

Army Training Centre (Pirbright)



Independent Advisory Panel Annual Report 2022



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Contents

1	Welcome and Overall Summary from the IAP Chair	1
2	What is the Army Training Centre (Pirbright)?.....	1
3	What is the IAP and what do we do?	2
4	IAP Members	2
5	Overview of IAP activities in 2022.....	3
6	IAP reports submitted and discussed in 2022.....	5
7	Themes and Priorities for 2023.....	6
8	Summary for 2022.....	7
9	Commanding Officers' Response	8
9.1	HQ Regt ATC(P).....	8
9.2	1 ATR.....	8
9.3	2 ATR.....	8
	Annex A: IAP Members as of December 2022	1

1 Welcome and Overall Summary from the IAP Chair



Welcome to this year's Annual Report of the Independent Advisory Panel (IAP) of the Army Training Centre (Pirbright) (ATC(P)).

I joined the IAP in 2016 and became the Chair in November 2021. I am supported in my role by an enthusiastic panel of volunteers. Our numbers have remained stable over the year, with one member leaving and one resuming their role so we currently maintain eight members on the panel, six male and two female. I would like to thank all the members of the IAP for giving their time, for their caring interaction with recruits and staff and their passion to meet our mandate to oversee supervisory care and delivery of training.

We have overseen the introduction of the latest version of the Common Military Syllabus (CMS) and the Compass for Life initiative. We have witnessed fluctuation in numbers arriving for each form-up, this has caused some re-planning for the Training Teams, which is not helpful. I am pleased to report that we are able to work in an open and inclusive environment, where our role as 'critical friend' is reflected by a receptive and engaging response from the staff.

During the year we welcomed Lt Col L Kelly R SIGNALS, Commanding Officer, 1 Army Training Regiment.

2 What is the Army Training Centre (Pirbright)?

ATC(P) comprises three Regiments, each with their own chain of command, but which are closely linked and co-located on one site; two of the units are Army Training Regiments (ATRs) and the third, HQ Regiment ATC(P), provides the coordination, support and enabling of training as well as the overall management of the site.

Each Commanding Officer (CO) commands their Regiment as they deem fit and to fulfil their duty of care to achieve their specified mission and tasks. In exercising command primacy, however, each CO agrees to abide by Centre-level policy as enshrined in the Supervisory Care Directive, the Standard Operating Instructions and any joint policy statements (such as on Diversity & Inclusion). CO HQ ATC(P) is the focus for specified enabling functions and the first point of contact for external organisations.

ATC(P) delivers the 14 week training course known as the CMS which is completed by all adult recruits (age 17+) when they join the Army. The course is designed to develop individual and team skills in a progressive manner, preparing recruits for their Initial Trade Training (Phase 2). ATC(P) delivers Phase 1 Training for new recruits joining the following:

Army Air Corps, Army Medical Services, Corps of Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, Corps of Royal Engineers, Corps of Army Music, Royal Armoured Corps, Royal Regiment of Artillery, Royal Corps of Signals, Royal Logistic Corps, Adjutant General's Corps and Intelligence Corps.

These recruits are taught and trained in fieldcraft, skill at arms, fitness training, values and standards of the British Army, military knowledge, battlefield casualty drills, mental resilience, individual health and education.



Besides its coordination function HQ ATC(P) delivers consolidated CMS courses to Army Reservists, an innovative and specially designed Soldier Development Course and Adventurous Training in Wales.

Coming to ATC(P) may be the recruit's first time away from home. Army barrack accommodation is not like living at home and recruits must learn new standards and rules of behaviour. Recruits share accommodation with other members of their section, but there is a reasonable amount of privacy for the individual. All the facilities are modern and well equipped and female recruits have their own separate rooms.

3 What is the IAP and what do we do?

The General Officer Commanding the Army Recruiting and Initial Training Command (ARITC) endorses IAPs as a mandatory requirement for ARITC training establishments. The aim of an IAP is to offer the Commanding Officer (CO) of a training establishment an independent, objective perspective utilising the key skills of the panel, sourced from the public, private and charity sectors, who can speak frankly, unrestrained by concerns of career or rank hierarchy.

The ATC(P) IAP is an independent part of ATC(P)'s assurance framework, offering advice, challenge, encouragement and support to the CO HQ Regt, on matters of supervisory care and training delivery. The IAP fulfils the role of 'critical friend', complementing the existing assurance frameworks and assisting ATC(P) to drive continuous improvement.

The IAP provides a source of feedback on local issues. The IAP also provides a conduit for external communications for ATC(P) to demystify the Army's training organisation and promote both the Army's and ATC(P)'s reputation locally.

IAP members are allocated to an individual squadron or company to act as the IAP representative for that sub-unit. The IAP member works with the management, the training teams and the recruits. Their interaction is both through formal presentations to the training teams and recruits and by informal visits to speak to recruits in classrooms, gymnasia, accommodation blocks or on exercises. The informal meetings can also take place during evenings or at weekends. A key part of every visit is to talk directly to the recruits about their experiences so far, how they are handling the transition and if they have any concerns. IAP members are involved through the complete recruit cycle from the course development week, through the 14 weeks of the recruit's journey, from civilian to trained soldier, to the Pass Out parade. IAP members have unfettered access to all areas of the training establishment to ensure they are able to conduct their business and identify issues effectively. After visits a report is produced by the IAP member and any issues identified will be forwarded to the Panel to be discussed in order to ascertain if further action needs to be taken. The Panel meets with the three COs at quarterly meetings.

IAP members also have long term secondary roles. They cover areas such as infrastructure, reservist training, accommodation, welfare, education and medical services.

4 IAP Members

IAP members are unpaid civilian volunteers, who can serve for a maximum of seven years, however this can be extended in exceptional circumstances. We do find that the IAP provides a level of continuity across the establishment. They are totally independent of the Chain of Command, but do not override the fundamental Army principle of self-regulation. Members are recruited, by the Panel, for the range of their expertise and experience in the commercial and industrial world, public services and education. The majority of the members are parents themselves and they live in and around Pirbright. All have full DBS (Disclosure Barring Service) clearance to allow them to work with under-18s.

See Annex A for a full list of IAP members at ATC (P) as of December 2022.

5 Overview of IAP activities in 2022

Form Up. The IAP see the form-up of recruits as they report to Pirbright as being a very important moment in their lives. It is also a defining moment for the parents, partners, dependent children and relatives. It's when the recruit's vision of their future starts to become a reality. Therefore, it is important to make this occasion a pleasant experience. Working with the Regimental Headquarters we relocated the venue for the form-up from a rather tired building to Granby Hall. It is a splendid facility where we can welcome parents with tea and coffee and brief them on elements of the course, the support systems in place to ensure the recruits develop in a safe environment, in order to help them become the best soldier they can be. Feedback from parents has been very positive, saying they feel reassured that their sons/daughters will be safe, nurtured and treated with respect. The IAP will continue to seek further improvements to the experience.

Local Community Engagement. The Pirbright Cricket Club (PCC) project to build a new pavilion was given the go ahead in late 2022. The club membership has grown exponentially, providing male, female, youth and walking cricket teams. The pavilion will not only provide facilities for the cricket and football teams, but also be used as a village community facility. The IAP were instrumental in facilitating a link between ATC(P) and the cricket club in support of the original bid. PCC are looking forward to a new season and integrating families from ATC(P) into the Pirbright cricket family.



Death of the Queen. The death of Her Royal Highness, Queen Elizabeth II on the 8th September 2022 was a very poignant moment for all those serving, and those who had served. A memorial to the Queen was set up in the peace and tranquillity of the ATC(P) church allowing recruits, staff and civilians to reflect on her life and legacy. Recruits having already pledged their allegiance to the monarch were reminded of the values and standards expected of them in the service of their country.

Normandy Coy. Normandy Coy is often mentioned in the parents' briefing, but still remains a mystery to most so a brief resume is included below:

- **Recovery and Rehabilitation.** It provides the space and time for recovery from injury. It supplements this with a bespoke and agile military skills training programme that directly complements the CMS in order to provide the recruits that return from rehab with the best possible chance of really succeeding in the CMS; providing a skills 'return on investment' for the additional months spent in training.
- **Retrain.** Recruits that fail summative assessments or otherwise fall behind in training and are outside the 'back-squadding' policy come to retrain for specific training interventions to reach the required standard in that area before returning to a sub-unit. This is complemented by a holistic military skills and fitness training programme in order to improve the recruit as a whole; if they have struggled in one area they tend to struggle in others so this is a preventative approach.
- **Resettlement.** Those leaving ATC(P) either at their own choice or the Army's, pass-through Omaha Pl. This is a critical part of the pipeline and the process requires careful management to ensure recruits leave in good order and in a positive manner. In a way, this can be the first stage in the re-recruitment pipeline for either Regular or Reserve candidates.
- **The Soldier Development Course (SDC).** Delivering a four-week Phase 0 course to candidates who have not quite met the standard at the Assessment Centre, the SDC is a slow introduction to the CMS. It delivers fitness and low-level military skills in order to maximise the potential of recruits who might otherwise be at greater risk of wastage.
- **Reserve CMS.** Normandy is the Regular delivery organisation for consolidated (as opposed to modular) Reserve CMS courses. This provides considerable opportunities for interaction with Reservists.

OFSTED Visit. ATC(P) underwent an OFSTED inspection in May 2022. This was a very focused inspection and unusually they did not request to speak to the IAP or request our most recent report. The overall inspection grades were:

Overall Effectiveness - Good

Key Judgements:

- Quality of training and support: Good
- Personal and professional development: Good
- Quality of facilities, infrastructure and resources: Good
- The effectiveness of leadership and management: Good

The recommendations from the report are:

- Increase the number of recruits who complete their courses.
- Help recruits consolidate their knowledge and practise their skills before attending battle camp.
- Provide recruits who have been in rehabilitation for long periods of time with more varied activities to keep them motivated.
- Provide relevant, clear nutritional labelling for food served in the mess, so that recruits can make more informed and healthier choices about what they eat.
- Provide recruits with more detailed and current information on how to understand the threats posed from radicalisation and extremist groups.
- Issue female recruits with appropriately fitted rucksacks and uniform.

The IAP will seek to work with ATC(P) to comply with the recommendations of OFSTED, funding and staffing levels allowing.

Freedom of Woking. On Sunday 24th April 2022, the Army Training Centre (Pirbright) were requested to participate in the Honorary Freedom of Woking Borough Parade in Woking town centre.

Troops from ATC(P) marched into Jubilee Square for an open-air ceremony, after which the parade marched past Deputy Lieutenant, Major General Tim Sullivan, CB, CBE, and the Mayor of Woking, Councillor Liam Lyons. The Freedom of the Borough is the highest award that a borough can bestow, recognising exceptional contributions or distinctive service by an individual or group of individuals.

The accolade was awarded to the ATC(P) on 8 December 2016 and gives the honour and distinction to all ranks of ATC(P) to march through the streets of the borough on ceremonial occasions.

The parade gave the recruits the unique opportunity to show off their newly acquired marching and weapon handling drills to the public. The recruits performed above and beyond expectation, delivering a very professional display.



6 IAP reports submitted and discussed in 2022

Compass for Life. During the year the IAP received various comments on the Compass for Life (CfL) programme from within both training regiments to the extent it was considered worthwhile to capture such comments for discussion with the Commanding Officers.

Informal discussions were held across the chains of command and with recruits. In general, there was a good understanding of the concepts of the CfL programme amongst headquarter staff and more senior members of the training teams, although there was concern that the implementation of the programme meant significant extra supervisory work for the section commanders. It was also apparent that there was scepticism as to the relevance of the content to the recruits at such an early stage of their army careers. Initially permanent staff had not been adequately complementing the delivery by the CfL staff and CfL staff had not been following up sufficiently through the 14 weeks of individual CMSs. That was rectified and improved upon in the latter part of the year.

Amongst the recruits few really seemed to understand what the CfL could provide and how best to use it. Recruits found the detail in which they were required to complete their CfL diaries an unwanted burden and far too cumbersome despite that being a requirement for the accreditation process. Some recruits suggested an electronic version of the CfL diary and a simplification of what needed to be recorded would have received far better uptake.

The IAP considered that the course content was good, relevant to the Initial Training Group (ITG) and had potential value. However, in broad terms, the IAP recommended that a better mechanism to “sell” its individual and team benefits to the Training Teams would likely have enhanced the uptake, support and overall implementation. The “sell” to the recruits needed to focus on “what was in the process for them” to ensure they fully understood the value and benefits thereof. Also, a mechanism for evidencing whether the recruits and permanent staff were benefitting from the CfL concepts and were (actively and willingly), applying them, needed to be put in place.

The Commanding Officers considered the IAP’s observations and recommendations resounded with what they had observed and considered the IAP report should be forwarded to ITG for consideration during their review of the first year of the CfL.

Infrastructure. In excess of £17m was either spent or committed in FY22/23 in relation to Infrastructure of ATC(P), which is a significant expenditure as compared to the previous three years. The maintenance contractor and the maintenance contract also changed during the report period.

Unlike the previous contract the new site contract includes preventive maintenance provisions, which has resulted in a repair spend in 2022 of £226,000 plus an associated new small project spend of £118,436. In addition, in FY22/23 for projects over £25,000 approval was secured to the value of £260,000 (to include Gym floor replacement, new Education Wing heaters, new Alexander Welfare Building boilers, reusable buildings for female changing rooms for Swimming Pool). The performance of the new site contractor is not yet entirely satisfactory due to market pressures, which have resulted in failures to recruit suitably qualified staff in a timely manner.

Other significant projects are moving ahead such as the Main Entrance Project of £3.6m (complete February 2023) and, the new Alexander Barracks Soldier Centre of £13m (project start February 2023, complete March 2024).

The activities described above for FY22/23 do not include an estimated project value of £500k for the Gym Roof to be replaced and delivered in FY23/24 and, the British Army Soldier Academy project estimated at £229m and scheduled to start Q2 2024 and to be completed in 2028/9.

Internal Validation (INVAL). The IAP has continued to monitor the recruit INVAL process which was found to be running smoothly. Later in the year the attention turned to the permanent staff INVAL. This process had morphed into a general discussion rather than be focused on the key elements of course design and delivery. Discussion and a workshop have taken place and trials of the proposed process have begun. The outcome of these trials will be reported in next year’s report.

Medical and Dental Centre. The population-at-risk coverage for the ATC(P) Medical Centre is expanding. The centre is now additionally responsible for the two Foot Guard battalions in Windsor. This commitment also includes providing medical support for surge troops training for ceremonial duties in London and Windsor, as well as visiting Foreign and Commonwealth ceremonial units/bands accommodated in Brunswick Lines. Extant coverage is still for ATC(P) and other lodger units within Pirbright, 3 Rangers, Longmoor, and ATR Winchester. Cover includes a Bedding Down Facility (for all Ph1 and RMAS plus ATR(W)) and Duty Clinician advice 24/7 throughout the year. Our findings from a light touch review are shown below:

3 Rangers. The addition of 3 Ranger to the Pirbright military family brings its own set of unique issues for the medical and dental team:

- Battalion personnel require GP support as their two doctors on establishment are often away from station (recce, deployed, training, exercise).
- Their 4 Combat Medical Technicians are usually deployed.
- Vaccinating Rangers with the essential vaccinations required for modern Field Army operations, is tricky when it coincides with recruit intake Initial Medical Assessments (IMA).

Occupational Health IT – laptops. New staff members are not being issued with laptops or the full spectrum of functionality of Microsoft applications. As all work stations need laptops to log in this is affecting efficiency.

Bedding Down Facility (BDF). Pirbright offers the BDF to cover ATC(P), ATR(W) and RMAS. This facility is currently under review. One of the difficulties of running this facility is finding staff at short notice to cover staff absence, as any replacement needs to be DBS cleared.

IMA. A number of recruits fail their IMA in Week 1. The main reasons are for musculoskeletal issues, dental condition and asthma. Dental inspections are carried out at recruitment centres by doctors. Whilst the Chief Dental Officer at Pirbright has developed guidelines for this inspection, we note that some recruits are still arriving requiring substantial dental treatment. If the required treatment cannot be achieved within the very tight Phase 1 training timetable, recruits are discharged. A small number of recruits are still turning up wearing braces; this is not allowed and recruits should have delayed entry or have the braces removed.

Staffing. Both the Medical Centre and the Dental Centre are continually having to deal with filling staff vacancies and short-term cover. Factors complicating this include the need for civilian staff need to be DBS cleared to allow them to treat under eighteens, and the fact that the job market is very buoyant at the moment. Military posts are continually gapped, putting extra pressure on those in post.

7 Themes and Priorities for 2023

The themes and priorities selected by the IAP for 2023 are as follows:

- Continue interaction with the COs in order to assist them with areas they are concerned about or elements they are trying to introduce or improve upon.
- Support ATC(P) in the trial and introduction of CMS Future Soldier.
- Continue to monitor the INVAL process and to see if lessons learned, particularly common themes, are implemented across ATC(P).
- Provide feedback on local community interaction/reaction with recruits who are enjoying a “Walk Out Pass”.
- Monitor process and interaction between the Training Regiments and Normandy Company.
- Monitor process and interaction between Training Teams and the medical teams.
- Gain a better understanding of the continual improvement processes being introduced across ITC and ARITC.

8 Summary for 2022

It has been a busy and very productive year for the IAP. We are now firmly established as contributors to the Course Development Week, the Permanent Staff Preparation Course and Parent Briefing. We have adapted to the revised field training regime and the Panel have been proactive in visiting field exercises and ranges. We have found these opportunities conducive to frank and honest discussions with the recruits. We have provided advice, when requested, to both the management and members of the training teams. We have carried out reviews of the Compass for Life initiative, INVAL and a light touch review of the Medical and Dental Centre. The Training Teams continue to provide top class instruction and mentoring to the recruits, whilst all staff continually strive to find effective ways to manage their work – life balance. Based on our observations from our visits to ATC(P), our conversations with training teams and recruits and attendance at key events, the IAP is satisfied that supervisory care is actively embedded across ATC(P).

9 Commanding Officers' Response

9.1 HQ Regt ATC(P)

No comment, content with the IAP report.

S A Kelly OBE RRF

Lieutenant Colonel
Commanding Officer

9.2 1 ATR

Thank you for the detailed report and generally for the contributions you have made throughout the training year 2022/23. 1ATR has found is useful to have you present for both CDW weeks, the 6-monthly Regt focus days as well as our TEAMWORK days so you can understand the Regt priorities. Areas where feedback will be invaluable as we move in to the new training year will be on Jackson Coy with the CMS (FS), the impact of the removal of the Bedding Down Facility, a focus on likely small intakes and any impacts that has and a continued review on the refined PS INVALs.

L Kelly R SIGNALS

Lieutenant Colonel
Commanding Officer

9.3 2 ATR

I am grateful to the IAP members for their time, care, and passion along with their knowledge, skills, and experience from the public, private, and charity sectors. Their support to recruits, regular feedback to Commanding Officers, and local engagement undoubtedly enhances our performance and reputation. I'm grateful for their nudge to relocate the form-up to Granby Hall, for reinforcing the connection with the Pirbright Cricket Club, and for their support to the Squadrons throughout the Common Military Syllabus courses. I'm delighted in conducting their role as 'critical friend' they experience unfettered access, in addition to receptive and engaging staff. I was pleased Ofsted listened to the Commanding Officers' accounts of our IAP but disappointed they didn't find the time during their inspection to speak to them directly given both Ofsted and the IAP's focus on recruit welfare. I recognise the IAP's summary that, 'the Training Teams continue to provide top class instruction and mentoring to recruits...' and 'that supervisory care is actively embedded across ATC(P)'. I am enormously grateful to the IAP for their encouragement, counsel, and support throughout this year and I look forward to working with them to implement the Common Military Syllabus Future Soldier in the coming months.

C Hellier RIFLES

Lieutenant Colonel
Commanding Officer

Annex A: IAP Members as of December 2022

Dennis Prowse (Chair) is a retired Vice President Consulting Services of an international IT Services company working mainly in the UK defence arena. Managing multi-site teams, he delivered operational and information systems to the UK Armed Forces. Prior to this he served 32 years in the Army (REME), completing a number of operational tours and his final role was as the Senior Instructor Land Systems at the School of Electronic and Aeronautical Engineering.

Michael Cannon worked in the Engineering Technology sector employed by International Companies such as Unilever, Air Products, Swiss Sulzer and Siemens. After career development periods in design and capital plant sales throughout Europe, he spent 20 years as UK CEO of Swiss and German operations. In retirement, he applied his experience to the voluntary sector in positions such as Chairman of the infrastructure county charity Surrey Community Action and Abbeyfield Pirbright; Vice-Chair of Surrey County Civilian Military Partnership and Trustee of Surrey Minority Ethnic Forum.

Ghislaine Cole Recently retired as a dentist, having spent forty years in hospitals and general practice specialising in nervous patients, surgery and orthodontics. She is passionate about golf and loves watching all sport especially rugby, she is a keen Harlequin and Wales supporter. She is married with two adult children, a cat and dog. She is presently studying a History of Art course and learning to play bridge.

Gillian Prowse MBE is a recently retired teacher and departmental head. Prior to her KS2 and KS3 teaching career, she was an army officer in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers for 21 years. During her army career she gained Chartered Engineer status, attended the Army Staff College, served in Germany, Northern Ireland and Kosovo and escorted numerous journalists around the world. Sudden rule changes in the early 1990s allowed her to take maternity leave and continue serving. She enjoys the great outdoors, gardening and orienteering.

Deric Quaile started his career working on the genetic improvement of commercial forest plantation species in Zimbabwe and South Africa before a 30 year career in Shell International, first working on the establishment and management of commercial forest plantations in countries in Latin America as a feedstock to a future liquid biofuels programme, and then as the Global Head of Biodiversity management across all Shell's new large scale investment projects worldwide. He was instrumental in establishing successful cooperative biodiversity management programmes between Shell and selected international environmental NGOs.

Peter Robotham has been an IAP member since September 2019. This follows his retirement from a successful career in Human Resources within the financial services sector. He lives in Pirbright and is married with three children and five grandchildren. He is a keen gardener, bee keeper and active sportsman.

Alan Sloan has held senior management and board level positions for a number of multinational IT companies over his 45 year career. He was the COO and main board director for a UK software company for over 13 years responsible for managing multinational teams across the US and Europe, then divisional CEO of a FTSE 250 company. His last role prior to retiring last year was managing director of a fine arts shipping company moving high value art across the world. He lives on Sheets Heath close to Alexander Barracks with his wife and 2 cats and has a daughter who is currently a chef in London. His interests are rugby and music.

Tim Sullivan CB CBE DL is a retired Vice President Customer Relations of a Defence Manufacturer working in the IT and armoured vehicle spheres of Defence Manufacturing. He was responsible for advising the Managing Director on defence matters. Previously he was also the Chief Operating Officer of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors for some 3 years. Prior to this he served 36 years in the Army mainly in armour / armoured reconnaissance completing 8 operational tours, including one with the UN in Cyprus. He was the previous Chairman of the IAP and is Chairman of the Surrey branch of the ABF – The Soldiers' Charity.