

Cayman Islands to establish a new reserve unit with support of the UK military

Following engagement from the Minister earlier this year the Governor of the Cayman Islands his Excellency Martyn Roper OBE and the Honourable Premier, Alden McLaughlin have announced that they will look to establish a reserve unit to be known as the Cayman Regiment, the first defence force for the islands.

A team of UK military and civilian experts from the MOD and FCO will shortly deploy to begin the assessments needed to take the project forward. Having a specially trained defence force in the region will provide a boost to security and disaster management capability both in Cayman and the wider Caribbean.

Initially, assistance from the UK is likely to take the form of logistical advice and support but will develop further to include operational training and equipment.

Minister for the Armed Forces Mark Lancaster said:

The UK enjoys a close and historic bond with the Cayman Islands and through helping to establish the Islands first reserve unit we are strengthening this relationship even further.

We are committed to the safety and security of the Overseas Territories. Having recently worked with regional partners on the response to Hurricane Dorian we have demonstrated both the depth of that commitment and value we place on our partnerships in the Caribbean.

Both in 2017 during the response to Hurricane Irma and more recently with Hurricane Dorian the UK has worked hand in hand with the Cayman Islands on relief efforts. During his visit the Minister was able to personally thank the Royal Cayman Islands Police Service and the Air Operations Unit for their work on the response and hear about how they worked with the Royal Navy and RFA Mounts Bay.

The Minister was also shown the growth of the Cayman Island Junior Cadet Corps, which has gone from strength to strength since its establishment in 2001. The new defence force will help offer an avenue for cadets on graduation, should they choose to develop their skills further. The Cadet Force also assist with low-level activities during national emergencies such as hurricanes.