

PRESS RELEASE**Wednesday 17 July 2019****Court of Appeal gives woman a right to late partner's military compensation and pension in landmark win for unmarried couples' rights.**

Air Commodore Christopher Green was a serving officer in the Royal Air Force when he died suddenly and unexpectedly on 17 May 2011. He had been in a committed relationship with Jane Langford for 15 years. The RAF pension scheme provides for unmarried partners of officers to receive a pension in the event of an officer's death. Air Cdre Green had assumed that Ms Langford would be provided for in the event of his death. However, the RAF refused to pay Ms Langford a pension because of a rule in the pension regulations that a surviving partner will be disqualified if he or she is married to another person, and Ms Langford had not formally dissolved her marriage to her ex-partner.

Today, the Court of Appeal unanimously held that this rule breached Ms Langford's rights under the Human Rights Act 1998.

Ms Langford was represented by London boutique litigation firm CANDEY and barristers Chris Buttler and Raj Desai of Matrix Chambers.

The lead judgment was given by Lord Justice McCombe, who was also critical of the government's conduct of the litigating, stating: *"The relaxed way in which the Minister and/or her advisers approached the procedural requirements in this case is not acceptable on the part of any litigant, whoever he or she may be."*

This decision is likely to have a far-reaching impact. The rule which was held to be unlawful in Ms Langford's case is found in most public sector pension schemes including Education, Police, Fire Service, NHS and Civil Service, which have millions of members. Anyone who has been refused a surviving partner's pension because they had not divorced an ex-partner may now be able to bring a claim, including for back payments.

Ms Langford and her lawyers are available for interview. Please contact Sonia Bamford or Andrew Dunn at CANDEY on 020 3370 8888 or by email to sbamford@candey.com and adunn@candey.com.

Documents attached to this press release:

1. Judgment of the Court of Appeal
2. Relevant extracts from Ms Langford witness statement in the High Court proceedings
3. The last photograph taken of Ms Langford and Air Cdre Green

Links and further contacts:

www.candey.com

<https://www.matrixlaw.co.uk/member/chris-buttler>

<https://www.matrixlaw.co.uk/member/raj-desai>