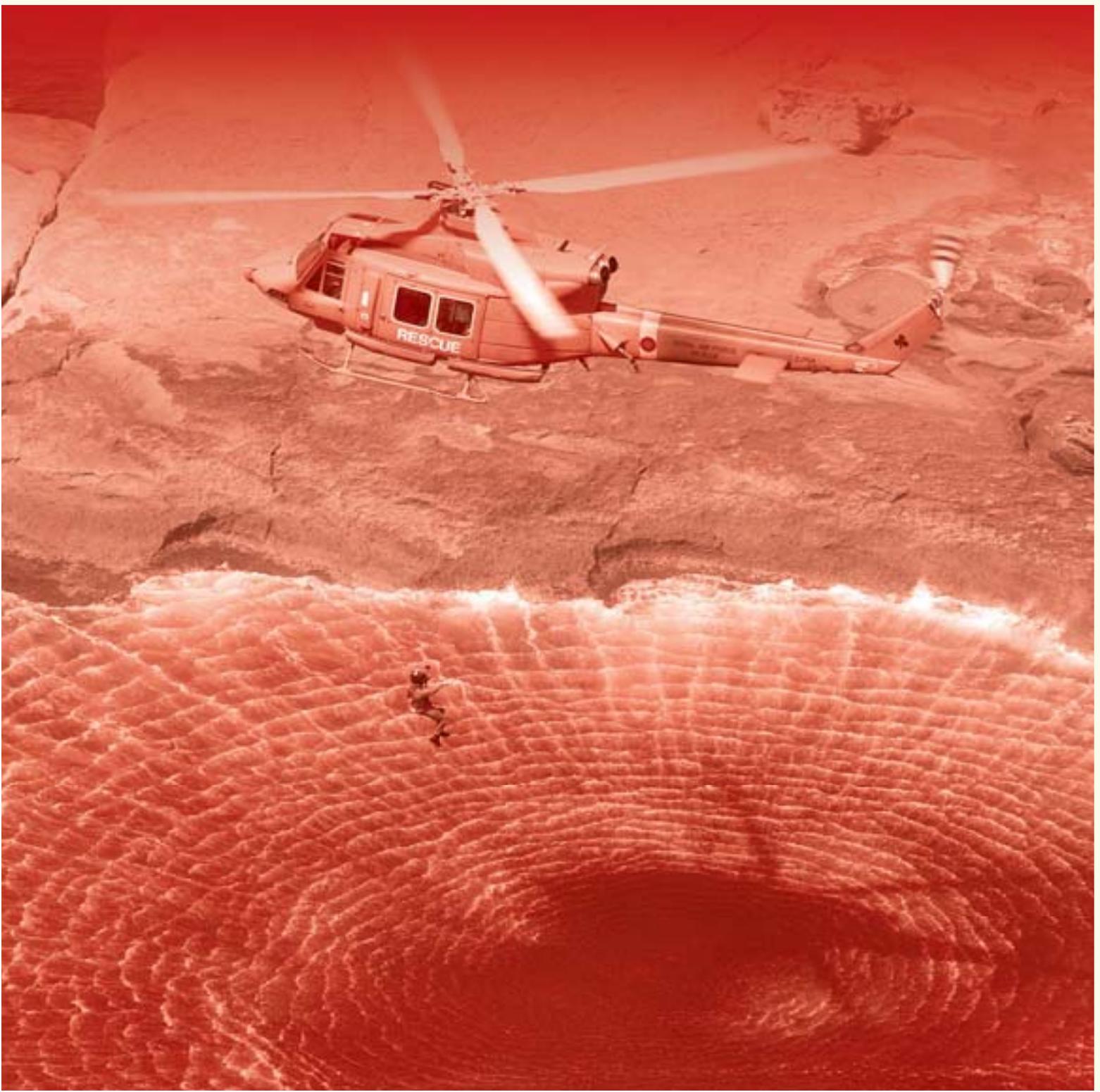


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Purpose



CURRENT OPERATIONS

Objective: To succeed in Operations and Military Tasks today.

Public Service Agreement Target (SR2004 MoD Target 1)

Achieve the objectives established by Ministers for Operations and Military Tasks in which the United Kingdom's Armed Forces are involved, including those providing support to our civil communities.

Performance Measures and Assessment

Achieve the objectives established by Ministers for Operations and Military Tasks:

- The Armed Forces continued to achieve a high degree of success against the policy and military objectives set for all Operations overseas, including in Iraq, Afghanistan and the Balkans, and in response to the South Asian earthquake;
- The Armed Forces contributed to six United Nations peacekeeping missions, in Cyprus, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Georgia, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Sudan;
- A minimum nuclear deterrent capability was maintained throughout the year;
- The security of the UK's Overseas Territories, including the Falkland Islands, Gibraltar and the Sovereign Base Areas in Cyprus, was maintained;
- Continuing support was provided to the civil authorities at home, including in Northern Ireland, responding to civil emergencies, provision of Search and Rescue and Fisheries Protection services, and the investigation and disposal of suspected explosive devices.

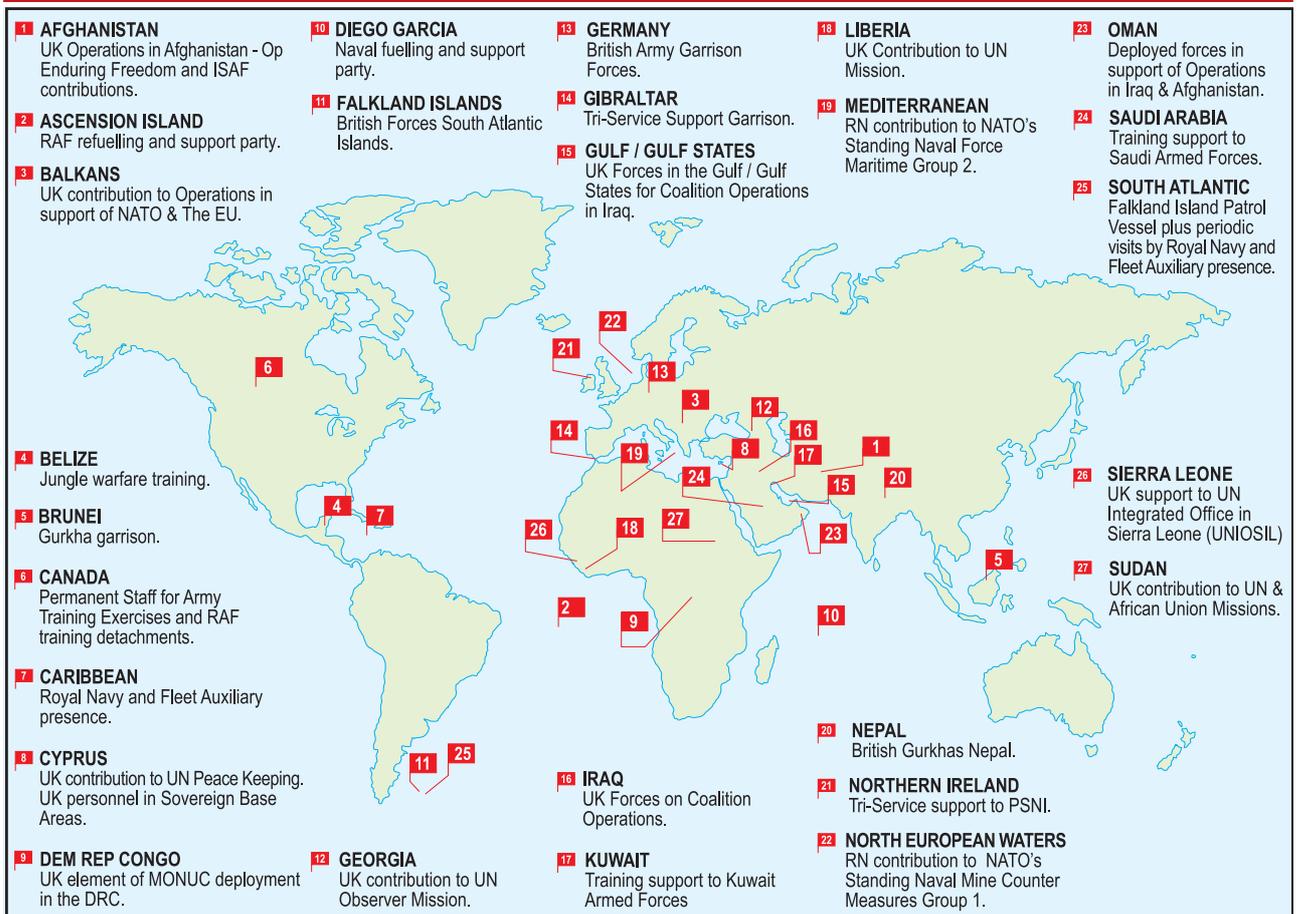
Monitor the proportion of the Armed Forces deployed in support of Operations and Military Tasks:

- The proportion of regular forces deployed on operations and other military tasks increased from about 18% in the first quarter of the year (including about 21% of the Army) to just under 20% in the last quarter of the year (including about 25% of the Army);
- The Armed Forces continued to operate above the overall level of concurrent operations for which they are resourced and structured to deliver for the fourth successive year;
- An average of about 9,200 military personnel (including over 1,300 Reserves) were deployed on, or in support of, operations in Iraq throughout the year;
- UK military personnel deployed to Afghanistan increased from about 1,000 in April 2005 to about 3,000 in April 2006 (including Reserves);
- UK military personnel deployed to the Balkans reduced from about 1,100 in April 2005 to about 900 in April 2006 (including Reserves);
- About 350 civilians were deployed on, or in support of, operations outside the UK during the year including about 160 in support of Operation TELIC.





Figure 1: Principal Deployments of the Armed Forces on 1 April 2006



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1. The purpose of Defence is to defend the United Kingdom and its interests, strengthen international peace and stability, and thereby act as a force for good in the world. Throughout the year the Armed Forces, supported by their civilian colleagues, worked successfully for this goal at home and overseas, achieving a high degree of success against their policy and military objectives. In particular, in addition to meeting their standing tasks, the Armed Forces were deployed on operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Balkans, Africa and Southern Asia. Figure 1 shows the wide range of deployments of the UK Armed Forces on 1 April 2006. They also continued to provide wide-ranging support to the civil authorities at home.

IRAQ

2. Iraq remained the UK's largest foreign theatre of operations. UK military and civilian personnel have made a significant contribution to progress in Iraq, providing security, training the Iraqi Security Forces and creating the conditions for reconstruction and restoring the political process. During 2005 there was a successful referendum on a new constitution for Iraq in October, and national elections in December. Sectarian violence remained a concern, and the February 2006 attack on the Al Askariyah

Shrine in Samara created a period of increased sectarian tension throughout Iraq.

3. The overwhelming majority of violence in Iraq remained concentrated in the four provinces of Baghdad, Al Anbar, Salah ad Din and Ninawa. Tackling this problem, with the Coalition's support, was and remains a high priority for the Iraqi authorities. Over the year the Iraqi Security Forces took on an increasing lead in delivering security as their capabilities developed. They provided all the immediate security for the referendum in October 2005 and for the December 2005 elections. They also demonstrated their growing capacity to lead counter-insurgency operations, such as in Tal Afar and the western Euphrates River Valley, and in clearing a suspected insurgent operating area north east of Samara. By 31 March 2006, with some 240,000 personnel trained and equipped, they had assumed responsibility for security in roughly 460 square miles of Baghdad and more than 11,600 square miles of other provinces in Iraq and were conducting more independent operations than the Coalition forces.



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Iraq



Training a soldier from the Iraqi Army

additional cost of operations in Iraq during 2005-06 was £958M. UK forces continued to help the Iraqis deliver security where necessary, but the focus for Coalition forces in MND(SE) over the past year has been on security sector reform to building Iraq's national capacity to provide security on its own. Particular elements included:

- training and sustaining the 10th Division of the Iraqi Army;
- training the Iraqi Police Service in conjunction with over 120 civilian police advisers part-funded by Defence;
- training the Iraqi Department of Border Enforcement to protect Iraq's southern borders with Iran, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia;
- developing the Iraqi Navy, with a Naval Assistance and Training Team of almost 50 UK personnel at Umm Qasr Naval Base, and seaborne support to the Iraqi Navy and Marines; and,
- providing an additional £35M worth of equipment and infrastructure to assist the development of the Iraqi Security Forces.

4. UK force levels were broadly stable throughout the year. On average about 9,200 UK military personnel were deployed to the region on or in support of Operation TELIC. Of these about 8,000 were based in Iraq itself, mainly in the four provinces of Al Basrah, Al Muthanna, Dhi Qar and Maysan in south-eastern Iraq covered by Multi-National Division (South East) (MND(SE)). The net



Good progress was made and by the end of the year Iraqi Security Forces in MND(SE) were increasingly leading security operations and taking on greater responsibility for the security of the Iraqi people.



A soldier talking with local Iraqi children in Al Salman

5. UK military personnel worked closely with the Department for International Development to help the Iraqis rebuild their country. The key focus in MND(SE) remained improving the quality of life for ordinary Iraqis by helping to deliver essential services like water and power, and by supporting economic development. Building on the success of the Quick Impact Projects, the MoD contributed directly to this effort through the Civil Effects Fund. This is primarily designed for the purposes of force protection, consent-building and winning 'hearts and minds'. By the end of March 2006, MND(SE) had committed around £35M of UK money to projects such as road and bridge building and repair, providing clean water supplies for isolated villages, and refurbishing schools, markets and state-run industries. Over 800 projects have been undertaken, including education, law and order and public services.

6. The Reserve Forces continued to make an invaluable contribution to the UK's military operations and commanders in the field praised their adaptability and high skill levels, reflecting the diversity of the skills they brought with them from civilian life. During 2005-06, over 1,300 Reservists were mobilised to support operations in Iraq, consisting on average about 8% of the total number of UK forces deployed. This brought the total number of Reserves mobilised in support of Operation TELIC since the end of warfighting to some 13,000. In general the period of mobilised service for reservists has been increased this year to accommodate improved pre-deployment training and post-deployment leave, with those deploying on a full-length tour now remaining in service for between seven and ten months. They provided formed units and sub-units, and reinforced regular units and formations of all the Services (such as the Royal Marines commando squadron that worked with the Iraqi authorities to provide security for the port of Umm Qasr). They also continued to provide essential specialists, such as medics, weather forecasters and air movements staff, where much of the UK Armed Forces' expertise is now concentrated in the Reserves.

7. Defence civilian personnel also continued to provide vital support to operations in Iraq, with some 160 deployed during the year (out of a total of about 350 deployed on operations outside the UK), normally for tours of up to 6 months. These personnel included policy and financial advisors to deployed UK forces and Coalition headquarters, and specialised support personnel from the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory, the Defence Fire Service and the Ministry of Defence Police. Defence civilians, working as advisors and mentors, also contributed to the development of the Iraqi Ministry of Defence. Defence contractors also continued to provide infrastructure, logistics and communication support across the whole of the UK's area of operation in southern Iraq. On 31 March 2006, there were approximately 330 Defence contractor personnel in theatre.

8. Although the MND(SE) area remained more peaceful than other parts of Iraq, UK forces continued to face risks during the conduct of their operations. Every effort is taken to minimise these risks and force protection is one of our top priorities. Nevertheless 17 UK soldiers, sailors and airmen were killed in the service of their country during the year, bringing to 103 the number killed from the start of Operation TELIC to 31 March 2006, of whom 79 were killed in action. Service personnel who died on operations overseas were brought home swiftly and with fitting ceremony. During the year a full review of the policy for repatriation of the dead confirmed that the procedures remained appropriate and dignified, and met the needs of both the bereaved families and the Services.

AFGHANISTAN

9. The UK has been a key contributor of international military support to Afghanistan, particularly through the successful NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). ISAF has had a positive role in bringing security to Kabul and the north of the country, in helping the central government extend its influence in the provinces, and in helping the Afghan authorities provide security during the successful parliamentary election in September 2005. This was a crucial milestone in the democratic development and peaceful evolution of the country, consolidating the progress made in the 2004 presidential elections. The first democratically elected parliament in over 30 years was inaugurated in December 2005. The London Conference held on 31 January/1 February 2006 and jointly chaired by the UN, the UK and Afghanistan launched the 'Afghanistan Compact' marking the beginning of a new phase of international engagement with increased emphasis on Afghan ownership of the reform process. At the conference \$10.5 billion was pledged over the next three financial years, including some £500M from the UK. The security situation remained fragile, and the number of suicide attacks rose around the turn of the year, but the presence of ISAF and coalition forces continued to prevent Taliban or other armed groups from presenting a credible threat to long-term stability and security in Afghanistan. Recorded opium production fell by 21% in 2005 (compared to 2004), although these levels are unlikely to be maintained into 2006.



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Afghanistan

10. A number of military-civilian Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) are based in the Afghan provinces to extend the Afghan Government's presence and influence and to facilitate improved local stability and security, reconstruction and development. At the beginning of the year, the UK provided PRTs in Meymaneh (handed over to Norway in September 2005) and Mazar-e Sharif in the north of Afghanistan, and a Forward Support Base also in Mazar-e Sharif. In March 2006, UK troops in the PRT in Mazar-e Sharif reported the largest ever weapons cache found in the country. We provided an infantry company to help ISAF provide security in the capital, Kabul, a training team to help train Afghan National Army non-commissioned officers, and staff officers for ISAF HQ and Combined Forces Command Afghanistan. We also deployed six Harrier GR7 aircraft to Kandahar in the south-east of the country to support both ISAF and US-led coalition operations by providing close air support and reconnaissance capabilities. During the year we expanded our support to security sector reform, launching a new Officer Candidate School in Kabul, based on the Sandhurst model. Courses began on 3 April 2006, and the school will train up to 400 junior officers per year. We are also providing two Defence civil servants as advisors to help the Afghan Ministry of Defence reform, develop the Afghan National Army and develop civilian capacity in the Afghan Ministry of Defence.

11. During the year, preparations began for ISAF expansion into the south to bring stability and security to a volatile region of the country. A preliminary team started preparing the ground in late 2005 to build infrastructure, and was subsequently reinforced by 850 additional engineers and Royal Marines (for force protection). In January 2006, we announced that we would deploy 3,300 UK troops in Helmand Province, comprising a UK Taskforce and a UK-led Provincial Reconstruction Team. The US, Canada, The Netherlands, Denmark, Australia, Romania and Estonia are also contributing. The UK Taskforce comprises elements of the Headquarters of 16 Air Assault Brigade, an airborne infantry battlegroup, eight Apache Attack Helicopters (on their first operational deployment), four Lynx Light Utility Helicopters, six Chinook Support Helicopters, armoured reconnaissance vehicles, a battery of 105mm Light Guns, a battery of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, and supporting specialist logistics, engineering

and medical assets. We are also deploying four additional C-130 Hercules transport aircraft. In light of this increasing commitment we handed over our remaining northern activities to ISAF partners in March 2006. In April 2006 we announced that we were extending our deployment of six Harrier GR7 aircraft to Kandahar until March 2007. We assumed command of ISAF for a nine month period in May 2006, using HQ Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC), supported by elements of 1 Signal Brigade, thus committing a further 1,000 personnel.



Royal Marines providing security in Helmand Province

12. Reflecting this growing contribution to Afghan security and stability, the number of UK military personnel deployed to Afghanistan increased from about 500 in April 2004 to about 1,000 in April 2005, and over 3,000 in April 2006. This will continue to increase steadily to a peak of around 5,700 in the summer of 2006, and then drop to below 5,000 by the autumn, when the infrastructure is completed. The Reserve Forces continue to contribute across the full range of our operations in Afghanistan, across all three Services and about 50 Defence civilian personnel were deployed. The total net additional cost of operations in Afghanistan during the year was £199M.

THE BALKANS

13. The UK continued to contribute to peace support operations in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo. The UK commanded the EU military mission in Bosnia (EUFOR) throughout 2005, handing over to Italy in December. The structure of EUFOR remained largely unaltered with 33 contributing nations, 11 of which are non-EU members, and force levels of around 6,300 personnel. Our contribution reduced from 850 to 690 personnel following a force level review. During 2005-06 the NATO Kosovo Force (KFOR) transformed from Multinational Brigades to Multinational Task Forces, providing a more flexible and intelligence-led capability. The UK contribution remained small, falling from around 200 to 180 personnel, but provided a valuable specialist capability able to deploy across the province. We also provided one third of the Operational Reserve Force capability able to deploy to Bosnia and Kosovo. The total net additional cost of operations in the Balkans during the year was £63M.



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The Balkans

14. Bosnia's reform programme made significant progress. This included the establishment of a single Ministry of Defence and a single multi-ethnic armed force, and a growing confidence and capacity of the local authorities, assisted by EUFOR when necessary, to recover illegally held weapons, ammunition and explosives and to combat organised crime. Agreement of the principles of police reform enabled the European Union formally to open Stabilisation and Association Agreement negotiations. The international community continued its pursuit of persons indicted for war crimes. Nine fugitives were apprehended, including Ante Gotovina, a former Croatia general, but Radovan Karadzic, a former Bosnian Serb leader, and Ratko Mladic, former chief of the Bosnian Serb army, remained at large. We provided some £1M Global Conflict Prevention Pool funds for post-conflict reconstruction through the UK-led Peace Support Operations Training Centre in Bosnia. This provides professional military education for junior officers to encourage common bonds between entities and strengthens the state structure. We also provided training and advice to former soldiers returning to civilian life through the Transitional Assistance to Demobilised Soldiers project.

15. Following the report on the UN Comprehensive Review of Standards, Martti Ahtisaari, a former president of Finland, was appointed to lead the process of talks to determine the future status of Kosovo in November 2005. We continued to support UN work to transform and professionalise the Kosovo Protection Corps, appointing a senior military officer and continuing the successful Train the Trainer demining programme. The MoD Police continued to support the UN Police mission in Kosovo, but the number of officers deployed reduced from around 70 to 55 reflecting the reducing size of the UN police force.

CRISIS RESPONSE OPERATIONS

16. During the year the MoD made significant and wide-ranging contributions to two overseas humanitarian relief operations. In September 2005 we provided 475,000 ration packs for the Hurricane Katrina disaster relief effort (although US environmental regulations prevented their use at that time). Two UK Royal Navy Hydrographic specialists also supplemented the US Coastal Survey Team and we provided aviation support to the NATO Response Force. In October 2005, following the devastating earthquake in South Asia, we provided assistance both bilaterally and through NATO. Three heavy-lift CH-47 Chinook helicopters successfully delivered nearly 1,700 tonnes of aid, flying over 330 hours. We also provided four C-130 Hercules to the NATO airbridge to transport aid into Pakistan (one of these C-130s was not in the event required), and one RAF C-17 aircraft transported two civilian helicopters from Seville to Pakistan. An 86-man party of Royal Engineers (supported by Royal Marines) constructed emergency shelters for villagers in remote areas above 5,500 ft. Further assistance included a two-person Mobile Air Operations Team, a four person Mobile Medical Team, an Operational Reconnaissance Team, four logistics planners deployed to the UN Joint Logistics Centre and various personnel to the Joint Force Air Component Command, and 23,000 vegetarian and Halal ration packs.

UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

17. The UK remains committed to supporting United Nations (UN) operations and during 2005-06 we contributed to six UN Peacekeeping Missions, in Cyprus, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Georgia, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Sudan. The number of personnel at the UN Mission in Cyprus remained static at about 860 including about 280 personnel from the UK. At 1 April 2006 the number of UK military personnel dedicated to UN Peacekeeping Operations was about 300. This included staff officers (whose specialist skills and experience is highly valued in a range of UN Mission HQ staff appointments) as well as troops, through NATO and the EU, in support of UN-mandated missions.

OTHER MILITARY TASKS

Independent Nuclear Deterrent

18. The UK's Trident submarine force continued to provide a constant and independent nuclear deterrent capability at sea, in support of NATO and as the ultimate guarantee of our national security. A major investment in new facilities and staff at the Atomic Weapons Establishment, Aldermaston, was announced in July 2005. This will ensure that our Trident warheads remain reliable and safe throughout their intended in-service life. Work has also now started to prepare for decisions on the future of the UK's nuclear deterrent beyond the planned life of the current system. These decisions are likely to be necessary during the current Parliament.



Royal Engineers constructing emergency shelters in South Asia



A Chinook delivering humanitarian aid in South Asia

Security of UK Overseas Territories

19. Some 3,900 UK military personnel, together with Defence civil servants and locally employed civilians, continued to be stationed or deployed in support of the security and defence of the UK's Overseas Territories. In Cyprus we maintained important military facilities within the Eastern and Western Sovereign Base Areas. UK Forces in the Falkland Islands continued to demonstrate the Government's commitment to the security of the UK Territories in the South Atlantic, including South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands. HMS Endurance both maintained British interests in the South Atlantic and Antarctica and helped to police the Antarctic Treaty to preserve the pristine nature of Antarctica. Gibraltar continued to provide a Forward Mounting Base with Gibraltar-based UK Armed Forces providing valuable security, logistics, communications and training facilities in support of operations.

MILITARY AID TO THE CIVIL AUTHORITIES

20. The response to disruptive challenges in the UK will always be a civil one, with the civil authorities taking the lead in dealing with the consequences of emergencies as well as the maintenance of the security of the citizen in the UK. The MoD fully supports enhanced resilience amongst responders, including the statutory duties placed upon them, by the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. Civil capabilities are improving all the time, reflecting investment in new capabilities and the development of more resilient and effective emergency services and local responders. At the same time, the Armed Forces regularly provide a limited number of niche capabilities and, if it proves essential, can augment the civil response, drawing on specialist military skills. The number of requests for support declined markedly in 2005-06, although they tended to increase in complexity. Provision of Explosive Ordnance Disposal support to the police outside London is regular and routine. Specialist capabilities are also deployed in support of criminal investigations and in support of police security operations protecting high profile events. Fairly extensive logistics support was provided to the

police security operation protecting the G8 Summit at Gleneagles in July, and in the same month we met in full the requests for logistic and technical support to the Metropolitan Police response to the London bombings. Towards the end of the year, the Armed Forces were deployed to provide emergency fire cover during local fire strikes in Suffolk and the West Midlands. We welcomed the enhancement to resilience within the Fire and Rescue Service: alternative arrangements put in place by the Chief Fire Officer for Suffolk meant that Armed Forces were not actually used during that dispute. In close cooperation with other Government departments, agencies, and air traffic control authorities, the Royal Air Force also continuously provide a continuous immediate air reaction capability ensuring the integrity of UK Airspace at all times.

Northern Ireland

21. 2005-06 was a momentous year for operations in Northern Ireland. The military played a key role, in support of the Police Service of Northern Ireland, in establishing a security situation in which significant progress was made towards achieving an enduring political solution. Following the cessation of the Provisional IRA's armed campaign, the process of Armed Forces Normalisation commenced on 1 August 2005. This will mean the end of Operation BANNER, under which the Armed Forces have provided support to the police in Northern Ireland for over 30 years. The normalisation programme will result in a reduction in troop levels to a standing garrison of no more than 5,000, accommodated in no more than 11 core sites, by 1 August 2007. A further element of the programme, also announced on 1 August 2005, was the disbandment of the three battalions of the Royal Irish (Home Service), who played a critical role throughout the Troubles. In March 2006 the Government announced the terms of a settlement that treats them fairly and with the dignity and respect they deserve. Normalisation progress is being scrutinised by the Independent Monitoring Commission, which reported in March 2006 that significant steps had already been taken towards meeting the required reductions in line with the timeframe laid down in the Joint Declaration. Despite the security improvements,



the threat from dissident Republicans continued; military supported operations focussed on disrupting their activity. The extreme Loyalist violence at Whiterock in Belfast in September 2005 also provided a reminder of the unpredictable nature of violence in Northern Ireland and demonstrated the Armed Forces' riot control capability and the essential support they provide to the Police. Further information on Northern Ireland is set out in the essay on page 67.

Fisheries Protection

22. In 2005-06 the Fishery Protection Squadron, part of the Royal Navy's Portsmouth Flotilla, delivered 855 Fishery Patrol Days to the Marine Fisheries Agency (880 in 2004-05), part of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. Of these, 72% were delivered by the River Class Offshore Patrol Vessels, which are demonstrating extremely high levels of availability through the innovative Contractor Logistic Support arrangement provided by Vosper Thornycroft. A total of 5,025 fishing vessels were identified (5,001 in 2004-05) of which 1,312 were boarded (1,748 in 2004-05), leading to discovery of 290 infringements (123 in 2004-05). Of the vessels boarded, 19 were detained at a UK port for further investigation and prosecution (15 in 2004-05). Although the total number of boardings was substantially down on last year (owing mainly to weather factors) the number of detected infringements more than doubled, demonstrating that the move towards more intelligence-led operations is beginning to be effective.

Search and Rescue

23. The military Search and Rescue service exists to help military personnel and civilian aircrew in difficulty. In practice, most of the work involves assisting shipping or individuals in distress on land and at sea, in and around the UK, in support of the Emergency Services and the Department for Transport's Maritime Coastguard Agency (MCA). RN and RAF helicopters continued to maintain constant Search and Rescue cover within the UK Search and Rescue Region throughout the year, together with the Royal Air Force's Mountain Rescue Service and Nimrod maritime patrol aircraft. The RAF also provided helicopters in Cyprus and the Falkland Islands. The Armed Forces' rescue services were called out on 1,833 occasions in 2005-06 (1,740 in 2004-05), recovering and assisting 1,466 people (1,494 in 2004-05). On 9 May 2006 we announced plans for the MoD and MCA to launch a joint Private Finance Initiative competition to replace the ageing RN and RAF Sea King and MCA civilian Search and Rescue helicopters. The single contract will retain a high proportion of military aircrew, maintain the same high quality service and bring benefits to UK Search and Rescue operations as a whole.

Counter-Drugs Operations



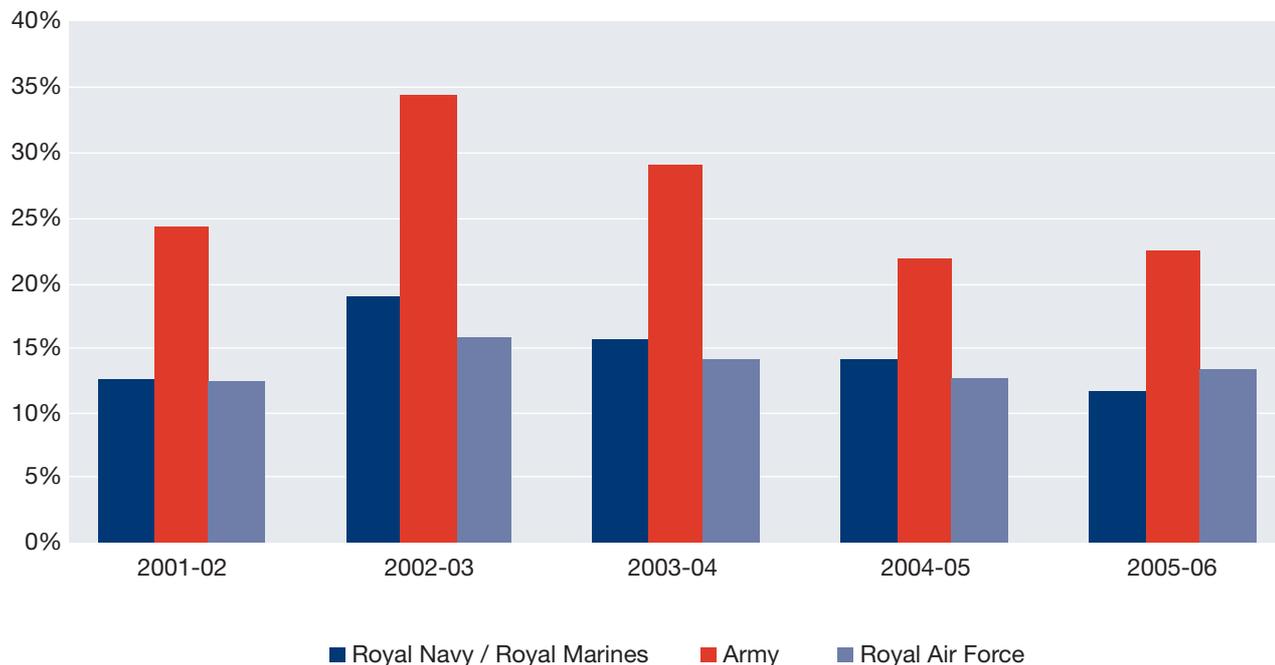
A boarding party from HMS Cumberland seizes 2 tonnes of cocaine in the Caribbean

24. The Armed Forces provided assistance to HM Revenue and Customs and to other anti-narcotics agencies around the world. In particular, RN ships deployed to the Caribbean undertook patrols and joint operations with the US Coast Guard and other international partners. British Forces were directly involved in the seizure of around 14 tonnes of cocaine, with a UK street value of nearly £840 million, and the arrest of 25 traffickers.

ACTIVITY AND CONCURRENCY LEVELS

25. The proportion of regular forces deployed on operations and other military tasks increased from about 18% in the first quarter of 2005-06 (including about 21% of the Army), to just under 20% in the last quarter of the year (including about 25% of the Army). Figure 2 sets out the annual average activity level by Service for the last five years.

Figure 2: Percentage of Regular Armed Forces Undertaking Operations and other Military Tasks



26. During the year, the Royal Navy maintained the Continuous at Sea Deterrent and a continuous presence in the Gulf and the South Atlantic, and carried out patrols in the Indian Ocean and the Caribbean. Royal Marines from 42 Commando deployed to Pakistan to provide humanitarian relief, and to Helmand province in Afghanistan. The Royal Navy also conducted a Five Powers Defence Arrangements deployment in South East Asia. At home, the Royal Navy helped to maintain the integrity of UK territorial waters and economic zones. The Royal Navy also provided a major contribution to the commemoration of the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar. The overall percentage of Naval Service personnel deployed on operations throughout 2005-2006 ranged from 11.6% in Quarter 1 to 13.5% in Quarter 4.

27. The overall percentage of Army personnel committed to operations throughout 2005-2006 grew from 21.0%

in Quarter 1 to 25.1% in Quarter 4, although some arms were much busier than others (see paragraph 181). The Army deployed troops on operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, Northern Ireland, Bosnia, Kosovo and Sierra Leone and supported a variety of worldwide UN operations (including Cyprus). In addition, the Army has been involved in several UK operations, including providing ongoing support to Global Counter Terrorism and provided earthquake relief in Pakistan.

28. The percentage of Royal Air Force personnel deployed on operations during 2005-06 ranged from 13.3% in the first quarter to 13.4% in the fourth quarter. The Royal Air Force's primary areas of overseas involvement continued to be the Gulf, Afghanistan and the Balkans. The Royal Air Force also contributed to the permanent British Forces commitments in Northern Ireland and the Falkland Islands, in addition to a range of other ongoing Military Tasks.

Table 1: Percentage of Regular Armed Forces undertaking Operations and other Military Tasks during 2005-06

	January 2006 to March 2006	October 2005 to December 2005	July 2005 to September 2005	April 2005 to June 2005
Navy/Marines	13.5%	12.1%	9.3%	11.6%
Army	25.1%	22.8%	22.0%	21.0%
RAF	13.4%	12.3%	11.9%	13.3%
Overall	19.8%	18.7%	17.5%	18.0%

Notes:

- Percentages are quarterly averages and reflect the burden of activity imposed by the operations and military tasks undertaken by each service. Figures are based on man-day equivalents.
- A list of Military Tasks can be found on the Department's website (www.mod.uk).



29. These activity level figures show, in percentage terms, the overall burden of the activity required to conduct the operations and military tasks undertaken by each service. They indicate a level of activity that can be compared to previous periods, and show how activity fluctuates throughout the year, but the figures themselves neither fully articulate the effect on our people of operating at a level above that for which we are structured to deliver (more information on this is contained in paragraphs 180-182) nor the burden on certain specialist enabling capabilities.

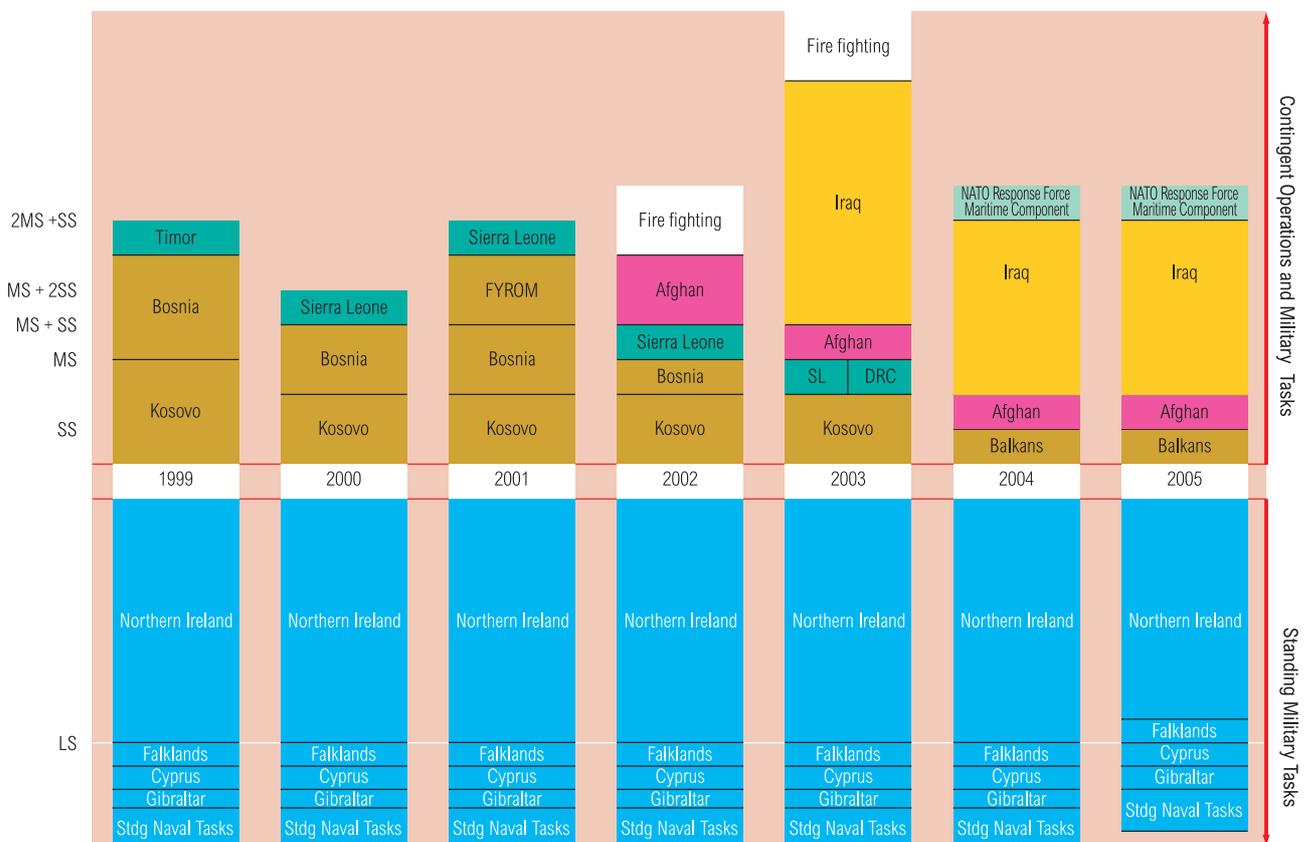
30. The level of concurrent operations we plan to be able to conduct and which we are resourced to have the capacity to deliver without creating overstretch, was set out in the December 2003 Defence White Paper *Delivering Security in a Changing World*. This stated that we should be able to:

- mount an enduring Medium Scale (MS) peace support operation simultaneously with an enduring Small Scale (SS) peace support operation and a one-off Small Scale intervention operation;

- reconfigure our forces rapidly to carry out the enduring Medium Scale peace support operation and a Small Scale peace support operation simultaneously with a limited Medium Scale intervention operation; and,
- given time to prepare, undertake a demanding one-off Large Scale (LS) operation while still maintaining a commitment to a simple Small Scale peace support operation.

Figure 3 sets out in broad terms the level of concurrent operations the MoD and Armed Forces have in fact sustained since 1999. We have operated at the limits of, or above, the level that we are resourced and structured to deliver, for six of the last seven years, and consistently above that level since 2002.

Figure 3: Concurrency 1999-2005



SS, MS and LS stand for Small, Medium and Large Scale Operations

FURTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION

31. Additional information on Current Operations is available from the following sources:

- quarterly PSA reports to HM Treasury at www.mod.uk;
- *UK Defence Statistics 2006* available at www.dasa.mod.uk (from September 2006);
- detailed information on current operations at www.operations.mod.uk;
- NAO Report *Ministry of Defence Reserve Forces* HC 964 dated 28 March 06 available at www.nao.org.uk;
- Cost of Operations at paragraph 260 and the analysis of Conflict Prevention costs at Note 2 to the accounts on page 200.
- the Defence Committee Sixth Report of Session 2004-05 on *Iraq: An Initial Assessment of Post Conflict Operations* (HC 65-I on 24 March 2005) available at www.parliament.the-stationery-office.co.uk;
- *The Government's response to The Defence Committee Sixth Report of Session 2004-05 on Iraq: An Initial Assessment of Post Conflict Operations* (HC436 on 20 July 05) available at www.mod.uk;
- information on the Afghanistan Compact at www.fco.gov.uk;
- the Defence Committee Fourth Report of Session 2005-06 on *Costs of peace-keeping in Iraq and Afghanistan: Spring Supplementary Estimates 2005-06* (HC 980 on 16 March 2006) available at www.parliament.the-stationery-office.co.uk;
- *The Government's response to The Defence Committee Fourth Report of Session 2005-06 on Costs of peace-keeping in Iraq and Afghanistan: Spring Supplementary Estimates 2005-06* (HC1136);
- the Defence Committee Fifth Report of Session 2005-06 on *The UK Deployment to Afghanistan* (HC558 on 6 April 2006);
- Defence White Paper *Delivering Security in a Changing World*, (Cm 6041-I in December 2003) available at www.mod.uk.



Essay: Iraq – Reconstruction and Security Sector Reform

Under the terms of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1637, and as part of the coalition in Iraq, the United Kingdom is committed to helping the Iraqi people and their elected representatives establish a free, democratic and unified Iraq. As part of this commitment, the MoD is contributing to rebuilding the Iraqi Security Forces and delivering a security environment in support of wider economic and political progress. Iraq's infrastructure and public services have degraded over many years through mismanagement and neglect. Our Armed Forces provide the basic security that enables stabilisation, reconstruction and recovery. Their wider logistics, personnel, medical and project management support underpins all UK government activity in Iraq.

Within the UK's area of responsibility – which is known as Multi-National Division (South East), and covers 4 provinces in Southern Iraq – we have established strong and effective working relationships with the Department for International Development (DFID), the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), and Iraqi colleagues, to deliver Security Sector Reform and other development, reconstruction and capacity building efforts. We are strengthening our joined-up approach through the establishment of a Provincial Reconstruction Team located in Basra. Basra is Iraq's second largest city with a population of over 1.5 million and this joint civilian and military team will help the provincial authorities develop their capability and capacity in a range of areas including rule of law, governance and provincial administration. It will also play an important role in coordinating a framework of donors and agencies working in the province.

The main Defence contribution to security sector reform is the training and mentoring of the 10th (Southern) Division of the Iraqi Army. The Divisional Headquarters is established next to the UK's military headquarters in Basra to facilitate direct mentoring of the Divisional Headquarters Staff. We also provide mentors to all the Iraqi Army Brigade Headquarters in MND(SE). UK forces train the Iraqi Army, in barracks and on joint operations. By 31 March 2006, 8 out of 10 battalions of the 10th Division of the Iraqi Army had been formed and completed basic training. We aim to develop capability rather than just raw numbers, and are therefore also working to develop Iraqi leadership, command and control, intelligence and logistics capacities. These are essential for the Iraqi Armed Forces to operate independently and to provide security to their own people.

DFID is the lead department for UK reconstruction efforts in Iraq and building the capacity of the local government. We work closely with DFID to achieve greater effect and to benefit more Iraqis than would otherwise have been the case. UK military personnel, with their greater ability to move freely and quickly and their expertise in project management and logistics, complement DFID's technical expertise in governance. An example of this joined up working is the refurbishment of the Basra Provincial Council building. DFID received the request for the refurbishment project and provided the funding, and the Armed Forces provided project management and security expertise. This gave our Service personnel visibility within the local community and demonstrated their commitment to supporting Iraq's reconstruction and to improving security. MoD has also contributed funding to a number of quick impact reconstruction projects such as road and bridge building and repair, provision of clean water supplies for isolated villages, school refurbishment, provision of a centre for the disabled, and construction of children's play areas. These projects often involve the Iraqis themselves and are key to winning the hearts and minds of local people.

Stable society rests upon the rule of law, a crucial component of which is an effective police force. We work closely with the FCO on the UK programme to train over 25,000 Iraqi Police officers. Some 16,000 had been trained by 31 March 2006. The FCO has organised provision of over 120 civilian police advisors, including International Police Advisors and seconded UK civilian police officers, to train and mentor the Iraqi police. Defence is contributing significant resources to this programme. We have provided officers from the MoD Police Force and our Armed Forces work alongside the police advisors in theatre to provide basic skills training. We will continue providing this resource until the Iraqi authorities are able to take on responsibility for security themselves.

FUTURE OPERATIONS

Objective: Be ready for the tasks of tomorrow.

Public Service Agreement Target (SR2004 MoD Target 3)

Generate forces which can be deployed, sustained and recovered at the scales of effort required to meet the government's strategic objectives.

Performance Measures and Assessment

- The National Audit Office found that the Department has a good system for reporting the readiness levels of the Armed Forces.

Military Capability – by April 2008 achieve 73% in the numbers of Force Elements reporting no serious or critical weakness against peacetime readiness targets:

- An average of 77% of Force Elements reported no critical or serious weaknesses in 2005-06;
- No Force Elements reported critical weaknesses from April to December 2005. 2% reported critical weaknesses from January to March 2006;
- The proportion of Force Elements reporting serious weaknesses increased from 25% in the first quarter to 26% in the last quarter of the year.

Force Generation – by April 2008 achieve 71% of Force Elements reporting no serious or critical weakness against the assessed ability to move from peacetime to immediate readiness:

- An average of 70% of Force Elements reported no critical or serious weaknesses in 2005-06;
- The proportion of Force Elements reporting critical weaknesses rose from 1% in the first quarter to 11% in the last quarter of the year;
- The proportion of Force Elements reporting serious weaknesses increased from 30% in the first quarter to 39% in the last quarter of the year.

Force Sustainability – by April 2008 achieve 5% improvement in the ability to Deploy, Sustain and Recover forces for Contingent Military Tasks against the most demanding concurrency assumptions in Defence Planning Assumptions:

- We are developing a system of assessment to report against this target. It is likely that performance will be lower than for the other two readiness measures.





READINESS

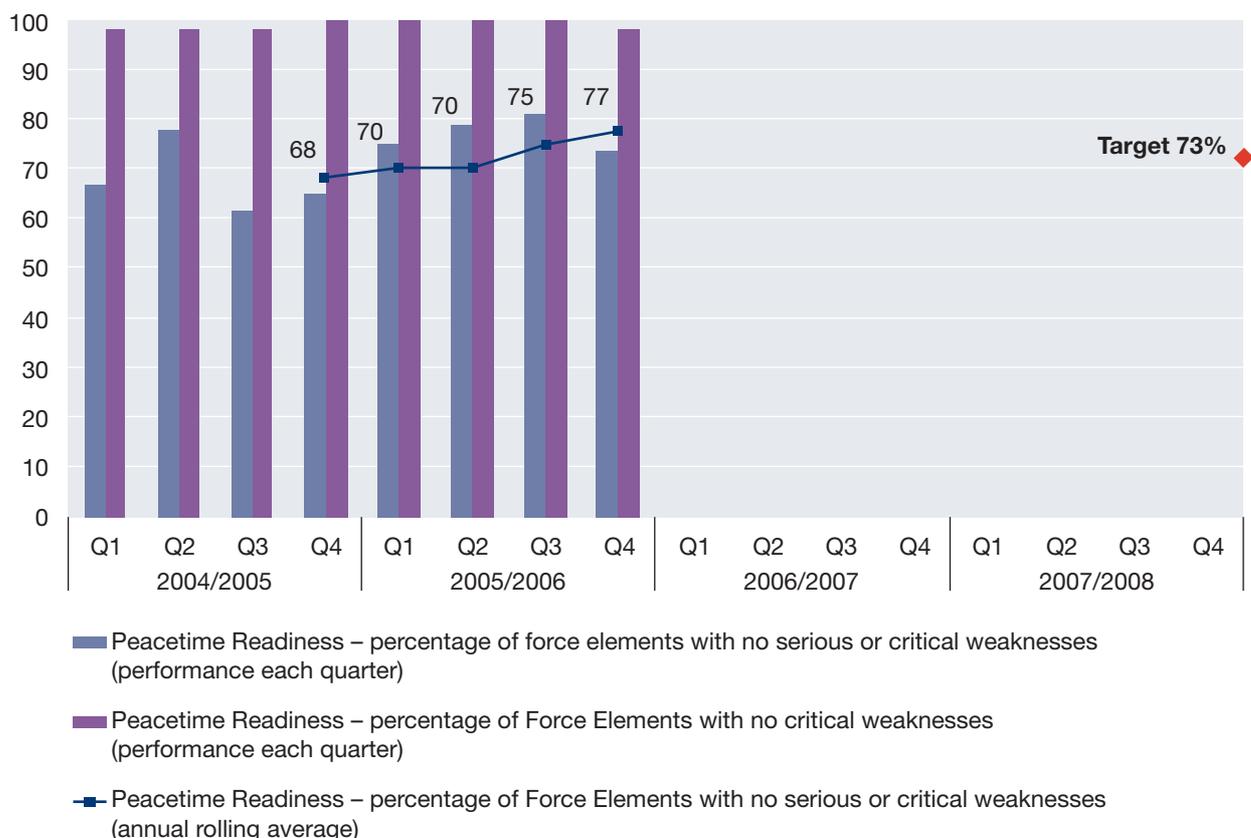
32. We use a system of graduated readiness to ensure that the right Force Elements (such as an Aircraft Carrier, an Army Brigade or an aircraft) are ready to deploy as required. Measuring and aggregating readiness is complex. To achieve peacetime readiness requirements the three Services are each set specific parameters for manning levels, equipment support and collective training (that is the training units do together to ensure they can fight effectively as part of a larger force). Inevitably, however, while the operational tempo remains above the level which Defence is resourced to have the capacity to sustain, there is an impact on our ability to take on further commitments.

Performance against PSA Targets

33. Despite operating above our planning assumptions, by the end of the year we had achieved the Public Service Agreement target for readiness set out in the 2004 Spending Review. This is measured against peacetime readiness

requirements, which require us to have our forces ready to respond to events in line with the levels envisaged in our planning assumptions. Between January 2005 and December 2005 no Force Elements reported critical weaknesses that would have made their deployment on operations in the required timescale almost impossible. However during the last quarter of the year 2% of Force Elements reported critical weaknesses relating to Royal Navy Readiness as detailed in paragraph 39. The proportion of Force Elements reporting serious weaknesses that would make deploying them within the required time difficult but not impossible increased from 25% in the first quarter to 26% in the fourth quarter. Over the year as a whole an average of 77% of Force Elements reported no critical or serious weaknesses in achieving their peacetime readiness – achieving our PSA target of 73% two years early. Despite this, the percentage of force elements still reporting serious weaknesses remains significant and it will be difficult to maintain this level of performance with our continuing high operational tempo.

Figure 4: Peacetime readiness



34. Under the PSA Readiness Target we also report on our ability to generate force elements from peacetime to immediate readiness, with a target of a 5% improvement to 71% reporting no serious or critical weaknesses by April 2008. Over 2005-06 an average of 70% of Force Elements reported no serious or critical weaknesses – slightly below the target. The slightly lower level of performance than that achieved for peacetime readiness reflects the pressure on the Armed Services resulting from operating above the Defence Planning Assumptions and concerns arising from our collective training (see paragraph 44-45).

35. Finally, the PSA Target requires us to report our ability to deploy the Armed Forces on operations at the most demanding level assumed by our planning assumptions (2 medium and a small scale concurrently), sustain them in theatre and thereafter recover them to their home bases. We have found that measuring this capability in the same way to the other readiness targets has proved significantly more complex than we had expected when negotiating this target in the 2004 Spending Review.

36. Although we are yet to articulate this capability in the same quantitative way as other measures of our readiness, we do make regular qualitative assessments. There have been some minor improvements this year, in terms of our assessed ability to support some Force Elements, in the Land environment and in terms of our assessed ability to deploy Force Elements, which we call strategic lift. This remains a particularly challenging area,

reflecting the considerable calls made on the enabling assets that allow us to deploy, sustain and recover the full range of our force elements.

37. We are conducting ongoing work to develop a system of assessment that will allow us to report against this target in a way consistent with how the other elements of readiness are reported, including historical performance across the Spending Review period measured against consistent baseline information for 2004-05. To support this requirement the ongoing Logistic Sustainability and Deployability Audit has sought, explicitly, to articulate for the first time the Total Logistic Requirement and to reach judgements about what might be made available within the relevant warning times in order to support operations up to the most demanding level envisaged in Defence Planning Assumptions. This audit provided an updated assessment of sustainability and in so doing has provided the foundation for the articulation of the requirement in output terms. In future this will allow us to report our ability to deploy the Armed Forces on operations at the most demanding level assumed by Defence Planning assumptions in a way which is analogous to Force Elements at Readiness.

38. In June 2005 the National Audit Office (NAO) published a report on *Assessing and Reporting Military Readiness*. The NAO found that the Department has a good system for reporting the readiness levels of the Armed Forces, that this system is continuously improving,

Figure 5: Assessed ability to generate force elements from peacetime to immediate readiness



- Ability to generate from peacetime readiness to immediate readiness – percentage of Force Elements with no serious or critical weaknesses (performance each quarter)
- Ability to generate from peacetime readiness to immediate readiness – percentage of Force Elements with no critical weaknesses (performance each quarter)
- Ability to generate from peacetime readiness to immediate readiness – percentage of Force Elements with no serious or critical weaknesses (annual rolling average)



that it is used by commanders who have expressed confidence in it, that it has been validated by recent operations, and that it compares well with the systems used by other countries. The Public Accounts Committee then conducted a further enquiry into military readiness, publishing its report in January 2006. It also concluded that Department has developed a sophisticated system for defining, measuring, and reporting the readiness of the Armed Forces and made a few specific recommendations, which the Government acknowledged in its formal response in April.

Royal Navy Readiness

39. The Royal Navy met all its operational commitments within Home waters and overseas during 2005-06, maintaining a permanent presence in the Gulf, the Atlantic and within NATO's standing forces as well as sustaining the national strategic deterrent. However, while the Royal Navy broadly continued to meet mandated readiness targets, the combination of a few critical specialist manpower shortages, difficulties with logistic support and industrial challenges did impact, in some areas, on overall readiness states. These were manifested towards the end of the year in Merlin Mk1 Helicopter Fleet readiness and availability of amphibious support shipping. Work is in hand to address these and other support issues to ensure the Royal Navy is ready in all respects to respond to the operational demands placed upon it.

Army Readiness

40. The Army remained heavily committed to operations throughout the year. It successfully delivered trained and prepared Force Elements for all UK and overseas operations, but this high level of commitment meant that it could only maintain the Spearhead Land Element of the Joint Rapid Reaction Forces at very high readiness for all of the year, and the Airborne Task Force for only 75% of the year. The continued high level of operational commitment in Iraq and Afghanistan and the simultaneous programme to bring the Bowman communications system into service in the Field Army would have very substantially limited the Army's ability to provide a further High Readiness Brigade sized grouping to the Joint Rapid Reaction Forces second echelon for any additional contingent operation had this been required.



Soldiers storming a beach on exercise

Royal Air Force Readiness

41. The Royal Air Force continued to meet its out of area commitments and enduring Military Tasks in 2005-06, contributing forces to a number of theatres around the world including the Gulf, Northern Ireland, South Atlantic, Afghanistan and the Balkans. However, the readiness levels of some Force Elements (such as Hercules and Nimrod MR2) were slightly lower than required owing to modification and maintenance programmes, spells of poor serviceability and specific manning imbalances.

JOINT RAPID REACTION FORCES

42. The Joint Rapid Reaction Forces (JRRF) provide a pool of capable and rapidly deployable Force Elements, trained and available for short notice deployments in support of Britain's foreign and security policy objectives. The JRRF planning requirement is to meet the concurrency levels set out in paragraph 30. It operated above these levels throughout the year, and the expansion of operations in Afghanistan whilst maintaining a high level of commitment in Iraq was particularly stretching. The Land component has been under particular pressure, with personnel deployed in Afghanistan, Iraq and the Balkans. This would have severely constrained its ability to support any further short notice deployments had these been required. Other JRRF force elements, such as the Spearhead air assets, have also been heavily committed to current operations and therefore been unavailable to the JRRF pool.



16 Air Assault Brigade on exercise

43. The Joint Force Headquarters (JFHQ), which provides the standing operational headquarters to form the nucleus of a UK response to emerging crises, also maintained a high tempo of operational and training activity over the year. Operational activity included assistance to UK Embassies in the preparation of evacuation plans, and assistance to an EU Headquarters in Indonesia. Elements from the JFHQ deployed to Afghanistan to commence early UK shaping operations within Helmand province. There have been varying degrees of engagement in Africa, with staff assisting in the United Nations / African Union transition planning in Sudan and a full JFHQ Exercise in Malawi. The training programme included

several larger force projection and planning exercises, such as a combined exercise with the Norwegian Armed Forces and a Peace Enforcement exercise drawing on wider expertise from other Government Departments and the newly-created Post Conflict Reconstruction Unit. The Joint Force Logistics Command HQ, the Permanent Joint Operating Bases in Gibraltar and the Falkland Islands, and the Joint Task Force HQ have also all been exercised in a variety of scenarios to hone their command and control skills, as well as to develop war-fighting doctrine.

COLLECTIVE TRAINING

44. The continued pressure of operational commitments, the impact of increased fuel prices and the prioritisation of operational requirements in the Department's financial planning limited the scope for joint and combined training for contingent tasks during the year. Although the number of exercises cancelled fell from 20% in 2004-05 to 14% in 2005-06, less collective training was conducted than was necessary to support maintenance of the full contingent capability called for by the planning assumptions underlying the Department's readiness targets. Forces received the specific training and preparation they required for current operations, but there was insufficient capacity, especially in the Army, to do much more. These constraints, and the focus on deployment specific training, mean that significant improvement will not be possible until commitments return to the levels within Defence planning assumptions. At that point there will then be a further period for the necessary training to take place before a full contingent capability is restored.

45. Despite these pressures, we continued to work to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of collective training. In order to coordinate better the training required to achieve more efficient delivery of Force Elements a Joint Training and Exercise Working Group was formed during the year. This also increased the effectiveness of lower-tier joint training. Improvements were also made to the arrangements for air integration in land operations. The Joint Warfare Development and Training Centre was established at PJHQ to train potential joint force commanders and their staffs on scheduled and bespoke courses. Greater involvement of other Government

Departments, particularly at the planning stage of exercises, increases the realism of training for potential operations. Exercises during the year therefore also featured improved inter-agency interoperability and more cohesive arrangements with other Government Departments.

46. Work continued to develop a new Defence Training and Exercise Strategy, informed by the results of the Directorate of Operational Capability's audit of collective training during the year and the definition of the detailed requirement for UK Joint Collective Training in order to guide near term capability growth. This strategy will produce a fully coherent and synchronised exercise programme to restore a balanced contingent capability once the level of operational commitments reduces. The focus will be on joint, combined and fully integrated training for operations that involves all components of capability and synchronises military effect with the efforts of other Government Departments and other agencies.

SUSTAINABILITY AND DEPLOYABILITY

47. The Armed Forces were successfully deployed and sustained on a wide range of military and humanitarian relief operations during the year. The net additional costs incurred to deploy, sustain and subsequently recover forces on operations are met from the central Government reserve. We continue to look for ways to increase the effectiveness of our sustainability and deployability processes, including the development of how we prepare for specific operational deployments. Resources are focused on providing those assets most likely to be needed to sustain operations or that we judge could not be bought within assumed readiness times. Given the stretching range of operations being sustained the UK has joined several multinational strategic lift initiatives to improve our ability to prepare, mount and deploy appropriate personnel and equipment. This includes the Strategic Airlift Interim Solution from January 2006 (see paragraph 51).

FURTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION

48. Additional Information on Future Operations is available from the following sources:
- Defence White Paper *Delivering Security in a Changing World*, December 2003;
 - quarterly SR2004 Public Service Agreement reports; to HM Treasury at www.mod.uk;
 - SR2004 PSA Technical Notes at www.mod.uk;
 - NAO Report *Assessing and Reporting Military Readiness*; (HC 72 on 15 June 2005) available at www.nao.org.uk;
 - The PAC twenty-sixth report of Session 2005-06: *Assessing and Reporting Military Readiness* (HC 667 on 30 January 2006) available at www.publications.parliament.uk;
 - *The Government's response to the PAC twenty-sixth report of Session 2005-06: Assessing and Reporting Military Readiness* (Cm 6775 on 30 January 2006) available at www.publications.parliament.uk.



Essay: Delivering readiness at the Front Line

The delivery and reporting of readiness is a complex subject. To give this some context this essay sets out what this means in practice for a front line light infantry battalion. A light role infantry battalion fights on foot using light, man-portable weapons, and is supported by a small fleet of wheeled vehicles. On operations it might be used on any of a full range of tasks, from peace support to high intensity warfighting, including complex activities such as Security Sector Reform. Light battalions provide the Army's main quick-reaction, high-readiness unit, known as the Spearhead battalion.

What does it involve? When a Spearhead battalion is ordered to deploy, its headquarters, lead company and logistic enablers have to be able to deploy from their barracks within 24 hours of receiving the order. The rest of the battalion, and any attached assets such as artillery, engineer and signals units, must be able to follow within a further 24 hours. A deployment can be anything from a few days to six months. Experience shows that a battalion may sometimes deploy even quicker than this and engage in operations on arrival. For example, when the 1st Battalion of the Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment deployed to Kosovo in March 2005, the majority of the Battalion arrived in theatre within 48 hours of being ordered to go.

How is it achieved? Most light role infantry battalions rightly claim they maintain a routinely high state of readiness; their ethos demands it. But more is required to reach the level of readiness required of the Spearhead battalion. In particular, it must be fully equipped, including specialist equipment, and hold three days worth of combat supplies to hand. Further supplies and theatre specific equipment will be issued when it is ordered to deploy. At the moment one of the biggest difficulties to be overcome is, in fact, driver training: light role infantry battalions are likely to deploy with specialist armoured Land Rovers; these require a Heavy Goods Vehicle licence, and it takes time and resources to train and qualify enough drivers. The full force with its supporting elements (such as artillery and engineers) must also be exercised as a whole by an external organisation or higher headquarters. For example, in 2004-05, HQ 52 Infantry Brigade controlled Exercise GRAND PRIX in Belize to prepare the Spearhead Battalion's main force by exercising the full battlegroup (at that time the 2nd Battalion the Light Infantry, together with attached Royal Artillery, Royal Engineer and Army Air Corps assets) across a range of operational scenarios from peace support to high intensity conflict, from planning through to execution.

How is it measured? The Army's operational headquarters has a well developed methodology linking resources to activity and output, which it uses to design, validate and measure training. In preparation for a Spearhead battalion commitment, the battalion's commanding officer uses this methodology to validate the battalion's performance and readiness, and then uses it to assess and report the level of readiness he is achieving and to identify any shortfalls at least every three months.

How is it maintained? Maintaining the highest readiness levels required of a Spearhead battalion is not easy. Equipment and supplies can be kept up to the necessary establishment relatively simply but the readiness of the soldiers, individually and collectively, inevitably declines unless active measures are taken to maintain it. The value of collective training diminishes over time, individual skills fade rapidly if not practised continually and administrative matters, such as passports, vaccinations and Next of Kin documentation, require constant refreshment (including keeping up with the constant inflow and outflow of personnel). A number of measures are taken to mitigate this potential 'readiness-fade', as battalions are unlikely to participate in a high-value overseas training exercise more often than once every 2 – 2½ years. Sub-unit exercises are run throughout the period of the Spearhead commitment, a Combined Arms Staff Trainer exercise is conducted to train and test the battalion headquarters staff and weekly company training programmes are scrutinised by the Battalion Headquarters to ensure meaningful, focussed training is undertaken on a regular basis. Finally, the Lead Company role is rotated between companies every month. This enables the Battalion Headquarters to 'call-out' the Lead Company, thus regularly auditing the companies' (and the battalion headquarters') abilities to deploy in the required timelines and with the correct equipment and documentation.

POLICY

Objective: Work with Allies, other governments and multilateral institutions to provide a security framework that matches new threats and instabilities.

Public Service Agreement Targets (SR2004 MoD Targets 2 and 5):

By 2007-08, deliver improved effectiveness of UK and international support for conflict prevention, through addressing long-term structural causes of conflict, managing regional and national tension and violence, and supporting post-conflict reconstruction, where the UK can make a significant contribution, in particular Africa, Asia, the Balkans and the Middle East. (Joint target with DFID and FCO);

Play a leading role in the development of the European Security agenda, and enhance capabilities to undertake timely and effective security operations, by successfully encouraging a more efficient and effective NATO, a more coherent and effective European Security and Defence Policy operating in strategic partnership with NATO, and enhanced European defence capabilities. (Joint Target with FCO)

Performance Measures and Assessment

A more efficient and effective NATO:

- Expanded NATO commitment to Afghanistan;
- NATO training mission for Iraq;
- Progress towards achievement of NATO Response Force full operational capability and deployment of NATO Response Force elements to Pakistan for earthquake relief;
- NATO Agreement of Comprehensive Political Guidance for planning staffs.

A more coherent and effective ESDP operating in strategic partnership with NATO:

- Achievement of UK EU Presidency ESDP goals;
- EUFOR mission to Bosnia under UK command;
- Expansion of ESDP operations.

Enhanced European defence capabilities:

- Further development of European Defence Agency;
- Implementation of EU Battlegroups complementary to NATO Response Force.

Implement Global Counter Terrorism strategy:

- Provision of training to build the counter terrorist capacity of other nations.

Counter the threat from Weapons of Mass Destruction:

- Continued contribution to UK arms and export control policy and implementation, including work on verification of nuclear disarmament and assistance to destruction of Russian chemical weapons;
- Comprehensive programme of CBRN defence with a strong emphasis on force protection measures;
- Continued work with US and NATO on missile defence.

Effective international and UK conflict prevention initiatives:

- Security sector reform assistance in areas where UK forces are engaged, including training Iraqi Security Forces and the Afghan National Army;
- Support to development of deployable international peacekeeping capabilities.

Effective international and UK conflict management initiatives:

- Continued support of UN peacekeeping operations and capabilities;
- Work to develop operational capability of Post Conflict Reconstruction Unit.



49. The maintenance of the transatlantic relationship and the security and stability of Europe are fundamental to our security and Defence policy, and we are a leading contributor to NATO and European Union security and Defence arrangements. But our security and prosperity depend also on wider international stability, freedom and stable economic development. As a permanent member of the UN Security Council, the United Kingdom strives internationally to support the rule of law and act as a force for good. We are working to address the threat posed by international terrorism and to counter the threat from weapons of mass destruction. We are also committed to tackling international conflict and its causes, to mitigate the effects of conflict when it breaks out, and to assist in the task of post-conflict reconstruction.

NATO AND EUROPEAN SECURITY

North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO): more efficient and effective

50. Throughout 2005-06 the UK continued to support NATO operations and missions. We assigned forces to Operation ACTIVE ENDEAVOUR (a maritime counter-terrorism operation in the Mediterranean) and to NATO's Training Mission in Iraq (training and mentoring Iraqi security personnel at NATO colleges and the Iraqi Staff College). We were also fully committed to the NATO mission in Afghanistan (see paragraphs 8-12). The year saw progress on NATO's transformation agenda, working towards the goal of Full Operational Capability of the NATO Response Force (NRF) by October 2006. We took forward a number of supporting policies during the year, including: aspects of Common Funding for strategic lift; for training; logistics command and control; development of three Deployable Joint Task Force Headquarters implementation of an Operational Preparation Directorate at Lisbon; establishment of an Intelligence Fusion Centre at RAF Molesworth; and Deployable Communications and Information Systems. The UK was a leading force contributor to the NRF. We commanded the Maritime Component in the first half of 2005, made a major contribution to the Air Component Command in the second half of 2005 (during which NATO deployed elements of the NRF, including RAF aircraft and personnel, to support international humanitarian relief work in Pakistan following the South Asian earthquake), and commanded both the Land and Air Components in the first half of 2006. However, engagement on all NATO Response Force rotations has been limited. Further work to build consensus on the way ahead may be needed, which could lead to a review of aspects of the underpinning concept.



British soldiers and a German helicopter contributing to NATO relief efforts in Pakistan

51. There were improvements in the management of the Alliance. NATO Ministers agreed Comprehensive Political Guidance for planning staffs and follow-on work continues to articulate Military Committee guidance. We supported the Secretary-General's efforts to make NATO more efficient and effective, for example through better management of resources and reform of the NATO HQ. In August 2005, NATO agreed transition arrangements for introduction of a more equitable cost-share of NATO's common funding, even though Ministers were not able to agree a cost-sharing mechanism. Problems remain with force generation and the provision of key enablers for both NATO and EU missions. However, as a pragmatic interim approach we supported the Strategic Airlift Interim Solution. Under this arrangement 16 NATO and EU nations, including the UK, can call upon a number of large Russian and Ukrainian transport aircraft pending entry into service of Airbus A400M. We continued to support NATO's Usability Initiative, to increase the deployable and usable forces for international operations. Against NATO targets of 40% of Land Forces structured, prepared and equipped for deployed operations and 8% undertaking or planning for such operations, the UK has declared 56% and 17.3% respectively. But reluctance by some Allies to provide consistent data is limiting the Initiative's value.

European Security and Defence Policy: more coherent and effective

52. The UK continued to take a leading role in the development of European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), and a key objective of our Presidency of the EU was to make ESDP more active, more capable, and more coherent. All our key delivery objectives were achieved. Further detail on the UK Presidency is contained in the essay on page 51. Work continued under the Austrian Presidency on the effective management of operations, using a collaborative approach to civil-military co-ordination, and on developing a long-term vision that sets out the context and conduct of military operations in 2020 and beyond, in order to identify the capabilities that Europe might need within the existing policy framework.

53. Increasingly the EU works with other organisations, such as NATO, the UN and the African Union, to improve global security. Substantial progress was made in developing European operational capabilities across the military, civilian and joint civilian-military spectrum. The largest EU operation is the 6,300-strong Operation ALTHEA (EUFOR) in Bosnia (see paragraph 13). This has proved the practical effectiveness of Berlin Plus arrangements, through a constructive relationship with the residual NATO presence, although NATO/EU cooperation remains a challenge at the political level. Other EU operations included a monitoring mission in Aceh in Indonesia, assistance to opening the Gaza-Egypt border at Rafah, missions to support the rule of law in Iraq and Palestine, support to the African Union in Darfur and Security Sector Reform in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The diversity of these operations underlined the EU's unique ability to deploy a range of military and civilian instruments to undertake tasks from security and stabilisation, to monitoring and mentoring of indigenous police forces, to training judiciary, border monitoring and tackling organised crime. The UK contributed to all but one of these missions.

Enhanced European Defence capabilities

54. ESDP has acted as a catalyst for many of our European partners to improve their rapidly deployable capability, through reform of their Armed Forces and political changes. The UK is committed to developing more rapidly deployable, sustainable and interoperable European capabilities. We recently launched a coherent strategic EU/NATO airlift initiative to identify European airlift shortfalls and preferred options in the short to medium term. We supported the European Defence Agency in its remit to identify common capability gaps and facilitate co-operation by groups of member-states in identifying and pursuing solutions. The Agency has a key role in elaboration of the Headline Goal 2010 and other continuing capability improvement initiatives, and we supported proposals for it to take forward the assessment and evaluation of member states' EU defence contributions. Agreement was reached on a UK-inspired Code of Conduct to open up the European defence equipment market.

55. Work to implement EU Battlegroups continued. EU member states have now committed a total of 19 Battlegroups to the EU rapid response capability, and 26 countries (including Norway and Turkey) contribute to the EU's battlegroup roster. The UK provides one national Battlegroup and one joint Battlegroup with the Netherlands. Together with a French Battlegroup we provided the EU's rapid reaction capability from January to June 2005. We worked to ensure mutual reinforcement and transparency between EU Battlegroups and the NRF (for example, by using NRF standards and criteria for the Battlegroups and harmonising planning timelines).

European Confidence and Security Building: Conventional Arms Control

56. Conventional arms control activities such as inspections, evaluations and confidence and security building measures continued to contribute to conflict prevention and stability across the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) area. Under the terms of three key treaties (Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CAFE), Vienna Document 1999, and Open Skies), the UK received 15 inbound inspections or evaluations (including five on British Forces Germany) and conducted 33 outbound inspections or evaluations on non-NATO signatories. In October 2005, we hosted representatives of 40 states and international organizations from across the OSCE at the Land Warfare Centre, as a confidence and security building measure under the Vienna Document. We also brought back into service the Open Skies Andover C Mk1 observation aircraft, which was deployed over Russia, Ukraine and Georgia. Details of UK military equipment holdings declared under the CFE Treaty will be published in *Defence Statistics 2006*.



HMS Nottingham and Russian cruiser Moskva on combined exercises

COUNTERING TERRORISM

57. Defence continued to make an important contribution to the UK's counter terrorism strategy over the year. While there is no specific military solution to countering terrorism, the Armed Forces make a significant contribution, particularly overseas. They have a unique capability to perform a variety of specialised tasks as part of the Government's overall efforts and can play an important role in pursuing terrorists and those who support them in threatening the UK, our allies and our interests. We have continued to take forward the crucial task of building the counter terrorist capacity of other nations. Military training is only part of what the UK can offer but it encompasses a wide range of activities including combat skills, VIP protection, bomb disposal and coastguard operations.



COUNTERING THE THREAT FROM WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

58. The need to reduce the risk that state and non-state actors acquire and use Chemical, Biological, Radiological or Nuclear (CBRN) weapons against the UK, our forces and our interests drives the work of both the MoD and the other Government departments involved. We need to constrain the intent and ability to acquire or increase illicit CBRN capabilities worldwide. This is most effectively dealt with through international treaties and diplomatic efforts. In parallel, we must also address the threat brought about by the transfer of CBRN know-how, material and weapons, as well as deterring potential proliferating states by diminishing their expected gains and raising expected costs. During 2005-06 the MoD continued to make a major contribution to the policy and implementation of counter proliferation and arms control activities. We also continued to maintain a nuclear deterrent capability as the ultimate guarantor of our national security. We improved the protection of our Armed Forces against CBRN weapons, to ensure that the UK can maintain its political and military freedom of action despite the CBRN threat, thereby minimising the incentive for any potential proliferators to acquire such weapons, or should they do so, to use them against us.

Nuclear Arms Control

59. We continued to press for multilateral negotiations towards mutual, balanced and verifiable reductions in nuclear weapons. The Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT) remains the cornerstone of the international nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime. As a Nuclear Weapon State under the Treaty the UK is, and will remain, fully compliant with our own disarmament obligations under the NPT. During the 2005 NPT Review Conference, the MoD worked very closely with the FCO and DTI to make progress on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and the Atomic Weapons Establishment delivered a well received presentation on the verification aspects of disarmament. We also became an active member of the Norwegian 7 Country Initiative; set up by the Norwegian Foreign Minister at the behest of the UN Secretary General, its purpose is to develop and promote viable and novel initiatives on disarmament, non-proliferation and access to the peaceful uses of nuclear technology. We developed and promoted proposals to strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime, particularly by tightening the controls against possible illicit use of civilian nuclear technology to develop military programmes and against the spread of sensitive nuclear technology to those who are not compliant with their non-proliferation obligations. We remain concerned about Iran's non-compliance with its nuclear safeguards obligations, as reported by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and the possibility it is pursuing a covert military nuclear programme. The UK, along with France and Germany, has been negotiating with Iran in an attempt to produce a diplomatic solution, and Iran's activities have now been reported to the UN Security Council, in line with IAEA statutes. This

clearly shows the breadth of international concern at Iran's lack of cooperation and transparency with the IAEA. North Korea's claim that it has nuclear weapons is also a concern and we continued to support the six party talks between North Korea, its neighbours and the US, as the best way forward.

Biological Arms Control

60. The MoD continued to support the 3-year programme of work to strengthen the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, with Defence personnel, particularly non-proliferation experts from the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl), making a key contribution. During 2005, the Convention was chaired by the UK and work focused on the content, promulgation and adoption of Codes of Conduct for scientists. The MoD is also contributing to preparations for the Sixth Review Conference in November 2006.

Chemical Arms Control



The metal parts furnace that will help destroy chemical weapons at Shchuch'ye, Russia.

61. We also continued to take a leading role in the UK's contribution to the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, again drawing on Dstl's expertise. As part of the UK's contribution to the 'The Global Partnership against the spread of weapons and materials of mass destruction' the MoD supports Russia's programme to destroy its stockpiles of chemical weapons. There was substantial progress in planning and starting to implement a number of major equipment and infrastructure projects through the UK managed-programme at the Shchuch'ye Chemical Weapons Destruction Facility. Work began to build an 18km railway to transport 1.9 million nerve-agent munitions from the storage site to the destruction facility, to upgrade an electrical supply station, and to procure key destruction equipment. During 2005-06, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Ireland, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway and Sweden agreed new funding contributions. The UK has contributed some £14M to the Global Partnership, Canada over £45M, and other donors about

£6M. Detailed information is published on www.dti.gov.uk. We also made progress with the redirection of former WMD scientists. Potential new projects were identified in Georgia, Russia and Kazakhstan, we took part in workshops for Iraqi scientists in Jordan and the UK, and supported workshops held for Libyan scientists.

Export Controls

62. Defence experts supported implementation and development of international export control regimes and arrangements for equipment, materials and technology related to CBRN threats, missile and UAV systems, conventional weapons, and dual use equipment, materials and technology. We made a significant contribution to the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons and supported an arms trade treaty process. We continue to work with other states on safe stockpile and security management practices and destruction work. The MoD also assesses UK export licence applications on behalf of the Department of Trade and Industry to consider the potential effect of proposed exports on our and our allies' defence and security and to assess the risk of diversion of the goods concerned to an undesirable end-user. Details of performance achieved in processing licence applications are published in the *Annual Report on United Kingdom Strategic Export Controls*.

Proliferation Security Initiative

63. The 2003 Proliferation Security Initiative strives to establish more coordinated and effective ways to impede and stop states and non-state actors from illicit trafficking in Weapons of Mass Destruction and associated delivery systems. We continued to take a leading role in its operational development, in particular driving forward elements of the exercise programme. We have hosted and chaired two of the nine Operational Expert Meetings and a Command Post Exercise in the air environment. In autumn 2005, we led a major maritime exercise and we are hosting a major maritime industry workshop in autumn 2006.

Deterrence

64. Deterrence aims to convince a potential adversary that the consequences of a particular course of action outweigh the potential gains. There is no doubt that deterrence is rather more complex now than during the Cold War and that it will not be straightforward to predict accurately in the decades ahead what threats may emerge and where they may come from. Our deterrence posture therefore seeks to anticipate potential threats and be flexible enough to deter both state and non-state actors from behaving in ways that would be harmful to the interests of the UK and our allies. All our military capabilities, conventional and nuclear, have a role to play in deterrence. Our nuclear weapons have a continuing role as the ultimate guarantee of the security of the UK. We have made it clear that our nuclear capability is a political tool aimed at deterring acts of aggression, and is not a war-fighting capability. Its use would only be contemplated in extreme circumstances of self defence, in order to achieve a strategic effect. Any use of nuclear

weapons would be proportionate and in accordance with our international legal obligations.

Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Defence

65. Our Armed Forces face a diverse range of potential CBRN threats and hazards on operations. We are taking forward a comprehensive programme, with a strong emphasis on force protection measures, to ensure that we maintain our political and military freedom of action. Internationally, we worked to improve interoperability with close allies (particularly the United States) and within NATO and the EU. We continued to play a leading role in NATO's Senior Defence Group on Proliferation, driving forward Alliance-wide CBRN policy and defensive capability improvements. During the year, we also took command of the fully operable NATO Multinational CBRN Defence Battalion.

Missile Defence

66. The United States continues to work towards an operational ballistic missile defence system to protect their country from missile attack. We maintained a close relationship with the US in this field, and continued technical co-operation with the US Missile Defence Agency through the UK Missile Defence Centre, to increase our knowledge of how a national missile defence system might work for us. No decision has been made on whether to acquire such a capability for the UK but we supported the upgrade of RAF Fylingdales to provide missile defence capabilities for the US system. NATO completed a feasibility study into missile defence for NATO territory and population centres and we are working closely with NATO bodies to examine the political and strategic implications. NATO is also planning to invest in the command infrastructure for an Active Layered Theatre Ballistic Missile Defence capability against shorter-range ballistic missiles which could threaten deployed forces. We remained closely engaged on the command arrangements, but the weapons systems for this capability will be provided by nations and we have no plans to acquire such systems ourselves.

UK AND INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT PREVENTION

67. While the primary focus of the Ministry of Defence remains providing the capability to conduct military operations, it is clearly better to prevent the need for them arising. We therefore continued to support the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Department for International Development in work to tackle the underlying causes of conflict and thus minimise the likelihood of a need for UK military intervention arising. This work is primarily taken forward through the Africa and Global Conflict Prevention Pools. These form a tri-departmental programme that ensures a coherent and consistent approach is taken across Government to deliver joined-up UK policy-making, action planning and activity to prevent conflict and dispel hostility. In Iraq and Afghanistan, in particular, the Armed Forces provide the security on the ground that enables such work to be



taken forward but we also contribute to the work of the Pools through our Defence Relations tools. In particular, we provided Security Sector Reform assistance in areas where UK forces were engaged on peace building tasks and supported the development of deployable African, Balkans and Central and Eastern European peacekeeping capabilities for regional and international security intervention operations. Further information on conflict prevention activities and performance against the joint Public Service Agreement targets can be found at Annex C.

Africa Conflict Prevention Pool

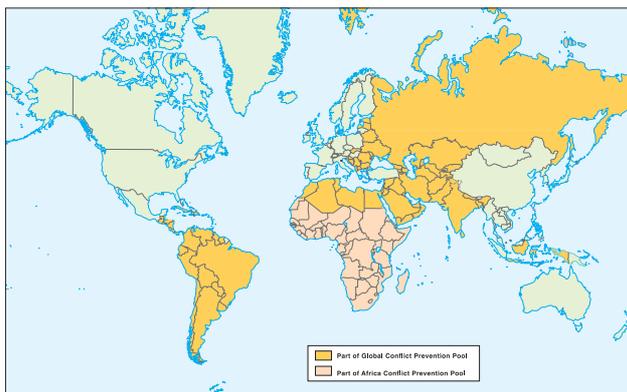
68. With around £30M to deploy via the Africa Conflict Prevention Pool, we devoted most of our resources to developing African capacity for planning and executing peace support operations and assisting selected Security Sector Reform programmes. During the year, we supported the African Union's planning for the development of an African Standby Force for peace support operations, and helped build up the conflict management capacity of key regional institutions such as the Economic Community of West African States. We also helped improve the capability of the armed forces of several African states to participate in peace support operations. UK support has been vital to establishing a number of regional training centres such as the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre in Ghana, the Karen Peace Support Training Centre and the UK-funded International Mine Action Training Centre in Kenya, which builds on previous mine clearance training provided to Kenya by the British Peace Support Team (East Africa). Since this Centre opened in February 2005, it has delivered de-mining and mine awareness training to 2,500 African personnel.

new Iraqi army in professional leadership and military skills as part of the overall campaign to develop capacity and capability in the Iraqi Security Forces. We have also supported the development and training of the new Afghan National Army. The Peace Support Operations Training Centre in Sarajevo was opened in 2005 and was part-funded from the Global Conflict Prevention Pool. This delivers internationally-approved education and training in multinational peace support and humanitarian operations.



An Army Combat Medical Technician tends to a Masai Warrior

Figure 6: Global and Africa Conflict Prevention Pools



Global Conflict Prevention Pool

69. The Defence focus in the Global Pool is Security Sector Reform. In particular, through “train the trainer” schemes, we transfer our military skills within an accountable and democratic framework to help other countries become self-sufficient and responsible for their own security. During the year, we trained members of the

UK AND INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND RECONSTRUCTION

70. It is not always possible to prevent conflicts. We therefore also worked to improve the international community's capability to manage and confine them when they break out, in particular through the United Nations; to develop international humanitarian norms and obligations to minimise the impact of such conflicts on the innocent; and to assist in reconstruction and recovery once conflicts are over.

The United Nations

71. Demand for UN peacekeeping continued to grow. The UK is working closely with other nations in the UN Special Committee on Peacekeeping on ways to enhance peacekeeping capacity and capability. We are also developing a national action plan in response to the Zeid Report, which made recommendations on the responsibility of member states to ensure criminal liability for the actions of their nationals while engaged on peacekeeping missions. This will complement the National Action Plan to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, announced on International Women's Day 2006.

International Humanitarian Law

72. We contributed to international consideration of a number of conflict-related humanitarian concerns. Although there was insufficient Parliamentary time in 2005 to

conclude the process of ratifying the legally binding Protocol V (Certain Conventional Weapons Convention) on Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) agreed in 2003, we intend to do so by the end of 2006. The Protocol contains new provisions offering significant humanitarian benefit to those in areas affected by ERW, making clearance of unexploded ordnance quicker and more effective. We also continued to work with Argentina, through the Joint Working Party, to address mine clearance issues in the Falkland Islands, including development of the Feasibility Study and the Statement of Requirement for the field survey by an explosive ordnance disposal contractor or Non-Government Organisation.

Post-Conflict Reconstruction

73. The Post Conflict Reconstruction Unit (PCRU) is an interdepartmental (FCO, MoD and DFID) organisation set up to enhance our national ability to plan, develop and deliver effective and co-ordinated post conflict stabilisation activity. During 2005-06, the PCRU focused on building an effective post-conflict operational capability. It conducted a number of assessments, including a review of the Global Conflict Prevention Pool Balkans strategy. It also provided a team to work alongside the Permanent Joint Headquarters in Helmand province in Afghanistan. It continued to develop an assessment methodology and a stabilisation planning tool. It also worked with the stabilisation units of other nations, in particular Canada

and the US, and with international organisations. In addition, the MoD, in collaboration with volunteers from the Fire Service, led a Global Conflict Prevention Pool funded project to establish an amalgamated fire and emergency response service for the ethnically divided communities of East and West Mostar in Bosnia Herzegovina. Through retraining demobilised soldiers from the Bosnian armed forces, the new Fire Brigade not only provided a much needed enhanced service to the community but also engaged representatives of all ethnicities in the city, thus helping the process of local reconciliation and reconstruction.



Tito Bridge, Mostar built by the Royal Engineers

FURTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION

74. Additional Information on Defence Policy is available from the following sources:

- Defence White Paper *Delivering Security in a Changing World*, December 2003;
- Command Paper *Delivering Security in a Changing World: Future Capabilities* (Cm6269, July 2004) available at www.mod.uk;
- quarterly PSA reports to HM Treasury at www.mod.uk;
- House of Commons Defence Committee Report 'Future Capabilities' Fourth Report HC 45-i & ii published 17 March 2005;
- House of Lords EU Committee Report 'Preventing Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction: The EU Contribution' Thirteenth Report HL 96 published 5 April 2005;
- House of Commons Defence Committee Report 'Strategic Export Controls: HMG's Annual Report for 2003, Licensing Policy and Parliamentary Scrutiny' HC 145 published 24 March 2005;
- information on Global and African Conflict Prevention Pools, and Proliferation Security Initiative at www.fco.gov.uk;
- *Annual Report on United Kingdom Strategic Export Controls* published in July 2005 available at www.fco.gov.uk;
- Analysis of Conflict Prevention costs at Note 2 to the accounts on page 200;
- United Nations Security Council at www.un.org;
- ESDP at ue.eu.int;
- information on EU Battlegroups, EU Civilian Military Cell, Headline Goal 2010, EU Military Operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the European Defence Agency and the Berlin+ arrangements at ue.eu.int;
- background on NATO Response Force at www.arrc.nato.int/brochure/nrf.htm;
- Zeid Report at www.un.org;
- NATO reference publications and ministerial communiqués, including Comprehensive Political Guidance at www.nato.int;
- NAO Report *Joint Targets* (HC 453 on 10 October 2005) available at www.nao.org.uk;
- NPT/CONF.2005/WP.1. Verification of nuclear disarmament: final report on studies into the verification of nuclear warheads and their components: Working paper submitted by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland at www.un.org.



Essay: European Security and Defence Policy: the UK Presidency of the European Union

At the beginning of the UK's six-month Presidency of the EU on 1 July 2005, we stated that we would be working to develop a European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) that was more capable, more coherent and more active, underpinned by effective multilateralism. This essay sets out the progress made towards these goals. Work to improve crisis management structures, Defence capabilities, research and technology and financing was launched at the Hampton Court Summit in October 2005.

More Capable

ESDP has acted as a catalyst for several Member States to modernise their Armed Forces, both by procuring equipment and undergoing the training required in today's operational environment, and by taking forward national constitutional amendments to enable the rapid deployment of their Armed Forces when necessary. As part of the Headline Goal 2010 process, the final version of the Requirements Catalogue was delivered, setting out the military capabilities that the EU requires in order to achieve its identified level of ambition. The Catalogue was validated by operational analysis provided by NATO and work has begun to develop the Force Catalogue that represents the next stage of the Headline Goal process.

There was further progress on the Battlegroup initiative, including a strategic-level seminar in October and a tactical-level seminar in December. By the end of the UK Presidency, 26 Member States had pledged contributions to 19 Battlegroups, intended to achieve full operational capability in 2007. Each Battlegroup consists of about 1,500 troops held at very high readiness and available for deployment on ESDP missions on a rotational basis (two Battlegroups every six months). The UK provided a Battlegroup in 2005, and will provide the next in 2008, and then a joint Battlegroup with the Netherlands in 2010.

During the UK Presidency, the European Defence Agency (EDA) launched a Code of Conduct to prevent protectionism and open up European defence markets to increased competition. The EDA has only a relatively small budget, and we believe that its primary role should be as a "dating agency" to facilitate Member States' identification of common capability shortfalls and to benefit from economies of scale by adopting joint procurement programs. We demonstrated our commitment to the EDA by launching a joint project with France on Lightweight Radar under its auspices. The EDA has also initiated work to address the identified European Air Refuelling shortfall.

More Coherent

The UK worked hard to lay the foundations for a structured, professional approach to Civil-Military Co-ordination, agreed jointly with Austria and Finland to be taken forward during their Presidencies. This work included developing concepts for Security Sector Reform and for comprehensive planning to improve the EU's ability to bring its full range of military, diplomatic, economic, policing and judicial tools to bear in the most cost-effective manner. It was helped by the creation of a civil-military cell within the EU Military Staff. The cell's capacity to generate the EU Operations Centre is due to reach Full Operational Capability later in 2006. When activated, this Centre will be capable of fulfilling a command and control function for civilian, civil-military and low-intensity military missions. We played a leading role in the introduction of periodic comprehensive reviews for all continuing EU missions in order to ensure that, in a fluid international environment, the resources available continue to be used and prioritised in a way likely to deliver the desired goal.

More Active

During the UK Presidency, seven missions and other activities were launched, covering the Republic of Macedonia, Gaza, Indonesia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan and Iraq. ESDP is now undertaking a variety of tasks across three continents including security and stabilisation, monitoring and mentoring of indigenous police forces, judiciary training, border monitoring and tackling organised crime.

Effectively Multilateral

The need for an effective, multilateral approach is recognised by all Member States. The EU will never operate in isolation and to achieve maximum effect in any given scenario it will need to engage with a range of third states, global and regional institutions, Non Government Organisations and other actors. At the heart of achieving this is an ESDP that complements and reinforces NATO. Differences remain among Member States over this relationship. But the need to gain maximum capability from the 19 States belonging to both the EU and NATO, with their individual forces and defence budgets, supports the case for close cooperation and co-ordination between both organisations. During the UK Presidency, arrangements for EU-NATO liaison cells within the headquarters of both organisations were finalised and are now operational. On the ground, the EU and NATO continue to work closely together on the largest ESDP mission to date, Operation ALTHEA in Bosnia, and have cooperated in supporting the African Union in Darfur. The EU is also working through ESDP to support the UN in the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Association of South East Asian Nations in Indonesia.

WIDER GOVERNMENT

Objective: Contribute to the Government's wider domestic reform agenda, and achieve our Public Service Agreement and Performance Partnership Agreement¹ targets.

Performance Measures and Assessment

Implementation of sustainable development across Defence:

- Strategies in place for travel, water, waste non-operational energy, estate procurement, heritage, timber, construction, biodiversity, social impacts, refrigerants and ozone depleting substances, estates disposals, estate adaption to climate change, land remediation, access and recreation and the Environmental Management System;
- 150 sustainability and environmental appraisals and assessments conducted;
- Carbon emissions from Defence buildings reduced by 2% between 1999-2000 and 2004-05;
- 7% of energy from renewable sources (target 10%).

Raised expectations and achievements of disaffected young people:

- Strengthened links with Learning and Skills Council to improve support for Service Apprenticeships and develop personnel with poor basic skills;
- Working with Government Skills to reflect needs of Armed Forces and develop Professional Skills for Government initiative;
- MoD Youth Council approved plan to introduce nationwide network of MoD Regional Youth Coordinators;
- Participation in wide range of social inclusion partnerships;
- 4,108 Cadets registered for BTEC in Public Services;
- Government announcement of pilot expansion of cadet forces;
- Provision of support for London 2012 Olympic Games.

Improved clinical support to the Armed Forces and the public:

- Development of programme to increase awareness of the military operational environment among NHS personnel.

Support to ex-Service personnel:

- Revised Strategy for Veterans published March 2006;
- Some 17,000 personnel (85% of those entitled) drew on resettlement support in 2005-06. 96% of those who wished to continue to work secured employment within six months of discharge;
- Introduced specialist assessment of what disabled Service leavers can do and tailored assistance to find suitable employment;
- Set up new 10-year resettlement service contract to provide Service leavers with civilian career preparation and training and job-seeking services;
- Major commemorative events, including introduction of annual Veterans Day;
- Range of projects to tackle homelessness and associated problems;
- Review of veterans' mental health programmes and services;
- Continuing research into specialist veterans health issues;
- Faster processing of claims for war pensions and war widows;
- Review of operation of Far East Prisoners of War payment scheme and extended eligibility.

¹ Performance Partnership Agreements were a central initiative to oversee Departmental management and coordinate Government business. During 2005 they were replaced by other systems including Departmental Capability Reviews.



DEFENCE IN THE WIDER COMMUNITY

75. The purpose of the Ministry of Defence and the Armed Forces is to defend the United Kingdom and its interests. We want to live in a strong, healthy, just and sustainable society nationally and internationally. Defence underpins this by providing security and helping sustain the rule of law, without which this would not be possible. Defence is an integral part of the national community and makes a significant further contribution to that community and to the Government's wider objectives in a number of ways. In all of this we work to implement the Government's sustainable development strategy set out in March 2005 in *Securing the Future*. We routinely support most other departments through the work of Defence personnel, military and civilian, and the provision of specialist military capabilities to the civil authorities. We own, or have access to, land across the country from the Outer Hebrides to the centre of London, covering about 1% of the UK land mass, making a substantial contribution to the protection of the environment and preservation of our heritage. We provide employment, much of it highly skilled, for around 600,000 people directly or indirectly. We place contracts and conduct complex scientific and technological research and development worth many billions each year. We recruit and train about 18,000 new Service personnel and over 4,500 civilians every year, and return a slightly larger number to the civilian economy with a wide range of acquired skills and qualifications. In addition, some 180,000 people have some form of Reserve commitment. The Cadet Forces provide challenging and enjoyable activities for about 130,000 young people in the UK and abroad that help raise their expectations and achievements and prepare them for their role in the community. Members of the Armed Forces make a strong contribution to sport in the UK, including representing their country in international competitions. There are over 10 million Service veterans and their dependents. Some 223,000 veterans and their dependants receive war pensions of over £1 billion every year in addition to substantial payments from the occupational scheme for injury or death due to service. We continue to work with other departments to improve the provision of support to veterans who need it. We also maintain a continuing programme of research into a number of specialist veterans health issues.

76. The MoD is responsible for over 8,000 archaeological and 1,000 scheduled monuments and 767 listed buildings, makes grants-in-aid of over £14M a year to the national museums for all three Services, and owns a wide range of historically significant assets. These include such unique items as HMS Victory, recently declared a national treasure and one of 100 'Icons of England', and the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight, as well as over 1,500 items of fine art and antiques in the MoD Art Collection. The collection provided the basis for the exhibition *Warriors For the Working Day* held in London in the summer of 2005 as part of the commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the end of the Second World War. This concentrated on the people working out of the front line and displayed works

of art showing the effects of the war on the physical environment. There are also over 100 independent Regimental and Corps museums and collections across the country. Overall this represents a significant contribution to the Government's broader goals for heritage, education, and veterans.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

77. The core task of the MoD is to produce battle winning people and equipment. In doing this we seek to ensure that we act responsibly and sustainably, neither squandering resources, human or physical, nor degrading the environment, and that we treat our people and the wider community with respect. This is both right in itself and makes the most of every pound provided for Defence. It also supports the four sustainable development priorities of sustainable consumption and production; climate change and energy; natural resource protection and environmental enhancement; and sustainable communities, set out in the Government's sustainable development strategy *Securing the Future* in March 2005. We continue to work to minimise and reduce the inevitable impact that Defence activity has on the environment, manage this sustainably, and mitigate it where possible. We are developing our performance measurement, management and reporting systems to ensure that we understand and take into account the impact of our activity. Detailed reporting is contained in the MoD *Sustainable Development Annual Report 2005*, the key elements of which are set out below. Other aspects are brought out in the chapters on 'operations', 'policy', 'future capabilities and infrastructure', 'science, innovation and technology', 'personnel management' and 'health and safety'.



Waste segregation in action

Sustainable Consumption and Production

78. Detailed Defence-wide sustainable development strategies are in place for waste, timber, construction and sustainable procurement on the Estate. An example of sustainable production in practice in Defence is set out in the essay on Project Allenby/Connaught on page 154, we

have introduced the Project Orientated Environmental Management Systems for Integrated Project Teams to use in the equipment acquisition process. Some 30 equipment projects are applying this so far against a target of full implementation by April 2007. Our new timber strategy requires demonstration that all timber and timber products are procured from legal sources, that these should be acquired from a sustainable source, and consideration given to the use of reclaimed, re-used or recycled items. All paper used for Defence publications comes from sustainable forests. We are working to improve waste reduction, recovery and recycling rates across Defence and the *Sustainable Waste Management Strategy* published in May 2005 set a target of reducing the waste we produce by at least 1% each year. There are examples of good practice (for instance, Bicester Garrison in Oxfordshire has saved 20% of the cost of waste management and tripled its recycling rate). But we do not yet have data systems in place to measure performance across the entire estate. These are being progressively introduced as waste management contracts come up for renegotiation.

Climate Change and Energy

79. Detailed Defence-wide sustainable development strategies are in place for travel, energy, adaptation to climate change and refrigerants and ozone depleting substances. HMS Endurance helped the British Antarctic Survey to visit remote areas in their work in monitoring environmental change.



HMS Endurance in Antarctica

80. Defence accounts for about two thirds of the carbon used on the Government Built Estate. Carbon emissions from Defence buildings reduced by 2% from 1999-2000 to 2004-05. We are increasing the proportion of energy we buy from renewable sources. This has now reached 7% against a target of 10%.

Natural Resource Protection and Environmental Enhancement

81. Detailed Defence-wide sustainable development strategies are in place for Environmental Management Systems, water, land remediations, heritage and biodiversity.

We are progressively developing and implementing Environmental Management Systems across Defence, and conducted 150 sustainability and environmental appraisals and assessments in 2005. We consume about 24 million cubic meters of water each year, which is about 80 cubic meters per person per year, which includes domestic (some sites operate 24 hours per day and every day in the year), commercial and industrial use and some distribution losses. We have set a target to reduce this to 51 cubic meters per person per year. Project Aquatrine (paragraph 313) will make a significant contribution to improving this performance. A small proportion of Defence land is contaminated. We are conducting assessments and developing decontamination plans over the whole estate with the aim of beginning a co-ordinated programme of work by the end of 2007. Further information on environmental enhancement is set out in paragraphs 315-318 and in the *Annual Stewardship Report on the Defence Estate*.

Sustainable Communities

82. A Defence-wide sustainable development strategy is in place for social impacts and access and recreation. The main Defence contribution in this area is set out in detail in the paragraphs below on young people (paragraphs 83-89) and veterans (paragraphs 91-105) and in the essay on Defence youth policy on page 60. Environmental noise from military flying and tank and artillery ranges is a legitimate concern for communities living close to the places where this takes place. We are taking forward the recommendations of the 2004 Aircraft Environmental Noise Report, providing routine advice for the public on Military Low Flying and publishing an annual review of low flying activity. Since the end of the Cold War the total number of low flying sorties has reduced by a third. During 2005 we reviewed the military helicopter low flying requirements and procedures in response to the Coroner's recommendations following the Heather Bell inquest.

YOUNG PEOPLE: BUILDING SKILLS AND RAISING EXPECTATIONS

83. Defence works with other Departments and the wider community to take forward the Government's skills and social responsibility objectives. In particular the cadet forces provide challenging and enjoyable activities for over 130,000 young people in the UK and abroad that help raise their expectations and achievements and prepare them for their role in the community.

Improving Skills

84. As part of our core business we provide considerable basic, specialist and professional skills training to newly-recruited young military and civilian personnel. This also contributes directly to the Government's skills development goals. Details are set out in paragraphs 187 to 189 in the chapter on Personnel Management. During 2005-06 we further strengthened our links with the Learning and Skills Council to improve the support to young Service personnel, particularly over funding of apprenticeships



and developing those identified with poor basic skills. We are also taking an active role in developing the newly created Government Skills, the Sector Skills Council for Central Government, to improve public service delivery across central government by driving skills development. In particular, we are working with it to ensure that it reflects the needs of the Armed Forces, and to help develop the Professional Skills for Government initiative. We also continue to use the Defence Education and Skills Advisory Board (which contains senior figures from across the public and private sector education and skills community) to inform and advise us on educational, learning and skills developments and to advocate for the MoD in appropriate national arenas.

Social Inclusion and Personal Development

85. Defence continues to make a significant positive impact to the Government's youth agenda by supporting a range of projects focussed on the well-being of young people and contributing to the formulation of Government-wide youth policies and initiatives. 2005 saw the first meeting of the MoD Youth Council, chaired by the Under Secretary of State and attended by senior representatives of the Services, the Department for Education and Skills and the Home Office. Reflecting the fact that local needs vary, the Council approved a plan to introduce a nationwide network of MoD Regional Youth Co-ordinators to ensure that activities respond to local priorities.

86. The success of the MoD's youth programmes is based on the expertise, enthusiasm and distinctive ethos of serving and retired Service personnel and Cadet Adult Instructors to lead programmes that are both challenging and appealing to young people of all sorts, and our ability to deliver such activities through the widely dispersed regional network of service establishments and Cadet locations. We participate in a wide range of social inclusion partnerships such as Skill Force and Outreach, and contribute to several joint programmes with the voluntary sector, in addition to our flagship Cadet organisations. In particular, we are increasing, to 50 per year, the number of team leaders seconded from the Services to the Prince's Trust team for disaffected youth, and this is managed by a full time Army officer working at the Trust's headquarters. Further information is contained in the essay on *Sustainable Communities: Defence Youth Policy* on page 60.

Cadet Forces

87. There are over 130,000 Cadets in the four Cadet Forces, supported by over 20,000 adult volunteers. The Sea Cadets had a particularly prominent year as they played an important role in the celebrations of the 200th anniversary of Trafalgar. Each Cadet Force fosters intangible personal qualities such as responsibility, citizenship and leadership, but Cadets are increasingly achieving formal educational and vocational skills as well. In 2005-06 4,108 Cadets registered for the Business and Technology Education Council vocational qualification in Public Services delivered through the Cadet Vocational Office in partnership with the Learning

and Skills Council. During the year the Directorate of Operational Capability conducted a study into the operation and effectiveness of the Cadet Forces. This made a number of detailed recommendations for their future development, highlighted the importance of having a well-defined service framework and conditions of service for Adult Volunteers, and endorsed the existing duty of care arrangements.



A cadet receiving instruction

88. To involve young people more in celebrating the contribution of our Armed Forces, the Chancellor of the Exchequer and Defence Secretary announced in February 2006 that they wished to pilot an expansion of the Cadet Forces, especially in state schools, capitalising on the strength of the MoD supported Combined Cadet Forces which mainly operate in private schools. They also asked Mr Ian Russell, (the head of the Russell Commission, established in 2004 by the Chancellor and Home Secretary, to develop a new National Framework for Youth Action and Engagement, to increase the level of community participation by young people of 16-25 across the UK) to fund raise with the private sector. Funds raised are matched by the Government. Work on this is now being taken forward. Subsequently, in June 2006 the Treasury made available £800,000 to run the pilot scheme for six new combined Cadet Force Units in state schools.

Sport

89. Sport helps to develop attributes required in service personnel such as physical fitness, courage, resilience and esprit de corps. These also support the Government's wider personal development and social responsibility goals. All members of the Armed Forces are encouraged to participate in sport and a number represent their country at international level. For example, eight members of the 40-strong British squad for the 2006 Winter Olympics were members of the Armed Forces, and 19 members of the Armed Forces represented the home countries at the 2006 Commonwealth Games. The MoD is supporting the London 2012 Olympic Games. We have agreed to provide a site at Woolwich Station for shooting events, and Horse Guards Parade for beach volleyball. An internal co-ordinating structure has been set up which supports the Inter-Departmental Olympic Steering Group headed by the Department for Culture, Media and Sports.



Royal Navy backing the London 2012 Olympic bid

HEALTH: IMPROVING CLINICAL SUPPORT

90. The key outputs of the Defence Medical Services are the ability to deploy the right medical capabilities to support military operations worldwide, and the delivery of healthcare services to all Armed Forces personnel (regulars and mobilised reservists) and entitled dependants and civilian staff. This is supported to mutual benefit by an effective working relationship with the National Health Service (NHS), and the MoD/Department of Health Partnership Board continued to provide strategic oversight of the relationship. The Defence Medical Services contribute to the NHS Improvement Plan, and this relationship will be further enhanced by the introduction of the new Managed Military Health System. Valuable liaison work routinely takes place at the local level. In particular, the Defence Medical Education and Training Agency has developed a programme to increase awareness of the military operational environment among NHS personnel working in the trusts that host sick or injured Service personnel.

VETERANS: SUPPORT FOR EX-SERVICE PERSONNEL

Strategy for Veterans

91. The MoD has a particular responsibility for supporting Service veterans, especially those whose physical or mental health has been damaged in the service of their country. The veterans' community in the United Kingdom is estimated to comprise over 10 million veterans and their dependants. In 2003 the MoD set out its approach to veterans' issues and what it aims to achieve, in partnership with other key stakeholders, in the *Strategy for Veterans*. During the year we reviewed the strategy in consultation with other Government Departments, the Devolved Administrations and ex-Service organisations. This highlighted the importance of improving the effectiveness of communications and the delivery of services, identified some areas that needed updating, but confirmed that our broad approach to veterans' issues held good. A revised *Strategy for Veterans* was published in March 2006. Its three key pillars remain to provide excellent preparation for the transition from Service to civilian life, to ensure

that the nation recognises veterans' contribution to society; and to provide support to veterans who need it.

Transition from Service to civilian life

92. All Service personnel leaving the Armed Forces are provided with structured assistance on making the transition from military to civilian life. The level of support provided depends on their length of service and the circumstances of their discharge. Those who have served at least four years are entitled to finance and housing briefings and a job finding service for two years after discharge. Those who have served at least six years² are also entitled to resettlement training, coaching in job interview technique and CV writing, and dedicated career consultancy support. Some 17,000 personnel (about 85% of those entitled) drew on this support in 2005-06. Over half of those who wished to continue to work secured employment within a month of discharge, and 96% within six months. A further 8,400 personnel leave annually as Early Service Leavers who do not qualify for this resettlement support. However they receive a mandatory resettlement brief and interview prior to discharge that includes assessment of their vulnerability to social exclusion, discussion on accommodation post-discharge, and direction to agencies and organisations that provide support for employment, accommodation and welfare needs. We are working with the Department of Work and Pensions and HM Revenue and Customs to produce by April 2007 meaningful employment statistics for these individuals six months after discharge. Exceptional arrangements for additional support are made for those assessed as vulnerable to social exclusion. We have worked with ex-Service charities with niche capabilities to ease the transition of Service personnel to veteran status, particularly for specialist assessment of what disabled Service leavers can do and tailored assistance to find suitable employment. A new 10-year Public Private Partnership contract with a leading outplacement company has been signed to deliver career transition and job-finding services to entitled Service leavers as part of their resettlement preparation.

Recognition and status of veterans in society

93. An important part of raising awareness is the message that veterans' contributions, both past and present, continue to be valued:

- The national commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the end of the Second World War took place in London on 10 July 2005. The Department also helped organise commemoration of the British military presence in the Suez Canal Zone from 1939 to 1956 at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire in May 2006. A service to mark the 150th anniversary of the institution of the Victoria Cross and the 50th anniversary of the formation of the Victoria Cross and George Cross Association took place at Westminster Abbey in June 2006. Detailed planning began for national commemoration of the 25th anniversary of the South Atlantic conflict to be held in June 2007;

² Five years if enlistment before 1 September 2002



- We will build on the success of the 2005 Veteran Awareness Week by mounting annual events to raise public awareness about the veterans' community. The first Veterans Day took place on 27th June 2006. Key events were held in London, Cardiff, Dundee, Liverpool, Torquay, Hull and Blackpool. We provided around £130,000 to support Veterans Day events throughout the UK;
- Currently, all those who served in the Armed Forces at any time from the start of the First World War to 31 December 1959, and widows and widowers of those who died of illness or injury attributable to their Service and in receipt of a war widow(er)'s pension are eligible for the HM Armed Forces Veterans Badge. A modified version is being produced for members of the Merchant Navy who served in vessels facilitating military operations. Some 200,000 badges had been issued by 31 March 2006;
- In March 2005 the Prime Minister announced the introduction of an Arctic Emblem, available from the summer of 2006, as an additional form of recognition for those who served north of the Arctic Circle during World War II;
- Public fundraising for the Armed Forces Memorial to members of the Armed Forces (Regular and Reserve) killed on duty or as a result of terrorist action since the Second World War, was launched in April 2005. The Government announced on 13 February 2006 that it would make £1.5M available for the Memorial from the sale of coins to commemorate the Battle of Trafalgar.

94. Young people featured heavily in the 2005 awareness-raising events and a national art competition aimed at 9-11 year old children was run to coincide with the first Veterans Day. Work continues with the Department for Education and Skills and ex-Service organisations, capitalising on the national curriculum, to involve young people and schools in recognition and commemoration events and teach the younger generation about veterans' contribution and role in society.



Veterans beside the memorial to Women in World War II

Provision of support to veterans who need it

95. The MoD continued to work to ensure that help and advice is available to all veterans who may need it, including through improving communication and information services available to veterans and increasing awareness of their needs and of the organisations available to provide support to them. The Veterans Agency launched a new periodical, *Veterans WORLD*, that aims to educate and inform advisors in the public and voluntary sectors who come into regular contact with veterans. Conferences have been held in London, Edinburgh, Cardiff, Liverpool and Newcastle to increase understanding of veterans' issues and familiarise delegates with the help and support available. The Agency has also started a programme of regional publicity campaigns to raise awareness of the Agency and the services provided, with the first taking place in Newcastle in March 2006.

96. We have continued to work closely with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and subsequently the Department for Communities and Local Government, ex-Service organisations and the voluntary and corporate sector to prevent and tackle homelessness and associated problems. Work is underway to build supported accommodation in Aldershot for Service leavers at risk of homelessness. A new 25-bed hostel run by the English Churches Housing Group is due to open in Summer 2007, providing both accommodation and training facilities offering Service leavers the opportunity to develop marketable job skills.

97. As part of Project Compass, which seeks to help homeless veterans return to employment in London, plans are being developed to assist Service leavers from the Military Corrective Training Centre in Colchester, and to provide job coaching and back to work training for Service leavers in the Catterick area. We are also supporting research into the effectiveness of recent homeless support initiatives in London. This is expected to identify services that could be extended to other parts of the UK.



Plans of new hostel to be built on former MoD land in Aldershot

Veterans Health Issues

98. The MoD has a continuing duty of care to veterans suffering ill health caused by their military service and we support a wide range of research programmes into specialist veterans health issues. Since 1948 Government policy has been that health care for veterans and war pensioners should be delivered by the National Health Service, and we are working with Chief Medical Officers and the Royal Colleges to raise the awareness of civilian health professionals about military and veterans' matters and to provide information for ex-Service personnel on what to expect and where to go for assistance from civilian health services. But war pensions legislation retains a discretion which allows funding of treatment of war pensioners' accepted disablements, subject to certain conditions. Under this provision war pensioners, whose pensioned condition is a mental health problem and where it is clinically appropriate, have been able to access remedial treatment programmes at the homes run by the Ex-Services Mental Welfare Society (Combat Stress). In February 2005, in light of developing clinical practice and treatment for mental health problems and with the agreement and full co-operation of the Society, the Department commissioned the Health and Social Care Advisory Service to review the Society's programmes to ensure that they reflected wider good practice, taking into account special factors relating to military service. The review's recommendations went beyond the current war pensioner programmes and considered mental health services for veterans more generally. It concluded that some veterans with mental health problems can be treated in the community at large, some are best dealt with by Community Mental Health teams, some may need hospital referral and inpatient care, and that there may be a sub-group with complex needs who meet the criteria for specialist NHS treatment. It also determined that the perceived stigma and discrimination arising from mental health problems and a belief that they should be able to overcome them makes young men in particular, including those in the veterans' population, reluctant to seek help. We are working with UK Health Departments and Combat Stress to implement the review's recommendations.

99. We continued where appropriate to provide medical assessments for veterans through the Medical Assessment Programme, based at St Thomas' Hospital in London. In 2005-06, five former Porton Down Volunteers, 19 veterans of the 1990-1991 Gulf Conflict, and eight veterans of Operations in Iraq since 2003 (Operation TELIC) were assessed. Due to falling demand, the retrospective depleted uranium testing programme for Gulf (1990/1991) and Balkans veterans closed to new applications at the end of January 2006. All results have so far been negative.

100. While we acknowledge that the phrase "Gulf War Syndrome" has become quite widespread in popular usage, the overwhelming consensus of the scientific and medical community is that Gulf War Syndrome does not exist as a discrete pathological entity. This was supported

by a Pensions Appeal Tribunal decision in October 2005, which stated that it was nevertheless a "useful umbrella term" to cover accepted conditions causally linked to the 1990-91 Gulf conflict. The Department agrees with this and we hope that use of the umbrella term will address the belief of some Gulf veterans that we do not recognise a link between their ill-health and the conflict. The MoD has continued to sponsor research into the ill-health reported by some veterans of the Conflict into the possible adverse health effects of the combination of vaccines and Nerve Agent Pre-treatment tablets offered to UK personnel. Regular publication of mortality data continues to show that Gulf veterans do not suffer an excess mortality compared with a group of similar Service personnel that did not deploy.

101. Research also continued into the physical health of those involved in Operation TELIC since 2003. A study by The King's Centre for Military Health Research published in May 2006 showed that to date there has been no repeat of the variety of symptoms reported by Regular personnel who served in the 1990-91 Gulf War, and that there is no substantial increase in ill health between those members of the Armed Forces who did deploy and those who did not. Other aspects of this research are covered at paragraph 215. Further results, including those on the level of uranium in the urine of personnel deployed to Iraq and of the UK military population in general, will follow.

102. The MoD is working on a comprehensive historical survey of the Service Volunteer Programme at Porton Down. We continued to fund and provide practical support to the independent epidemiological study into mortality and cancer incidence among veterans who took part in this Programme. Findings are expected in 2007. The Department had been seeking Judicial Review of the verdict of unlawful killing in November 2004 at the inquest into the death of a volunteer taking part in a trial in 1953. Although we accepted there was sufficient evidence for the Jury to consider whether the Serviceman was unlawfully killed as a result of gross negligence in the conduct and planning of the experiment, we did not agree that there was sufficient evidence for it to consider a verdict on issues of consent. In February 2006 the family of the deceased stated that they would not challenge this view and on that basis the MoD agreed not to proceed. This agreement left undisturbed the verdict of unlawful killing, while making clear the basis for that verdict. We are currently engaged in talks on appropriate compensation.

War Pensions and Armed Forces Compensation Scheme

103. The Veterans Agency provides financial compensation via the War Pensions Scheme and since April 2005, the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme, to some 183,000 veterans and 40,000 widows for death and disablement arising out of service in the Armed Forces. The number of war pensions paid each year continues to decline by some 12,000 a year. Direct welfare support is also provided to war pensioners and war widows by the



War Pensioners Welfare Service, operating from locations across the UK and the Irish Republic. £1.069 billion was paid on some 223,000 war pensions during 2005-06. Average clearance times for war pension claims reduced by 10% to 52 days and for war widow claims by 6.4% to 21 days during the year. The War Pensions Scheme received some 43,000 claims and appeals during 2005-06, a decrease from 45,000 in 2004-05. The Armed Forces Compensation Scheme, introduced in April 2005, has considered some 3,000 cases in its first year, this is expected to rise year on year. Further information on this can be found at paragraph 157.

104. In the course of work to identify and correct errors in the payment of Armed Forces pensions we have discovered that a number of invalidity awards to Service personnel, arising from causes due to their service, may not have been consistently up-rated over the years, in line with the War Pension Scheme deterioration claims which had been accepted by the Veterans Agency. Early estimates are that this might apply to about 1,800 (less than 1% of) pensions in payment. As announced by the

Minister for Veterans on 3 July 2006, we have a programme of work, Project Collins, to identify and correct any such errors. We are considering what if any further recompense may be appropriate.

Far East Prisoners of War and Civilian Internees

105. The Far East Prisoners of War payment scheme awarded a payment of £10,000 to certain individuals held captive by the Japanese during World War II or the surviving spouses of those who died. In December 2005, following the emergence of inconsistencies in application of the qualifying criteria, the Minister for Veterans ordered a review of all 30,000 claims. In March 2006 the review concluded that the scheme should be extended to individuals who lived in the UK for 20 years since the Second World War and up until the introduction of the scheme in November 2000. Some 25,000 payments have already been made, and we estimate that a further 500 individuals will receive ex-gratia payments of £10,000 as a result of the revised criteria.

FURTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION

106. Additional Information on Wider Government is available from the following sources:

- quarterly PSA reports to HM Treasury at www.mod.uk;
- information on Government Skills at www.government-skills.gov.uk;
- *Strategy for Veterans* available at www.veteransagency.mod.uk;
- *Veterans WORLD* available at www.veteransagency.mod.uk;
- UK Gulf Veterans Mortality Data at www.dasa.mod.uk;
- Depleted Uranium Oversight Board at www.duob.org.uk;
- National Radiological Protection Board at www.nrpb.org;
- Armed Forces Youth Policy *Armed Forces Overarching Personnel Strategy* at www.mod.uk;
- Veterans Agency Annual Report and Accounts 2005-06 at www.veteransagency.mod.uk (from July 2006);
- Commemorative Booklets at www.veteransagency.mod.uk;
- Homelessness research *Improving the Delivery of Cross Departmental Support and Services for Veterans* at www.mod.uk;
- *The 1990/1991 Gulf Conflict: Health and Personnel Related Lessons Identified* at www.mod.uk;
- Kings College research papers published in The Lancet 'The Health Of UK Military Personnel Who Deployed To The 2003 Iraq War' and 'Is there an Iraq syndrome?' available at www.thelancet.com;
- MoD *Sustainable Development Annual Report 2005* available at www.mod.uk;
- *Defence Estates Stewardship Report 2005* available at www.mod.uk;
- *The Pattern of Military Low Flying across the United Kingdom 2005-06* at www.mod.uk (available from August 2006);
- *Review of UK Military Helicopter Low Flying in Response to a Rule 43 Letter from the Louth and Spilsby Coroner* available at www.mod.uk;
- *Bequests to the Nation: An introduction to the MoD Art Collection* available at www.art.mod.uk;
- *Sustainable Waste Management Strategy* available at www.mod.uk;
- *Securing the Future* available at www.sustainable-development.gov.uk.

Sustainable Communities: Defence Youth Policy

Defence Youth Policy aims to increase knowledge and understanding of the Armed Forces among young people. It also makes a major contribution to the wider Government goal of improving the well-being and future prospects of young people, particularly those on the fringes of society.

The Cadet Forces are at the heart of MoD's youth systems. They are a nationwide military themed youth organisation, comprising the Sea Cadet Corps, Army Cadet Force, Air Training Corps, and the Combined Cadet Force units that operate within secondary schools. They offer a wide variety of activities (ranging from outdoor adventurous training to learning to play a musical instrument) many of which can lead to achieving formal qualifications. Their contribution is such that in February 2006, the Government announced that it wished to pilot an expansion of the Cadet Forces, especially in state schools, capitalising on the strength of Combined Cadet Forces. The Cadets attract some 130,000 youngsters across the UK from all walks of life. This number is steadily growing, but a shortage of adult volunteers has required serious examination of how much more growth can be sustained. We are therefore looking at how the Cadet Forces will operate in the long term. This will include the parameters that we think should govern their operations, and ensuring we retain and attract the right calibre of adult volunteer that will enable the Cadet movement to prosper. This is crucial if we are to continue offering youngsters the best opportunities that we can to help grow them into their fullest potential.

We support a range of curricular activities in schools and colleges that offer unique and positive ways to enhance understanding of the Armed Forces within society, and particularly the values, culture, traditions and ethos which underpin military effectiveness. We offer vocational training comprising professional and accredited educational and citizenship activities to enhance young people's skills and potentially lead to practical work-related qualifications. Examples include the Cadet First Diploma, work experience and e-mentoring schemes with schools and colleges. Our five School Presentation Teams contribute to the Government's Citizenship Curriculum and the 'We Were There' Exhibition to educate children about the contribution ethnic minorities have made to Britain's defence. A new e-based teaching resource for GCSE students on Defence issues is being developed.

We work in partnership with other public sector authorities, youth organisations and charities. This enhances our ability to reach sectors of the population where youth provision is lacking and allows us to contribute in a focused way to specific aspects of Government youth policy such as social inclusion and the drive to reduce certain types of anti-social behaviour. Over the last couple of years a number of community related initiatives have come to fruition, including national-level partnership agreements with The Youth Justice Board and The Prince's Trust (which attracts over 40 volunteers a year from the Services). We also support Outreach, an Army Cadet Force Association Project aimed at turning around disaffected 14 to 16 year olds through an intensive programme of outdoor based confidence training and leadership/team building activities, and the Skill Force, which is based in schools, to turn around disaffected youngsters and help them develop useful skills. The RAF has also established a network of Youth Activity Liaison Officers nationwide who engage with local communities to assist with the needs of young people and families, and to help public authorities within those communities.

Overall, by contributing to the development of the country's young people we aim to affirm the good reputation of the Armed Forces and nourish the values which contribute to a healthy and stable society.