

DEFENCE TRAINING ESTATE

2006/7

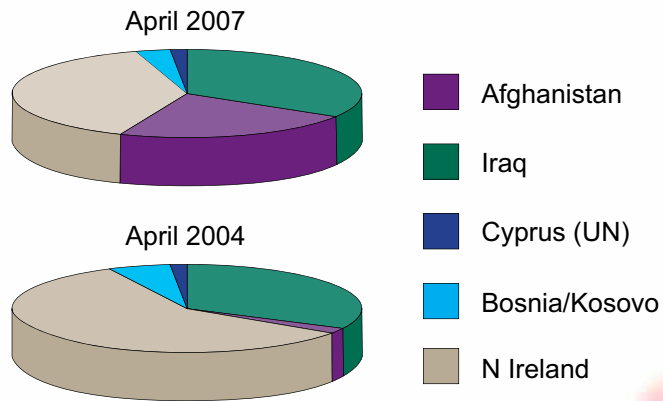
Annual Report



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DEFENCE ESTATES
Delivering Estate Solutions to Defence Needs

PREFACE



Change In Focus of Operations

James Pollock

Col James Pollock MBE
Director Defence Training Estate



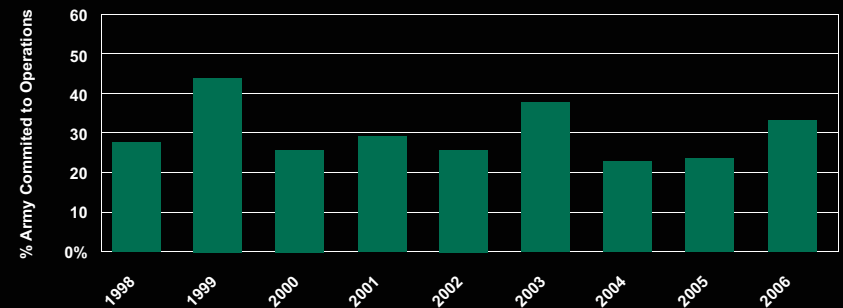
The Defence Training Estate (DTE) is being developed to create a single strategic asset by brigading the training estate of all three services; last year the process started, this year the remaining training land in Great Britain has transferred to DTE along with the facilities in Northern Ireland and Germany. This is intended to improve visibility of costs, efficiency of use and decision making and enable the adoption of best practice for safety and sustainability.

A Defence Requirements Organisation has been established in the Land Warfare Centre to

collate all training estate requirements. DTE as "supplier" has to match these with suitable, timely and affordable solutions.

DTE, working with commercial partners, seeks to ensure consistent efficient management and prudent stewardship of a finite, sensitive and nationally important resource. Our mission is to provide safe and sustainable training estate and facilities to meet the training requirements of Defence. This task is essential for national security but also ensures an enduring legacy of appropriately managed countryside.

Whilst the estate is as busy as ever, training activity has changed dramatically to meet the demands of current operations (see charts). This requires new facilities such as Afghan type compounds. Given the dangers and difficulties of the operations this is a critical task which we undertake in concert with all our stakeholders in the statutory bodies, local communities and industry.



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RECONCILING OUR DIFFERENCES



Kate Ashbrook
Chairman, Council for National Parks
Chairman, Ramblers' Association

'I accept that military training and a national park are discordant, incongruous and inconsistent' wrote Baroness Sharp, the former senior civil servant, who presided over the 1975 public inquiry into military training on Dartmoor. Sixteen years later the government-appointed National Parks Review Panel said that live firing should stop in national parks, and called for an independent review of military training requirements.

Although Lady Sharp went on to say '...but I cannot accept that they are incapable of living together since it is clear that in this country national parks and military training may have to co-exist', the crucial issue of whether they do have to co-exist has never been grasped. The military continue to occupy our best landscapes for training with live ammunition, heavy artillery and low flying by fast jets; natural beauty is scarred by look-out huts, flags, danger notices and other paraphernalia. Public access is still banned or restricted in those very areas designated for public enjoyment. The northern wilderness of Dartmoor, the great expanses of Northumberland, and the cliffs of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park, to name a few areas, are thus degraded.

Of course we accept that the armed forces need to train, and that they cannot leave overnight. The question is how and where to train, not whether. The review must be carried out in time to inform the decision on the renewal of the Duchy of Cornwall's licences for live firing on northern Dartmoor; these expire in 2012. It must be an independent examination of the military's requirements set against the public's increasing need for the freedom to enjoy quiet, beautiful landscapes. How can these requirements best be matched? Is any military intensification in the national parks acceptable — such as recent developments at Otterburn to enable training with the AS90 howitzer gun and multi-launch rocket system?


The House of Commons Defence Committee has recognised our concerns that the MoD's aim of rationalising the estate, and the potential for increased demand for training in future, could mean an intensification of activity in the national parks. Helpfully, it has called on the MoD to explain how it will address this issue. But that will only take us so far.

We recognise the significant efforts by Defence Estates to improve their environmental record, promoting public access where they believe it is safe to do so, managing sensitive habitats and producing integrated land management plans. They are much more consultative and open-minded than in the past. They give support on the ground, providing rangers and undertaking conservation work, such as creating the Epynt Way permissive bridleway in Powys. All this is welcome progress.


We shall continue to work with Defence Estates, trying to reconcile training with the protection of landscapes, access and wildlife. In particular, we want all MoD processes to be transparent and consultative; tools such as environmental impact assessment to be applied rigorously; and user groups and other stakeholders to be involved in policy and management decisions, at strategic and training-area level.

But above all, we want that independent review.

Kate Ashbrook
Chairman, Council for National Parks
Chairman, Ramblers' Association



Baroness Sharp's inquiry: "I accept that military training and a national park are discordant, incongruous and inconsistent; but I cannot accept that they are incapable of living together since it is clear that in this country national parks and military training may have to co-exist." It goes on to say: "Counsel for MOD recalled that, in the discussion of the Bill which originally set up the national parks, Lord Silkin said that it was necessary to contemplate military training in the parks as well as some other discordant uses. The Sandford Committee also accepted this, only one of their number dissenting."



DTE EAST

Lt Col Simon Lloyd MBE RA Stanford Training Area (STANTA)

The Operational Training Advisory Group (OPTAG) now uses STANTA to train those units about to deploy on operations in Iraq and Afghanistan; there have been 4 visits this year, each of 8 weeks duration. With over 750,000 man training days to accommodate, we are constantly looking at ways of improving the area to make it even more relevant to those deploying on operations. In February 2007, 3 patrol bases were built which has revolutionised training. New overhead fire platforms were also built to improve the skills of soldiers when reacting to this type of threat and we hope to begin the replication of a Middle Eastern village for troops to train on soon.

On 1 April 2006, DTE East became responsible for the Air Weapon Ranges at RAF Donna Nook, RAF Wainfleet and RAF Holbeach; a short article on RAF Holbeach follows below. We also took on a dry training area at RAF Barnham and 2 ranges at Thetford – all increasing the capability and facilities that are offered in DTE East.

RAF Holbeach

RAF Holbeach, one of the Air Weapons Ranges administered by DTE East, is a remote bombing range located on the Lincolnshire coast around 18 miles west of Kings Lynn. It extends over an area of 3,875 hectares, including 3,100 hectares of intertidal mudflats and 775 hectares of saltmarsh. The range consists of 8 targets and has been used for bombing since 1926. Since 1993 this has included night bombing and helicopter operations. Tornado GR4, Harrier GR9, Jaguars, Typhoons, USAF F15s and Apache helicopters can now all be seen operating on the range. The southern edge of the range is part of the Wash Walkway and it is therefore possible to watch aircraft operations from close but safe proximity.

This range also provides a haven for wildlife which is a major consideration when planning exercises. The casual observer sees only a bleak and inhospitable area of coastline but the sands and marshes are an ideal habitat for flora and fauna which remains largely undisturbed by the general public.

The Wash marshes are of great importance to nature conservation and the range area is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). During the winter months thousands of Brent geese arrive from their breeding grounds along the Arctic coast to feed on Zoster weed which grows on the foreshore. Unfortunately they are also partial to winter wheat much to the dismay of local farmers! Barn Owls and Marsh Harriers regularly patrol dykes in search of food and there have been frequent sightings of Merlin. Many other birds and animal species inhabit this area including seals which can be seen in the summer months basking on the sand bars and creek with their pups.

Visitors are welcome to access the range when it is safe to do so, but it has been an active range for over 100 years and whether you are here to watch the aircraft or to enjoy the countryside, please ensure that you obey the range warning signs. If you find anything suspicious, please leave it.



DTE HOME COUNTIES

Lt Col Andy Westcott AAC

The year 2007 has been dominated by a high operational tempo and exceptional weather. The usage figures and number of bookings continues to rise and there are regularly over 800 bids each month; more than 600 of that total are fulfilled. Over 1,200 units have either been accommodated or trained on DTE HC facilities; this represents a 5% rise over the previous year. Staff deal with this core business in their usual 'can do', adroit, calm manner but sometimes must wonder where the saturation point is.

Our capabilities have been severely tested (beyond saturation point) by an extraordinary storm on the 12th August 2006 which devastated the Pirbright and Ash range complexes and also washed away part of the embankment on the main railway line to London. The sand was washed off the butts to such an extent that the earth banks beneath them were exposed. The vast majority of our ranges were unusable for a period of over six months whilst the butts were re-instated. Once authority to proceed with the work was given, the contractor, T J Mathers, worked outstandingly well, against some continuing bad weather, to complete the restoration one month ahead of a tight schedule. An unfortunate and unsavoury aspect of the work was the need to provide a guard for the plant and machinery to prevent some determined and specifically directed vandalism. The whole project was another example of the value of excellent partnering steered by strong and resolute leadership.

As if that wasn't enough, the head range warden at Ash felt he was being personally victimised when a mini-tornado chased him across the range danger area. The localisation of the associated wind and its force was incredible. Trees with a diameter in excess of two feet were snapped like twigs whilst others just yards away went unscathed. The warden survived!

Work on Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) has focussed this year on the management agreement reached with Surrey and Hampshire Wildlife Trusts to graze the cleared areas of would-be heathland. It has been enormously disappointing to have the fencing work continuously sabotaged by ill informed members of the public armed with wire cutters who made 25 cuts in one week-end; we hope they will not be so irresponsible when cattle are introduced to the areas. In addition, a study is being conducted into the feasibility of grazing the Pirbright range danger area with red deer.

Public pressure and expectation continues to be a major problem. DTE HC has become significant in the Thames Basin planning issue and the need for Suitable Alternative Natural Green Spaces (SANGs) before planning permission can be granted. The MoD's land holdings for military training continues to require rigorous justification if it is not to be lost.

As part of the emergence of the Defence Training Estate, DTE HC has absorbed new facilities at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, ranges and training area, and Tipner, ranges at Portsmouth.



Vandalism at DTE HC

Mini-tornado at Ash ranges

DTE OTTERBURN

Lt Col Niall MacGregor-Smith SCOTS

During 2006/07 some 44,200 servicemen and women trained at DTE Otterburn (O). Roughly a quarter of the Regular and Reserve personnel were on pre-operational deployment training. This figure represents a large throughput for the fourth successive year.

A number of developments have ensured that DTE O is keeping pace with the requirements of the operational tempo. The first is the completion of a new electric target range close to Leighton Hide which was authorised for use on 26 March 2007. The new facility turns DTE O into a true 'one stop training shop' at which units can carry out Skill at Arms at every level from Stage 1 to Stage 5 in one place. Coupled with electronic simulation, the dismounted close combat trainer, the ETR is a step forward in improving the standard of operational shooting.

In February 2007, 12 Mechanised Brigade was put through its paces prior for deployment on Op HERRICK which involved over 1,600 troops with attack helicopter, support helicopter and close air support integrated from the outset. As part of the preparation for Ex PASHTUN ACE, two 'Afghan Type' temporary wooden structures were constructed to facilitate theatre specific procedures. A similar package is due to occur for 52 Brigade in July 2007 as it also conducts pre-deployment training (PDT).

Due to the demanding conditions and terrain and the fact there are few airspace restrictions, DTE O is increasingly being sought by RAF users to facilitate Forward Air Controllers PDT training and also low level pilot training including live firing.

The Great North Air Ambulance Service (GNAAS) has been operating a Bolkow 105 Air Ambulance from DTE O since 15 December 2006. Since its arrival GNAAS has flown 49 missions in Northumberland. These incidents have included road traffic accidents, falls, medical emergencies, horse riding accidents and cardiac arrests. The Air Ambulance has been tasked four times to incidents on the Ranges and Otterburn camp.

GNAAS also offer clinical placements at DTE Otterburn to clinical medical technicians (CMTs) from the Royal Army Medical Corp. So far, five 14-day placements have been completed. It is intended that these placements continue on a rolling programme with 25 CMT's being allocated placements this year. This service offers a major improvement in response times for the civilian community in the north-east and also for those undertaking training on this DTE.

Although the official opening day of the £60M DTE O development took place in July 2005, 2006/07 has seen the internal Camp facilities brought into use. The addition of 8 modular accommodation blocks(132 bedspaces), regimental size armoury, and a large Central Maintenance Facility comprising of workshop, washdown, fuel point and a large hard-standing parking area has greatly enhanced the available facilities.



BBC Top Gear's 'Space Shuttle' at DTE O

Lt Col Julian Crowe OBE SG Warcop Training Area

Warcop Ranges were used for 301 days out of the programmed 319 firing days last year. Training has included low level platoon training, Unit NCO Cadres, machine gun and mortar courses, live firing marksmanship, tactical training and live firing exercises ranging from fire team to platoon attacks by both day and night, some with live 81mm mortar support. In addition there have been live vehicle anti-ambush drills carried out on the attack ranges, Royal Artillery conversion training to 105mm light gun and 30mm armoured fighting vehicle firing for Royal Armoured Corps recruit and conversion training.

A wind turbine is being installed onto a range (E22) to generate sufficient electrical power to operate 24 electric targets at ranges between 50 – 500m. This is both energy efficient and provides value for money as it will cost only half that needed to install mains power. In addition, a new live platoon attack area (E23A) has been established to provide an alternative type of terrain for tactical movement for the Infantry Training Centre Catterick.

Conservation projects have included rebuilding traditional stone walls, reinstating hedges, and maintaining features peculiar to Warcop such as the Scotch Pine coppices, areas of ancient semi-natural woodland and protected limestone pavement.

Over two thirds of Warcop includes upland which forms part of the Appleby Fells Site of Special Scientific Interest. This area also forms part of the North Pennine Moors Special Protection Area, and Moorhouse and Upper Teesdale Special Area of Conservation. The uplands on Warcop are unique in being one of the largest areas of heather moorland and blanket bog in the Pennines not to have been burnt for moorland management and grouse purposes. Natural England has therefore resisted any active heather management for several years; however, due to the implementation of a new stocking regime since 2002, vegetation has improved greatly along with the SSSI condition assessment status. This improvement encouraged a programme of heather cutting in autumn 2006 with plans to undertake additional cutting late in the summer of 2007.

Other stakeholder projects have led to a substantial amount of woodland works across the estate being carried out in conjunction with the North Pennines Black Grouse Recovery Project. The older plantations have been thinned and the woodland edges “feathered” to increase the amount of Black Grouse habitat on the Estate. This has been successful as we have established another lek on Warcop, but also the use by soldiers of the woodland has greatly improved.



Media coverage for water voles at Foxglove Covert

DTE PEMBROKESHIRE



Lt Col Johnny Rogers OBE KRH

The main focus has been Pre-Deployment Training (PDT) for Iraq but dismounted live firing has now also been integrated into armoured exercises. Troops from the RM Commando and the Light Dragoons on their way to Afghanistan



have trained here and in addition the range has been used by Special Forces and helicopter Side Door Gunners. Detailed co-ordination has produced some interesting All Arms field firing exercises, including mortar support and fighter ground attack.

PDT for 19 Brigade saw the Royal Marines Boat Assault Squadron conducting assault training from the sea on the western beaches. Targets were positioned on the cliffs and troops were 'shot in' from their Ridged Raider Assault Boats.

Unfortunately, Warrior armoured fighting vehicles (AFVs) from 2 LANCs had only just returned from Iraq and were not fully modified for training: It is to their credit that they sorted out the problems and managed to move onto some realistic training including anti-ambush drills, flank support and top-cover shooting from all vehicles. They utilised the Iraqi Village with Warrior and dismounted infantry with full armoured 30mm support in the attack.

During 1 Mechanised Brigade's PDT, the newly formed Royal Regiment of Wales was able to host local dignitaries for lunch in the Officers' Mess. This visit, including a demonstration of equipment on the range, gained local radio coverage.

We have produced, from our existing AFV targetry resources, an Afghan Village compound and if required an Afghan style operating base for various All Arms Exercises. The base location is centred on a large central range bunker.

Castlemartin looks forward to the challenge of additional bookings with the return of two additional Challenger tank regiments and more Armoured Infantry troops from Germany. This will certainly bring pressure on our armoured range space and give priority to armoured firing qualifications.

DTE SALISBURY PLAIN

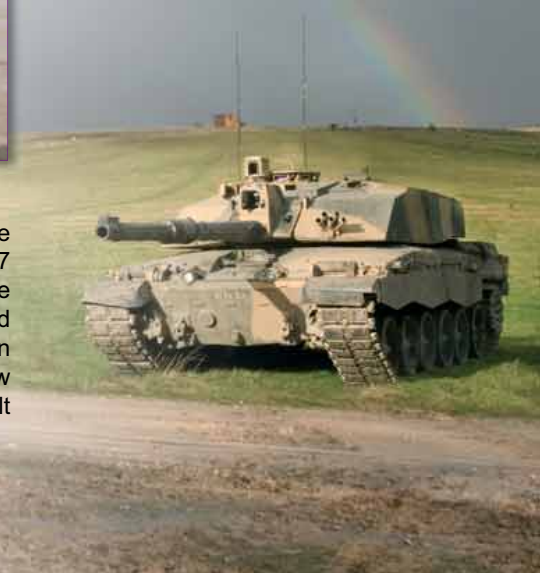
Lt Col Mike Beard R ANGLIAN

From September 2007 Lulworth Ranges and Bovington Training Area became part of DTE SP; not because of some seismic shift in geology but as part of DTE rationalisation and the overarching training estate strategy to separate 'Customer' and 'Supplier'. Command and Control arrangements continue to evolve and there are additional complications of diverse contractual support. While Lulworth and Bovington are primarily focused on enabling individual career and qualification training, they also host unit training and demands will evolve with the introduction of new equipment and the continuing return of units from Germany.

It was the planned return of units from Germany that triggered a number of environmental and training projects to facilitate increased training whilst mitigating the environmental impact. The Eastern Infrastructure Project (EIP) aims to enable wider usage and improved armoured access to DTE SP East through the provision of a perimeter track, improved road crossings, hard standings and additional training features. During 2007 there has been considerable planning with local authorities, statutory bodies and environmental groups, and subject to further MoD approval, work will commence on this £25M project in 2008 with a target completion date in 2012. In the shorter term, in order to respond to the demands of current operational scenarios, DTE SP is working to identify enhancements to existing training features. All these training developments must of course take into account our ongoing environmental undertakings to the statutory bodies and 2008 will also see an important review of our progress in maintaining and improving the 50,000 acres of SSSI on the Plain.



Incidents of trespass and crime are on the increase, ranging from illegal raves and thefts of military equipment to the growing of cannabis in a range danger area. Fly tipping is a growing and increasingly expensive menace. The 24 hour Ops Room became operational at HQ DTE SP in June 2007 and while its main effort is supporting safety and training, it will play an important part in gathering information, assisted by a new 'Plain Watch' scheme that encourages legal users of Salisbury Plain to report suspected criminal activity, in order to target more effectively our limited MOD Police and other resources. Controlling access to DTE SP and maintaining the 'safe place' for everyone, including of course the trespassers themselves, is an increasing challenge, particularly as we seek to widen training usage of the East – already our most 'porous' area on DTE SP. The forthcoming review of DTE SP's complex Bye Laws and ongoing efforts to rationalise some of the potentially hazardous Public Rights of Way will need to strike a difficult balance between the needs of military training, safety and public access.



DTE SCOTLAND

Maj (R) David Halpin **Cape Wrath Training Centre**

Due to severe weather conditions often encountered here throughout the year, Cape Wrath can live up to its name which actually came from “Old Norse” and means “turning point”; an easily identifiable feature for the early Norse mariners. The area covers some 25,000 acres at the extreme Northwest tip of the UK mainland. An extremely isolated and arduous area; purpose built for military activity! Its isolation cannot detract from its rugged beauty, being one of the last true great wildernesses in the UK. The area contains several Sites of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSIs) mainly due to seabird populations, rare botanical species and geological features.

Military activity has been recorded at Cape Wrath since the beginning of the last century when the Royal Navy used to practice gunnery under a leasing agreement with the local landowner. Demand increased and in 1933 bye-laws were published to facilitate range activity. These bye-laws were written on behalf of the Lord High Admiral of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and are still in force to this day!

In recent years, use of the area by amphibious forces has increased with a resurgence of interest in littoral warfare. This is particularly evident twice a year during Exercise NEPTUNE WARRIOR, part of the build up for operational efficiency of naval ships; destroyers, frigates, cruisers, aircraft carriers, commando carriers and submarines as well as shipping from NATO allies can all be part of this exercise. Artillery, Mortars, Attack helicopters, ground forces and aircraft dropping live 1000 lbs ordnance are also often in support. This is the only area in the UK where live 1000lb bombs can be dropped and live ship to shore naval gunfire support can take place; it is a training area where Land, Sea and Air activity can take place simultaneously.

The Cape Wrath Conservation Group was re-constituted in 2005 but has been active since the late seventies and now has members from the Highland Council, Scottish Natural Heritage, The John Muir Trust and Services Branch of the British Deer Society, The Mountain Bothies Association and Defence Estates. Operation Auk is particularly noteworthy as it has taken place every July since 1993; it is a voluntary two-week bird ringing and counting exercise based on the area. The provision of data supplied by the group is of immense assistance when engaging in environmental studies of any impact that military activity may have on sea birds. More recently the range wardens have assisted in establishing a “Puffin cam” which enables the colony to be observed from the comfort of the Tourist Information Centre.

In summary, the British military and its allies have used Cape Wrath for the best part of a century and despite the problems of isolation, logistics, access and weather, it continues to be used. As one senior officer recently said “the problems are real and not stage managed and therefore must be overcome. It doesn’t get much more realistic than this!”



DTE SOUTH EAST

Lt Col Guy Bettesworth R IRISH

The emergency sea defence works undertaken last year along the foreshore at Hythe Ranges have stood the test of time and nature; we have not suffered from flooding. A full annual maintenance programme is being put in place to ensure that the risk is kept to an acceptable level. This year we are able to concentrate on core activities to provide and develop safe and sustainable training estate and facilities in order to meet the training requirements of defence.

As predicted the pace for those using the facilities rose throughout the year to reach record levels. The major contributing factor was an increase in pre-deployment training for those committed to operations, especially in Iraq and Afghanistan. Of particular note was the doubling of individual reinforcement courses at Lydd from one to two per month.

A good example of the DTE partnership at work is the development of the Afghan compound at Hythe ranges. In early October 2006 an urgent operational requirement was identified by Operational Training Advisory Group for the provision of a live firing capability to practise the assault of walled compounds in Afghanistan similar to the one shown in this photograph.

Against the tightest of deadlines we were given 28 days to research, site, design, cost and build the compound to enable elements of 12 Mechanised Brigade to use it during its training package which was due to start on the 4th November 2006. Throughout this period the ranges at Hythe remained active so planning and construction had to be completed whilst other Priority 1 training continued on the range complex. That work complete, Landmarc Support Services engaged the services of Walkers Construction to build the Afghan Compound and a small window was found in the firing programme so that heavy plant machinery could prepare the ground for concrete footings to be constructed.

The range is unique because in effect there are two ranges within one. Once the outer wall has been breached and entry to the compound effected, live firing continues within the enclosed space, including an assault into the dwelling at its centre.

In order to replicate the command and control problems being faced by troops in Afghanistan it was important to incorporate this on the range, but such reality brought with it very real range safety concerns. Those concerns were addressed and the range had to be constructed within current design and safety regulations. The first live firing exercise was conducted on 6 November 2006 and at the end of that week 57,000 rounds had been fired into the compound.

Yet again it is satisfying to note that the partnership between the MOD and Landmarc Support Services is able to adapt to short notice requirements when necessary. Against the clock, a new facility was built to meet a short notice training requirement and the feedback from users of this new range has been extremely positive. Cameras have been added inside the compound to assist in the debriefing process to ensure that the maximum training experience is gained and I am sure, in future that other enhancements will be added. Proving our ability to react to user requirements is always a source of great staff job satisfaction – never more so than in the delivery of this unique live firing range.



DTE SOUTH WEST

Lt Col James Porter RRF

Located at intriguingly-named 'Paradise', 2 miles north of the historic port and ancient town of Langport in Somerset (now many miles inland!), the Langport Range dates back roughly to the English Civil War Battle of Langport in 1645. Before that the area was part of the early Royal hunting ground called "Somerton Warren". Evidence of an even earlier relic is available from the air where the layout of a Roman villa is visible.

At the end of the 19th Century the existing 1,200 yard range that had been built with its axis lying across the valley was rotated by some 15° to conform to the valley bottom following Mill Brook. At the same time it was shortened to 500 yards.

In more recent times the range was controlled from the Army's Norton Manor Camp which now homes 40 Commando, Royal Marines. RNAS Yeovilton then re-opened the range in about 1972 and extended it to 600 yards a few years later. It remained with RNAS Yeovilton until transferring to the newly-formed DTE on 1 April 2006.

The range area comprises three elements: the Gallery Range, the Dry Training Area of Breach Wood and the tenanted farmland – some 900 acres in total. The 600 yard Gallery Range was modernised in the early 1990s by RNAS Yeovilton. Site facilities currently include a Range Office/workshop complex and several storage sheds, while there is an aspiration to develop a classroom/troop-shelter and toilet facilities, funds permitting.

Before Langport came under DTE's wing, Breach Wood was used infrequently for dry training - and this use was restricted to survival training, orienteering and the occasional helicopter landing. Being close to the Yeovilton 'Northern Route' flight path there was occasionally an exercise depicting an aircraft crash scenario. Under DTE, things are changing and activity levels rising. A number of developments are taking place including a 'woodland' off-road driver training circuit and covert light vehicle parking bays deep in the wood together with covert parking bays under the woodland edge to facilitate helicopter replenishment and operations in the adjoining MOD owned field. Confined helicopter landing sites and bivouac/tented camping areas are already available and there is approximately 14km of woodland ride available for foot patrols and map reading exercises.

The tenanted farmland amounts to just over 600 acres. Use of this area for military training in the past has been limited by the nature of the tenancy agreements but there are areas of short lease tenancy that have been used in the past for field hospitals and helicopter landing sites.

Exercising troops can expect to see rare and protected flora and fauna. Both the gallery range and Breach Wood are important county wildlife sites. Worthy of note are: Herb Paris, Hairy Mallow, Water Vole, Hobby, Merlin and the odd Red Kite or Otter. Other species of interest include: rare invertebrates (including dragonflies, ants and spiders), Water Shrew, Brown Hare, over 300 species of moth (some nationally rare), 25 species of butterfly (including White Admiral), Peregrine Falcon, Pigmy Shrew, Nightingale. Golden Oriole occasionally breeds in the woodland.



DTE WALES AND WEST

Lt Col Chris Sernberg CHESHIRE

Nesscliff and Swynnerton training areas in the West Midlands have both been busier for the past 3 years as operational training displaces smaller units from the major training areas. Nesscliff has been adopted by the biannual explosive ordnance device (EOD) re-licensing exercise which is then followed by a week of joint police/military EOD exercising. Meanwhile, Swynnerton has become the field site for the Technical Response Force, a joint MOD/Home Office response to major civil incidents which requires a site with good access, space and a variety of terrain in which to deploy and exercise their equipment and procedures.

Military units are now also appreciating that Leek training area, 2,700 acres, did not close with the camp in 2005. After a severe dip in usage from 94,000 man training days in the last full year of the camp being open, to 3,000 man training days the following year the usage is now on the rise. With imaginative planning, Swynnerton and Leek which are only an hour apart, can meet a battalion sized unit's requirement for low level training.

Caerwent Training Area is a wartime explosive factory and has been host to 5 pre-operational exercises this year, one UK Divisional exercise and 3 Joint Helicopter Force exercises. The television adaptation of "Johnny and the Bomb" was also filmed at Caerwent.

Sennybridge has also been busier than usual. Most capbadges of the British Army interspersed with Dutch Marines, French Foreign Legion and Belgian and Italian troops all frequently train here. The Wales Rally GB also uses part of Sennybridge for one of its stages, encouraging access for hundreds of enthusiasts.

Cilieni fighting in built up areas (FIBUA) village on Sennybridge has seen a number of improvements produced by the village team: explosive entry displays in the lecture theatre; adaptation of some doors for non-explosive entry; and the booby trap house has been "rebranded" as the Furnished House, often used for search and arrest practice. On a larger scale, one of the houses has been excluded from the village proper and is being converted to be a Low Level Urban Skills Trainer (LLUST), the third such facility in UK. It should be complete and ready for use in June 2007.

Conservation remains a key consideration. At Nesscliff, woods are rotated to allow regeneration and to support a healthy common buzzard population which, amongst other more rare species such as Bullfinches, flourish at Nesscliff. Repairs have been carried out to the bat roost at St Malo on Caerwent, continuing support to the nationally important bat colony there. The Usk and Wye Foundation work chronicled in last year's report has seen a significant increase in the young fish stock. The Epynt Way is now fully open and the last of the numerous bridges and reception centres have been established which were locally made and installed by local tradesmen. The Epynt Way is well used and there are weekly guided walks led by volunteers.



A Stage of the Welsh Rally (GB) passing through Sennybridge

FINANCE

Penny Mundy, DTE Head of Finance

On the 1st April 2006, two changes affected the financial management of the MoD Training Estate Organisation. Both of these changes were related to the formation of the Defence Training Estate; the first was an increase in budget provision to fund the running costs of the additional training areas and the cost of staff transferring from the Defence Estate/Training Estate. This increase was approximately £4M to cover increased manpower and to fund the various support contracts in place to support operations at the new sites. In addition there was a change in the financial reporting requirements as the Training Estate organisation moved from Land Command Top Level Budget (TLB) to the Defence Estates TLB.

The actual increase in operating cost between FY 05/06 and FY 06/07 was 9% with an overall increase of 6% in regional expenditure. There was a reduction in running cost between FY 05/06 to FY 06/07 of 6% for DTE Salisbury Plain and this can be explained by the peak of activity in 05/06 for Environmental Assessment work as the five year plan was being implemented started in 2002.

DTE operating costs

DTE Region	FY 06-07	FY 05-06	FY 05-06 to 06-07 % Change
East	11.1	9.8	13
Home Counties	9.2	8.3	11
North	11.8	10.5	12
Otterburn	6.8	5.7	19
Pembrokeshire	6.5	6.3	3
Salisbury Plain	11.9	12.6	-6
Scotland	8.2	8.1	1
South East	11.1	10.4	7
South West	9.8	9.8	0
Wales	11.4	10.9	5
TOTAL	97.8	92.4	6
HQ Level Costs	3.1	0.5	520
TOTAL DTE COSTS	100.9	92.9	9

DTE LANDMARC

Steve Utley, Project Director, Landmarc Support Services Limited

Since taking over as Project Director in 2006, I have been impressed by the dedication and enthusiasm shown by both core and Landmarc employees across all regions and at HQ. The clear message, understood by all, is that we are here to facilitate the best possible training for our armed forces to prepare them for the very difficult environments they are being sent to.

Landmarc's mission is to support the Defence Training Estate (DTE) as a partner to provide and develop safe, sustainable training estate and facilities to meet the requirements of Defence. A Partnering Charter underpins all that we seek to achieve with the DTE and our joint partnering objectives ensure we meet the same common aim of providing an excellent service to soldiers and other users of the estate.

The benefits of partnering were particularly evident during 2006/2007. Landmarc and the DTE worked seamlessly to accomplish mission-critical projects to meet the increased training needs of our armed forces. In the East and the South East, the Afghan Training Villages were created within extremely tight design and construction periods. And Project Spider in DTE Home Counties transformed four basic accommodation blocks into energy-efficient homes for new recruits whilst their existing barracks are rebuilt as part of Project SLAM.

In Otterburn, the waste handling solution to help prevent live ammunition from entering the waste stream is proving successful with plans to extend this to another six regions. And on the rural side, trials at Otterburn, Salisbury Plain and Home Counties to move from an 'input' to an 'output' based approach in the future management of the rural estate are being extended across all DTE regions. This means we are one step closer to a comprehensive set of management objectives for all rural assets which will cover not only the military training requirements but other strategic estate management objectives such as managing and improving the extensive sites of nature conservation and archaeological interest.

The estate's capacity is undoubtedly stretched with a 12% increase in usage from the previous financial year, but service levels continue to be sustained at a high level, as demonstrated by our customer feedback, with an overall satisfaction rate of more than 80% across all service categories.

Over the last year DTE has had to contend with the inclusion of additional facilities into their remit, whilst operating with minimum resources. With more estate coming on board, our main message is that Landmarc is here to help.

Key Usage statistics 2006/2007

	2006/2007
Number of bids	29,925
Number of bed nights	2,410,159
Number of days fed	2,564,517
Man Training Days (Ranges)	3,092,864
Man Training Days (Training Areas)	5,749,807



ENVIRONMENT

Lt Col (Ret'd) Richard Rimmer

The MOD has undertaken to achieve 95% 'Favourable' or 'Unfavourable Recovering' status by 2010. DTE was at 81% on 12 April 2007, however, a number of additional SSSIs, in varying condition, have since been taken into the DTE as part of the rationalisation process under Defence Estates (DE), notably within DTE East, DTE Scotland, DTE Pembrokeshire and DTE South West.

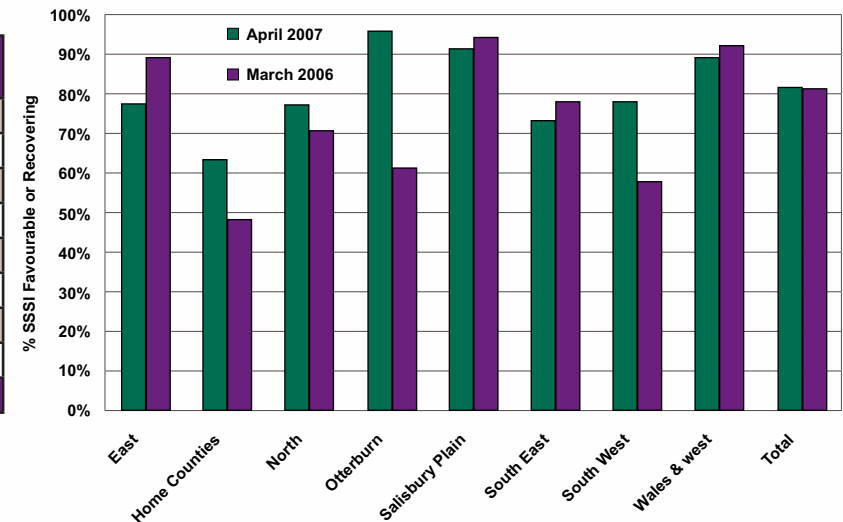
Different criteria apply for Scotland and Wales where designated sites are judged on features rather than by unit/area as in England, so the DTE Wales and West figures only show those SSSIs in England. In addition, condition assessments are unfortunately incomplete and sometimes up to 5 years out of date.


The responsibilities for funding 'maintenance' and 'improvement' are separate; 'maintenance' falls to the Rural Elements of the Estate Strategy (REES) programme (£800,000 in FY 06/07 and £850,450 for FY 07/08), whilst 'improvement' falls to other funding streams (£250,000 in FY 06/07 but offered very late in the year, and £240,500 taken at risk by HQ DTE for FY 07/08). The REES programme complies with the EST estimates for maintenance requirements over the next 5 years.

SSSI Status % Figures for England

DTE Region	English SSSI Designated Areas in the DTE (ha)
East	13,862
Home Counties	6,256
North	5,558
Otterburn	1,561
Salisbury Plain	22,212
South East	1,782
South West	1,156
Wales & West*	799
TOTAL	53,189

* Note: The figures for DTE Wales & West cover the old ATE West Midlands SSSIs and the one SSSI in DTE Wales that is in England!





*“They will continue to take all they learnt on
Dartmoor to the bleak, mud-walled compounds of
Afghanistan”*

*- Chris Terrill
Author “Commando”
an ITV Series*

***Chris Terrill,**
Author and producer of
ITV series ‘Commando’: “It seems
inconceivable that the Royal
Marines would not be able to
train on Dartmoor”.*

REGIONAL SUMMARY



DTE East

- Pre-operational training for 20 weeks for 10,000 troops.
- 3 farm complexes transformed into patrol bases and four 5m scaffold towers installed to provide firing platforms for convoy ambushes.
- RAF Barnham Training Area, Thetford ranges and 3 RAF Air Weapons Ranges successfully transferred to DTE East on 1 April 2006.
- Opening of the second range at Thetford.
- £200,000 improvement to the South Geedon Creek sea defences at East Anglia Training Area and clearance of 4,800m of Borrow Dyke.

DTE Home Counties

- 53,000 bids for training/accommodation.
- 1200 units trained/accommodated, 5% increase on previous year.
- Grazing agreement with Hampshire and Surrey Wildlife Trusts.
- Ash and Pirbright Ranges restored after freak storm.
- New facilities taken on at RMAS Sandhurst (ranges and training area) and Tipner (ranges).

DTE North

- New platoon attack range opened at Warcop.
- Section in defence range at Warcop was electrified.
- Approximately 35 ha of windblown woodland was re-fenced and re-planted at Catterick.
- Two accommodation buildings at Halton were replaced.
- Low Level Urban Skills Trainer installed at Whinny Hill.
- Troop shelters built at both Holcombe Moor and Driffield.

DTE Otterburn

- Throughput of 44,272 troops including major brigade exercise with 1,600 personnel.
- New armoury, workshop, washdown, fuel point, parking and accommodation.
- New Electronic Target Range ready for use.
- Air ambulance on site, £4,000 donation from DTE O staff.
- Afghan village structures undertaken.

DTE Pembrokeshire

- Castlemartin Range staff and target shed technicians produced an urban assault range.
- Planning permission to carry out missile firing at night lead to consent for a two year trial at Manobier.
- Structural engineering work has been carried out to drain the persistent surface water from the Penally Gallery Range.
- Pembrey Sands used increasingly by transport aircraft for practising soft terrain landings both by day and by night.

DTE Scotland

- Integration of Cape Wrath, Aultbea and RAF Tain training areas and ranges but also Kinlochleven Hostel and Balmacara House.
- Trial to provide centralised booking system for all DTE training facilities in Scotland.
- Construction at Barry Buddon of the 400m firing point at Monifeith and the 6 lane 1200m firing point at Barry North Range completed.
- Improved access and signage for the public to all major DTE Scotland training areas, under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003, has been completed.

REGIONAL SUMMARY

- Environmental Management System (EMS) to stage 3 (less the Rural Aspects) has been completed for Cape Wrath, RAF Tain and Aultbea.
- Major clean up of the historic hill forts and historic dyke system at Kirkcudbright.

DTE South East

- Construction projects include the expansion of accommodation, an Afghan Compound live fire range and a Middle East sector added to Rype Village.
- Energy Efficient Range Warden's hut (solar and wind power with water catchment facilities), is established on Lydd Range.
- Following the closure of Connaught Barracks in Dover, 375 acres of dry training area are identified as surplus to requirement.
- Sea defences at Hythe are refurbished and a routine refurbishment plan is established.

DTE Salisbury Plain

- DTE SP expanded to include Bovington Training Area and Lulworth Ranges in September 2007.
- The 4 year £25M Eastern Infrastructure Project, designed to improve access and facilities for armoured training in DTE SP East, is on track to commence in 2008.
- Usage of DTE SP will increase with move of Germany units to the area.

- Usage of Bovington and Lulworth will also be affected by additional armoured units in UK plus evolution of new equipment.
- HQ DTE SP 24-hour Ops Room became operational in June 2007.
- Increasing incidents of criminal activity and trespass. Introduction of 'Plain Watch' to obtain more information from public in order to target MOD Police operations.

DTE South West

- Langport Range and Training Area came under command on 01 April 2006 and Straight Point Ranges and Woodbury Common Training Area will transfer on 01 September 2007 from Royal Marines.
- At Chickerell Camp a new Kitchen has been opened. There is also a new armoury and a new ablutions block.
- At Penhale Camp an off-road driver training circuit has been developed.
- Agreement reached with Exmoor National Park (ENP) to grant exercising troops the same rights as the general public to roam on ENP land.

DTE Wales & West

- Increase in training activity at Nesscliff, Swynnerton and Caerwent.
- Enhanced facilities at Cilieni village including a low level urban skills training house.
- Continued high usage by foreign forces particularly the Dutch.

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Mil 94650 5150

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Mil 94291 3459

DTE NORTH

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Mil 94731 5501

Warcop
Civ 01768 343224
Mil 94542 3224

DTE PEMBROKESHIRE

Civ 01646 662200
Mil 94361 4200

DTE SALISBURY PLAIN

Civ 01980 674612
Mil 94325 4612

DTE SCOTLAND

Barry Buddon
Civ 0131 310 3422
Mil 94747 3422

Garelochhead
Civ 0141 224 8127
Mil 94568 8127

Inverness
Civ 0131 310 8115
Mil 94749 8115

Kirkcudbright
Civ 0141 224 8503
Mil 94574 8503

DTE WEST MIDLANDS

Civ 01785 760643 x 8464
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LANDMARC HELPDESK

(Out of hours)

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Mil 94348 2488

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Mil 94363 3253

Fremington
Civ 01271 312951
Mil 94363 3542

Penhale
Civ 01637 832002
Mil 94364 8002

Wyke Regis
Civ 01305 831930
Mil 94370 8390

Wyvern Barracks
Civ 01392 492488
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DTE SOUTH EAST

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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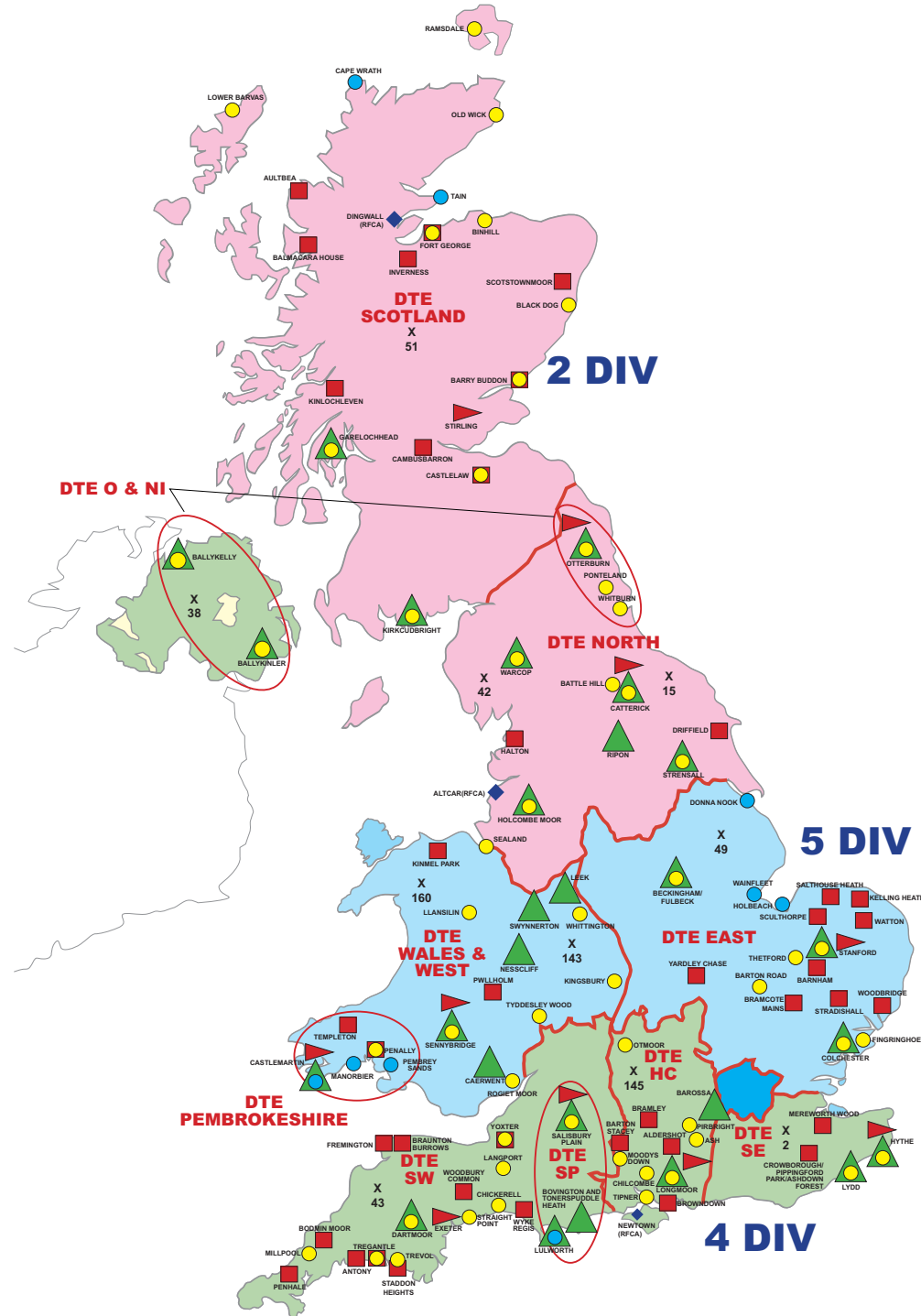
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LEGEND

- HQ Regional DTE
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- Other Ranges
- RFCA TAs/Ranges