

Coronavirus precautions on the Defence Training Estate

The Training Estate is considered an important asset in support of the military's response to COVID-19, and every measure is being taken to ensure personnel are protected from the virus. In particular, staff at Warcop Training Area in Cumbria and Swynnerton Training Camp in Staffordshire brought in extra facilities to ensure the safety of soldiers.

Facilities at Warcop Training Area were in use by soldiers from 4th Battalion, the Royal Regiment of Scotland. Numbers in each building were restricted to ensure that social distancing measures could be observed. Working with our industry partner Landmarc and their sub-contractors Splashdown, additional shower and toilet facilities were temporarily brought in to make sure that numbers could be limited. 2 mobile laundry facilities were also provided. Due to the fast-moving nature of the Coronavirus pandemic, the teams had to work very quickly and the new facilities were in place within 2 weeks.

At Swynnerton Training Area, members of 29 Regiment Royal Logistics Corps were preparing to be individual augmentees for various different operations around the world, as well as soldiers returning from rest and recuperation time after having been on operations. As personnel were coming in from different parts of the world, each group was kept isolated from other groups, including taking their meals and undertaking fitness training separately until they had completed 14 days in self-isolation.

Personnel were accommodated in the normal camp accommodation which had been rearranged to give sufficient space between soldiers, with separate ablution facilities for each group. Landmarc arranged for additional toilet and shower blocks at Swynnerton as well as Warcop. In total an extra 20 showers, 18 toilets and 6 hand washing stations were brought in at Swynnerton. The facilities arrived within a week.

Colonel Phil Cook, Deputy Head of UK Training at DIO, said:

At both Warcop and Swynnerton the DIO and Landmarc teams on the ground had to react very quickly and proactively to a changing situation. Plans had to take into account the number of troops, existing facilities, available space and any steps which could be taken to protect troops, contractors and staff. Their hard work ensured that all the soldiers could complete their training safely.

Mark Neill, Landmarc's Managing Director, said:

As DIO's industry partner for the strategic management and operation of the UK Defence Training Estate, our primary

responsibility is to enable our servicemen and women to deploy safely on operations. The speed and agility in which critical services have been delivered in response to the Coronavirus crisis reflects the high level of collaboration between Landmarc and DIO to ensure we can continue to support the nation's key defence and national security outputs.