

The Retirement Management Agency



By Sustainer

Apparently, it has been found necessary to form a body to regulate retired officers. This is in order to ensure that they each conform to the latest European legislation. However, we are fortunate that 'Sustainer' is so well connected in the MoD that he is able to alert readers of 'The Officer' to the impending new regulations. Remember you read it here first.

It has come to the attention of 'Brussels' that there are significant numbers of retired British officers (ROs) who are not conducting their retirement in a manner that is acceptable to the European Commissioners. Accordingly, a brief directive of 1597 pages is to be issued just as soon as Brazil releases a couple of hundred acres of rain forest to expedite the vital printing and promulgation process.

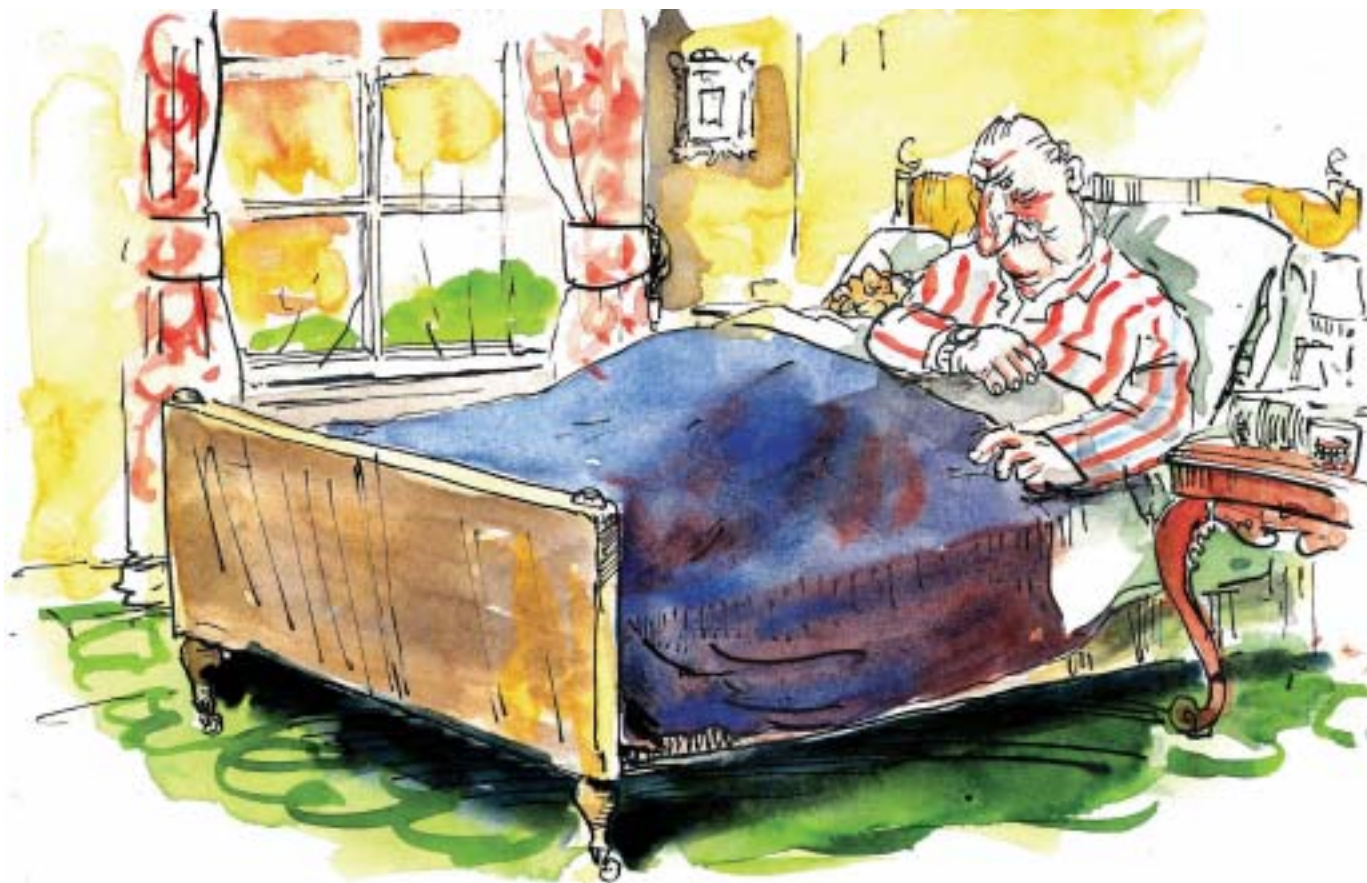
I've had a sneak preview of the 19th draft paper and can tell you that it is far-reaching, overarching, focussed and ongoing. This will be a great comfort to those readers who are sceptical of 'Brussels' and who, until now, have doubted the EU's capacity to organise, effectively, a small

social event on licensed premises.

Not the least of the recommendations in this 19th draft is that *'The Retirement Management Agency'* (RMA) be formed to enforce the new regime.

There may be those who associate the initials RMA with a place just off the A30 and not too far from the 'Crown & Cushion'. Well, you'd better believe that times they are a-changing. The place off the A30 will be adjusting its curriculum to embrace this new thinking in order to prepare the 20 year-old officer cadets for their impending retirement that lays not too far ahead.

Predictably, HMG expects to reap another 'Peace Dividend' following the



cessation of major hostilities in the Gulf. The conclusions of a 'Defence Review' have been decided and pretty soon now some rationale will be cobbled together to support these perceptive conclusions. The 'Defence Review' is to be followed by swingeing cuts, particularly in armour. The forward thinkers have already decided that there will be no need for tanks in any future war, conflict, dustup or armed unpleasantness.

Early to rise

We are not here to discuss tanks... nasty, dirty, noisy things. The issue at hand is far more serious. It appears that investigators have found that some retired officers are in the habit of rising early on the spurious excuse that they, "Always hit the carpet at 0630hrs for 34 years and it's sort of ingrained now." (Subject in Salisbury area, aged 57, now selected for re-education.)

This 'early to rise' attitude is, of course, socially and politically divisive. The postman is discommoded when met on the doorstep by a retired customer as he delivers the morning's batch of urgent junk mail. This can induce a sense of low esteem with attendant stress. Similarly, at 0630 hrs the milkman does not expect to engage in badinage with a customer who should be hull down behind his 'Rice Krispies'.

There is an element of concern that some ROs are still wearing ties. (34 subjects in the Aldershot area. 19 subjects Knightsbridge/ Chelsea area.) Clearly, this has to stop. A tie is the outward sign of an inward desire to be part of a structured organisation and ROs are deemed not part of anything. In the view of the Commissioners, who are all highly successful men like Neil Kinnock, this conformity to old values must be eradicated if a vibrant new Europe is to rise from the ashes of highly successful individual Nation states.

The RO community has an absolute responsibility to be seen to be 'retired'. It has to act 'retired'. It must think 'retired'. There are problems a-plenty if old boys in their early 60s start to produce original thought or insist on being 'active'. (Multiple outbreaks have been reported and there are at least 328 subjects in the Portsmouth/Winchester area alone.)

The problem is so acute that the Commissioners have appointed a high-grade individual from Luxembourg to head up the 'Retirement Management Agency'. This appointment is in grateful recognition of the alacrity with which Luxembourg

signed up to the new Franco/German led European Army and gives belated recognition to the massive contribution that Luxembourg has made to the defence of Europe over the last 100 years or so. There was some infighting because that other great warrior race, the Belgians, wanted to put their man in place. It is tragic that a 'nation' that has been at the epicentre of two major wars should have to be denied this great opportunity to regulate the lives of some of those who won the Cold War and, by doing so, secured the freedom of Belgium. But then, 'life's a bitch', as this column has pointed out before.

Now to practical matters

Now to practical matters. Some of the readership will want to know the degree to which the RMA will impact upon their lives. It has to be said, right off the bat, that all the indications are that the impact will be, 'massive, bordering on jolly big'.

The RMA's thrust will be to ensure that ROs do not involve themselves in any matter that might affect the political processes in which the Commissioners are currently engaged. ROs, when considered as a group, are noted for having an opinion and expressing it loudly... Often. (775 subjects identified in Camberley.) This has to cease and a separate body, provisionally to be called 'The Voice Police', is to be formed. A representative of this group will be stationed in every golf club and some of the more upmarket pubs. These representatives will have wide-ranging powers to regulate the conversation of ROs. There is provision in the legislation for these powers to be extended to bog standard civilians if the need should arise.

Concern has been expressed in Brussels that ROs flock together at regimental reunions and at these gatherings they talk about times past and discuss, "Old-so-and-so," who is invariably dead. The atmosphere at these events is such that nostalgia reigns supreme and a consensus that, "Things are not as good as they were in our day," is usually arrived at before the 2nd gin has been damaged. This attitude is endemic among ROs and it is judged to be undesirable. The subversion that is inherent in regimental reunions is such that they are to be proscribed.

Freed from the manacles of Service life, ROs are now willing to do the TESCO run with the dragon. Some ROs develop a modest skill in the shopping area and are quickly able to strike a balance between the 'Large Economy Packet' and today's 'Special

'... belated recognition to the massive contribution that Luxembourg has made to the defence of Europe over the last 100 years or so'