

Sodexo's commitment to supporting veterans recognised with listing in prestigious Top 50

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Last night at the 2025 Ex-Forces in Business Awards dinner held at the Grosvenor House London [Sodexo UK & Ireland](#) celebrated its continued inclusion in the 50 GREAT British Employers of Veterans.

The top 50 list is compiled by the organisers of the Ex-Forces in Business Awards and was created to provide a comprehensive guide to organisations setting the national standard in veteran employment and delivering the most outstanding pathways and support for veterans, reservists and military families. It provides a definitive, data-backed guide to the UK's most exemplary Forces Friendly employers and stands as a mark of excellence for organisations whose support is embedded, enduring and effective.

Inclusion requires employers to undergo a comprehensive assessment combining objective data with expert human evaluation by an independent judging panel of 21 business leaders who are veterans in their own right. The panel includes leaders from Asda, Fortinet, the University of Cambridge, RICS and the Veterans Covenant Healthcare Alliance.

Paul Anstey, CEO Government and Energy & Resources, Sodexo UK & Ireland said: *"We are extremely proud to be again included in this prestigious list. Supporting the welfare of the armed forces community and providing meaningful employment opportunities is an integral part of our social impact commitments.*

"Veterans and individuals with military connections have a diverse range of skills and experience which are transferrable into businesses such as ours and something we truly value, which is why we continue to focus on providing meaningful career opportunities for veterans, reserve and military families where we

can.

“Engaging with relevant external organisations and networks is crucial to building advocacy and bridging the gap between industry and the military and we are proud of colleagues who are actively participating with these groups, helping to promote dedicated career pathways in an industry that actively values the armed forces community.”

Sodexo has been a [partner to the military](#) for over 30 years and has a long-standing commitment to supporting armed forces personnel, both during and after service, and currently employs around 500 veterans across its UK operations, representing 1.7% of its workforce. It was an early signatory of the Armed Forces Covenant and in 2017 was one of the first organisations to be awarded the Gold Employer Recognition Award by the Ministry of Defence.

Its commitment is evident through its inclusive policies, proactive engagement and structured support programmes, this includes:

- as part of its recruitment process, job applicants are asked to self-identify if they are veterans, ensuring they can be recognised and supported from the outset. This visibility enables tailored career pathways and the promotion of an inclusive culture.
- veteran recruitment is underpinned by a comprehensive outreach programme including virtual drop in sessions for veterans and their families.
- participation in external events through the Career Transition Partnership (CTP) and British Forces Resettlement Services (BFRS).
- collaboration with pan-industry groups such as the Institute of Workplace and Facilities Management (IWFM) Veterans in FM Network, creating wider sectoral visibility for veterans seeking second careers.
- a Military Connections network which plays a key role in mentoring and guiding veterans through career progression.
- a wide range of training and development opportunities including formal apprenticeships, internal and external learning programmes, coaching, mentoring, and professional qualification support.

Ben Rossi, founder of the global Forces in Business Awards series and 50 GREAT British Employers of Veterans programme, added: *“This comprehensive ranking of Forces Friendly employers has become a cornerstone resource for veterans, reservists and their families – and a powerful benchmark for organisations seeking to lead in veteran employment. To feature in the Top 50 is to stand among the most committed supporters of the armed forces community.*

“Inclusion is not easily earned. The 2025 list reflects a growing coalition of employers who truly understand military talent, setting best practice and proving that investing in the armed forces community is not just the right thing to do – it’s a clear strategic advantage. We applaud you all.”

Sodexo also supports SSAFA, the armed forces charity through employee volunteering, fundraising, event support. Sodexo’s Stop Hunger Foundation has contributed over £500,000 to SSAFA’s Homelessness Fund and this year over 100 colleagues will take part in SSAFA’s 13 Bridges Walk.

In addition to celebrating its inclusion in the 50 GREAT British Employers of Veterans Sodexo also celebrated two colleagues who were highly commended at the awards.

- Rachel Evans, HR director for Sodexo's Government and Energy & Resources business was highly commended in the Advocate of the Year category. Rachel has helped shape strategies within Sodexo and beyond on policy changes, cultural transformation, and enhancing business-military relationships. Rachel is co-chair of the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award Association and is committed to boosting employment opportunities for veterans and reservists and the wider military community.
- Mark Baker, Chief Operating Officer for Sodexo's Defence business was highly commended in the Business Leader of the Year. Mark has a distinguished military background, serving in the Royal Air Force for over three decades. Since joining Sodexo in 2016, Mark has been instrumental in managing Sodexo's operations across 150 military sites across the UK, Cyprus and Falkland Islands, ensuring service delivery to over 50,000 troops. Under his leadership Sodexo has successfully renewed significant contracts and supported the military response to critical operations.

Finalists at the awards also included Sodexo's Gary Savage in Outstanding Achiever of the Year and Chris Parry for Team Leader of the Year.