

[UK Automotive looks to ex-military personnel to upskill industry on brink of electrification](#)

The pledge commits [SMMT](#) to promoting best practice, fostering a culture and ethos of inclusivity, and making the commercial case for automotive companies to also sign up to the Covenant.

The signing reaffirms the work done through [Mission Automotive](#), an initiative dedicated to placing veterans in jobs across the sector, set up in partnership with the Royal Foundation of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, the forces' charity Mission Motorsport, and supported by the Ministry of Defence (MOD).

Watch the short video about [Mission Automotive](#).

Read the full [Mission Automotive transcript](#) (ODT, 5.01KB).

Making the process as easy as possible, SMMT has helped members create tailored engagement programs, guiding and aligning their interactions with the armed forces community across brand, corporate and HR areas to support their own business strategies. Some 55 SMMT member companies already work with the armed forces community, employing veterans, service leavers and their spouses across all parts of the automotive supply chain, from cars to commercial vehicles, across design, manufacturing, repair and through to retail and logistics.

Alex Fogg, former Royal Engineer and Arrival Logistics Store Manager said:

With the help of Mission Motorsport and the Mission Automotive initiative I have a career that has not only changed my life but is also incredibly therapeutic for me. I couldn't be happier.

Mission Automotive is already working to place personnel with highly relevant skills in the UK automotive industry.

Johnny Mercer MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence People and Veterans, said:

The skills and training military personnel bring to civilian employers are incredibly important. By signing the Armed Forces Covenant, employers are harnessing the value that the Armed Forces community contributes to business. That is why it is vitally important that employers publicly pledge their support for the armed forces community – it means a lot to the cohort that we are trying to represent. In this field, it is hard to find a better

exemplar of best practice than SMMT.

As the UK looks to secure battery gigafactory investment ahead of the 2030 phase-out of sale for new conventional petrol and diesel engine cars and vans, the automotive industry hopes to help fill the skills gap with service leavers, offering opportunities for development and mapped-out career paths which translate military skills into qualifications required by the sector. Many service personnel are uniquely suited to this industry, with experience of high voltage equipment and other technologies. Veterans, therefore, are potentially some of the best candidates for roles working in electric and hydrogen vehicle manufacturing and engineering.

The past year tested the auto industry's resilience as the country battled coronavirus, with the sector keeping essential services and key workers moving, supporting the vulnerable and even manufacturing ventilators. Many automotive companies worked with veteran volunteers to redeploy vehicle fleets across the country to transport medical supplies and PPE.

Mike Hawes, SMMT Chief Executive, said:

Upskilling our industry will be crucial as new technologies transform the sector, and ex-military personnel are an often-untapped talent pool that can provide these in-demand skills. We are incredibly proud to support Mission Motorsport in helping service leavers embark on new career paths and signing the Armed Forces Covenant cements SMMT's long-term commitment to this cause. As events of the past year have shown, the veteran community is a real asset to automotive businesses and will be central not just to a successful and sustainable recovery, but to our future success as we transition to a connected, autonomous and zero emissions future.

James Cameron, Mission Motorsport CEO, said:

The Armed Forces Covenant is a promise, a commitment to ensure that those who have served in the armed forces, and their families, should not be disadvantaged by their service to the country. Service leavers and veterans are a national resource, and SMMT has been innovative in helping its members to share best practices, support each other, and harness that potential. By helping to make the commercial case for companies, SMMT's engagement and advocacy through its Mission Automotive initiative will encourage other industry bodies to follow suit and this should be celebrated.

Companies that want to find out more can visit the [Mission Automotive website](#) or contact info@missionautomotive.org for more information, and an induction pack.

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