

AFPG History

In the mid 1990's, a group of Cheltenham civil servants decided that government policy, not to acknowledge time served in the armed forces before 1975 for pension purposes, was not only morally wrong but also wrong in the eyes of British law. Holly Richmond, practising law in Keynsham, Bristol, shared that view and agreed to act as legal advisor to the group. The 'group' at that time was no more than twenty strong.

By the late 1990's it became clear that there were many ex armed service personnel country wide who wished to have their own time served acknowledged for pension purposes. By 1999, the group now counted several hundred, all having subscribed equal sums of money to cover administration and legal costs. As word spread by word of mouth and media coverage, the group's numbers increased several fold, peaking at over 3,000. Membership is now world-wide. It was the legal advisor's opinion that in 2003, the time was right to challenge the government in the High Court. The government saw fit to vigorously defend the action, admitting that an abatement had been made from service personnel pay pre 1975 but not for pension purposes.

They argued that the AFPG was 'out of time' and the High Court Justice a company. The first priority for the newly formed company is to seek action at the European Court of Justice, pleading a right to be heard in the British High Court. It is a widely held belief that the government (whatever colour) will not want that to take place and will seek settlement. Firstly, if our case is heard in the High Court, the Crown will be made to produce documentation proving that no abatement was used for pension purposes. Secondly, and probably more important to them, this could all happen in or near to a general election year.