

Defence Relationship Management: Employer Attitude Monitor

2020

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Background, aims and objectives



Defence has an on-going requirement to maintain strong, mutually-beneficial, trust-based relationships with employers at all levels.

Defence Relationship Management (DRM) has been created to be a single point of access linking employers with Defence.

Given the investment in this area, it is crucial that Defence understands the impacts its efforts are having; particularly in terms of employer attitudes to Defence People issues. Specifically this research was designed to:

- Support the evaluation of Defence's employer engagement activities by providing robust data on employer attitudes to Defence People issues;
- Enable continuous improvement by informing policy and shaping activities; and
- Provide a historic dataset, showing how employer attitudes have changed over time.



Methodology



Two data sources were used; DRM provided some data, and the remainder was free found from Market Location (independent data supplier)



1,000 telephone interviews via CATI (computer assisted telephone interview) conducted between 3rd February – 9th March 2020



Interviews lasted 25 minutes on average



To ensure the research was comparable with previous years, quotas were set by whether employers employed Reservists (500 interviews were conducted with those that did and 500 interviews were conducted with those that did not)



A spread of employers were also targeted by size, sector and region

Sample profile

	2020	
	Reservist Employers	Non-Reservist Employers
<u>Number of Employees</u>		
0-9	9%	17%
10-49	25%	34%
50-249	23%	25%
250-500	12%	9%
500+	30%	15%
SMEs (1-249 employees)	57%	76%
Large (250+ employees)	43%	24%
<u>Sector</u>		
Public Sector	36%	25%
Manufacturing	28%	27%
Retail/Wholesale	7%	16%
Services	29%	32%

Regional breakdown of interviews

Region	Reservist Employers		Non-Reservist Employers		All employers	
	Interviews	%	Interviews	%	Interviews	%
North of England	29	6%	19	4%	48	5%
North West and Isle of Man	87	17%	69	14%	156	16%
Yorkshire and Humber	24	5%	35	7%	59	6%
West Midlands	43	9%	59	12%	102	10%
East Midlands	48	10%	50	10%	98	10%
East Anglia	43	9%	49	10%	92	9%
South East	55	11%	63	13%	118	12%
Wessex	47	9%	50	10%	97	10%
Greater London	50	10%	50	10%	100	10%
Wales	30	6%	27	5%	57	6%
Scotland – Highland	18	4%	12	2%	30	3%
Scotland – Lowland	26	5%	17	3%	43	4%
TOTAL	500	100%	500	100%	1,000	100%

Notes on interpretation

Where results are circled with a dotted circle  it means the difference between Reservist and Non-Reservist employers is a statistically significant difference.

Significance testing between 2020 and 2019 is shown where applicable at the 95% confidence level. A green arrow  indicates results are significantly higher than in 2019, and a red arrow  indicates results are significantly lower than in 2019.

Where previous waves are significantly different to each other, this symbol  is used to show there was a significant increase between previous waves, and this symbol  is used to show there was a significant decrease between previous waves.

Where charts do not sum to 100% this is due to rounding up or down, the exclusion of “Don’t Know” responses, or the possibility for respondents to pick more than one option.

Where results by region are circled, it means this is significantly better  or worse  than average.

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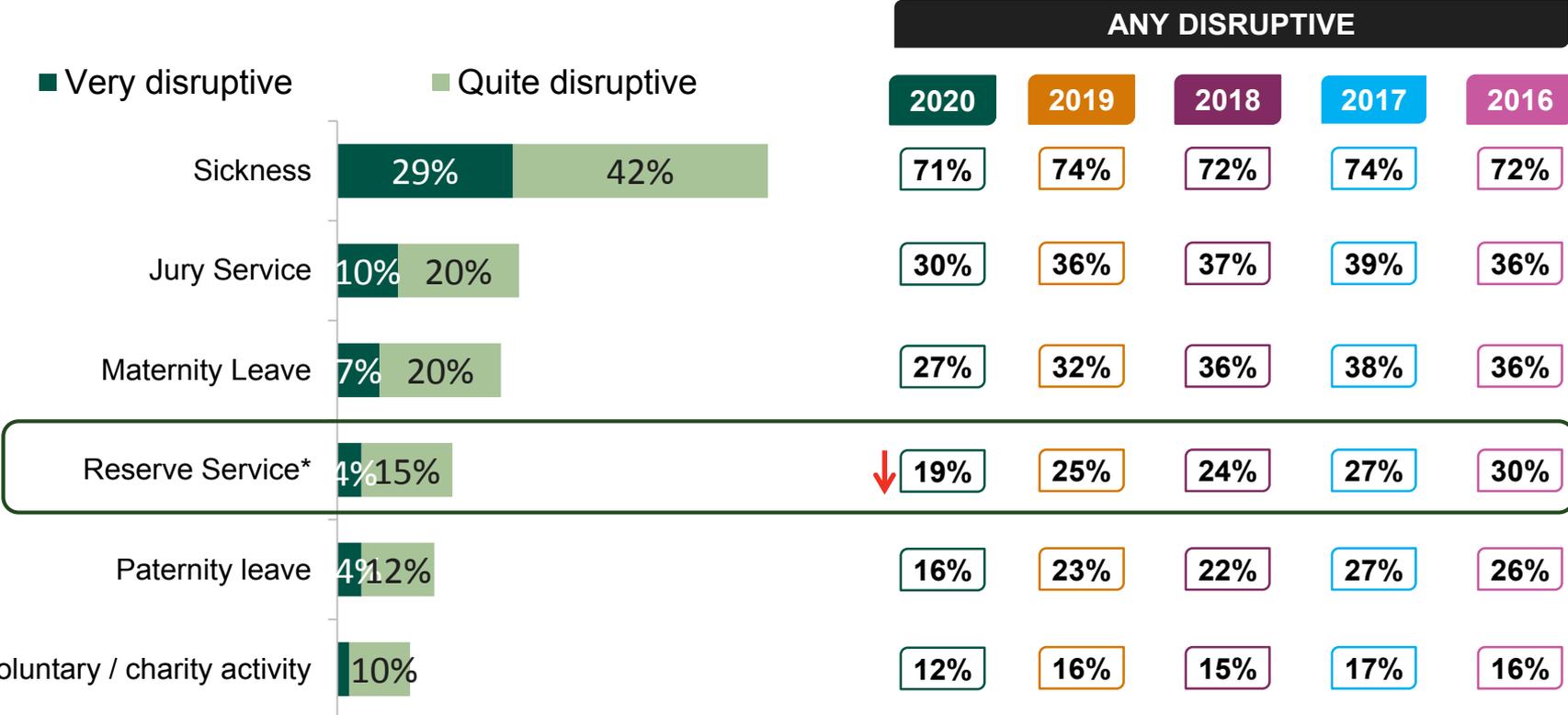
5. Reservists in the workplace

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7. Key findings and recommendations

Sickness remains the factor most commonly perceived to be disruptive to employers. Positively, perception that Reserve Service is disruptive has decreased since 2019

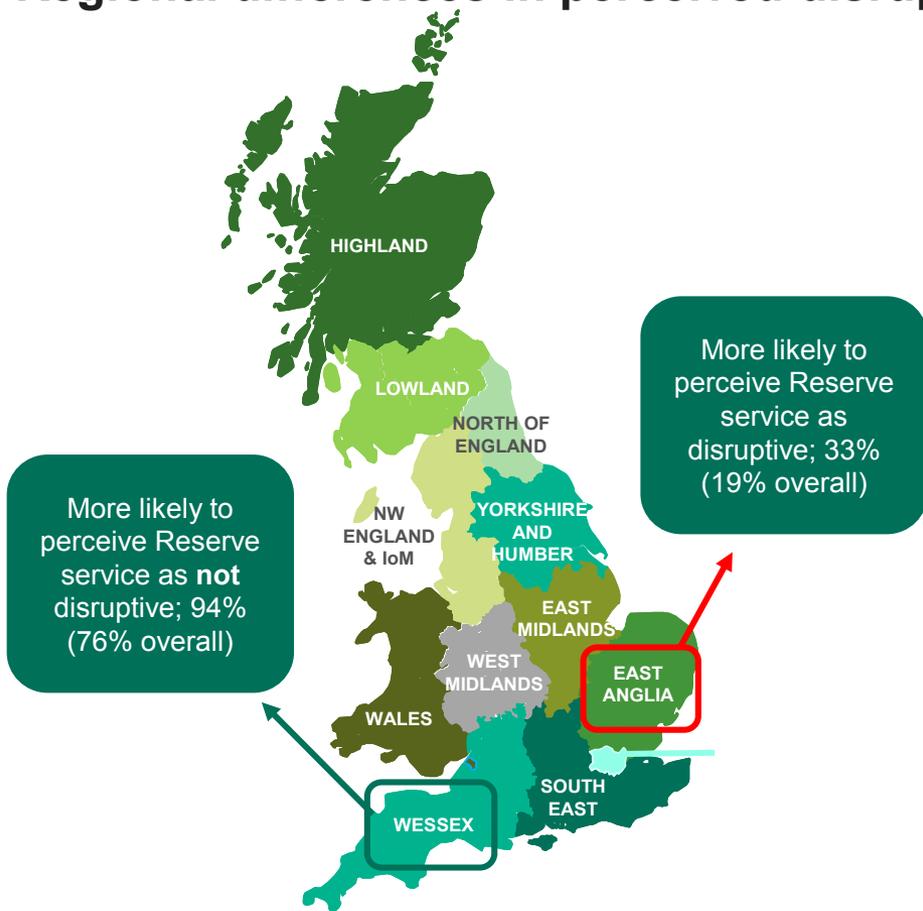
Perceived disruption by type of absence



"B4. For each one, please tell me how disruptive each of them are to your organisation?" Base: Reservist employers 2020 (500) All; 2019 (1,000), 2018 (1,021), 2016 (1,001), 2016 (1,000), *Base: Reservist employers; 2020 (500) 2019 (501) 2018 (486), 2017 (501), 2016 (500)

Picture is consistent across most regions, though employers in Wessex were more likely to perceive Reserve service as not disruptive

Regional differences in perceived disruption of Reserve service



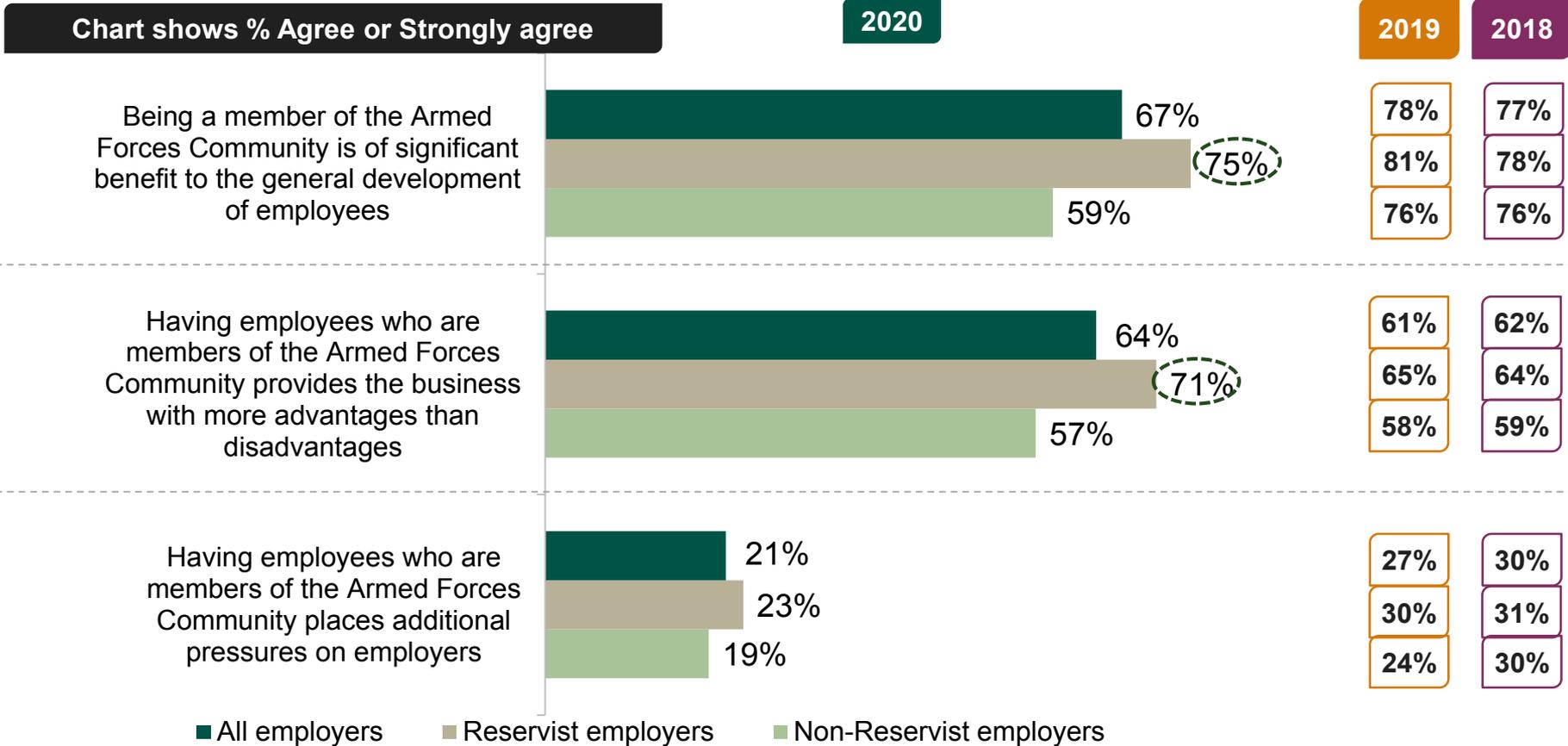
Region	% Not disruptive	% Disruptive
North of England	59%	34%
North West England & IoM	69%	22%
Yorkshire and Humber	88%	8%
West Midlands	67%	30%
East Midlands	77%	19%
East Anglia	65%	33%
South East	76%	15%
Wessex	94%	2%
Greater London	76%	20%
Wales	83%	17%
Scotland – Highland	78%	17%
Scotland – Lowland	92%	8%
All Reservist employers	76%	19%

○ Significantly better than average
 ○ Significantly worse than average

B4. Base: Employers that employ Reserves; North of England (29), North West & IoM (87), Yorkshire and Humber (24), West Midlands (43), East Midlands (48), East Anglia (43), South East (55), Wessex (47), Greater London (50), Wales (30), Highland (18), Lowland (26) *Please be cautious of low bases – treat as indicative only.*

Attitudes towards the Armed Forces Community are generally positive, with Reservist employers more so. In previous years, this question asked about those in voluntary organisations; perceptions of the Armed Forces Community is higher for 2 attitudes but lower in terms of the benefit it holds for the employees

Attitudes towards employees who are members of Armed Forces Community **Voluntary organisations**



“B6. I’m going to read a few statements that other people have made regarding employees who are members of the Armed Forces Community” (Agree / Disagree scale) Base: All / Reservist employers / Non-Reservist employers; 2020 (1000/500/500)

Picture was mostly consistent across all regions, though employers in Wales were less likely to agree that being a member of the Armed Forces Community is a significant benefit



Less likely to agree that being a member of the Armed Forces Community is of significant benefit to the general development of employees; 60% (79% overall)

Region	Having employees who are members of the Armed Forces Community places additional pressures on employers	Having employees who are members of the Armed Forces Community provides the business with more advantages than disadvantages	Being a member of the Armed Forces Community is of significant benefit to the general development of employees
	% Agree or Strongly agree		
North of England	28%	52%	66%
North West England & IoM	24%	66%	71%
Yorkshire and Humber	13%	75%	75%
West Midlands	28%	74%	81%
East Midlands	23%	79%	85%
East Anglia	30%	65%	77%
South East	15%	76%	84%
Wessex	21%	72%	70%
Greater London	22%	82%	78%
Wales	23%	63%	60%
Scotland – Highland	33%	72%	72%
Scotland – Lowland	27%	69%	77%
All Reservist employers	23%	71%	75%

○ Significantly better than average ○ Significantly worse than average

B6. Base: All Reservist employers; North of England (29), North West & IoM (87), Yorkshire and Humber (24), West Midlands (43), East Midlands (48), East Anglia (43), South East (55), Wessex (47), Greater London (50), Wales (30), Highland (18), Lowland (26).

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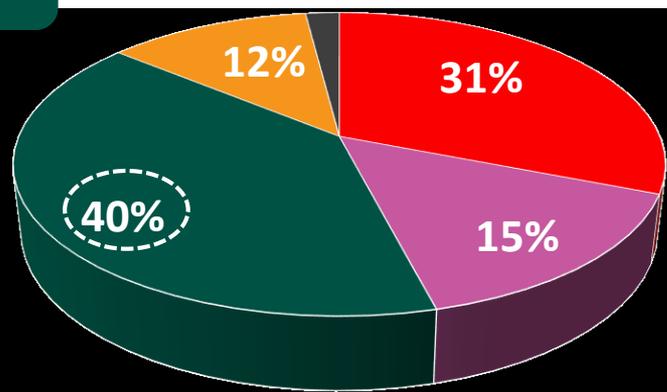
Around two-thirds of Reservist employers are aware of the AFC and two-fifths have signed it, Non-Reservist employers are less likely to be aware of the AFC



Which best describes your business in relation to the Armed Forces Covenant

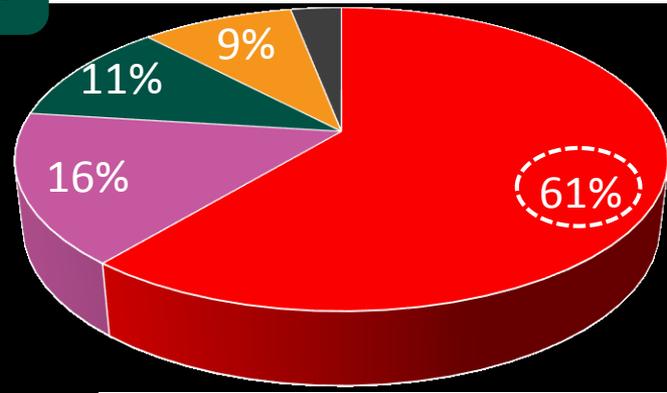
Reservist employers

68% aware overall



Non-Reservist employers

36% aware overall



- Not aware of it
- Aware of it, but have not signed it
- Aware of it and have signed it
- Aware of it but don't know if signed it
- Don't know

"C3. Which best describes your business in relation to the AFC?" Base: Reservist employers / Non-Reservist employers; 2020 (500/500) 2019 (501/499)
 NB in 2015 the AFC was known as the Corporate Covenant

The main reason for not being likely to sign up to the AFC is that employers don't know anything about it

What are the main reasons behind not being interested in signing up to the AFC?

We've never looked at it, so we did not know it existed and what, if any, benefits there might be.

Reservist employer, 10-49 staff

We're a small company that we tend to focus on more day-to-day issues.

Reservist employer, 50-249 staff

We are a charity and I don't think there is much of an overlap between defence and the aims of our charity in a general sense.

Reservist employer, 50-249 staff

Don't know anything about it

I don't know too much about it. We employ the right people for the job if they are reservists that is not a problem.

Non-Reservist employer, 10-49 staff

Can't afford the time / resources

We have only full-time positions; we are a small company and have only limited amount of part time positions available as we cannot have people away for too long.

Non-Reservist employer, 50-249 staff

Don't see business benefit / no need

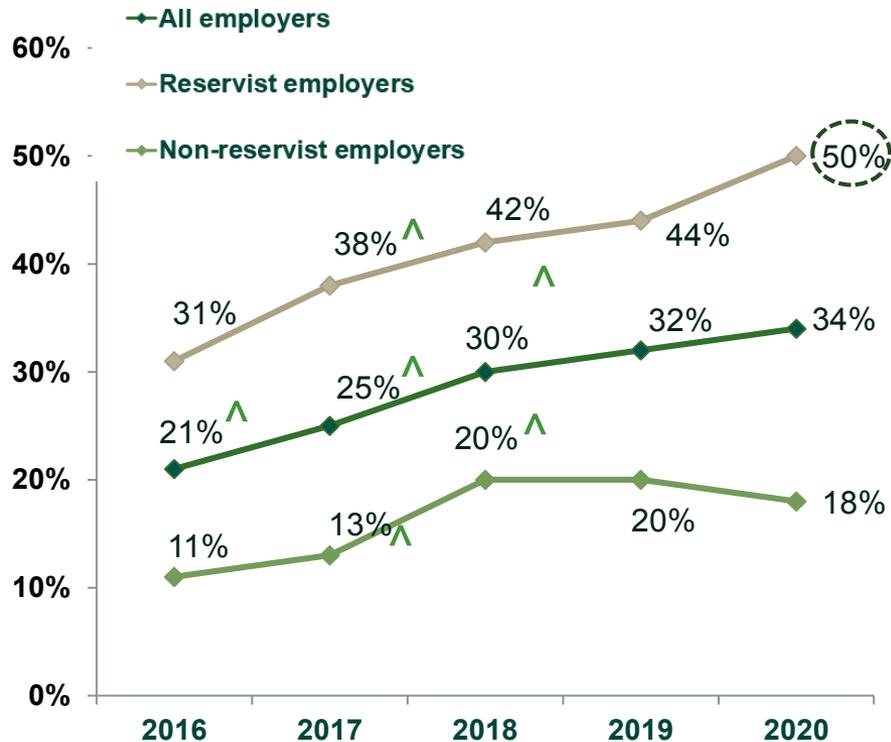
I am not sure how it would benefit us if we did sign up.

Non-Reservist employer, 10-49 staff

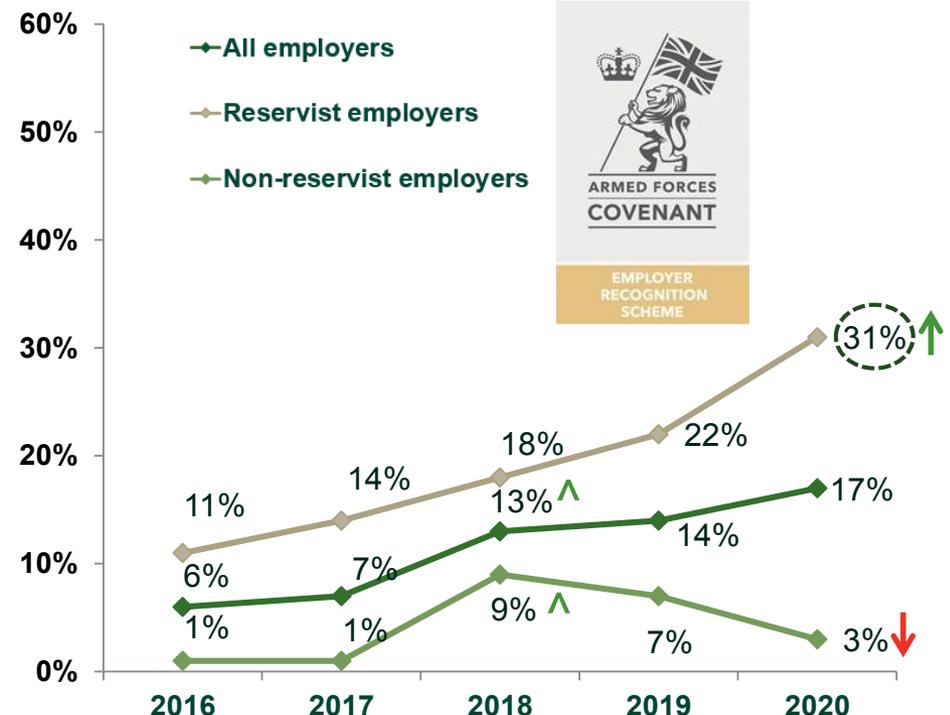
"C6 What are the main reasons behind not being interested in signing up to the AFC?" Base: Those not likely to sign up to AFC; 2020 (200), (2019 (233), 2018 (252), 2017 (308)

Awareness of the Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) award continues its steady upward trend amongst Reservist employers. There has been an increase in Reservist employers who received an award in 2020, compared to 2019, and a decrease for Non-Reservist employers

% Aware of Employer Recognition Scheme



% Received Employer Recognition award



"C7. Which best describes your business in relation to the ERS?" Base: All / Reservist employers / Non-Reservist employers; 2020 (1,000/500/500), 2019 (1,000/501/499), 2018 (1,021/486/535), 2017 (1,001/501/500), 2016 (1,000/500/500).

The proportion aware of both the AFC and ERS, as well as the likelihood to sign up for the AFC and work towards an ERS nomination was consistent across all regions



Region	% aware of the AFC	% Would sign up to the AFC	% Aware of ERS	% Work towards ERS nomination
North of England	48%	58%	35%	51%
North West England & IoM	53%	53%	33%	55%
Yorkshire and Humber	41%	57%	25%	48%
West Midlands	48%	48%	25%	51%
East Midlands	52%	63%	35%	58%
East Anglia	57%	54%	35%	48%
South East	53%	49%	38%	43%
Wessex	56%	58%	34%	61%
Greater London	48%	56%	31%	44%
Wales	54%	56%	42%	56%
Scotland – Highland	63%	79%	47%	59%
Scotland – Lowland	47%	56%	33%	45%
All employers	52%	55%	34%	51%

 Significantly better than average
 Significantly worse than average

C3, C7. Base: All; C5. Base; all organisations that have not signed the AFC. C9, Base: All organisations that have not received an ERS award. North of England (48/33/37), North West & IoM (156/117/132), Yorkshire and Humber (59/47/50), West Midlands (102/79/91), East Midlands (98/75/74), East Anglia (92/70/79), South East (118/83/96), Wessex (97/65/83), Greater London (100/81/84), Wales (57/39/45), Highland (30/19/22), Lowland (43/34/38).

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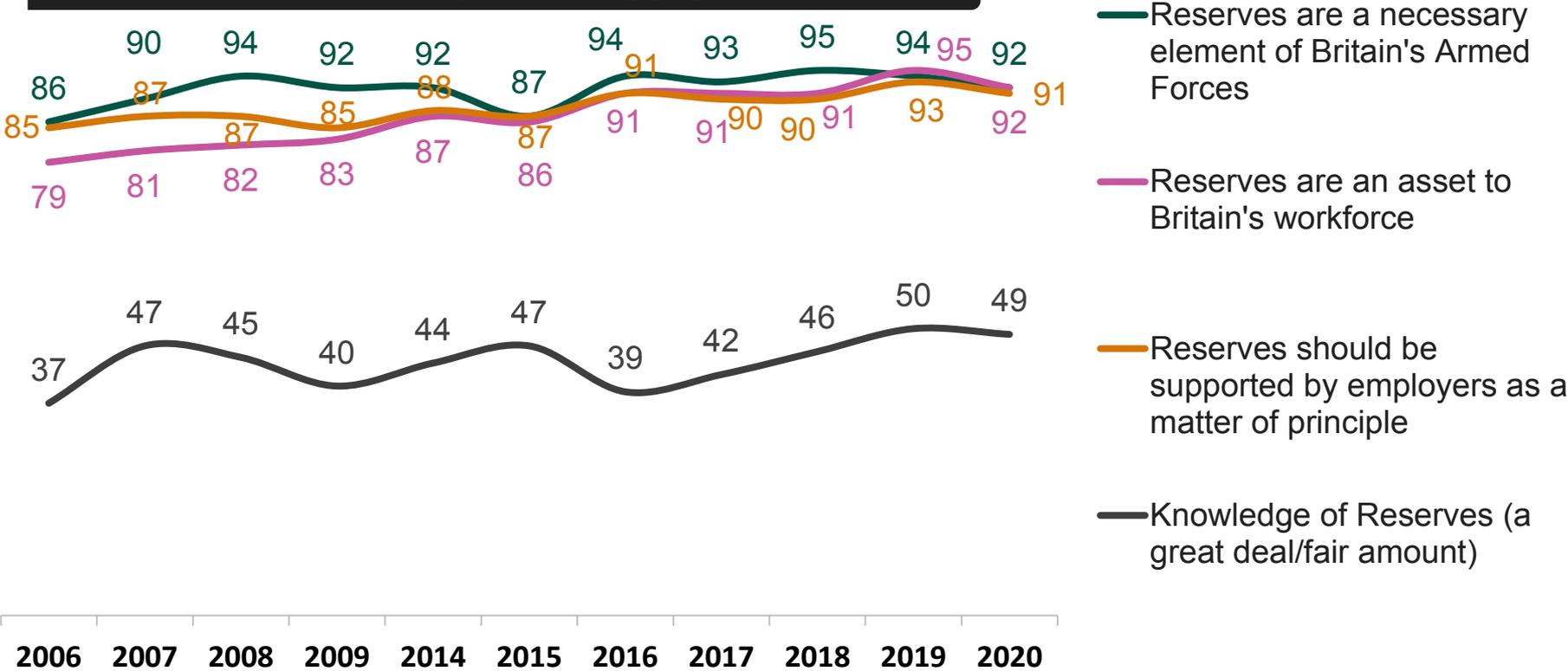
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The high level of positivity towards Reserves has stayed consistent

Attitudes towards and knowledge of Reserves among Reservist employers

Chart shows % Agree or Strongly agree or



“D5. Overall how much would you say you know about the Reserves?” “D6. I’m going to read a few statements that other people have made regarding the Reserves, for each please tell me whether you agree or disagree?” Base: Reservist employers (500)

Employers in North West were less likely to agree that Reserves should be supported by employers as a matter of principle

Regional differences in attitudes towards Reserves among Reservist employers



Region	Reserves are a necessary element of Britain's Armed Forces	Reserves are an asset to Britain's workforce	Reserves should be supported by employers as a matter of principle	Knowledge of Reserves
	% Agree or Strongly agree			% a great deal / a fair amount
North of England	93%	93%	90%	38%
North West England & IoM	90%	89%	86%	46%
Yorkshire and Humber	96%	96%	100%	46%
West Midlands	98%	95%	98%	53%
East Midlands	96%	98%	98%	54%
East Anglia	88%	88%	95%	42%
South East	93%	95%	95%	60%
Wessex	89%	89%	91%	51%
Greater London	90%	94%	96%	52%
Wales	97%	93%	93%	43%
Scotland – Highland	94%	94%	94%	56%
Scotland – Lowland	92%	88%	100%	46%
All Reservist employers	92%	92%	94%	49%

○ Significantly better than average ○ Significantly worse than average

D5/D6. Base: All; North of England (29), North West & IoM (87), Yorkshire and Humber (24), West Midlands (43), East Midlands (48), East Anglia (43), South East (55), Wessex (47), Greater London (50), Wales (30), Highland (18), Lowland (26) Please be cautious of low bases – treat as indicative only.

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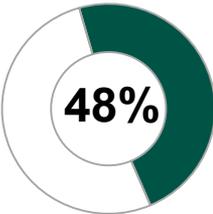
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Almost half of Reservist employers have a policy related to Reserves, continuing the increasing trend present over recent years



Of Reservist employers have a policy related to joining or being a member of the Reserves



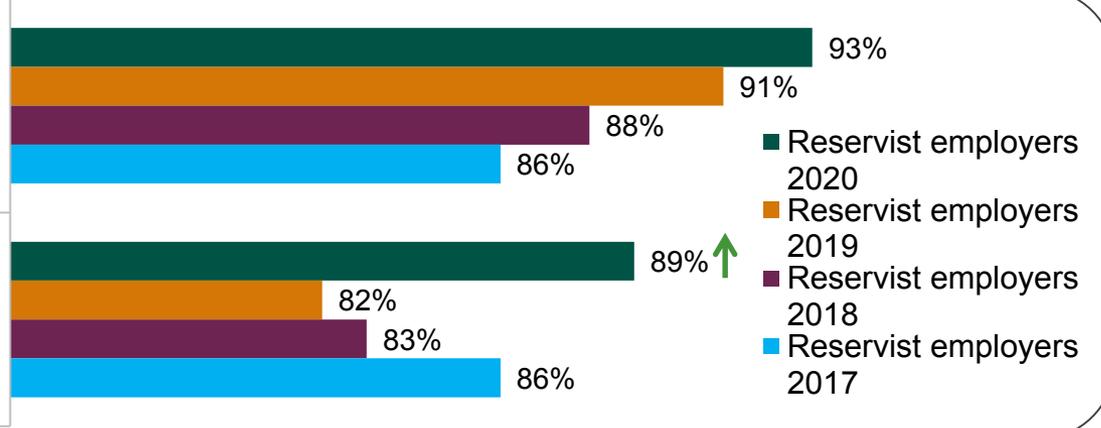
The predominant reason among Reservist employers for **not having a policy** remains that **they don't see the need for one (57%)**; other reasons include **not getting round to it, dealing with employees on an individual basis, being a small company and lack of interest from employees (all 4%)**

Significantly more than 2019 (42%) and 2018 (37%), continuing the upward trend

Of employers that have a policy, the policy...

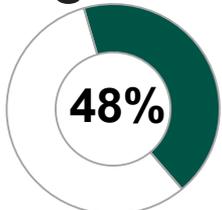
Allows Reservist employees additional leave to support training

Outlines the employer's support to Reservist employees in writing



"E11. Does the company or organisation you work for have any policies, written or otherwise, related to either joining or being a member of the Reserves?" Base: Reservist employers 2020 (500) "E12. Why does the company not have a policy?" Base: Reservist employers with no policy 2020 (227) "E14. Which one of the following most closely describes your company's policy towards reserves?" Base: Reservist employers with a policy 2020/2019/2018/2017 (242/211/179/180)

Employers that employ Reservists in Wales were more likely to have a Reserves policy, whereas employers in North West England were less likely



Of Reservist employers have a policy related to joining or being a member of the Reserves

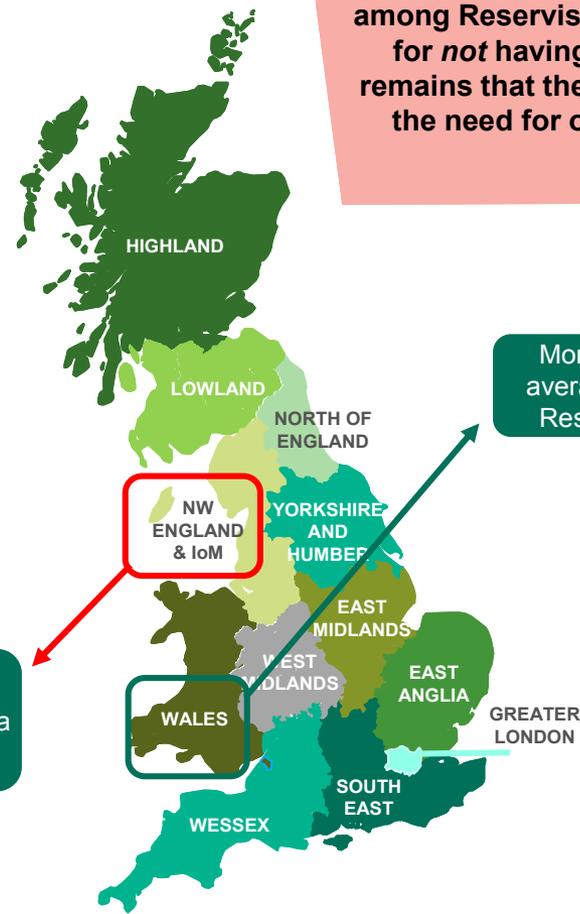


The predominant reason among Reservist employers for *not* having a policy remains that they don't see the need for one (66%)

Region	% Have policy
North of England	48%
North West England & IoM	37%
Yorkshire and Humber	46%
West Midlands	35%
East Midlands	42%
East Anglia	44%
South East	60%
Wessex	55%
Greater London	56%
Wales	67%
Scotland – Highland	72%
Scotland – Lowland	42%
Reservist employers	48%
All employers	33%

Less likely than average to have a Reserves policy

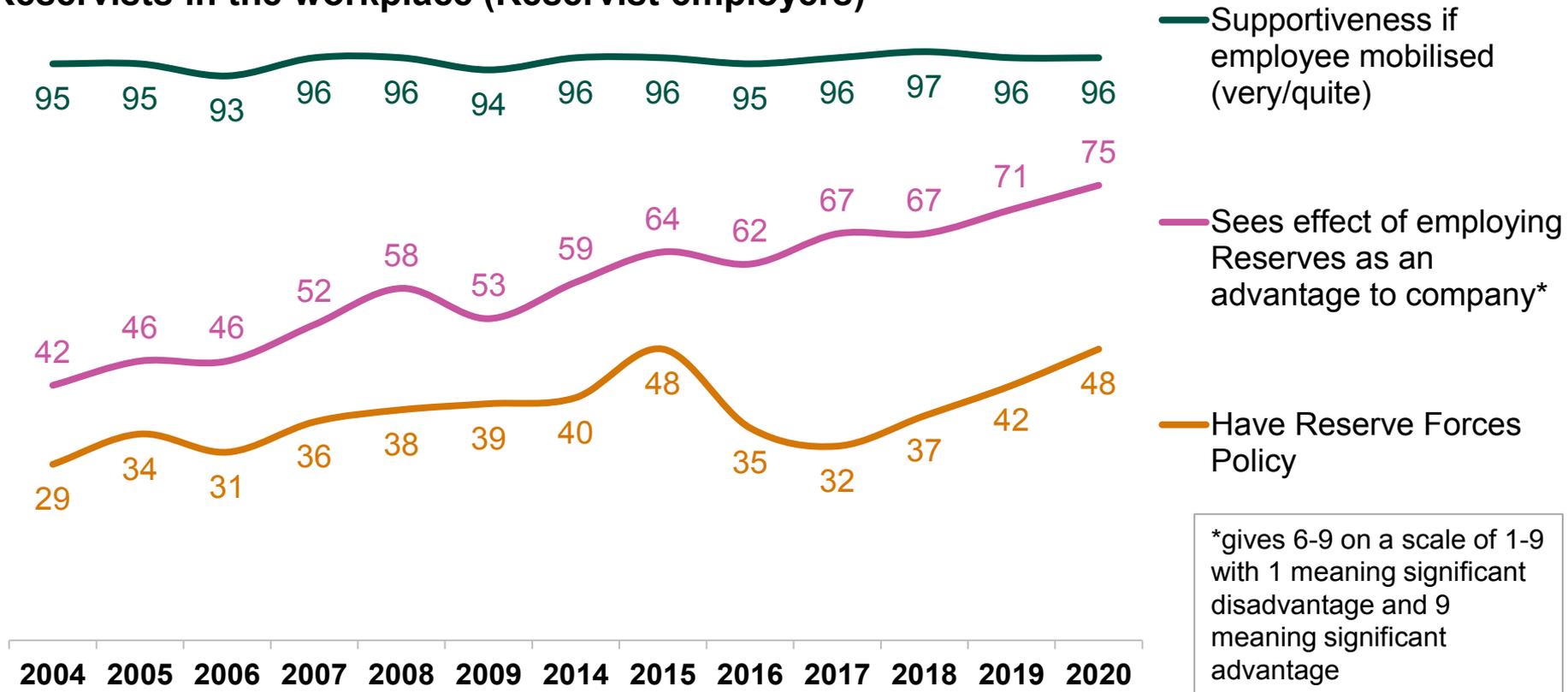
More likely than average to have a Reserves policy



E11. Base: Employers that employ Reserves; North of England (29), North West & IoM (87), Yorkshire and Humber (24), West Midlands (43), East Midlands (48), East Anglia (43), South East (55), Wessex (47), Greater London (50), Wales (30), Highland (18), Lowland (26) *Please be cautious of low bases – treat as indicative only.*) “E12. Why does the company not have a policy?” Base: All organisations that do not have a policy (587)

Supportiveness for Reservists has remains stable. Since 2017 the upward trend in the proportion of Reservist employers with a Reserves Forces policy and perception that employing Reserves is an advantage to a company continues

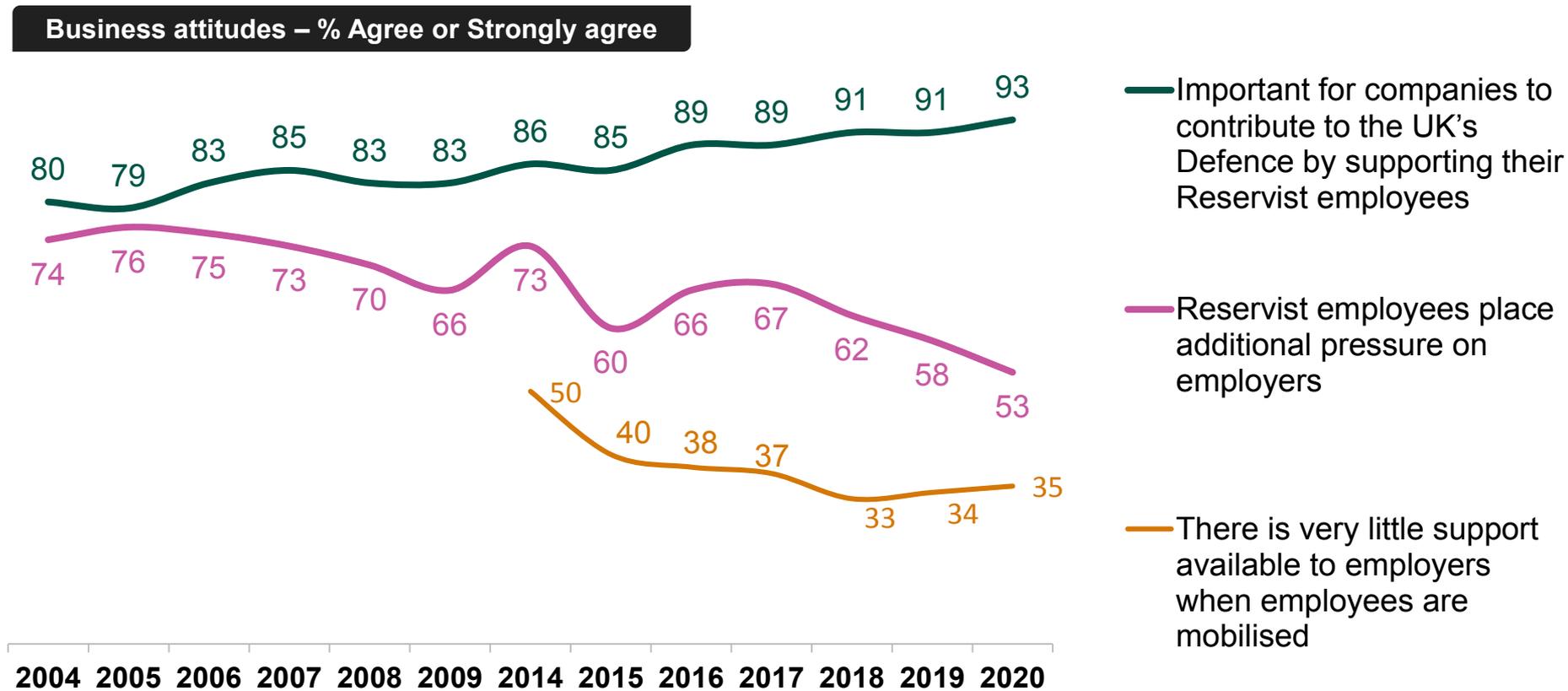
Reservists in the workplace (Reservist employers)



E16/E5/E11 Base: Reservist employers (500)

Views on Reservists have generally remained stable, though, positively, the perception that Reservists place an additional pressure on employers continues the downward trend since 2017

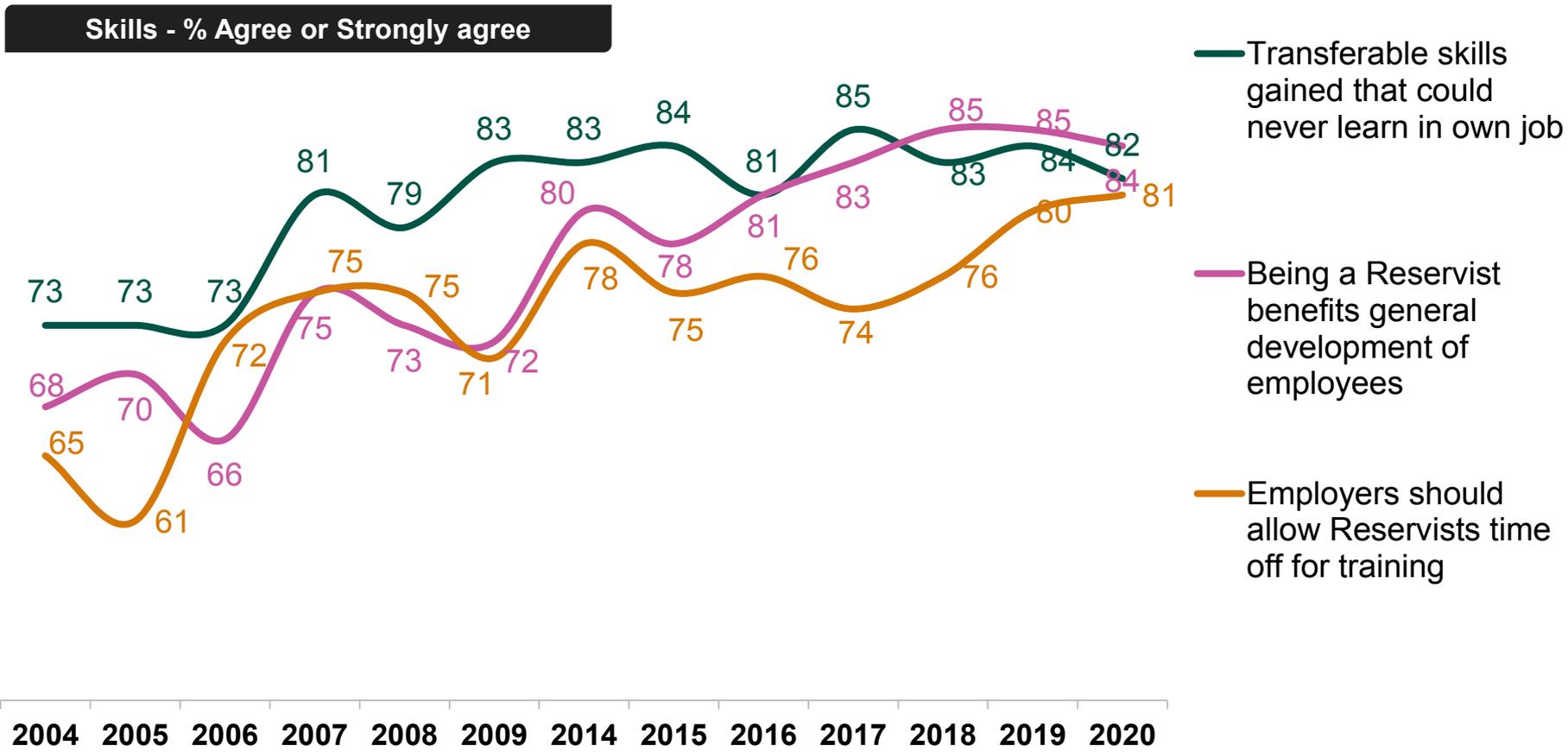
Attitudes towards Reservists in the workplace (Reservist employers)



“E17. I'm going to read a few statements that other employers have made regarding the effects of employing members of the Reserves in their business, for each please tell me whether you agree or disagree?” Base: Reservist employers (500)

Employers' attitudes towards Reservists' skills are in keeping with previous years

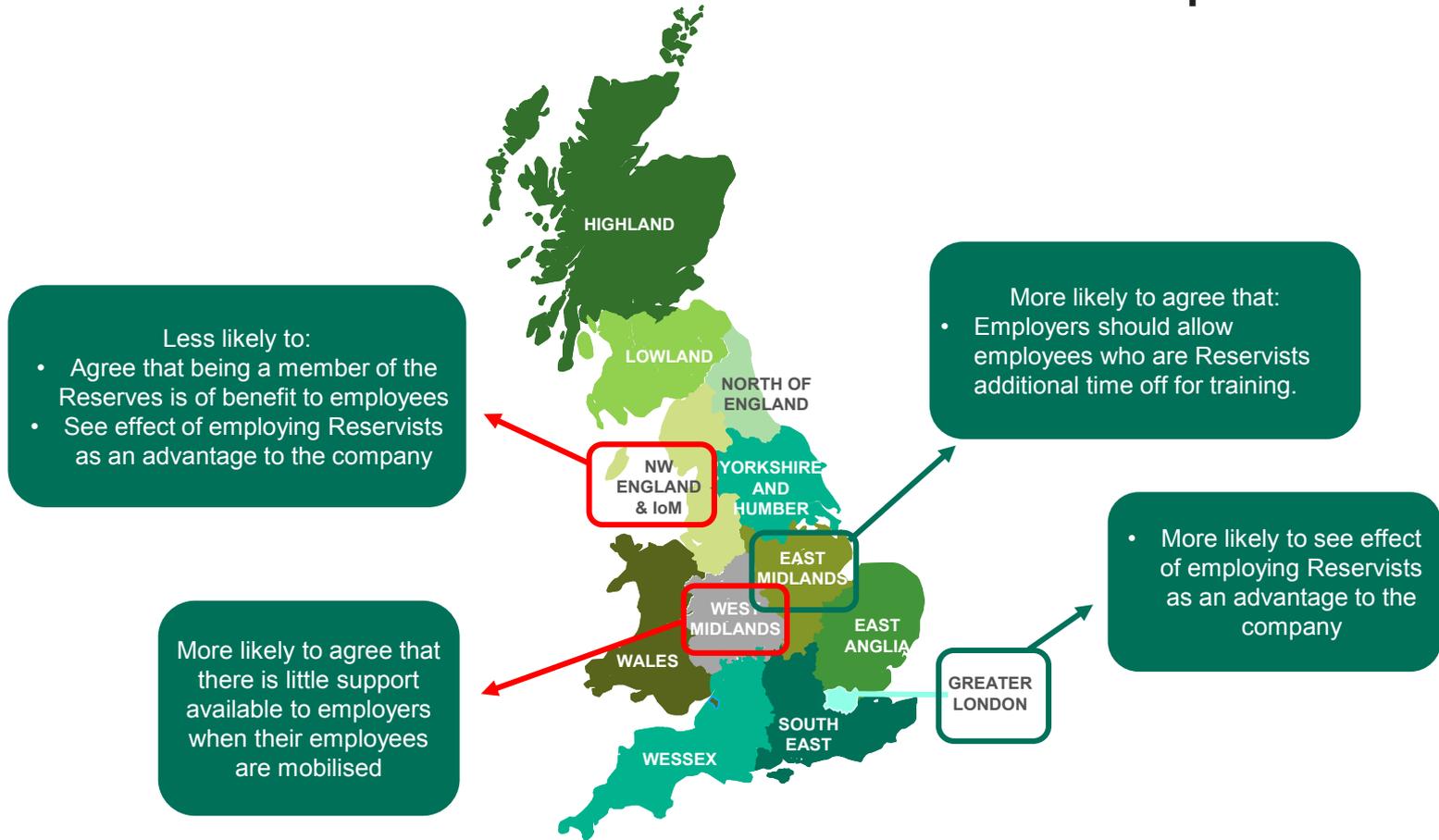
Attitudes towards Reservists in the workplace (Reservist employers)



"E17. I'm going to read a few statements that other employers have made regarding the effects of employing members of the Reserves in their business, for each please tell me whether you agree or disagree?" Base: Reservist employers (500)

Reservist employers in East Midlands and Greater London were more positive on certain measures regarding Reserves in the workplace

Regional differences in attitudes towards Reserves in the workplace



E16/E17. Base: All; Employers that employ Reserves; North of England (29), North West & IoM (87), Yorkshire and Humber (24), West Midlands (43), East Midlands (48), East Anglia (43), South East (55), Wessex (47), Greater London (50), Wales (30), Highland (18), Lowland (26) *Please be cautious of low bases – treat as indicative only.*

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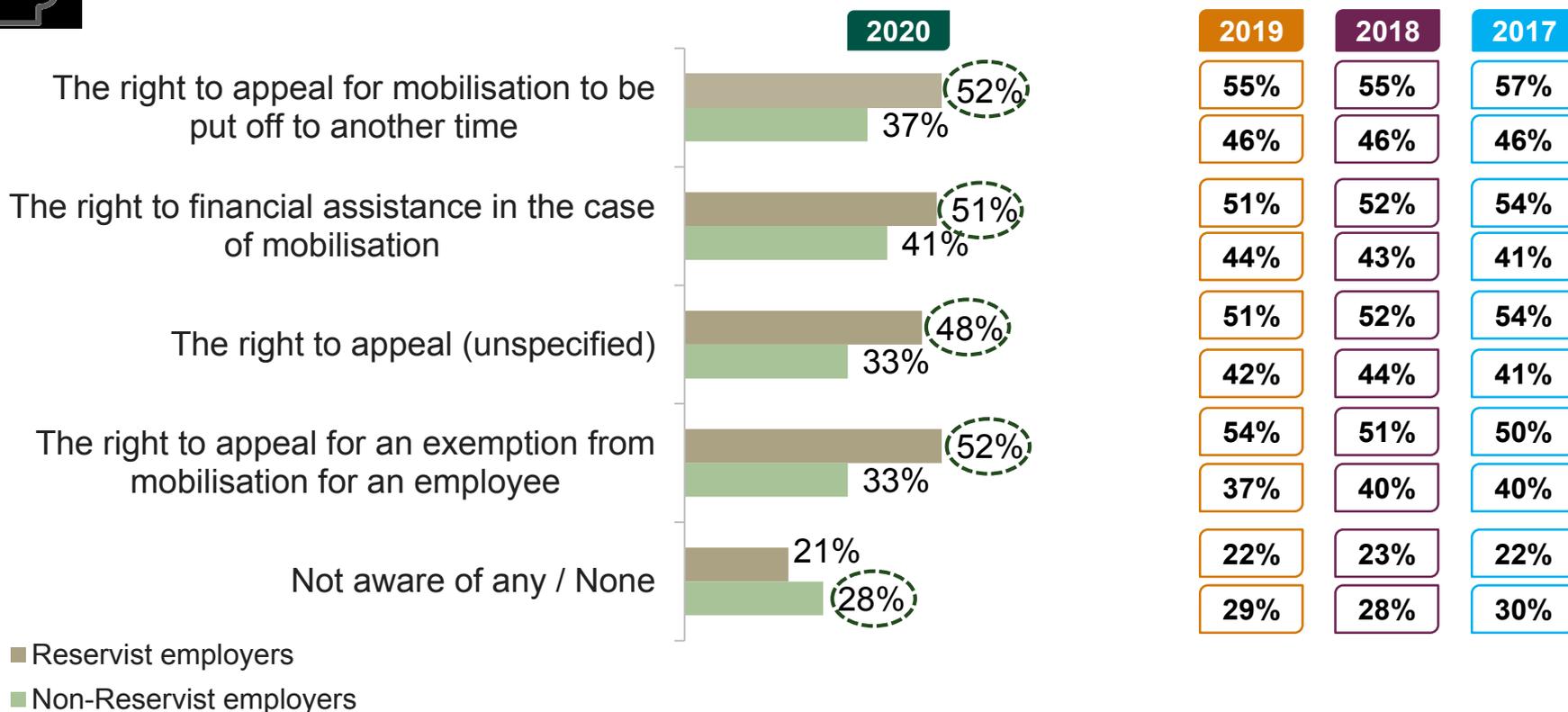
6. Awareness of employer rights

7. Key findings and recommendations

Reservist employers are significantly more likely than Non-Reservist employers to be aware of all of the rights and safeguards – consistent with 2019



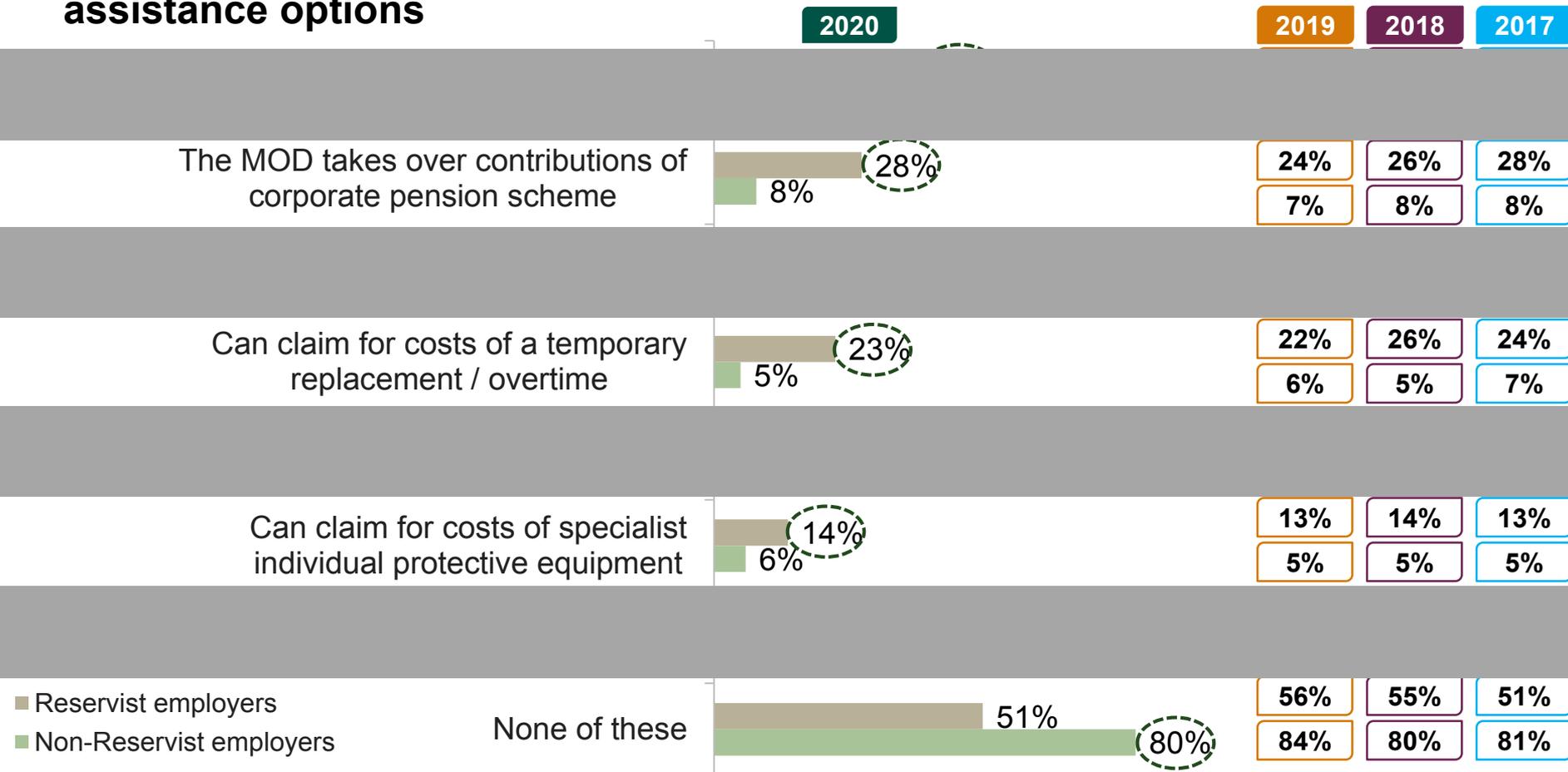
% of employers aware of rights and safeguards



"F1. Which of the following employer rights and safeguards do you think you have in relation to Reservists from your organisation being mobilised by the Armed Forces?"
 Base: All Reservist employers / Non-Reservist employers 2020 (500/500), 2019 (501/499), 2018 (486/535), 2017 (501/500).

Awareness of financial assistance options remains in line with previous years. Non-Reservist employers remain less likely to be aware of the options, with 8 in 10 not aware of any

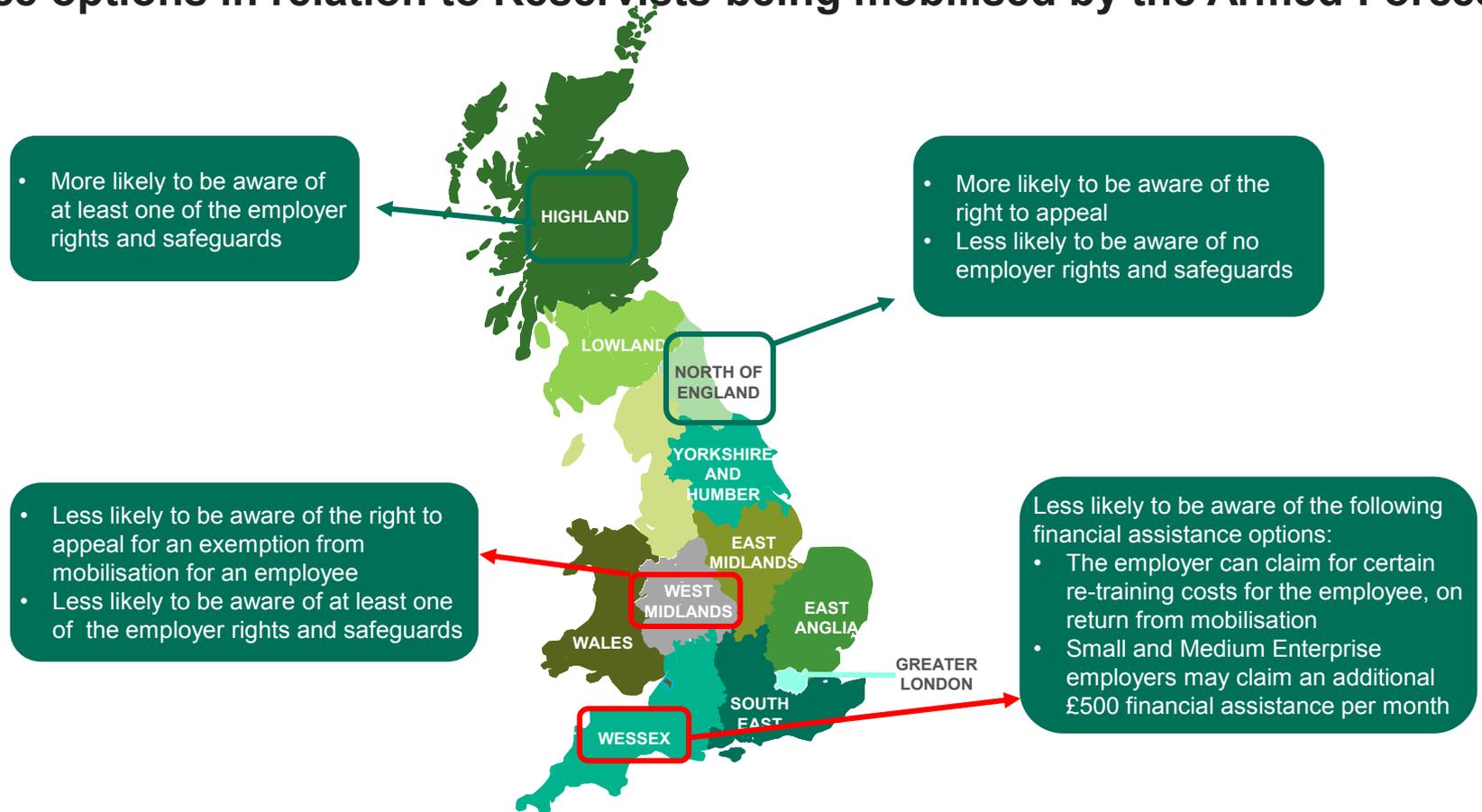
% of employers aware of each of the following financial assistance options



“F2. In the case of mobilisation of an employee, an employer can claim for financial assistance from the Ministry of Defence (MOD). Which of the following financial assistance options are you aware of?” Base: All Reservist employers / Non-Reservist employers 2020 (500/500), 2019 (501/499), 2018 (486/535), 2017 (501/500).

Employers in the West Midlands were less aware of rights and safeguards and Wessex were less aware of some financial assistance options

Regional differences in awareness of employer rights and safeguards and financial assistance options in relation to Reservists being mobilised by the Armed Forces



F1. Base: All; North of England (48), North West & IoM (156), Yorkshire and Humber (59), West Midlands (102), East Midlands (98), East Anglia (92), South East (118), Wessex (97), Greater London (100), Wales (57), Highland (30), Lowland (43) Please be cautious of low bases – treat as indicative only.

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Key findings

The majority of findings are consistent with 2019, with attitudes towards the Reserve Forces and Defence people remaining positive, and in some cases continuing positive trends from previous years. There have also been a handful of positive shifts for both Reservist and Non-Reservist employers

- Perception of Reserve Service as being disruptive to businesses has decreased since 2019 amongst Reservist employers, showing a positive direction of travel.
- Attitudes towards offering opportunities to Reserves and other service personnel has remained consistent with 2019. Positively, Non-Reservist employers showed an increase in knowledge of Reserves and that they would communicate publicly the benefits of employing Reservists. Views on Reservist skills and benefits they can bring to the business also remain positive.
- There has been an increase in supportiveness of Reserves if staff wanted to join the Reserves and if they were to be mobilized. Supportiveness remains high amongst Reservist employers.
- Awareness of the Armed Forces Covenant (AFC) has remained consistent, though perception that signing the AFC is of value to employers has increased amongst both Reservist and Non-Reservist employers. There has also been an increase in the proportion of Reservist employers, and employers as a whole, signing the AFC since 2019.
- Similarly, awareness of the Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) award has remained consistent, but there has been an increase in Reservist employers who have received an award since 2019. However, there has been a decrease in Non-Reservist employers receiving an award.
- Continuing the trend since 2017, the proportion of Reservist employers with a policy related to either joining or being a member of the Reserves has increased to almost half, from 42% in 2019 and 37% in 2018.