

News story: UK agrees new military training programme with France

The Defence Secretary will agree the new programme of UK-French training during his first bilateral meeting with Florence Parly, the newly appointed French Minister for the Armed Forces in Paris later today.

In September, over 1,500 British soldiers from 16 Air Assault Brigade will be joined by troops from 11eme Brigade Parachitiste on NATO exercise Swift Response in Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania. Meanwhile, French troops also plan to join 1,000 UK personnel from 3rd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment on Exercise Askari Storm in Kenya in November, training on the prevention of instability and the spread of violent extremism.

During the visit, the Defence Secretary will also praise the French troops who have been deployed to Estonia as part of the UK-led enhanced Forward Presence battalion in the country since April this year.

Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon said:

The UK and France have a long enduring relationship and that will continue as the UK leaves the European Union.

We are deployed together in NATO, fighting against Daesh in Iraq and Syria and training together across the globe.

This announcement is the latest in a string of partnerships that highlight the enduring strength of the UK-French defence relationship.

Earlier this year, the UK and France signed a €100million agreement to develop future long range weapons and are working together on an unmanned combat air system. And as the UK prepares for HMS Queen Elizabeth to reach operational capability in 2020, France is expected to play her part in supporting the Carrier Strike Group, as the UK did with the French carrier Charles De Gualle in the Gulf during 2015 when HMS Kent was integrated into her task group.

The UK and France also run a personnel exchange programme. Improving how we work together, there are currently over 40 personnel working in reciprocal roles across the three services.

The Defence Secretary has also announced that the RAF Red Arrows will start their European and Gulf tour in France on 15th September, Battle of Britain Day, with a flypast in Cannes.

Press release: UK security and defence collaboration with Japan steps up a level

In light of serious challenges to the rules-based international order – most recently the unprecedented threat posed by North Korea – the Prime Minister Theresa May is set to announce a significant step up in cooperation.

Japan is already the UK's closest security partner in Asia, and the Prime Minister will say that even closer cooperation will ensure we can continue to stand alongside our Japanese friends and allies to further our shared interests and meet our shared challenges in an uncertain world.

The Prime Minister is expected to say that Japan is a natural partner for the UK on defence and security issues, as two outward-looking countries both firmly committed to supporting the rules-based international system and the promotion of democratic values.

As responsible members of the United Nations and through our cooperation on the Security Council, we work together in pursuit of important common foreign policy goals, including finding a peaceful solution to the North Korean problem and ensuring the rigorous implementation of sanctions against the North Korean regime. Our military personnel also work alongside one another in anti-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden, and we are jointly leading pioneering de-mining and peacekeeping work across Africa.

Highlighting the importance both sides are placing on working more closely together than ever before, the Prime Minister will today attend a meeting of the Japanese National Security Council in Tokyo – becoming only the second ever foreign leader to do so and the first European leader ever to be granted such privileged access.

The two leaders are expected to agree a new “Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation” with the UK, which will include.

- **Defence:**

While recognising that our work together on defence is already particularly strong, with our Typhoon fighter jets exercising in Japan last year for example, the Prime Minister will announce that we are now taking this even further with the deployment of HMS Argyll to the region in December 2018, and UK troops exercising jointly with their Japanese counterparts next year. This will be a first for non-US troops on Japanese soil.

Cyber Security:

Following PM Abe's visit to the UK's National Cyber Security Centre earlier this year, the UK and Japan will agree to cooperate on cyber security ahead of the 2019 Rugby World Cup and 2020 Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics and share best practice and expertise, including through an exchange of expert visits. The UK's support, built on decades of expertise in managing cyber crime and other malicious cyber activity, will help enhance Games security.

• Counter Terrorism:

The two countries will agree much improved information-sharing and will strengthen cooperation on aviation security and tackling violent extremism. We will also offer practical support to Japan's Olympics counter-terrorism preparation, sharing best practice on mass event safety and security through expert exchanges.

The Prime Minister will visit the headquarters of the Japanese Maritime Self Defence Force (JMSDF) at Yokosuka outside Tokyo today, where she will receive a briefing from Japanese and UK military personnel on-board IZUMO, the largest vessel in the JMSDF. The briefing will focus on the strength of the UK-Japan defence relationship, including joint mine countermeasures work in the region.

Speaking at the National Security Council today, the Prime Minister will say:

It is a great honour to be invited to attend this meeting of Japan's National Security Council.

As two outward-facing countries with many shared priorities and shared challenges, Japan remains a natural partner for us on defence and security issues.

I am determined that our defence and security cooperation will continue to go from strength to strength, enhancing our collective response to threats to the international order and to global peace and security, through increased cooperation on defence, cyber security, and counter-terrorism.

And that must include confronting the threat that North Korea poses and ensuring the regime stops its aggressive acts.

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News story: Ofsted launches new point-in-time questionnaires

The questionnaires are for children and young people as well as parents, carers and staff.

Ofsted has today (Thursday 31 August) issued its annual point-in-time questionnaires about the residential provision of boarding schools, residential special schools, and further education colleges.

Ofsted inspectors want to hear what children and young people, their parents and carers, and staff have to say about the boarding or residential provision of these schools and further education colleges. Their responses will help inform future inspections.

Questions for children and young people include:

- do staff look after you well?
- do you feel safe inside your school or college accommodation?
- can you talk to staff about what you think?

Ofsted is asking for responses by Thursday 12 October.

Schools and colleges should provide children and young people, their parents and carers, and staff with a link to the questionnaire. Alternatively, anyone wishing to offer their views can contact Ofsted on 0300 123 1231 (select option 5 and then option 2) or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

Notice: Westerham Golf Club Limited: application made to abstract water

The Environment Agency consults the public on certain applications for the abstraction and impoundment of water.

These notices explain:

- what the application is about
- which Environment Agency offices you can visit to see the application documents on the public register
- when you need to comment by

News story: Inspiring new products and services: apply for business funding

Innovate UK has up to £25 million to invest in emerging and enabling technologies that could support UK economic growth in the future.

Projects can be carried out in a range of areas including:

- emerging technologies such as biofilms, energy harvesting, graphene and imaging
- digital technologies
- electronics sensors and photonics
- robotics and autonomous systems
- creative economy and design
- space applications

The aim is to support technologies that have the potential to transform commercial markets or that could make a difference to UK economic growth across many different sectors.

Up to £15 million of the funding has been set aside for research and development projects. A further £10 million is for Knowledge Transfer Partnerships.

- the competition opens on 4 September 2017, and the deadline for applications is midday on 8 November 2017
- research and development projects:
 - must involve at least one SME, working alone or in collaboration
 - must involve at least 2 partners working together if project costs are more than £100,000
 - can vary in size between £35,000 and £2 million and last between 3 months and 3 years
- businesses can attract up to 70% of their total project costs
- funding is available for Knowledge Transfer Partnerships, which link a business with an academic or research organisation and a qualified graduate
- briefing events take place across the UK during September