

## **MINISTRY OF DEFENCE TOP LEVEL MESSAGES**

### **SECTION 1 - OPERATIONS**

#### **AFGHANISTAN**

##### **Key Context:**

On 22 Mar 2011, President Karzai announced that the first areas to enter the transition process would be: Kabul (except Surbi District), Panjshayr, Bamyan Province, Herat City, Lashkar Gah, Mazar-i-Sharif city, Balkh Province and Mehtar Lam, capital of Laghman Province.

##### **Top Line:**

**British forces are in Afghanistan to prevent Afghan territory from again being used by Al Qaeda (AQ) as a base from which to plan attacks on the UK and its allies. The presence of NATO forces is preventing AQ or the Taliban regime from returning while Afghanistan's security forces are trained to take over the tasks for themselves. We do not seek a perfect Afghanistan, but a stable Afghanistan, able to maintain its own security and prevent AQ from returning.**

##### **Supporting Lines:**

- It is vital to Britain's security that AQ is denied the ability to operate freely from within Pakistan or be allowed to return to Afghanistan. Pakistan is now robustly tackling the terrorist threat within its own borders particularly in the vital border regions. A more stable and secure Afghanistan and Pakistan will help ensure a safer Britain and world.
- The UK is part of a UN mandated NATO-led international mission in Afghanistan supported actively by 60 countries, of which 48 are providing troops. Several Islamic countries are part of the mission. The aim is to prevent Afghanistan becoming a terrorist sanctuary again.
- UK and NATO allies and partners in Afghanistan are resolved to see the campaign through to a successful conclusion. The international community has a clear, realistic, and achievable strategy, and a properly resourced campaign plan to deliver it. At the heart of the strategy is a process of transition from the international community and International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) to the Afghan Government, with the continuing engagement and support of the international community.
- ISAF strategy, endorsed by NATO, involves protecting the civilian population from the insurgents, supporting more effective governance at every level, and building up the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) as rapidly as feasible. The ISAF coalition wants to transfer security responsibility for districts and provinces to Afghan control as soon as they are ready.
- The Lisbon Conference (in November 2010) discussed both transition and long-term commitment to Afghanistan. The transition process is the next phase of the NATO/ISAF counter-insurgency strategy for Afghanistan, and will reinforce Afghan sovereignty. Security responsibility for districts and provinces will transfer to Afghan control as soon as the ANSF are ready.
- The Prime Minister is clear that there will not be British troops in a combat role or in the numbers they are now in Afghanistan by 2015. Of course, there could be some troops in a training role as part of a wider diplomatic relationship in the longer term, as we have with other countries. The bottom line is clear: we don't want to be fighting in Afghanistan a day longer than necessary, and we believe that we have the right strategy to achieve this.

- The Prime Minister, during his visit to Afghanistan in early December 2010, set out the three priorities for 2011 of: maintaining the momentum that has been created through the military surge; beginning the process of transition to Afghan forces leading security operations; and accelerating the Afghan-led political process of reintegration and reconciliation.
- UK troops working alongside US, Danish, Estonian and Afghan forces continue to make progress by driving out the Taliban and extending the authority and influence of the Afghan Government in Central Helmand. This is allowing the ANSF, with ISAF support, to protect the population, and the international community to help the Afghans extend governance. But we must be realistic: Helmand's security situation remains complex and there will be more tough fighting ahead as we consolidate gains.

#### **Key Facts:**

- UK commitment: The enduring UK force level in Afghanistan is 9,500, out of a total ISAF force of around 130,000 personnel from 48 troop contributing nations.
- Development: In 2010, the UK contributed £5 million to the Afghan Peace and Reintegration Finance Fund.
- Security: There are now over 152,000 Afghan national army and 117,000 Afghan national police. This is on schedule to meet the October 2011 growth target to deliver 305,600 ANSF. Of the 14 districts in Helmand Province, 6 were under Afghan Government control in 2008. By June 2010, this had risen to 12.
- Drugs: Tackling the drug trade is a major priority for the Afghan Government and its international partners. The UK is supporting the Afghans to deliver their National Drug Control Strategy, including by co-ordinating the International Community's contributions. As a result of this work, the number of poppy-free provinces has risen from 8 to 20 (out of 34) since 2005.
- Education: There are currently 6.6 million children attending school, up from 1 million in 2001. 37% of school attendees are girls – up from virtually none under the Taliban when girls were not allowed to go to school. In Helmand, there are now 135 schools open, up from 34 in 2006.

#### **LIBYA**

##### **Top Line:**

**On 19 March 2011, the Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Defence announced that British forces were in action over Libya to protect the civilian population and implement United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1973. British forces are playing a full part in Libya implementing UNSCR 1973, which authorises all necessary measures to protect the civilian population. For the No Fly Zone to be enforced safely, it is necessary to carry out carefully targeted operations against Libyan air defence capabilities. A broad coalition, which continues to grow, is conducting military operations to enforce the resolution adopted by the United Nations Security Council. Coalition forces have largely neutralised Libyan air defences and are continuing to target the military hardware that Gaddafi is using against his own people. NATO has now agreed to take complete command and control of all military operations in Libya.**

##### **Supporting lines:**

- The Government has received Parliament's clear backing for this action.
- UNSCR 1973 is not about regime change, the objective is to protect civilians, It was made clear that if Gaddafi did not comply with UNSCR 1973, it would be enforced through military action.
- Over 1300 UK personnel are deployed in the operation to enforce UNSCR 1973.
- Tomahawk Land Attack Missiles from our Trafalgar Class submarine, have been launched against Libyan air defence systems.
- RAF Tornado and Typhoon aircraft are based at Gioia del Colle in southern Italy where they will launch future operations.

- VC10 and Tristar air-to-air refuelling aircraft as well as E3D Sentry and Sentinel surveillance aircraft are supporting the operation.
- HMS Westminster and HMS Cumberland are in the region providing support.

## **IRAQ**

### **Top Line:**

**UK combat forces were withdrawn from Iraq in July 2009 but a small number of British military trainers remain to build the capacity of the Iraqi Security Forces. The Royal Navy is continuing to play a role in training the Iraqi Navy to defend its territorial waters and offshore oil infrastructure upon which Iraq's economic stability is so dependent. Royal Navy warships also help to patrol Iraq's territorial while the Iraqi Navy develops its capability to undertake this task itself. The Royal Navy remains on course to complete its contribution to the training and maritime support mission by Spring 2011. The UK is also the second largest contributor to the NATO Training Mission in Iraq (NTM-I), and leads on officer education and training. Through these efforts, the UK is contributing to a stable Iraq that can meet the security of its people.**

## **SECTION 2 - POLICY**

### **TRANSFORMING DEFENCE – SDSR AND DEFENCE REFORM**

#### **Top Line:**

**The Government has identified addressing the fiscal deficit as its top priority and that means bearing down on public expenditure – including spending on Defence. The Armed Forces and Ministry of Defence will see their budget and staffing reduced, although less than many other parts of the public sector. The UK will retain the world's fourth largest defence budget, a highly effective Armed Forces and a robust set of military capabilities.**

**The imperative for change within Defence is not just financial. There is a pressing need for a more effective organisation to ensure the UK is able to respond to new threats and to address shortcomings. These requirements present a once in a generation opportunity to improve the way Defence is delivered.**

**To deliver the changes required the MOD has set in hand the Transforming Defence programme. This includes the work of the Defence Reform Review, which is looking at a better top-level structure for Defence, Acquisition Reform and a range of other initiatives, including the implementation of Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) measures.**

#### **Supporting Lines:**

- The financial savings required cannot be achieved without an impact on people and jobs. People and associated costs account for a substantial proportion of our budget. SDSR outcome includes reductions by 17,000 military personnel and around 25,000 civil servants (5,000 in Trading Funds and 20,000 elsewhere).
- The Secretary of State launched the Defence Reform Review in August 2010 under the leadership of Lord Levene to look at a root and branch reform of the MOD (everything other than the front-line capabilities covered by the SDSR). Where possible, decisions will be taken earlier in order to maximise benefits and minimise the period of uncertainty. The Secretary of State announced proposed future arrangements for the management of defence infrastructure

on 22 February 2011 and plans for a Defence Business Services organisation on 22 March 2011.

- The Defence Reform Review comprises an external Steering Group, chaired by Lord Levene (a former Chief of Defence Procurement and now Chairman of Lloyd's of London), with several external experts and unpaid members. This group will lead the Review and make recommendations to the Defence Secretary in July 2011.
- Change on this scale can be unsettling, but through the outcome of Defence Reform activity we can expect to see more about what Defence will look like in the future. The purpose of all this activity is to deliver the following key Defence objectives:
  - Ensure a secure and resilient UK and to shape a stable world by working across Government and with key Allies and partners.
  - Maintain flexible, agile and battle-winning Armed Forces, with the right equipment, capable of operating across the globe.
  - Support Service personnel and their families, our Reserves, veterans and civilian staff.
  - Deliver a simpler, more effective organisation that provides value for money and lives within its means.

## **BUDGET**

### **Top Line:**

**The Spending Review (announced on 20 October 2010) set out the resources allocated to Defence for implementing the SDSR. The Spending Review has been closely aligned with the SDSR throughout. The Core Defence Budget for 2010/11 was £32.9 billion. This does not include the costs for operations or depreciation.**

### **Supporting Lines:**

- The Government has committed to bringing down the national deficit by reducing public expenditure. Defence is not immune from the UK's general financial situation. Despite these cuts, the UK expects to continue to have the fourth largest military budget in the world (and, on some measures, the third largest) and to meet the NATO target of spending 2% of UK GDP on Defence.
- The MOD is committed to a one-third reduction in administrative costs over the SR10 period. In addition, it expects to save at least £3 billion in efficiencies by 2014/15 through further improvements in areas such as the way we support Defence Equipment; work examining the use of Service personnel; reviewing procurement; the management of the Defence Estate; savings in back office and process costs; as well as other opportunities presented in the Defence Review.

### **Key Facts:**

- By 2014/15, the budget will reduce by around 8% in real terms.
- The cost of operations is additional to the Defence budget and is met from the Treasury Reserve. In the last financial year, 2009/10, over £4 billion was spent in support of operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. A further £4.6 billion is estimated to be spent this financial year. Operations in Libya will also be met by the Treasury.

## **FUTURE RESERVES 2020 STUDY**

### **Top Line:**

**As part of the SDSR announcement on 19 October 2010, the Prime Minister commissioned a review of the Reserve Forces to ensure that MOD makes the most efficient use of Reservist skills, experience and capabilities. Vice Chief of the Defence Staff, General Sir Nicholas Houghton KCB ADC Gen, will lead the review, supported by Julian Brazier TD MP, who has been appointed as his deputy. The Study is known as the Future Reserves 2020 Study (FR20) and will take six months to complete. MOD is expected to announce its findings in Summer 2011.**

### **Supporting Lines:**

FR20 is organised into three phases. In Phase One, the Study is developing a common understanding of the context in which Reserves will be used in future and define the strategic principles around which the balance between Regular and non-Regular manpower should be designed. Phase Two will focus on Reserve Force structures needed to complement the Regular Force and meet operational requirements. Later, in Phase Three, the Study will develop a detailed concept and outline plan for implementing new single-Services Reserves' structures.

## **SECTION 3 - EQUIPMENT AND LOGISTIC SUPPORT**

### **Top Line:**

**Success in Afghanistan is the top priority for Defence and the Government is fully committed to ensuring that the campaign is properly resourced, funded and equipped.**

### **Supporting Lines:**

- Significant improvements have been made in the equipment provided to UK Armed Forces on operations, and Operational Commanders now have a wide range of helicopters, protected vehicles, weapons, remotely piloted air system (RPAS) and other key equipments at their disposal.

### **Key Facts:**

#### Afghanistan Operations

- Over £4.9 billion has been approved through the Urgent Operational Requirement (UOR) process on equipment to meet emerging threats and requirements for Afghanistan since Operation HERRICK began.
- On 10 June 2010, the Prime Minister announced up to an extra £67 million for equipment in support of the Counter-Improvised Explosive Devices (C-IED) campaign.
- On 7 July 2010, the Secretary of State announced £189 million of funding from the Treasury Reserve as a UOR. It is being spent on:
  - £158 million for equipment such as ground-based surveillance and communications systems to make bases more secure;
  - £19 million for personal equipment, including Osprey body armour and helmets, light and heavy machine guns, combat shotguns, and more night vision equipment;
  - £12 million for better protected logistics support vehicles.
- On 7 December 2010, the Prime Minister announced that Reaper remotely piloted aircraft hours in Afghanistan would be doubled, giving troops increased air support to ground operations and the C-IED campaign.

### Protected Vehicles

- Deliveries of Protected Patrol Vehicles to Afghanistan continue. During 2010, both Wolfhound and Warthog were declared operational, and further deliveries of Mastiff, Ridgback, and Jackal were made.
- In October 2010, Wolfhound, the 'heavyweight' in the Tactical Support Vehicle (TSV) fleet became operational. Combining the protection and firepower of a Mastiff with a flatbed for cargo, Wolfhound joins Husky and Coyote in carrying essential combat supplies such as food, water and ammunition to troops on frontline patrols. The original order was boosted by 30 more vehicles in June 2010, bringing total contract value to £160 million. On 17 October 2010, an order for a further 30 Husky vehicles was announced in a £36 million contract (bringing the total value to around £220 million).
- In Autumn 2010, the Warthog armoured all-terrain vehicle became operational in Afghanistan. Over 100 vehicles have been bought to replace Viking, with 2 Royal Tank Regiment being the first to benefit from the Warthog's outstanding manoeuvrability, greater protection and firepower.
- On 30 November 2010, the Government announced a £180 million contract to buy the next generation Light Protected Patrol Vehicle (Foxhound). The first vehicles are scheduled to be available for training in 2011.

### Counter-IED (C-IED)

- In June 2010, the new Talisman Counter-IED system was unveiled. Bought as a UOR, worth more than £180 million, the suite of vehicles clears routes of IEDs and mines. Each Talisman suite consists of Mastiff protected patrol vehicles; Buffalo Mine-Protected Vehicles with rummaging arms; JCB High Mobility Engineer Excavators; T-Hawk Micro Air Vehicle and a Talon tracked Remote Control Vehicle. Operated by the Royal Engineers, its capability improves our ability to manage the IED and mine threat, and protects vehicle convoys delivering supplies to Forward Operating Bases.

### Personal protection

- In September 2010, the first layer of a new, multi-tiered pelvic protection system was introduced for troops in Afghanistan to help mitigate the effects of IED blasts. The three-tiered system of clothing and armour consists of special protective underwear and detachable armoured groin protection and trousers. The second tier of pelvic protection is currently being delivered to Theatre. Trials are currently underway to develop the third tier of protection.

### Helicopters

- Upgraded Lynx Mk9A helicopters, with their powerful engines, are providing sustained capability in theatre at altitude and during the heat of the Afghan summer, providing a year-round light helicopter capability for the first time. They complement the support Chinook, Merlin and Sea King helicopters as well as the Apache attack helicopter in the theatre fleet. The Merlin helicopter was deployed to Afghanistan at the end of 2009.

### Weapons

- In June 2010, Royal Marines from 40 Commando became the first British troops to use the new Sharpshooter rifle on the front line. With enhanced accuracy of engagement during long-range firefights with the Taliban, Sharpshooter is the first new infantry combat rifle to be issued to troops for more than 20 years.

### ISTAR

- The Reaper RPAS programme has now provided over 20,000 hrs of armed over-watch in support of UK and ISAF forces in Afghanistan. The UK's Reaper RPA continue to provide high quality, persistent armed Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) support to UK and ISAF forces in Afghanistan. On 6 December 2010, the Prime Minister announced that funding will be made available to enable further increases to Reaper capability in future.
- The Future Force 2020 will include strategic surveillance and intelligence platforms capable of providing wide area coverage as part of our broader ISTAR capability. The Nimrod R1 will be

replaced with the American-built RC135 Rivet Joint aircraft. UK crews are already training with the US Rivet Joint fleet in preparation for the introduction of 3 x Rivet Joint aircraft in 2014.

- The Government has taken the difficult decision to take Sentinel out of service post Op HERRICK. At the time Sentinel was envisaged, no assets in Defence could provide similar capabilities. However, at present, Defence has the use of a number of other platforms which can mitigate, to a degree, the loss of the platform.

#### Tornado GR4

- The Tornado is making an important contribution to operations in Afghanistan and Libya. Tornado GR4 offers commanders a reactive, scaleable, and precise ladder of effects that cannot be provided by other air platforms. In Afghanistan it routinely provides de-escalatory 'shows of presence' and 'shows of force' to deter or disperse insurgents without the need to resort to direct attack. Both in Libya and Afghanistan, the Tornado is also providing pre-planned close air support, intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, armed overwatch and a life-saving response – often all in the same mission.
- As a result of the SDSR, it was decided to reduce the size of the Tornado force by 2 squadrons. XIII Squadron, based at Royal Air Force Marham, and 14 Squadron, based at Royal Air Force Lossiemouth will therefore disband by 1 June 11.

#### Tornado F3/Typhoon

- Since the late 1980s, the Tornado F3 has served with distinction and has been the cornerstone of the UK's air defence capability. It reached its out of service date on 31 March 2011.
- Typhoon is already playing a vital Air Defence role in the UK, Falkland Islands and operations in Libya. It is capable of being deployed in the full spectrum of air operations, from air policing, to peace support, through to high intensity conflict. On 14 March 2011, Typhoon (6(F) Sqn) assumed responsibility for Northern QRA at RAF Leuchars.

#### Nimrod R1/Air Seeker

- The collection and exploitation of electronic signals, and dissemination of intelligence thereby gained (SIGINT), is an essential and enduring capability requirement for both standing and contingent military tasks. This capability is currently provided by the Nimrod R1. In service with 51 Squadron since 1974, it was due to be retired from service in March 2011.
- Following a short assessment, in light of the current circumstances, the MOD can confirm that it has decided to extend the life of one Nimrod R1 for up to an additional three months. The original decision to take the R1 out of service was taken in 2008 and is not a result of the SDSR.
- On 19 March 2010, the MOD accepted an offer from the US Government to procure three RIVET JOINT aircraft and associated training and ground systems to replace the Nimrod R1 aircraft.
- Between 2011 and 2014 the UK will enter into a partnering arrangement (with the US) that will sustain the UK's airborne signals intelligence capability and safeguard UK personnel core competencies until the RIVET JOINT aircraft enter Service with the RAF in 2014.

#### Strategic and Tactical Lift

- The RAF's Air Transport Force will be rationalised as quickly as possible to consist of only the most modern and capable aircraft types: A400M, C17 and the future strategic (transport) and tanker aircraft (FSTA). The UK will gradually withdraw legacy fleets such as the C130 Hercules, Tristar, VC10 and existing Comms Fleet Aircraft as soon as new capabilities are introduced.
- On 21 January 2011, the Prime Minister unveiled the RAF's newest C17 Globemaster at RAF Brize Norton. The new aircraft, the 7<sup>th</sup> C17 in the RAF's fleet, will bolster the airbridge between the UK and frontline operations and undertook its first operational mission to Afghanistan on 18 Feb 2011.

### Joint Combat Aircraft: Lightning 2

- To meet the UK's Joint Combat Aircraft requirement, the Government remains absolutely committed to the US led Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) programme, which will provide a world-beating aircraft, able to operate from both the sea and land, ideally suited for our future capability needs. The UK plans to transition to a combined fast jet fleet of JSF, named the Lightning 2, and Typhoon aircraft in the medium to long term, and will assess the balance between the two platforms in future Defence reviews.
- The UK now plans to buy the more capable Carrier Variant JSF, which offers advantages in terms of range, payload and through-life costs over the Short Take Off and Vertical Landing (STOVL) variant. The UK plans to deliver the Carrier Strike capability from around 2020.

### Equipment, Support and Technology for UK Defence and Security

- On 20 December 2010, the Government launched a Green Paper marking the formal consultation on Equipment, Support and Technology for UK Defence and Security. Led by the MOD and Home Office, it covers a range of issues including national security, working with other countries, exports, small and medium-sized enterprises and cyber security. This is the first time these key issues have been considered together from both a defence and security perspective. A White Paper, to be published later in 2011, will set out the Government's approach in the defence and security domains over the next five years.

### Independent Review of single source pricing regulations - the "Yellow Book"

- In January 2011, the MOD also announced the appointment of Lord David Currie as chairman of the independent review of single source pricing regulations. The review should complete this year and will analyse the purpose and role of how the MOD procures non-competitively tendered goods and services.

### Type 45 Destroyers

- The first Type 45, HMS Daring, entered service on 31 July 2010. The second in class, HMS Dauntless, was formally commissioned into the Royal Navy on 3 June 2010, and is now in service conducting Basic Operational Sea Training. Sea Viper was fired from her in September 2010, representing the first firing of the missile from a Type 45 platform. HMS Diamond (Ship 3) was accepted off contract in September 2010 and is currently undergoing sea trials. Dragon (Ship 4) will shortly commence her first set of sea trials. Defender (Ship 5) was launched on 21 October 2009 and Duncan (Ship 6) on 11 October 2010. Both are currently being fitted out on the Clyde. .

### Submarines

- The first in class of the new Astute Submarines, HMS Astute, has completed her first set of rigorous sea trials and has now been commissioned into the Royal Navy. She will now undergo further trials before she is declared operational. Ambush was named on 16 December 2010 to be launched in early 2011. Artful and Audacious are under construction at Barrow.

### Air Defence

- RAF air defence assets including fighter aircraft, radars and command and control systems, are held at continuous readiness 24/7, 365 days of the year to guarantee the security of UK sovereign airspace and NATO-monitored airspace.

## **SECTION 4 – PERSONNEL AND MEDICAL**

### **Top Line:**

**The Government recognises the need do much more to ensure our Armed Forces, veterans and their families have the support they need, and are treated with the dignity they deserve. The commitment to rebuilding the Covenant will set the tone for Government policy aimed at improving the support available for the Armed Forces Community.**

## Supporting lines:

### THE ARMED FORCES COVENANT

- The Government has committed to rewrite the Covenant as a new tri-service document which will set the enduring, general principles that will govern the relationship between the Nation, the Government and the Armed Forces Community and set the tone for Government policy aimed at improving the support available for serving and former members of the Armed Forces and their families.
- The Government has committed to publishing its response to the Covenant Task Force Report in the spring and is bringing forward legislation in the Armed Forces Bill which will require the Defence Secretary to present an Armed Forces Covenant report to Parliament every year.

### COMMITMENTS AND PRIORITIES

The coalition programme, published in June 2010, stated the Government would work to rebuild the Military Covenant by:

- Ensuring that Service personnel's rest and recuperation leave can be maximised [**delivered**];
- Changing the rules so that Service personnel only have to register once on the Service register;
- Including Service children as part of proposals for a pupil premium [**announced on 9 December 2010**];
- Exploring the potential for including Service children as part of proposals for a pupil premium [**delivered**];
- Providing university and further education scholarships for the children of Servicemen and women who have been killed on active service since 1990 [**announced for implementation in September 2011**];
- Providing support for ex-Service personnel to study at university [**announced for implementation in September 2011**];
- Creating a new programme, 'Troops for Teachers', to recruit ex-Service personnel into the teaching profession [**announced on 24 November 2010 by the Department for Education - scheme launching in 2011**];
- Providing extra support for veteran mental health needs [**being taken forward as implementation of the Murrison study**];
- Reviewing the rules governing the awarding of medals;
- Including Armed Forces pay in plans for a fair pay review;
- Ensuring that injured personnel are treated in dedicated military wards; and
- Looking at whether there is scope to refurbish Armed Forces' accommodation from efficiencies within the Ministry of Defence.

### MEDICAL SUPPORT

#### Top Line:

**The support to personnel injured on operations is of an excellent standard. All Armed Forces personnel are supported by dedicated and comprehensive medical services, including mental health support.**

## **Supporting Lines:**

### **Seriously Injured personnel**

- Operational casualties whose injuries are serious enough to require further treatment back in the UK are aeromedically evacuated as a matter of priority. The Queen Elizabeth NHS Hospital in Birmingham, which opened in June 2010, is the primary reception hospital for military patients evacuated to the UK from overseas. The new facilities offer injured soldiers the best possible care in a Military Ward, subject to clinical need.
- Patients requiring further rehabilitation care (including prosthetics) can be referred to the Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre (DMRC) at Headley Court in Surrey. DMRC has 96 established in-patient beds with a further 14 beds being brought into use as a sensible contingency. Flexibility remains to use step down accommodation in the Single Living Accommodation for those who do not need close nursing support or supervision.
- Birmingham hospitals and Headley Court have the ability to manage increased casualty numbers, including mobilising additional military medical staff and providing extra bed spaces. We have contingency measures in place for managing increased numbers over and above those experienced last year.

### **Retention of NHS Waiting List Position**

- Previous waiting times will be taken into account when families relocate.

### **Prosthetics**

- Recent Service leavers who have lost a limb while serving will, where clinically appropriate, be entitled to receive from the NHS equivalent standard prosthetic care to that provided by Defence Medical Services. Dr Andrew Murrison MP is leading a review to examine NHS prosthetic services for veterans now and for the future.

### **Mental Health**

#### **Service Personnel**

- The MOD provides mental healthcare for those Armed Forces personnel who need it, primarily through our 15 military Departments of Community Mental Health across the UK (plus centres overseas), which provide out-patient treatment located close to the main military population centres. In-patient care, when necessary, is provided in specialised psychiatric units under contract with the NHS
- In May 2010, the latest phase of a King's College study into the effects of deployment on the mental health of personnel confirmed the continuing low incidence rate of probable PTSD for the UK Armed Forces. Alcohol misuse and common mental disorders were the most prevalent mental health problems. Service personnel are no worse off as regards mental health disorders compared with available data for the civilian population. The number of times that a member of the Armed Forces deploys to Afghanistan or Iraq does not increase their risk of developing common mental health disorders. Deployment on operations was associated with a small increase in symptoms of PTSD in Reservists, and Regular personnel in combat roles were more likely than those in support roles to report probable PTSD.

#### **Veterans**

- The NHS is responsible for veterans' health care, with priority treatment for Service-related conditions, subject to the clinical needs of all patients. Veterans mental health services

(including Murrison Report enhancements) will be rolled-out across the NHS from 2011. This will also take account of data provided by six pilot projects which identified the components of successful veterans mental health services.

- MOD complements NHS services by providing a Medical Assessment Programme (with a similar service for Reservists) and by funding treatment by Combat Stress of war pensioners with service-caused conditions.
- In England, Armed Forces Champions in Strategic Health Authorities and regional Armed Forces Networks are bringing together the NHS, Service charities and others, to meet the needs of the Armed Forces community in their area.

#### **Dr Andrew Murrison's report, 'Fighting Fit: a mental health plan for servicemen and veterans'**

- The MOD is working closely with the Department of Health to take forward the recommendations in Dr Andrew Murrison's independent report, 'Fighting Fit', including:

##### **For Service personnel:**

- An enhanced mental health assessment for serving personnel that will be used during routine medical examinations, with a three-month trial starting in April 2011.
- Updating MOD policy to allow Service personnel, who have mental health issues while serving, to continue to access the military Departments of Community Mental Health (DCMH) for up to 6 months after discharge.
- An online website for serving personnel, dependants and veterans will be trialled from April 2011 in selected areas.
- The MOD is working closely with Kings College London on a two-year study, funded by the US military, starting this autumn, of a possible screening tool for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

##### **For veterans:**

- Creating a Veterans' Information Service (VIS) that will contact ex-Service personnel 12 months after they leave the Armed Forces to give them information, guidance and support on health and wellbeing issues should they want it. A trial will take place during 2011, with rollout scheduled for early 2012.
- Increasing the number of mental health professionals in England (from 15 to 30) to conduct veterans' outreach work from Mental Health Trusts. The Department of Health is working with the NHS Armed Forces Networks and others to finalise arrangements that are due to come on stream from April 2011.
- A veterans' mental health helpline, 0800 138 1619, was introduced in March 2011. It is provided by Combat Stress with Department of Health funding and offers support 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

## **PAY AND ALLOWANCES**

**The Government is determined that members of the Armed Forces should receive a remuneration package commensurate with the vital role they play. The outcomes of the SDSR and the Spending Review will have far-reaching consequences in reducing Defence expenditure, although the full impact on pay and allowances is not yet clear. It is critical that change in these areas do not impact on our ability to attract, recruit and retain high calibre individuals.**

- The tax-free Operational Allowance for Armed Forces personnel serving in qualifying operational theatres was doubled on 6 May 2010.

- On 21 Mar 11 the Government announced that it had accepted in full the 2011 Armed Forces' Pay Review Body recommendations, which will be implemented from 1 April 2011. As part of the Government's Emergency Budget, on 22 June 2010, the Chancellor announced a two-year pay freeze from 2011/12 for public sector workers, including Service and Civilian personnel. The Government however, stated that all those earning £21,000 or less should receive a minimum increase of £250. The AFPRB recommended an increase of £250 for Armed Forces' personnel earning £21,000 or less, inclusive of X-Factor. Additionally, the AFPRB recommended targeted measures for specific ranks or trades, and an increase to the Daily Food Charge and some accommodation charges. Eligible Service personnel will continue to receive an increment each year.
- Reductions in the Service Personnel allowances package (totalling £250 million of the £880 million spend) were announced on 20 January 2011. The announcement was a result of the requirement set out in the SDSR to reduce expenditure on Service and Civil Service allowances.

## REDUNDANCY

**Following the SDSR, the shape and size of the Defence workforce (both military and civilian) must be addressed. The UK's Armed Forces will be restructured to meet current and emerging threats and in doing so, the Services will undergo some changes. This will include a reduction in the combined size of the Royal Navy, the Army and the RAF by some 17,000 by 2015. Some of this reduction will be achieved by slowing down recruitment but we estimate that up to around 11,000 personnel will need to be made redundant. The outcome of the SDSR will also result in a reduction of the number of civilian personnel by around 25,000 by 2015.**

The Armed Forces redundancy programme seeks to reduce the number of Service personnel while maintaining a satisfactory balance of skills, experience, ability and seniority in rank throughout the Armed Forces to enable delivery of operational requirements.

- A compulsory redundancy programme has been developed under the terms of Armed Forces Redundancy Scheme 2006 (AFRS 06) and AFRS 10, broadly aligning with the Armed Forces Pension Schemes 05 and 75.
- On 1 March 2011, the RAF published a comprehensive document for their personnel, detailing the branches and trades from which they are seeking to make redundancies. Although this is a compulsory programme, volunteers are being sought. The RAF will run a number of redundancy tranches and the released document only covers the first tranche. The Army and Navy are expected to release similar details on 4 April 2011 and members of all three Services will be informed through their chain of command if they are to be made redundant in this first tranche in September 2011. For further information please see the [MOD website](#).
- Decisions on those selected for redundancy (from the identified redundancy fields) will be made by the single Services, and may include non-applicants as well as volunteers.
- Transition of those selected for redundancy will be managed through the appropriate resettlement package.
- Following a minor programming error with the bespoke Armed Forces Redundancy Calculator, identified on 14 March, a revised Calculator (v1.2) was issued on 15 March. This was widely communicated and affected only a small number of Service Personnel. We are confident that the Calculator has served to provide immediate, credible and comprehensive forecasts for those considering redundancy. Tri-Service usage of the Calculator continues to grow. As of 21 March, the Calculator had received some 76,050 hits (since its launch on 1 March) broken down by Service as follows: RN 20,200; ARMY 38,700; RAF 17,150. Given the application window has not closed for any Service Personnel, no one has been unfairly disadvantaged.

For the civilian workforce, the Department is committed to achieving the necessary reductions without recourse to compulsory redundancy wherever possible although this eventuality cannot be ruled out. The reductions will be managed by a range of measures including natural wastage, restrictions on external recruitment which have been in place for some time, and a Voluntary Early Release Scheme (VERS) which was launched on 28 February 2011. The deadline for applications for the scheme was 31 March 2011.

- The TUs were consulted prior to the launch of the scheme.
- The compensation payable will be determined in accordance with the rules of the Civil Service Compensation Scheme (and equivalent arrangements for members of other pension arrangements – such as Teachers, Burnham Lecturers and NHS grades).
- It is unlikely that these measures alone will be sufficient to achieve the full reductions required and further action is currently being considered which may include a further early release scheme(s) and/or more targeted schemes.

### **RAF Flying Training Pipeline**

The SDSR has had an impact on the future number of RAF pilots required. Consequently up to 170 RAF student pilots currently in the Flying Training Pipeline are surplus to RAF front line requirements and will be removed from training. Students who are not required for flying training will be redirected to the Officer and Aircrew Selection Centre for possible reselection to another Branch dependent on the RAF's requirement, and their suitability. It is expected that a small proportion will progress to an alternative Ground Branch, with the majority put forward for redundancy under the current scheme. In addition, there will be no intake of RAF student pilots for FY 11/12.

### **RECRUITMENT**

The Armed Forces depend on high-quality young people wanting to join the Services for rewarding and exciting careers. Despite the reduction in the overall numbers of Service personnel, the Armed Forces are still recruiting and training to replace those personnel who leave the Services at the end of their contracts.

### **ARMED FORCES COMPENSATION SCHEME (AFCS)**

- The AFCS provides compensation for injuries, illness and death arising from Service since 6 April 2005. War pensions are paid to veterans with injuries caused by their service prior to this date. The AFCS covers all serving and ex-Service personnel and may provide a tax-free lump sum for pain and suffering, the size of which reflects the severity of injury or illness that has been sustained. There are 15 tariff levels with associated lump sum awards which currently range from £1,155 to £570,000. As of February 2011, this will range from £1,200 to £570,000. The AFCS also provides a bereavement grant to survivors of Service personnel who die as a result of their service.
- For serious injuries and illness, the AFCS also provides an income stream known as the Guaranteed Income Payment (GIP). This is in addition to the lump sum and is a tax-free, index-linked monthly payment from discharge until death. The GIP is an enhancement to an individual's ill-health pension, paid to recognise that the injury or illness was sustained as a result of service. The scale of the payment is based on the severity of the injury, and age and salary on discharge.
- The Scheme was reviewed under the independent chairmanship of former Chief of the Defence Staff, Admiral the Lord Boyce. The Review report, published in February 2010, found that the Scheme was fundamentally sound, but that adjustments were required in some areas.
- The MOD is committed to implementing all recommendations from the Review. All changes to the Scheme will be completed by the time new legislation is laid in late February 2011. Some changes came into effect on 3 August 2010:

- Extending the time limits for making a claim for injury from 5 to 7 years and for bereavement from 1 to 3 years;
  - Increasing the maximum bereavement grant to £25,000 for all Regular personnel and to £37,500 for Reservist personnel not members of a reserve forces pension scheme; and
  - Increasing by one Tariff level most awards for hearing loss.
- The February 2011 changes to the Scheme will see increases in all lump sum payments (except in the case of the highest tariff, which was doubled from £285,000 to £570,000 in 2008) and an uplift to Guaranteed Income Payments (GIP) for the more seriously injured. Policy changes coming into force in February 2011 include a new approach to compensating for multiple injuries, and a new fast payment award that will enable those most seriously injured to have the option of receiving a modest up-front payment before full consideration of their claim.
  - The Review also saw the establishment of an Independent Medical Expert Group (IMEG) to advise on the appropriate levels of compensation for several specific injuries, including mental health. The Group's first report will be published shortly. The IMEG will continue to look at how we can compensate properly for hearing loss and mental health problems this year. Its findings will be published in late 2011.

## HOUSING

**The MOD has committed to undertake a detailed review of the approach to accommodation to better meet the needs of Service personnel for affordable and good quality housing during and after Service. Accommodation forms part of a review into the Terms and Conditions of Service.**

- Armed Forces Home Ownership Scheme (Pilot). An MOD £20 million, 4-year pilot shared equity scheme was launched in January 2010. The scheme is eligible to full-time permanent members of the Armed Forces who wish to remain in the Forces, and who have between 4 and 6 years' service, to buy a property in England. Up to January 2011, the scheme attracted 518 applicants assessed as being eligible in principle. Of these, 181 are ready to be invited to speak to a financial adviser and 82 have completed.
- Extended Eligibility for Priority Status to Affordable Housing Schemes. Armed Forces personnel with over six years service are entitled to keep their priority status for 12 months after leaving the Armed Forces to help them buy a house through the affordable home schemes across all areas in England, Scotland and Wales. This has been extended to include bereaved spouses and partners of Service personnel. In England, between April 2009 and May 2010, there were 774 completions.
- Housing Adaptation Grants. Seriously injured personnel in receipt of AFCS or War Pension Scheme (WPS) payments can access substantial grants to adapt their home for their disability. AFCS and WPS lump sum payments are not considered to be income when means-testing for Housing Adaptation Grants.
- Disregard to compensation payments. AFCS lump sum payments are not considered to be income when assessing for affordable housing.
- Local Connection. Previously, Local Connection legislation meant that service leavers received no recognition for having lived and worked in an area when applying for social housing. This has been amended in England and Wales, and the change in Scotland will come into force from 1 April 2011.
- Priority Housing for Injured Service Personnel. Ex-Servicemen and women who are seriously injured have priority for specially adapted social homes.
- Service Families Accommodation. The vast majority of UK Service homes are now at the top two standards (of four) for condition<sup>1</sup>, with families no longer required to live in properties at the lowest standard, although some still choose to do so.

## EDUCATION

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<sup>1</sup> We refer here to Standard for Condition, not Grade for Charge.

- Free Further or Higher Education. Service leavers with six years' service, and who have previously been members of the Enhanced Learning Scheme, can apply for funding to cover tuition fee expenses for an additional qualification. This is up to and including degree level courses.
- School Place Allocation. The School Admissions Code is designed to recognise the needs of Service children.
- Special Educational Needs (SEN). Local authorities and schools have received guidance reminding them of their obligation to ensure continuity of support.
- Troops to Teachers. As part of the Schools White Paper, released in November 2010 by the Department for Education, the Government announced plans to develop a 'Troops to Teachers' programme which will sponsor Service leavers to train as teachers.

## WELFARE

**The welfare needs of Service personnel and their families remain a key priority. Any changes proposed to Terms and Conditions of Service will take into account the impact on welfare support. The Government remains committed to providing the best possible support to deployed personnel and their families through the Deployed Welfare Package.**

- Operational Welfare. The Deployed Welfare Package is kept under constant review to ensure it meets the needs of both the Service person and their dependants. Free phone calls are available for 30 minutes per week. WiFi access has been extended in operational areas, texting and internet facilities have been improved in Forward Operating Bases and the Families Welfare Grant doubled.
- Post. MOD and the Royal Mail continue to operate the Enduring Families Free Mail Service (EFFMS) for friends and families to send packages of up to 2 kg to named personnel in Afghanistan and Iraq plus HM Ships in support.
- Improved access to welfare services. Five pilot schemes are running, and one further scheme is being developed, to improve access by members of the Armed Forces Community to the help and support from the MOD, statutory providers and from the voluntary and community sector.
- Rest and Recuperation. On 22 July 2010, the Government announced steps to maximise Service personnel's rest and recuperation.

DMC Secretariat & New Media

Please direct any queries to 020 7218 9228

### **Have your say on TLMs**

We are currently undertaking a short review of the TLMs and would like your views to help us make sure that they provide the right information and meet your needs.

To let us know what you think, please complete this short survey:

[Top Level Messages survey](#)

The survey should only take a couple of minutes to complete and is completely anonymous. Your responses will be considered as we look for future ways to develop and improve the TLMs.