



Reserve Forces Act 1996

1996 CHAPTER 14

PART X

GENERAL OFFENCES

Desertion and absence without leave from service, duty or training

98 Punishment etc. of offences of desertion or absence without leave.

- (1) An offence under [^{F1}section 8 or 9 of the Armed Forces Act 2006] (offences under service law of desertion or absence without leave) committed by a member of a reserve force is triable summarily by a civil court [^{F2}(as well as being triable by the Court Martial)].
- (2) A member of a reserve force convicted by [^{F3}the Court Martial] of an offence under section 96(1) or 97(1) is punishable as for an offence under [^{F4}section 8 or 9 (as the case may be) of the Armed Forces Act 2006.]
- (3) A member of a reserve force convicted by a civil court of—
 - (a) an offence under section 96(1) or 97(1), or
 - (b) an offence under [^{F5}section 8 or 9 of the Armed Forces Act 2006],is liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months or a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale (or both).
- (4) A person convicted of an offence under section 97(2) is liable—
 - (a) if convicted by [^{F6}the Court Martial], to the same punishment as for an offence under [^{F7}section 9 of the Armed Forces Act 2006];
 - (b) if convicted by a civil court, to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months or a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale (or both).

^{F8}(5)

- (6) Where a member of a reserve force or a person liable to recall is convicted of an offence of desertion, the time which elapsed between the time of his desertion and

Changes to legislation: Reserve Forces Act 1996, Section 98 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 13 June 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes

the time of his apprehension or voluntary surrender shall not be taken into account in reckoning his service for the purpose of release from permanent service or discharge.

[^{F9}(7) Orders or regulations under section 4 may include provision for enabling a determination to be made in prescribed circumstances that subsection (6) is to cease to have effect in relation to a period of time or a part of a period of time.]

Textual Amendments

- F1** Words in s. 98(1) substituted (28.3.2009 for specified purposes, 31.10.2009 in so far as not already in force) by [Armed Forces Act 2006 \(c. 52\)](#), s. 383(2), **Sch. 14 para. 42(2)(a)**; S.I. 2009/812, art. 3(a)(b) (with transitional provisions in [S.I. 2009/1059](#)); S.I. 2009/1167, art. 4
- F2** Words in s. 98(1) substituted (28.3.2009 for specified purposes, 31.10.2009 in so far as not already in force) by [Armed Forces Act 2006 \(c. 52\)](#), s. 383(2), **Sch. 14 para. 42(2)(b)**; S.I. 2009/812, art. 3(a)(b) (with transitional provisions in [S.I. 2009/1059](#)); S.I. 2009/1167, art. 4
- F3** Words in s. 98(2) substituted (28.3.2009 for specified purposes, 31.10.2009 in so far as not already in force) by [Armed Forces Act 2006 \(c. 52\)](#), s. 383(2), **Sch. 14 para. 42(3)(a)**; S.I. 2009/812, art. 3(a)(b) (with transitional provisions in [S.I. 2009/1059](#)); S.I. 2009/1167, art. 4
- F4** Words in s. 98(2) substituted (28.3.2009 for specified purposes, 31.10.2009 in so far as not already in force) by [Armed Forces Act 2006 \(c. 52\)](#), s. 383(2), **Sch. 14 para. 42(3)(b)**; S.I. 2009/812, art. 3(a)(b) (with transitional provisions in [S.I. 2009/1059](#)); S.I. 2009/1167, art. 4
- F5** Words in s. 98(3)(b) substituted (28.3.2009 for specified purposes, 31.10.2009 in so far as not already in force) by [Armed Forces Act 2006 \(c. 52\)](#), s. 383(2), **Sch. 14 para. 42(4)**; S.I. 2009/812, art. 3(a)(b) (with transitional provisions in [S.I. 2009/1059](#)); S.I. 2009/1167, art. 4
- F6** Words in s. 98(4)(a) substituted (28.3.2009 for specified purposes, 31.10.2009 in so far as not already in force) by [Armed Forces Act 2006 \(c. 52\)](#), s. 383(2), **Sch. 14 para. 42(5)(a)**; S.I. 2009/812, art. 3(a)(b) (with transitional provisions in [S.I. 2009/1059](#)); S.I. 2009/1167, art. 4
- F7** Words in s. 98(4)(a) substituted (28.3.2009 for specified purposes, 31.10.2009 in so far as not already in force) by [Armed Forces Act 2006 \(c. 52\)](#), s. 383(2), **Sch. 14 para. 42(5)(b)**; S.I. 2009/812, art. 3(a)(b) (with transitional provisions in [S.I. 2009/1059](#)); S.I. 2009/1167, art. 4
- F8** S. 98(5) repealed (28.3.2009 for specified purposes, 31.10.2009 in so far as not already in force) by [Armed Forces Act 2006 \(c. 52\)](#), s. 383(2), **Sch. 14 para. 42(6)**, **Sch. 17**; S.I. 2009/812, art. 3(a)(b) (with transitional provisions in [S.I. 2009/1059](#)); S.I. 2009/1167, art. 4
- F9** S. 98(7) inserted (28.3.2009 for specified purposes, 31.10.2009 in so far as not already in force) by [Armed Forces Act 2006 \(c. 52\)](#), s. 383(2), **Sch. 14 para. 42(7)**; S.I. 2009/812, art. 3(a)(b) (with transitional provisions in [S.I. 2009/1059](#)); S.I. 2009/1167, art. 4

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C1** S. 98(1) modified (24.4.2009 for specified purposes, 31.10.2009 in so far as not already in force) by [The Armed Forces Act 2006 \(Transitional Provisions etc\) Order 2009 \(S.I. 2009/1059\)](#), arts. 1(3), **201(3)**
- C2** S. 98(3) modified (24.4.2009 for specified purposes, 31.10.2009 in so far as not already in force) by [The Armed Forces Act 2006 \(Transitional Provisions etc\) Order 2009 \(S.I. 2009/1059\)](#), arts. 1(3), **201(3)**

Changes to legislation:

Reserve Forces Act 1996, Section 98 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 13 June 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations.

[View outstanding changes](#)

Changes and effects yet to be applied to the whole Act associated Parts and Chapters:

Whole provisions yet to be inserted into this Act (including any effects on those provisions):

- Sch. 2 para. 3(2A) inserted by [2003 c. 44 Sch. 3 para. 65](#)