

# Royal Air Force



## Chief of the Air Staff's Diversity & Inclusion Directive

*'...Everyone, everywhere matters to us every day...'*

## **Chief of the Air Staff's Personal Statement**

Our Service ethos is sustained by strong leadership at all levels, high professional and personal standards, and a commitment to the well-being of all our people. As Chief of the Air Staff, it is my responsibility to make sure everybody can feel valued and included for who they are, what they bring to our organisation, and what they do to enhance the operational capability of the RAF. All our people, regular, reserve, civil servant or contractor, must have the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

Our work is often done in challenging and hazardous circumstances. Success in these circumstances can only be achieved by motivated, capable and self-disciplined people, inspired by exceptional leadership and line management at every level. By the very nature of the air and space environment, we must be pioneering in approach, pragmatic in delivery, courageous, fair and just.

A positive attitude to Diversity & Inclusion must be part of our normal business, a fundamental element of everything we do, every action and decision we take. This requires people in every part of our organisation to demonstrate moral courage and the highest personal standards of inclusive behaviour. I expect our leaders to be engaged, authentic and relentless in upholding the exemplary standards of conduct and behaviour that are the foundation of the RAF's reputation and operational success.

At a personal level:

- I will support, reward and raise awareness of positive role models across the RAF to inspire others and share their success.
- I will ensure the RAF is an employer of choice so we are able to attract, recruit and retain the most talented people from all backgrounds to create a truly inclusive workforce.
- I will ensure all RAF and Civil Service colleagues have the opportunity to complete mandatory Diversity & Inclusion training, and that people are recognised for making a tangible commitment to inclusion and our core values and standards in their workplaces.
- I will challenge and champion policies and Terms of Service to ensure the RAF is at the forefront of flexible and inclusive employment practices.

I am a passionate advocate for the energy, value and effectiveness a diverse and fully inclusive workforce brings to any organisation. I ask that you are too.

Air Chief Marshal Mike Wigston CBE ADC  
Chief of the Air Staff  
13 November, 2019

# Royal Air Force Diversity & Inclusion Directive

## Context

1. **Background.** The Royal Air Force has a well-earned reputation for excellence in delivering Air and Space Power, and a proud history of success. While capable aircraft, weapons and support elements are fundamental to that reputation and success, it is our people who ultimately make the difference and give the Royal Air Force its competitive edge. Going forward, we must ensure we are able to recruit, promote and retain the widest pool of talent, and harness everybody's full potential. With a richly diverse and inclusive workforce, we will be a better, stronger and more resilient Service. We must ensure that everyone, everywhere matters to us every day.
2. **Diversity.** We must increase our diversity across all minority groups including race, religion and beliefs, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, socio-economic representation and neuro-diversity. Greater diversity will enrich our understanding and broaden our insight. It will help us make better decisions and act more effectively as a Service. Diversity is a critical component of our operational effectiveness.
3. **Inclusion.** A diverse workforce in itself is not enough; it must be fully inclusive to harness the full potential of everybody across the RAF Whole Force. It requires people in every part of our organisation to demonstrate the highest personal standards of inclusive behaviour. Our workforce must all feel included, able to achieve their full potential and able to contribute to our success, irrespective of who they are or where they came from.

## Defence Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

4. **Defence Goals.** The Defence Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, *A Force for Inclusion*, has three strategic goals:
  - a. **Strategic Goal 1:** To be an inclusive employer where all staff can fulfil their potential and feel confident that their unique perspectives and talents will be valued.
  - b. **Strategic Goal 2:** To be an organisation that, at all levels, appropriately represents UK society.
  - c. **Strategic Goal 3:** To be recognised as a force for inclusion in wider society.
5. **Priority Areas.** The Strategic Goals are complemented by Priority Areas to address under-representation:
  - a. **Priority Area 1:** Mainstreaming D&I within the Defence Operating Model.
  - b. **Priority Area 2:** Mainstreaming D&I in Defence culture and behaviours.
  - c. **Priority Area 3:** D&I Policies and Guidance.
  - d. **Priority Area 4:** Outreach.

## RAF Diversity & Inclusion

6. **Vision.** The RAF will become a richly diverse and inclusive organisation, recognised as such by MOD, Government, specialist bodies and the public. The RAF will be an employer of choice for all, able to attract, recruit, promote and retain the most talented people from any background to create a truly inclusive workforce. The RAF will be enhanced by the energy, value and operational effectiveness of a richly diverse and inclusive workforce, harnessing everyone's full potential.

7. **CAS' Intent.** My intent is to make sure everybody can feel valued and included for who they are, what they bring to our organisation, and what they do to enhance the operational capability of the RAF. This Directive demands RAF leaders and commanders to be engaged, authentic and relentless champions of D&I, upholding the exemplary standards of conduct and behaviour that are the foundation of our reputation and our operational success. This must be matched by people at every level demonstrating the moral courage to make a difference and the highest personal standards of inclusive behaviour. Our inclusive culture and behaviours will be bolstered by an ambitious D&I policy framework, overseen directly by the Air Force Main Board. We will take every opportunity through internal and external communications to raise awareness, celebrate and reward positive role models across the RAF to inspire others and share their success.

8. **Approach.** Everyone is responsible and accountable for D&I but will be supported by the RAF D&I Organisation shown at Annex A for oversight and governance. We will deliver this intent through clear leadership, strong governance, a rich, wide and active advocacy network, high profile event participation, country-wide presence, bench-marking against key institutions and criteria, good practice, and five D&I Themes. These Themes, which map against the strategic goals and priority areas, will guide activity and are deliberately accessible, adaptable and relatable to all irrespective of rank, grade, experience or responsibility. Collectively this framework will help drive supporting training, development and cultural awareness events. these themes are:

- a. Inclusive Culture.
- b. Diverse Workforce.
- c. Greater Openness.
- d. Shared Responsibility.
- e. Everyday Behaviour.

9. **Tasks.** To deliver these effects, the following tasks apply:

- a. **DCom Cap/AMP&C.** As the Whole Force D&I Champion, DCom Cap is to:
  - (1) Ensure delivery of this Directive;
  - (2) Hold stakeholders to account for delivery of this Directive;
  - (3) Chair the D&I Steering Group and appoint D&I Advocates;
  - (4) Role model inclusive behaviour and leadership; &
  - (5) Project this approach both internally and externally.

- b. **RAF Senior Leadership Team (SLT).** All members of the RAF SLT will:
- (1) Support mainstreaming of D&I;
  - (2) Be visible and vocal role models for Inclusivity; &
  - (3) Publish personal D&I statements and action plans.
- c. **COS Pers.** COS Pers is to:
- (1) Establish an RAF D&I Team;
  - (2) Conduct regular assessments of our people's lived experiences;
  - (3) Benchmark our policies, practices and processes against others; &
  - (4) Exceed MOD recruiting Diversity targets.
- d. **AOC 22 Gp.** AOC 22 Gp is to:
- (1) Train diverse recruits in an inclusive environment;
  - (2) Deliver challenging through-career D&I interventions and CPD; &
  - (3) Support the leadership in D&I complaints handling and soft skills.
- e. **DRes.** DRes will:
- (1) Establish a Civil Service D&I team alongside COS Pers;
  - (2) Support delivery of Whole Force and Civil Service D&I initiatives and activities;
  - (3) Champion the D&I programme for civil servants in the Air TLB; &
  - (4) Ensure Air recruits a diverse Civil Service workforce and exceeds MoD targets.
- f. **ACAS.** ACAS through ACOS M&C is to deliver support to internal and external engagement to showcase our organisation as a diverse and inclusive employer of choice, aiding both recruitment and retention.
- g. **Advocates & Networks.** Advocates and Networks are to provide advocacy, peer support, advice and both internal and, particularly, external engagement in support of under-represented groups and opportunities to progress the RAF D&I agenda.
- h. **Commanding Officers & Heads of Establishments.** Commanding Officers and Heads of Establishment are to:
- (1) Provide visible and inspiring D&I leadership;

- (2) Publish personal D&I statements and action plans;
- (3) Contribute to the Service ambition through activity and ideas; &
- (4) Be a role model for ethos, values and standards.

10. **Governance.** RAF D&I will be delivered through the following governance:

- a. **AFMB People and D&I Committee.** Strategic oversight and direction will be achieved through the AFMB People and D&I Committee. This will be chaired by an AFMB NED and attended by AMP&C, COS Pers and DRes.
- b. **D&I Steering Group.** The D&I Steering Group will be chaired by DCom Cap/AMP&C, attended by the advocates, COS Pers, AOC 22 Gp, Hd CW, ACOS Pers Pol, CASWO and the networks where feasible. It will oversee policy developments, this Directive, delivery, events and opportunities. It will sit bi-annually and report to the AFMB People and D&I Committee.
- c. **D&I Working Group.** The D&I Working Group will be chaired by ACOS Pers Pol, attended by the advocates and networks and others as required. It will sit quarterly and report its findings to the D&I Steering Group
- d. **Advocates and Networks.** The D&I Advocates will champion their areas, encourage mainstreaming of D&I across all areas of business, help improve the lived experience of personnel especially those underrepresented, raise awareness and understanding of protected characteristics and how they intersect and provide senior leadership support to events. Advocates will liaise with the HQ Air D&I Team to help inform organisational policies and delivery, as well as challenge behaviours and practices at all rank/grade levels to mainstream a positive inclusive culture.

## **Maturity**

11. **Mainstreaming.** While the importance of having an increasingly diverse workforce continues to be acknowledged and pursued, our focus is on the value of inclusion to ensure we maximise participation, talent and the value of all employees. Embedding inclusion, appropriate challenge and good behaviours at all levels is key and personnel will therefore no longer be able to consider D&I activities and responsibilities the sole preserve of specialist staff, HR managers or Equality, D&I Practitioners and Advisers. We must move beyond engagement with D&I activity being limited to completion of mandatory training: positive D&I actions and everyday behaviour need to be viewed as a core attribute for all.

12. **Assessment.** Monitoring our progress will be the responsibility of the HQ Air D&I team who will report annually to the D&I Steering Group. Progress will be set against but not limited to the following key areas:

- a. Senior Leadership
- b. Climate
- c. Policy
- d. Advocacy & Networks
- e. Complaints & Grievances

- f. Talent
- g. Training
- h. CPD
- i. Units
- j. Engagement
- k. Benchmarking & Awards

### **Co-ordinating Instructions**

13. **Validity.** This Directive is effective immediately. All should draw upon this Directive to inform and guide respective and cascading orders as appropriate.

14. **Revision.** This Directive will be reviewed and reissued annually.

### **CAS**

Annex:

A. Royal Air Force Diversity and Inclusion Organisation.

**ROYAL AIR FORCE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ORGANISATION**

