our high level of client support with minimum disruption.



“Our priority is always the individual and making sure their needs are met with a continuity of care.”

## SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT

The single point of contact (SPOC) service is available **24 hours a day, 365 days a year** and incorporates a confidential signposting service during working hours and an out of hours support service.

The SPOC service was introduced as part of the new contract as an additional way for serving personnel and their families to access the service wherever they are located.

Since its launch in September 2017, it has received over 100 calls and emails resulting in 21 referrals to the PS&SWS team.

## HR WELFARE SUPERVISION

We've developed a support service to assist the RAF in recognising the adverse effects brought about by the emotional demands of their work. It also supports individuals in building resilience to reduce levels of stress and burnout.

Using a tried and tested programme based on the restorative supervision model, the service provides a supportive environment where RAF professionals can talk in a confidential setting. Delivered by SSAFA Welfare Support Officers, it allows individuals the opportunity to enhance the coping mechanisms used when facing challenges, building relationships and making decisions within their role.



## DELIVERING ADDED VALUE

SSAFA has been serving the military community since 1885 and understands the unique demands of service life. Our experience and heritage means we benefit from having an established set of specialist services that target the ever-changing Armed Forces community.

In addition, we continue to develop and evolve our portfolio, so that we can bridge any gaps where support is not readily available.

With a network of nearly 6,000 volunteers as well as our trained staff, SSAFA offers practical, financial and emotional support to regular, reserves, veterans and their families.

### ADOPTION SERVICE

Our professional adoption service caters specifically to military families. They understand the specific issues faced when adopting, especially challenges faced due to regular relocation.

### ADDITIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES ADVICE SERVICE

If someone in your family has additional needs then SSAFA can provide specialised support including our Forces Additional Needs and Disability Forum (FANDF). SSAFA offers activities for children and young people from service families, including those with additional needs and disabilities.

### SPECIALIST SERVICES

Life in the Forces can present different challenges for different people; not every case has a straightforward solution. Therefore, we offer a range of specialist services that provide unique resolutions when they are most needed. They include mentoring and providing specialist equipment or home redevelopment.

SSAFA works with clients to provide personalised and tailored support for their individual needs.



## CLOSING REMARKS

This report once again clearly highlights the excellent work being delivered by SSAFA in providing personal support and social work services for our personnel and their families.

One theme which resonates from the report is the comprehensive support that RAF personnel and their families can access, through the RAF's contract with SSAFA and the additional support that can be accessed from the wider SSAFA organisation and the other military charities.

It is reassuring to note that, through SSAFA's timely interventions in delivering practical and emotional support, many personnel can continue to serve and benefit from a full and rewarding career. Equally, this helps the RAF to retain critical skills and experience to maintain its operational capability. In turn, personnel can have confidence that the support that they and their family may need will be available after they have retired from active service.

The new contract has delivered fresh thinking to the way we provide welfare and personal support for our people. In particular, the introduction of a welfare supervision programme will promote the resilience of our own welfare delivery staff.

This increases the RAF's capability to deliver welfare support to our personnel to best effect.

Accessibility to SSAFA has been greatly enhanced through the new 24/7 single point of contact (**03000 111 723**). This facility will become increasingly important as more of us and our families live away from our parent station.

I was also delighted to note that the continued personal and professional development of staff is identified by SSAFA as a key requirement; this can ensure our people and their families continue to be supported by highly competent staff who receive fresh and relevant training to help tackle the new challenges that our people face.

I remain most grateful to our SSAFA experts for all they do in supporting the RAF Community. They are an essential element of the RAF Whole Force and their commitment to supporting all of our people is plain to see.



Alan Opie  
**Air Commodore**  
Assistant Chief of  
Staff Personnel Delivery

**SSAFA, the Armed Forces charity, provides lifelong support to our Armed Forces, veterans and their families. We began our work in 1885, and in 2017 our staff and teams of volunteers helped more than 73,000 people – from Second World War veterans to those involved in more recent conflicts, and their families.**

### **NEED TO TALK?**

Our single point of contact service provides practical and emotional support to regulars, reserves and their families. It is completely independent of the chain of command.

■ Call **0300 0111 723**

Lines open 24 hours a day / 7 days a week

■ Email **psswsRAF@ssafa.org.uk**

monitored 08:30 to 17:00 weekdays



**ssafa** | the  
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