

£2.8bn armoured vehicle contract secured for British Army

The Defence Secretary has announced that the army will receive more than 500 Boxer 8x8 high mobility, network-enabled armoured vehicles to transport troops onto the frontline.

Defence Secretary, Ben Wallace, said:

Our men and women of the Armed Forces deserve to have the best equipment to do their job.

The Boxer vehicle is a leader in its field and I look forward to it arriving in units from 2023.

The vehicles will form part of the Army's Strike brigades, new units set up to deploy rapidly over long distances across varied terrains.

Boxer is modular by design to meet these requirements – the same vehicle base can be rapidly reconfigured to fill different roles on the battlefield, from carrying troops across deserts to treating severely injured service personnel on the journey to hospital.

Initially the Army will buy a mixture of the troop-carrying variant, ambulances, command vehicles, and specialist designs to carry military equipment.

Sir Simon Bollom, Chief Executive of Defence, Equipment and Support (DE&S), said:

This is excellent news for the Army and I'm delighted that we can now move forward with a contract for the Mechanised Infantry Vehicle.

We are looking forward to continuing to work closely with the Army and our partners across industry to deliver the best equipment and support for our troops.

The UK announced in 2018 that it would re-join the Boxer programme within the Organisation for Joint Armament Cooperation (OCCAR) and explore options to modernise its vehicle fleet and meet the Army's Mechanised Infantry Vehicle requirement.

The UK played a central role in the original design, development and testing of the Boxer. In re-joining the programme last year, the UK reassumed the rights it had as a project partner.

Major General Simon Hamilton, Mechanised Infantry Vehicle Programme lead for the British Army, said:

I am delighted that we have committed to delivering the Mechanised Infantry capability through the purchase of around 500 battle-winning Boxer vehicles for the British Army. Boxer completes the suite of platforms to equip our new state-of-the-art STRIKE brigade where, alongside Ajax, Boxer's low logistic need, extended reach, high-mobility, and advanced digitisation will ensure STRIKE is ready for any global scenario.

This contract was signed ahead of the pre-election period due to the strong value-for-money agreement reached with industry and other OCCAR nations, which expires on December 31st 2019, and announced today due to expected market implications. It would be possible for a new Government to take a different position.

The MOD Permanent Secretary, as the Accounting Officer, considered the value for money implications and, on this basis, determined the most appropriate course of action is to proceed with the contract award ahead of the election.