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# 26m would die in <sup>GU</sup> N-attack, says data

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The Home Office is revising its nuclear war plans to take account of new data which suggests that a full-scale attack would result in the immediate death of half the population of Britain.

New Home Office figures show that blast alone would probably kill 26 million in the postulated 200-megaton attack on military targets and cities — 10 million more than previously estimated.

A further two to three million would probably die of radiation burns. Many of the six million injured would die within days or weeks.

The figures, released on Friday night, are revised calculations for the effects of blast on houses. They deal in the percentage of fatalities, not hard numbers of people killed, and the scientists who compiled them stress they are only estimates.

Nevertheless, their recalculations are in line with those from the US Office of Technology Assessment: 90 per cent of people in ordinary brick houses would be killed by a pressure from the blast of around 11 lbs per square inch (psi) from a single 1 megaton bomb. Previously the Home Office had calculated that a pressure of 30psi would be needed to kill the same proportion.

The British Medical Association has used the US figures to calculate the deaths from the 200 megaton attack postulated in the Home Office defence exercise, Operation Square Leg.

The result is 26 million blast deaths, and not 16 million as the Home Office previously assumed.

The new study had not assumed that the population would take evasive action. "People will be warned. That is the way it is planned. The Government will tell people how to build shelters in homes and there will be communal shelters," the Home Office said.