



Ministry
of Defence

Defence in Scotland

A Strong Story to Tell

Protecting Scotland. Protecting the UK. Contributing to Global Security.

Scotland is critical to Defence, both in peace and in times of crisis. Its proximity to the waters and skies above the North Atlantic make it a vital strategic asset for the UK and NATO. Key Defence capabilities, including the nuclear deterrent and maritime patrol aircraft, are located here, protecting the people of Scotland and the wider UK, and contributing to global security.



British Armed Forces in Scotland - Regulars and Reserves - play a critical role at home and abroad, building capacity, strengthening NATO, supporting the UN, connecting with society and delivering Resilience activities.

Promoting Prosperity and Investing in People

Defence invests in Scotland. Contracts to build and maintain high-end, cutting-edge equipment for sea, land and air support jobs and develop skills across Scotland. Public and Private sector investment and expenditure, including in R&D, contribute to the Scottish economy. Defence industry facilities and partnerships in Scotland underpin the UK's global standing. 'Made in Scotland' benefits Scotland, the wider UK, and beyond.



Defence is one of the biggest employers in Scotland. Scottish military and civilian personnel at establishments across the nation support this in myriad ways, as do Veterans, who continue to serve their country and enrich their communities, bringing highly valued skills and experience to business and the voluntary sector across Scotland.

Defence outreach teams engage and support young people in Scotland's schools, working in collaboration with Scottish industry and the university sector to promote STEM and the technological innovation needed for the workforce of the future. Defence also supports the Armed Forces Cadet organisations in Scotland. Defence promotes diversity, inclusivity and opportunity, establishing itself as a progressive competitive employer.

Strengthening Communities and Celebrating Cultural Heritage

Defence's outstanding contribution to the national COVID response and other resilience operations have built valuable capital with the Scottish people, engendering a sense of trust and respect with Scottish Government Ministers, senior officials and local authorities.

The Defence Training Estate in Scotland provides training areas for vehicles, weapons, trials and personnel, and other specialised training environments. Through its Climate Change and Sustainability Approach, Defence is redoubling efforts to protect areas of outstanding natural habitat, investing in green technology and promoting responsible use.

Ceremony is a key pillar of the work and engagement that Defence does within Scotland. Events such as the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo play a vital role in showcasing Scotland's strong military traditions to audiences at home and around the world.





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The Defence Landscape in Scotland

Today, more than 10,000 Regular military personnel and 4,000 Reservists, supported by nearly 4000 MOD Civilians, are stationed in Scotland. There are also just under 6,000 cadets.

By 2029, the Defence footprint in Scotland will include:

The Royal Navy HQ in Scotland, HM Naval Base Clyde housing the RN Submarine Service, the Faslane Patrol Boat Squadron, a Mine Counter-Measures Squadron and 43 Commando Royal Marines. 45 Commando Royal Marines in Arbroath. The Royal Marines Band Scotland, two RN and one Royal Marine Reserve unit, eight RN Combined Cadet Force and thirty seven Sea Cadet units. The largest Armed Forces contingent in Scotland, by 2032, the RN's footprint will grow to 8,200 following the redeployment of all submarine training and operational units to HMNB Clyde.

A dedicated British Army HQ for Scotland (Edinburgh); four major and expanded Army bases, seven major Regular units, thirteen Army Reserve units and eight Reserve sub-units. There are also eight Army Cadet Force battalions and fifteen Combined Cadet Force Army Contingents. Leuchars will become the largest Army base in Scotland.



One of the RAF's three fast jet main operating bases, which will house four Squadrons of Quick Reaction Alert Typhoons, nine P-8A Poseidon Maritime Patrol Aircraft, the RAF's new E-7 Wedgetail Airborne Early Warning and Control Aircraft and a RAF Force Protection Wing. Scotland will also have four RAF Reserve Squadrons, two University Air Squadrons, two RAF Air Cadet Air Experience Flights and a RAF Air Cadet Volunteer Gliding Squadron.



Defence in Scotland Numbers

MOD expenditure with industry and commerce in Scotland in 2020/21 was £1.989 billion - the equivalent of £360 per person in Scotland. The Future Soldier programme is investing £335m in the Army estate in Scotland, generating up to £1 billion in wider economic benefit.

Defence directly employs a highly skilled workforce and supports a further 9,500 jobs in Scotland. Defence investment in Scottish shipbuilding has filled order books until the 2030s, including orders for eight Type 26 frigates from BAE Systems at Govan and five Type 31s from Babcock's shipyard in Rosyth.



The ninth submarine hunting Boeing P-8A Poseidon Maritime Patrol Aircraft, vital to maintaining UK Security and that of our NATO allies, arrived at RAF Lossiemouth in Jan 2022. RAF Lossiemouth will continue to grow by circa 500 personnel in preparation for the arrival of the RAF's new fleet of E-7 Wedgetail Airborne Early Warning and Control aircraft.

Support to Overseas Operations



NATO: Elements of 3 SCOTS and 3 RIFLES on deployment to train Ukrainian forces. Elements of 3 SCOTS supporting UK FCDO overseas. RAF Lossiemouth's Typhoon Sqns in support of NATO activities, including Air Policing operations based out of Romania (Op BILOXI) and Lithuania (Op AZOTIZE).

UN: Royal Scots Dragoon Guards currently deployed on Op NEWCOMBE (Mali). 2 SCOTS due to deploy in Jan 23. 71 Engr Regt to deploy on Op TOSCA (Cyprus) in Oct 23.

Rest of World: Multiple Scotland-based service personnel support Defence commitments around the globe. The Royal Navy delivers vital Continuous At Sea Deterrence from Scottish waters, alongside Mine Counter Measure operations worldwide and other maritime security functions.