

News story: MSPs discover more about Europe's largest military exercise

MSPs observing Exercise Joint Warrior listen to a briefing at HMNB Clyde. Crown Copyright.

Exercise Joint Warrior includes more than 11,600 military personnel from 17 nations and is directed from the Maritime Operations Centre at HMNB Clyde, Scotland's largest military establishment.

The purpose of the visit today (April 27 2018) is to help MSPs to better understand the range of social and welfare issues relevant to Scots-based armed forces personnel, and their families.

Launched by the Parliament's Presiding Officer Ken Macintosh MSP and the Ministry of Defence in April 2017, the Armed Forces Visit Programme has already had successful fact-finding visits to the Army's Glencorse Barracks, Penicuik, RAF Lossiemouth, Moray and Royal Marine Condor, Arbroath.

The MSPs will find out how HMNB Clyde and military training areas across Scotland are used by the Royal Navy, Army and RAF to train together across air, land, sea and cyber domains, practicing "high-end" war-fighting between near-peer adversaries.

The Joint Warrior training scenarios involve multiple sovereign nations disputing resources and territories; counter-terrorism and anti-smuggling activity; information warfare; and evacuation operations. This year it is running from 21 April until 4 May.

The group also found out more about the developments at HMNB Clyde which will see it be the sole home of the UK Submarine Service from 2020 and their visit included time in a submarine control room simulator.

Naval Regional Commander Captain Chris Smith said:

The Armed Forces Visits programme helps MSPs find out more about the role and purpose of the military communities across Scotland and the issues that are important to them.

Although Defence is clearly reserved to Westminster, the Scottish Parliament's policies and decisions affect the day to day lives of all of our Scots-based service personnel.

In addition to being home to the Submarine Service from 2020, Scotland is home to an Army Infantry Operational, Engagement and Resilience Brigade, the RAF's Quick Reaction Alert interceptors (North) and submarine hunting Maritime Patrol Aircraft flying from Lossiemouth.

The MOD has around 10,000 sailors, soldiers and air personnel living permanently in Scotland, supported by 8,000 reservists and civilians. Scottish industry benefits from Defence spending £1.5bn with it each year, supporting 10,500 private sector jobs in Scotland. The Defence Board confirmed in February 2017, that £1.7 billion would be invested to upgrade Scottish military bases over the next decade.

List of attending MSPs

1. Mr Richard Lohead, Scottish National Party Member for Moray
2. Mr Lewis Macdonald, Scottish Labour Member for North East Scotland
3. Ms Jackie Baillie, Scottish Labour Member for Dumbarton
4. Mr Maurice Corry, Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party Member for West Scotland
5. Mr Graham Simpson, Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party Member for Central Scotland
6. Ms Annie Wells, Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party Member for Glasgow
7. Mr Jackson Carlaw, Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party Member for Eastwood
8. Mr Murdo Fraser, Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party Member for Mid Scotland and Fife
9. Ms Michelle Ballantyne, Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party Member for South Scotland
10. Mr William Bowman, Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party Member for North East Scotland
11. Mr Brian Whittle, Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party Member for South Scotland
12. Mr Gordon Lindhurst, Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party Member for Lothian

News story: The UK Government delivers for Scottish businesses

The Scottish Business Taskforce of economic and business leaders came together today, Friday 27 April, to discuss ways to support some of Scotland's most important sectors.

The taskforce, announced by Scottish Secretary David Mundell last year, aims to exert a positive influence on the development of UK Government policy and in turn, advance Scotland's interests.

Today the panel, chaired by former UK Government Minister Andrew Dunlop, met in Edinburgh and discussed ways to unlock the provision of long term finance to grow innovative firms. The participants provided expert insight on how the British Business Bank might work in Scotland to maximise its economic impact.

Also on the agenda was a discussion of priorities for the UK Government's export strategy and opportunities for women in leadership positions, including a proposal to establish a National Women's Business Centre of Excellence in Scotland.

Taskforce chairman, Andrew Dunlop, said: "We know that Scotland's economic performance lags behind the rest of UK, and we need to close that gap. These meetings are crucial for gathering expert advice and guidance as to how best to improve Scottish productivity, performance and promote strong economic growth.

"As we prepare to leave the EU, the conversations on helping innovative firms grow, boosting trade and promoting women in leadership positions are timely and valuable. The UK Government is working hard to release Scotland's full potential through the ambitious Industrial Strategy and the insight of the taskforce will help to ensure policymakers deliver for Scottish businesses."

The next meeting of the taskforce will take place in July 2018.

The taskforce comprises:

- Marc Crothall CEO – Scottish Tourism Alliance
- Prof Susan Deacon – Assistant Principal External Relations, University of Edinburgh and Chair, IoD Scotland
- Jayne-Anne Gadhia – Chief Executive, Virgin Money
- Jo Macsween – Vistage Group Chair and ex MD Macsween of Edinburgh
- Prof. Graeme Roy – Director, Fraser of Allander, University of Strathclyde
- Louise Smith – HMT Fintech envoy Scotland and Head of Design, Personal and Business Banking RBS

- Douglas Smith – Chairman – Scotland, CBRE
 - Neil Sims – VP, Expro – North Sea
 - Chris Van der Kuyl – Chairman, 4J Studios
 - Ellis Watson – Executive Chairman DC Thomson Media
 - Will Whitehorn – Chair, Scottish Exhibition Centre and Clyde Space
 - Brian Wilson – Chair, Harris Tweed Hebrides
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[News story: Sir Simon Bollom appointed Chief Executive of Defence Equipment and Support](#)

Sir Simon Bollom, the new Chief Executive for Defence Equipment and Support (DE&S). Crown copyright.

Welcoming Simon Bollom's appointment, Stephen Lovegrove, Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Defence said:

I am delighted to announce Simon's appointment as the new Chief Executive of DE&S. His previous roles, as Chief of Materiel (Air) and more recently Chief of Materiel (Ships), means that he will bring to the role a deep understanding and knowledge of DE&S and its business. I wish him every success.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

DE&S is responsible for delivering the substantial, complex and demanding Equipment Programme. I am delighted that Simon has been appointed to this role. I look forward to working with him on the organisation's important task of driving performance in the supply chain, building capability to support our armed forces and delivering value for the taxpayer.

DE&S Chair, Paul Skinner, said:

I would like to welcome Simon into his new role, and I am delighted that we have managed to secure somebody who already has great experience in delivering equipment and equipment support. I look forward to continuing to work with him as we carry on our important work to support the armed forces.

I should also like to thank Michael Bradley for his excellent oversight of DE&S since January following Tony Douglas' departure.

Simon Bollom said:

I am absolutely delighted to have secured this extremely important role. The work of DE&S is vital to our nation and I am proud to have been given the opportunity to lead such an important organisation.

Simon Bollom has held the role of Chief of Materiel (Ships) in DE&S since April 2017. He will take up his new post on the 21st May. The appointment follows an external recruitment competition.

[News story: AS Roma v Liverpool FC](#) [Travel Advice](#)

The AS Roma vs Liverpool FC match will take place on Wednesday 2 May 2018 at the Stadio Olimpico in Rome. Kick off time is 8.45 (local time)

As well as this advice, check out our [travel advice for Italy](#)

Passports and visas

You do not need a visa to travel to Italy but you must hold a valid passport. Your passport must be valid for the proposed duration of your stay; you do not need any additional period of validity on your passport beyond this. However, it is always sensible to have a short period of extra validity on your passport in case of unforeseen delays to your departure.

Remember your [European Health Insurance Card \(EHIC\)](#) as well as ensuring you take out good [travel insurance](#) – it could save you a lot of money if you get into difficulties.

In Italy it is obligatory to carry ID with you at all times – you will also need your ID to enter the stadium.

Travel Arrangements

Rome has two airports, Fiumicino and Ciampino. It has been known for travellers to go to the wrong airport and subsequently miss their flight home. If you are taking a taxi to the airport, please make sure you specify which one to the taxi driver. There is an airport train which departs every

30 minutes from Fiumicino and arrives at the main train station in Rome (Termini station). From Ciampino airport you can take one of the regular bus shuttles into the city centre.

Ticket Collection Point

A ticket collection point will be established at the Grand Hotel Palatino (Via Cavour 213, 00184 Rome, Italy Tel: +39 06 481 4927) for a small number of international tickets. The ticket collection point will be open from 9am until 8.30pm on the day of the match.

Getting to the stadium

All fans will be required to take one of the free official shuttle buses to the Olympic stadium. This service will start at approximately 4pm and continue until required. To use the shuttle bus:

- take Metro Line A to Flaminio/Piazza del Popolo;
- take the entrance to Villa Borghese through the archway onto Viale Washington, then onto Viale F. La Guardia to reach Piazzale delle Canestre, from where the shuttle buses will depart.

Stewards wearing high visibility vests will be on hand to assist those using the shuttle bus. Be aware that there may be long waiting times so check the weather and dress appropriately.

Combined Metro and bus/tram tickets can be purchased from most tobacconists, bars, or vending machines at metro stations and major bus stops and cost €1.50 each, lasting 100 minutes (includes one metro journey only).

It is strongly recommended that fans use the shuttle buses and not make their own way to the stadium thus avoiding the area south of the Olympic stadium, in particular Ponte Duca D'Aosta, where Roma fans normally gather before the match.

At the match

Visiting fans will enter the stadium via Sectors 50-51-52 of the Distinti North West part of the stadium. There will be ticket checks and some body searches at the entrance to the turnstiles as well as a requirement to remove shoes. To avoid a last minute bottleneck you should therefore get to the stadium early, arriving no later than 7.30pm. The stadium will open at approximately 5pm for visiting fans.

Entry tickets to the Stadium are holder specific, and cannot be passed to other parties. You will need to show ID to enter the stadium such as an original British passport or a UK driving licence plus a photocopy of a passport. The name on the ticket and the ID must match otherwise you will be refused entry. Spectators are not permitted to take the following items into the Stadium: alcohol, weapons, (or any item that could be used as a weapon), drums, megaphones, fireworks, plastic bottles with tops, glass bottles and

cans containing liquid, belts with large buckles, large umbrellas, large flags. The Stadium is CCTV monitored, and pitch invasion is prohibited.

Visiting fans will be held back after the match for potentially up to 2 hours. There will be toilet and refreshment facilities during this time. Free shuttle buses will take fans back to the city centre and airport. It is strongly recommended that fans make use of the shuttle buses and do not attempt to leave the stadium independently as other transfer options will be limited (no taxi/bus or metro availability).

Tips

As in any other city beware of pickpockets and bag snatchers at airports, railway stations, around the town centre and when using public transport. Only carry what you need, leave spare cash and valuables in hotel safety deposits. Carry a photocopy of the personal details pages of your passport and keep it in a safe place separate from your passport.

Local Laws and Customs

While local authorities are keen that visiting fans enjoy the sites of Rome during their trip, be aware that it's an offence to eat or drink on the steps of main monuments (for example on the steps of Piazza di Spagna), as is entering any public fountain. Doing so risks receiving a high fine and possible arrest.

Check our Italy [travel advice for Italy](#) for more information on local laws and customs.

Lost or stolen passports

If your passport is stolen, report the loss to the local police as soon as possible and obtain a copy of the police report.

Please be aware that you cannot travel back to the UK without a valid travel document. You will need to apply to the Consular Section of the British Embassy, Rome during opening hours for an [Emergency Travel Document](#).

The Emergency Travel Document is a temporary one-way travel document which will allow you to return to the UK or back to your country of residence. You will need to produce the following:

- a copy of the police report reporting the passport stolen;
- an acceptable form of identification, if possible (e.g. driving licence and/or photocopy of your lost passport);
- one passport-size photograph. We are able to provide a photo at the Embassy for a cost of €5 paid only in cash;
- a fee of €119 or £100 (payable in cash or by credit card except American Express);
- any details you may have of your return travel arrangements;
- authorisation from both parents if you are under 16.

The Embassy will be open on Monday 30 April. However, due to a national Bank Holiday, the Embassy will be closed on Tuesday 1st May 2018. Therefore should you lose your passport, this will mean applying for an Emergency Travel Document at the British Embassy in Rome on the Monday before the game, on match day or the following day.

Lost wallets

If you lose your wallet please try to cancel your credit cards as soon as possible. British consular officials cannot give you money to help you return home. You can transfer money from relatives or friends in the UK using many of the reputable commercial money transfer agencies in Italy including Western Union and Moneygram and Consular staff can assist you in this. You can also use most major credit cards (and debit cards carrying the Maestro and EC logos) to obtain money from Italian cash machines if you have your PIN. Consular staff can provide you with telephone and internet facilities during opening hours.

If you are arrested

British consular officials can visit you in prison (if you request it) and can put you in touch with local lawyers if you need one. But they cannot get you out of prison, represent you in court or pay your bills. If you wish to see a consular official please make this request clear to the local police authorities.

The Consular Section of the British Embassy in Rome is open to the public from 9am to 12pm and 2pm to 3pm, Monday to Friday.

If you need emergency consular assistance during your trip, contact the Embassy on 0039 06 4220 0001. The address for the British Embassy Rome is Via XX Settembre 80/a, 00187 Rome, Italy.

Emergency services numbers:

- (+39) 118 Medical Services
- (+39) 113 Police
- (+39) 112 Carabinieri
- (+39) 115 Fire services

We hope you enjoy the game and your visit to Rome!

British Embassy Rome, Via XX Settembre 80/a, 00187 Rome, Italy Contact telephone number (0039) 06 4220 0001

[News story: CoRWM responds to consultations on geological disposal](#)

Consultation responses

3 consultations relating to key pieces of policy regarding the geological disposal of radioactive waste in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland were launched on 25 January 2018 and closed on 20 April 2018. The Committee on Radioactive Waste Management (CoRWM) has now published its responses to these consultations on the gov.uk website.

The 3 policy documents and CoRWM's responses are as follows:

- [Working with communities: implementing geological disposal](#) from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) in Northern Ireland. [CoRWM's response](#).
- [Geological disposal of radioactive waste](#), the Welsh Government equivalent to 'Working with communities: implementing geological disposal'. [CoRWM's response](#).
- [National policy statement for geological disposal infrastructure](#), a framework for the Secretary of State and the Planning Inspectorate to consider applications on development consent for geological disposal infrastructure in England – produced by BEIS. [CoRWM's response](#).

Background

The 2014 white paper [Implementing Geological Disposal](#) set out the actions and roadmap for development of these policy documents.

CoRWM developed its responses through:

- subgroup meetings.
- members' attendance at 7 consultation workshops held by BEIS
- correspondence within the committee.

CoRWM finalised its response at a [plenary meeting](#) in March.