



### Returning Home –Single Soldiers

Returning Home can be as difficult for single soldiers as it is for those in relationships, or soldiers with kids. It helps if you do some planning and preparation – before you go and while you are away.

#### Before you go:

- Get your financial affairs organised as best you can. Make sure your power-of-attorney is up to date so there are no hassles with bills, or the bank while you are away.
- Try to take some time to be together either with your family or your close friends in the week before you leave.
- You might want to spend some time with your siblings and any nieces and nephews

#### Staying in touch:

- Think about ways to keep in touch with your parents, siblings and their families while you are away.
- Look at a calendar and make note of any special dates that fall when you are away, eg. your mother's birthday, Hand-write a card if you know you will be away for the date.
- Keep an eye out for websites where you can order presents online and have them delivered home. This can be a very special way to say you are thinking of your parents / siblings while you are away.
- If you're not sure what to buy nieces and nephews, you could send them a letter promising to take them shopping when you return which will be something for them to look forward to.

#### Presents

Think about whether you want to buy presents for your parents or for nieces and nephews when you return. Some Soldiers may choose to do this if they have time. Others feel that the best present is being home and being with their family again. If you do choose to buy presents and you aren't sure what they would like – ask them!

#### Holidays / taking a break

- Some families like to get away together and reconnect quietly. Some ideas for a holiday on return could include:
- Enjoy the process of planning the holiday with your parents. It's easier if you agree about what kind of holiday you want.
- Look at websites that can help you plan a family-friendly holiday. (see links opposite).
- Look at the holiday cottages available through Army Amenities Fund.
- Remember that many bases have cabins for rent where parents, friends or other family members can come to visit you. This might avoid the stress of an overcrowded house.

Many of the ideas on preparation and staying in touch have come from Army families. But we know single soldiers have different challenges - and the ARTF wants to hear from you on these challenges, and also about the ways you kept in in touch or reconnected with your family or community on return. Visit the discussion forum on the ARTF website.

There is also some information on this website about volunteering. This can be a great way to reconnect and to meet new people. If you do go down this path, let us know how it went.