

DFTDC Manston

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Defence Fire Training and Development Centre

The Defence Fire Training and Development Centre (MOD DFTDC), Manston lies in Kent on the site of the former RAF base at Manston on the Isle of Thanet. Fire-fighter training has been conducted at Manston since 1959. In 1989 the RAF Fire Fighting and Rescue Squadron moved from RAF Catterick to RAF Manston to join the Air Force Department Fire Service and form the RAF Fire Services CTE.

In 1995 the school became the MOD FSCTE Manston which in turn has now become DFTDC in 2008 after a change in governance. DFTDC mirrors a small RAF station with an Admin Support Flight, MT, MTSS and Logistics Support Flight. A wide spectrum of personnel from the three Services, DFRMO and civilians provide specialist support to the Unit. A Wing Commander commands the unit while the instructors are drawn from the RN, RAF or Defence Fire and Rescue Service (DF&RS) personnel. The role of DFTDC is to undertake the formal training of MOD firefighters from all 3 services including contract fire services working for the Ministry of Defence in aircraft crash and structural firefighting. This includes associated specialist equipment, career training and trials of new equipment.

The site at Manston is an historic one with its origins in the formation of a Royal Naval Air Station during 1916, followed by transformation into RAF Manston two years later. Following the end of the Cold War and the subsequent RAF withdrawal from Germany, Manston became surplus to RAF requirements and the airfield was sold in 1999 to become today's Kent International Airport. However, DFTDC was retained under its previous name of Fire Services Central Training Establishment (FSCTE) becoming an enclave set within the former RAF Manston domestic site.

Ownership of DFTDC was originally vested in HQ Strike Command at RAF High Wycombe, although this changed in April 2007 when the Army assumed responsibility for the delivery of firefighting services throughout the MOD estate. In turn, DFTDC is now governed by HQ LAND Forces at Wilton, through the newly created Defence Fire Risk Management Organisation (DFRMO) at Andover, with regional control vested in HQ 2 Brigade at Shorncliffe Barracks, Folkestone.

The official web site of the MOD Defence Fire Training and Development Centre (DFTDC) at Manston is available at <http://www.dftdc.org>. Within this site you will find a variety of information relating to our many activities and it should provide you with a good overview of our training courses, facilities and supporting infrastructure.

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