Director of Senior Rugby 2016/17 Directive

Army senior representative teams and many players continue to compete at the highest levels. Although 2015 did not deliver the overall results that players and coaches desired, the season ended successfully with the Senior XV reaching and competing in the final of the International Defence Rugby Cup (IDRC) 15, losing to a very strong Fijian side but beating New Zealand, Australian and South African Armed Forces sides along the way to reach the final. In 2016, we will look to develop existing representative players as well as identify and nurture new talent to compete at the highest Service and civilian levels. **We will encourage players to exploit their full individual and collective potential that is built on a desire to be the best they can, to strive for team excellence and to understand the honour and responsibility for representing the Army - to represent the Army must be second only to representing your country.**

My task as Director of Senior Rugby is to provide direction and leadership to the Senior Army XV and Army 7s players, coaching, management and medical staff to enable the representative players to achieve success on and off the playing field. In doing so I will develop and implement a holistic strategy to enable the success of the Army Senior XV annually in the Inter-Services Competition, to identify, inspire and nurture players and coaches for the next IDRC in 2019 and for the Army 7s squad to contribute to Defence Engagement and UK regional engagement by keeping the Army in the public eye through competition success. Implicit in this is the investment in player, coaching, refereeing and management talent at Regimental and Corps level.

Key to achieving individual and collective success is the ability to mentor, nurture and develop individuals both on and off the pitch. To that end, communication with individuals and their chain of command will be vital to ensure availability and exploit opportunity. Equally, recognition of the commitment and achievement of individuals must be articulated to employers and the chain of command. Senior players must lead by example, encourage and inspire the younger generation to success. Coaches, management and medical staff must constantly strive for continuous improvement, assurance and financial propriety. Succession planning of key management and coaching appointments will be fundamental to future success. In the future, the U23/Academy appointments will become a key part of the coaching and management progression pathway (in addition to Corps/ARU Premiershp teams) to Senior XV appointments. Future Senior XV candidates should have this (or civilian Academy) experience as part of their development and progression, demonstrating understanding/knowledge/success of the Developing Player Pathway recognised by the RFU.

The 2016 and 2017 seasons will be about consolidating and developing existing talent, identifying and nurturing new talent (both players and coaches) and building on the firm foundations that already exist within the Army Rugby Union. **Key in this will be the winning of the Inter-Services competition at Senior XV level** **in 2016** (and by implication at Masters, Womens and U23) and in the years thereafter. In the same vein, the Army 7s squad must not only re-establish itself as a competitive and respected 7s team on the national circuit but also win the Colorado 7s tournament in Aug 16 (teams competing from RN, British Army, RAF as well as US Navy, US Army, USMC, US Airforce and US Coast Guard).