

Unite MGS National Branch OMECE Campaign

Update



Unite Against OMEC: Get Active, Get Informed, Get Involved

As the Unite campaign against OMEC gathers pace we are calling on all MGS Guards on every site in the UK to: Get Active, Get Informed & Get Involved.

DIO have talked up the work of the MGS through the pandemic (see below). However, OMEC will be:
Bad for you health: Bad for Work/Life Balance: Bad for Pay & Bad for the Service.

Get informed on OMEC: Visit

<https://www.unitetheunion.org/campaigns/protect-the-mod-guards/>

We need your views today visit: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/ProtectTheMoDGuards>

Below are extracts from an article entitled "*The unsung heroes of the MOD Guard Service*" that was published on the UK Government website on 14th April 2020. A link to the full article is below.

"The unsung heroes of the MOD Guard Service"

"Like all organisations across the country – and much of the world – DIO has been heavily impacted by Coronavirus and Covid-19. While we were well set up for home working thanks to investment in recent years, there are some members of the team who, unlike most of us, can't work from home."

"I'm specifically talking about the MOD Guard Service (MGS). These security professionals provide a 24-hour, 365 day a year unarmed guarding service on 117 MOD sites – with another 12 sites recently added to the portfolio..."

*"The MGS provides an **essential service** to the department **protecting MOD people, assets and sites**. Their responsibilities include processing visitors to site, checking IDs before allowing staff onto site, patrolling, monitoring CCTV and more."*

*"Clearly, these are not jobs which can be done remotely and MGS officers are therefore considered to be **key workers**."*

*"MGS staff, whether guards on the ground, regional managers or Head Office staff, have shown **real dedication** and flexibility to continue to provide a high-level service. Some have cancelled leave, worked longer hours or changed their shifts at very short notice. They are working in very difficult circumstances to keep Defence operational and are truly the **unsung heroes in Defence**."*

https://insidedio.blog.gov.uk/2020/04/14/the-unsung-heroes-of-the-mod-guard-service/?fbclid=IwAR0vaVS-tcd04OZDT4YMz7PHXZVleS6uEl2gezOpWx5icBUPbtbjofYN6_M



OMECE: No way to treat the unsung heroes of the MGS

Not yet a member?
Join Unite Online Today:

<https://join.unitetheunion.org/>

Protect The MoD
Guards

They Protect
You



@Unite
MoDGuards

In Focus: MGS Dog Handling Service

MoD in Doghouse over Impact of OMEC



The Dog Handling section of the MGS is not exempt from OMEC.

Unite is currently forecasting that, over time, OMEC will lead to reductions in the Dog Handling workforce by up to 10% on large sites and by up to 20% of small sites.

Those working on OMEC contracts who have dog handling duties will be working longer hours for less pay. During periods of leave or sick leave, there will be fewer guards to call upon to help out by doing overtime or additional shifts.

Competing Pressures

A reduction in the professional Dog Handling workforce will lead to competing pressures for workers in this specialised section of the MGS.

MGS Dog handlers take great care and responsibility for the dogs they work with. However, working with dogs is not exclusive of all other duties. A reduced workforce will likely lead to an increase in instances where guards are expected to fulfil duties that take them away from dog handling duties. Increasing demands unrelated to dog handling activities will place unique stressors upon this section of the workforce. Workers will end up trying to absorb additional pressures so as their dogs are properly attended to. In the medium to long term competing pressures will be felt in unique ways by this section of the MGS.

Animal Welfare

MoD Guard dogs are selected from breeds known to be both intelligent and highly energetic. Owning a breed of dog like the German shepherd as a pet is a real commitment and responsibility. However, in the case of MGS dogs, these breeds are not pets. They are working dogs, with specialist training that, in effect, makes them a type of weapon.

MGS Dog Handlers know better than anyone their dogs' needs. Reduced staff and increased working hours will make unintentional lapses in animal welfare more likely. Dogs left in kennels for extended periods can demonstrate stress behaviours such as spinning, jumping, circling and excessive barking. Agitation through inattention can result in tail-tip and soft tissue injuries.

Health & Safety

Unite has clearly spelt out the risks associated with proposed OMEC rosters. Substantially increased working hours along with disrupted rest periods will lead to fatigue.

Handling trained guard dogs both in kennels and while on patrol takes great care and attention. Fatigue is well known to have an impact upon attention levels.

Your Branch believes that OMEC will impact upon the safe handling of MGS guard dogs. There have been repeated requests to get sight of new risk assessments that will factor in increased fatigue levels as a hazard. However, to date, the team responsible for pushing through OMEC have failed to share anything of any substance.

OMEC

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Bad for work/life balance

Bad for Pay

Bad for the Service

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