

Annual General Meeting

Thursday 7th May 2009

Union Jack Club, Sandell Street, Waterloo, London
(Opposite East Side of Waterloo Main Railway Station)

1300 hrs for 1330 hrs

AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of last meeting
3. Membership Report
4. Treasurers Report
5. Secretary General's Report (See also Web-site)
6. Election of Officers
7. Annual Subscriptions
8. The Researched Report (MPs Questions & Answers)
9. Lobbyists and Legal Issues
10. Application to the Pensions Ombudsman
11. Intellectual Property Office
12. MOD Letters in reply
13. General Election and Economy
14. AFPG and The Way Ahead
15. Any other business

Light refreshments at 1300 and 1500 hrs.

The Combined Armed Forces Federation UK
Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held
In the Lawrence Rooms of the Union Jack Club
Waterloo, Thursday May 7th 2009

Present

David Robson	Chairman/Secretary General
Michael Kennedy	Treasurer
David Everiss	Co/opted
Peter Holden	Co/opted
Geoff Meanwell	Co/opted
David Walton	Member
Peter Hargreaves	Member

1. Apologies

Frank Rixon B.E.M. Membership Secretary

Silence

The Chairman led the meeting in one minutes silence in remembrance of colleague and those who have fallen in defence of our Nation.
Closed by the Treasurer.

2. Minutes of Last Meeting

Issues Arising

Catch Up Provisions 2 b (1)

Michael Kennedy was unable to find any references to 'Catch Up Provisions' in his research in "The Times".

The Pensions Rule Book 2 b (2) & Human Rights

This issue, reference to access only one Occupational Pension Scheme at any one time will be taken up with the Pensions Ombudsman should it become necessary.

Future Strategy 2 d (3)

We are presently awaiting the reply to my letter to Mr John Thurso MP dated January 22nd 2009 available for viewing on our Web-site. (See Secretary General's Report April 2009) This letter sets out the Parliamentary Duty and the Statutory Duty the Government has to pay us our Occupational Pensions and Gratuities in Law. The response from the Under Secretary of State Mr K. Jones MP is now long overdue since January 9th 2009. A recent letter to Mr John Thurso MP has been sent to register our concern over this delay.

Publicity 2 d (4)

Over the last twelve months we have had a two page spread regarding our cause set out in The Daily Mail Newspaper in support. This Newspaper has also provided us with a very generous donation towards the costs of producing our Research Report for which we owe them a considerable debt of gratitude.

In the meantime, besides advertising our cause as widely as possible in your local press and media Members can do no better than writing to their Members of Parliament in accordance with my Report on the Web-site and requesting them to answer the questions at the end. There are many Members of Parliament in support so keep on reminding them we haven't gone away!

Overseas Officer 2 e

Following his appointment last year Eddy Ely was unable, due to health and associated family difficulties, to attend this years AGM. We hope to receive some overseas news from him now in the near future.

Copyright Protection 6 b

A hearing will take place with the Intellectual Property Office on Thursday July 9th to decide whether we are going to be given Copyright Protection for our Trade Mark and Logo.

Human Rights 6 c

The High Court has very recently decided members of the Armed Forces are entitled to Human Rights protection in spite of opposition by the Government and MOD would you believe! The Government values the contribution made by the Armed Forces but not enough for them to have basic 'Human Rights' it would appear!

The issues raised at last years AGM, reference the inability to belong to an alternative Pension Scheme during service, and also being denied the opportunity to qualify for a full service pension after many years of service, will also be put before the Pensions Ombudsman should it become necessary.

3. Membership Report

May I first apologise for not attending the AGM due to the fact I am now registered Disabled and clambering up and down trains and stairs causes me problems.

The number of new members from 12th May 2008 to 1st May 2009 was 33.

The Secretary General was sent several letters containing necessary information as regards Queries, Change of Addresses, Change of E-Mails and Nominal Roll Changes.

Number of letters to Hon. Treasurer 32.

A total of 225 letters were sent out during this period covering not only the U.K. but several overseas countries such as Hungary, Australia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Spain and Gibraltar etc. mainly for answers to membership request to join.

There were numerous phone calls to me and E-Mails seeking information etc.

Having a look at our Web Site I think some items can be brought up to date possibly.

I think it is time we considered if it is worth while trying to recruit present serving members of all services which was one of the objects of forming the Federation.

I am prepared to continue as Membership Secretary if so selected.

My regards to the Officers and Members attending.

1st May 2009

Frank Rixon B.E.M.

4. Treasurer's Report

**FROM THE DESK OF THE HON TREASURER
THE COMBINED ARMED FORCES FEDERATION UK
7 WHITEHOUSE ROAD RUSKINGTON
SLEAFORD LINCOLNSHIRE NG34 9TP**

Date 7th. May 2009.

Dear Members

ANNUAL REPORT

1. I was appointed Treasurer of your Federation at the AGM on the 6th June 06, and now have pleasure in presenting this my third Treasurers report.
2. The process of maintaining the accounts has been continued with our Main Current Account and High Interest Reserve Account retained with the Alliance and Leicester Bank. These are Postal and Telephone Accounts for Corporate Bodies and Clubs such as our Federation and are very suitable for our purposes. During the year we also activated our dormant account with a deposit of £100, for the sole purpose of depositing subscriptions from serving members of HM Forces who wish to join the Federation. This follows our constitution where such funds are to be held separate.
3. Maintenance of the Federations Membership is held on Computer. A monthly system for membership renewal and reminders is operated by the Treasurer as well as receiving New Member Applications on a regular basis from the Membership Secretary Mr Frank Rixon. Bank Statements from the Alliance and

Leicester are also received via the Secretary General. These are also reconciled monthly via our computerised data base and amended with amounts received and when due.

4. Correspondence with members who move, change accounts or query payments are also undertaken at regular intervals.
5. The Federations membership is almost 1000. Two thirds of members prefer to pay by Annual Cheque, the rest by Standing Order as advised.
6. Accounts for payment are also received and prepared for payment before sending to the Secretary General for authorisation second signature before settlement. A computerised debit Data base is also maintained of all cheques written and checked by our independent accountant in preparation for the accounts
7. Accounts for the Year Ending 31st March 2009 and Management Notes to the Accounts Process are supplied and should be read in conjunction with this report. Members requiring further copies of the accounts should contact the treasurer quoting their membership number and address.
8. During the year I obtained literature of other higher interest bearing accounts now that generally rates have fallen. These were left aside to be discussed at the AGM 09.

MICHAEL KENNEDY

Date 7th. May 2009

Position Hon Treasurer Caff UK

Postscript: It was unanimously agreed that the Treasurer proceed in accordance with the literature presented regarding Higher Interest Business Savings Accounts in respect of the Federations Funds.

5. Secretary General's Report

Once again many thanks to our Membership for your financial support over the last year. We now have a healthy 'Fighting Fund' but we need to keep it that way if we are to continue to press home our claim for the Occupational Pensions and Gratuities we are legally entitled to.

Despite the 'Credit Crunch' we are streets ahead of greedy, irresponsible, 'Bankers' and their outrageous claims for Pensions at the expense of British tax payers! Other than 'Savings Deposits', exactly why they were not forced out of business is a question that remains to be answered?! Why should taxpayers now be required to bail them out, is another question that needs to be answered? There are plenty of Banks that did not behave irresponsibly which could have taken over their accounting commitments.

Our 'Researched Report' was distributed to every MP in October 2008 as planned as well as Defence Spokespersons in the House of Lords. Copies were also sent to the National Broadsheet Newspapers. And National Television Companies.

The Report has been well received by many MPs and some have written in support to the Rt. Hon. John Hutton MP, Secretary of State for Defence. The Daily Mail Newspaper has also made a very generous contribution towards the Research, Publication and Distribution costs.

There are 'Key Questions' John Thurso MP put to the Ministry of Defence on our behalf in January this year which are still awaiting replies. These questions need to be answered prior to placing our claims before the Pensions Ombudsman. Members are requested to write to their MPs, yet again and preferably typed, requesting them to refer to my Report on the Web-site www.caffuk.org.uk and answer the questions at the end! Members are also requested to visit our Web-site at their local library if you are not on the Internet. It would also be appreciated if Members would send me copies of any replies received.

We have a legal claim on our Pensions and Gratuities (Together with back payments and interest!) and but for this Governments resistance to their Parliamentary and Statutory Duties there should be no requirement or necessity to involve the Pensions Ombudsman anyway.

In my Report on the Web-site you will see I have also called into question the rulings in Hudson & Others V MOD & Treasury which I regard are 'Unsafe' and should be set aside. Whether the AFPG will apply for it to be set aside remains to be seen. They could recoup much of their costs.

So our claims against this Government are not over by any means and our challenge will continue. We are not going away, we are here to stay, and we will continue with it for as long as it takes!

David Robson
Secretary General - May 2009

6. Election of Officers

Membership Secretary

It was Proposed by David Everiss, Seconded by Peter Hargreaves and carried unanimously that Frank Rixon BEM be re-elected as Membership Secretary.

Treasurer

Proposed by Peter Holden, Seconded by Daniel Walton that Michael Kennedy be Re-elected as Treasurer and carried unanimously.

Secretary General

Proposed by Michael Kennedy, Seconded by Peter Holden David Robson be Re-elected Secretary General and carried unanimously.

Chairman

The position of Chairman was vacant since Chris Watkin had tendered his Resignation due to ill health. However he has subsequently offered to provide the services of Chairman in an Administrative capacity.

Proposed by Michael Kennedy, Seconded by David Robson and carried unanimously that Chris Watkin be appointed Chairman in an Administrative capacity.

7. Annual Subscriptions

Proposed by Peter Holden, Seconded by David Walton and carried, Annual Subscriptions should remain the same at £2 per month.

8. Researched Report

See last years issues arising and Future Strategy 2 d (3) above. Also Secretary General's Report on the Web-site for April 2009.

The Researched Report with Addendums was published last October and sent as planned to every MP, Defence Spokespersons in the House of Lords, The National Newspapers and Television Companies. Copies were also sent to the Chief of the General Defence Staff and the Vice Chancellor of The University of Winchester.

The Report has been generally well received with several MPs writing to the Minister of Defence on our behalf in support. See also Publicity 2 d (4) above. Much of the Secretary General's time over the months since October 2008 has been spent thanking MPs for their support and keeping them up to date with progress. This has been a very time consuming process.

Members are requested to refer their MP's to the Secretary General's letters to John Thurso MP and Ian Cawsey MP, in his Report for April 2009, on our web-site – www.caffuk.org.uk and request their MPs to respond to the questions detailed at the end. The Secretary General will be grateful to receive copies of Replies from their MPs.

9. Lobbyists and Legal Issues

After a delay of 5 months now we are still awaiting a reply from the Under Secretary of State for Defence Mr K Jones MP with reference to my questions set out in the letter to John Thurso MP! In a recent reply from John Thurso MP we can now expect a substansive reply in the near future?

Subsequently we intend to place all the issues regarding the failure of this Government to pay our legal entitlements to Occupational Pensions and Gratuities, Pro Rata, for time served in the Armed Forces prior to 1975 in the hands of the Pensions Ombudsman.

We shall consider placing the reply from the Under Secretary of State on our web-site with a view to lobbying MPs in accordance with its findings and our responses.

10. Application to the Pensions Ombudsman

Prior to any application the Ombudsman requires copies of correspondence with the MOD as above in 9. Hence the delay at present until we receive the MOD reply. You may be aware that Mr J Hutton MP has resigned with immediate effect as Minister of Defence making him the sixth Government Defence Minister to do so in as many years! What a way to run a Ministry of Defence and what a way to run a country?

11. Intellectual Property Office

A hearing will take place with the IPO on July 9th 2009 to determine whether they will provide copyright protection for our Trade Mark and Logo. The result will be published on our web-site as soon as we have it.

12. MOD letters in reply

See 10 above

13. General Election and Economy

By this time next year a new administration will be in place following a General Election. We can only hope it will not be back to the Mark 1 philosophy of 'Privilege and Monopoly?'

14. A.F.P.G. and the Way Ahead

The Armed Forces Pension Group is forging ahead with its own strategy of pursuing our pensions claims and we will be interested to pass on any news of success that is forth coming?

Progress on the part of CAFF UK's attempts rest entirely for the present on the reply from the MOD to the questions raised in the letter to John Thurso MP and subsequent submission to the Pensions Ombudsman.

15. Any Other Business

The Chairman suggested we might consider the possibility of sponsoring Prospective Parliamentary Candidates as Independent Candidates for the Armed Forces especially in garrison constituencies. The reason being very few MPs at present have served on regular engagements in the Armed Forces, and the average

MP has no idea or understanding of the demands servicemen and women are placed under. After some discussion it was concluded it was unlikely sufficient support would be forthcoming even in garrison towns and cities such as Gosport, Fareham and Portsmouth.

However since the AGM and the breaking of the Parliamentary Expenses scandal, and from a protest point of view, the situation may well be different, especially in the Gosport constituency where Sir Peter Viggers MP helped himself to £20,000 of taxpayers' money for personal property development!?

Something that was not discussed at the AGM and was overlooked is the following. General Sir Michael Jackson, Chief of the General Staff said in his Dimbleby Lecture that the Armed Forces were undervalued and underfunded and that the covenant with the British people had been broken. With this in mind the Secretary General wrote to the Chief Executive of the British Lawn Tennis Association earlier in the year regarding the presence of uniformed members of the Armed Forces during the Wimbledon Fortnight acting as usherettes and sentries.

In view of the outrageous prize money afforded to these tennis players, I wrote the Chief Executive, and asked if the Armed Forces participating, were re-imbursed financially for their services and whether the B.L.T.A. would be prepared to consider reserving a dozen front row complimentary seats in the Centre and No. 1 Courts for past and present members of the Armed Forces during the Wimbledon fortnight?

I think past and present members of the Armed Forces will be interested to know That I never received any acknowledgement or reply from the B.L.T.A. Chief Executive in spite of all the money they get from television rights from the B.B.C. Etc!!

According to the MOD, servicemen and women are not allowed to be paid for Second jobs but the B.L.T.A. does provide them with subsistence!

Next Years AGM

Provisional dates of May 13th or June 10th 2010 were considered. Final details will be announced on our web-site nearer the time.