



THE ROYAL AIR FORCE REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

Welfare Information Sheet

The RAF Regiment Association is not a “welfare” organisation. Put bluntly, we do not have the capacity, expertise or knowledge to take on a welfare role and there are other organisations both governmental and charitable, already well established who are constituted solely for that purpose. But we are, of course, concerned for the *wellbeing* of all our members.

For any association such as ours, having a lot of members, spread far and wide, the best form of support is sometimes simply to be able to talk to someone about a problem. If a member, possibly living alone, needs help of some kind, then it must be good if he or she knows there is someone to turn to for help. Often, it is enough just to talk things over that can make all the difference. In this regard, Branches have a clear role to play and there are excellent examples of such arrangements, where Branch members are made aware of a problem, will visit the afflicted member – at home or in hospital - and offer sympathetic help and advice, follow up visits and the simple assurance that they are not alone

But most of our members are on HQ Roll - not members of any branch - and the aim of this information sheet is to ensure, as far as possible, that any member who needs help and support, or any member becoming aware of a comrade in such a situation, knows which organisation is best suited to offer help and advice, and how to make contact with them.

This information sheet is being distributed to every member via The Flash, it is also available on the RAF Regiment Association website (www.rafregt.org.uk) and will be regularly reviewed and reissued. If any Association member can offer further input to improve the information to benefit our members, please approach any member of the National Management Committee.

Peter Lawrence

National Chairman

Helping YOU get the HELP you NEED

Government/MOD Agencies

- **Department of Work and Pensions (DWP).** The old DSS and other departments have been subsumed into the DWP. Among its principal responsibilities are welfare and pensions. It deals with Carers' Allowance, Attendance Allowance, Disability Living Allowance and Personal Independent Payment scheme, as well as State Pension, Pension Credit, Winter Fuel Payment and Cold Weather Payment. The DWP has offices across the country; local offices can be found on the DWP website <http://pensions-service.direct.gov.uk/en/find-pension-centre/home.asp> or the telephone directory.

For the Pension Service: Contact Numbers: 0800 731 7898, for help making a claim, or 0345 606 0265, to report a change in circumstances.

For Disability and Carers Service: Contact Numbers

- Attendance Allowance: 0345 605 6055
- Disability Living Allowance (DLA): 0345 712 3456
- Personal Independent Payments (PIP): 0345 850 3322
- Carer's Allowance: 0345 608 4321

However, each county has its own offices that deal with Disability and Carer's allowances.

Since the DWP is now such a huge government department, it may be easier to get the specific help you need by approaching one of the more focussed agencies listed below.

- **Service Personnel and Veterans Agency.** Pay, pensions and personnel support for the Services and veterans, including pensions, the Joint Personnel Administration System and Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre. Tel: 0800 0853600 or 0800 1692277. See www.veterans-uk.info which opens many other avenues of approach
- **HIVE.** Tri-Service information covering issues such as education and health. There are HIVE offices from RAF Benson to RAF Wyton. Put "RAF Hives" into Google and follow the links. In particular try the Veterans Welfare Service which gets you access to the Veterans UK Helpline on 0808 1914218. There is a very useful leaflet covering a wide range of issues.
- **Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB).** CAB offers free, confidential advice on benefits, pensions, redundancy, housing, debt, family matters, consumer rights and more. There are local CAB offices across the country, and advice by phone is available from local CAB offices. In addition, they are developing a national phone service, Adviceline, which is fully operational in Wales for people who live or work there. In England the service is currently being rolled out. If it is not yet available in your area, you will hear options for recorded information: For England call 03444 111 444 or check contact details via our local Citizens Advice search option. For Wales call 03444 77 20 20

Charitable Agencies

- **RAF Benevolent Fund.** The RAF Benevolent Fund offers a broad range of help for RAF personnel, past and present.
Visit www.rafbf.org.assistance or call 0800 0562424.
- **SSAFA Forces Help.** SSAFA supports serving personnel, veterans and families of both with practical and financial assistance as well as emotional and morale support.
Visit www.ssafa.org.uk or call 08451 300975.
- **Royal British Legion.** The RBL is the leading charity providing financial, social and emotional support to those who have served, or are serving, in the Forces, as well as their dependents.
Visit www.britishlegion.org.uk or call 08457 725725.
- **RAF Association.** RAFA offers comradeship and care for current and former members of the RAF
Visit www.rafa.org.uk/welfare.asp or call Freephone 0800 0182361, or Central HQ 0116 266 5224
"Association NCC member, Tich Taylor, is happy to signpost members' questions about RAFA support to the relevant RAFA office. Tel: 01446 730894 (+answer machine). Mob:07968 043818. Email linda.49taylor@tiscali.co.uk"

Note that these, and other, charities often cooperate to ensure that the best help is available. For example, a SSAFA officer may visit to assess the situation and refer the case to RAF Benfund or RBL.

Above all, remember that HELP IS AVAILABLE.

Don't be too proud - or simply bloody-minded - to ask for it!

