

News story: Joint Forces Command appoints new Director of Overseas Bases

Alison Stevenson has been appointed as the first Director of Overseas Bases. Since May 2015 she has been the Director Head Office in the Ministry of Defence (MOD), responsible for the financial and corporate management of the Head Office, and is also the Gender Champion for the MOD.

Prior to this, Alison was the Head of NATO and Europe Policy. She was responsible for UK defence policy objectives for international security organisations; and for developing defence bilateral relations with our European allies and partners; a role requiring extensive cross-government and international engagement.

Alison initially trained within MOD as an electronic engineer. She has undertaken a range of senior policy and corporate roles in the department.

General Deverell said:

I am delighted to announce Alison's appointment as the new Director of Overseas Bases. She is an outstanding hire for Joint Forces Command, who brings a wealth of expertise, knowledge, and leadership to her new role.

Alison Stevenson said:

It's fantastic to be joining Joint Forces Command at a time when our Overseas Bases, and the people who work in them, have never been more important in projecting our global military influence as well as contributing to regional security and Global Britain. I join an excellent team and look forward to working with them.

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Commander of Joint Forces Command General Chris Deverell welcomes Alison

Stevenson as the first Director of Overseas Bases.

Press release: UK troops touch down in Norway following epic road move

Hundreds of British Army troops have successfully completed an epic road move to Norway, where they will now begin training with allies ahead of NATO Exercise Trident Juncture.

Armed Forces Minister Mark Lancaster:

With the Arctic and Far North becoming increasingly militarised, it is now more important than ever for the UK and our NATO Allies to train across a range of challenging environments.

This exercise will truly test our ability to deter any aggression we may face in an era of intensifying threats.

Over the course of the next 10 days Army personnel will integrate with fellow troops from Denmark and Poland – sharing equipment, drills and personnel to form a multinational, combat-ready brigade.

Once complete British infantry and armoured reconnaissance vehicles, Danish main battle tanks and Polish armoured fighting vehicles will then conduct a week-long live exercise alongside brigades led by Germany and Italy against a fictitious invading enemy in defensive and offensive operations.

In total there will be 2,700 UK Armed Forces personnel as well as six Royal Navy ships, 480 vehicles and Royal Air Force Hawk aircraft.

With some 150 aircraft, 40,000 participants and 10,000 vehicles, Exercise Trident Juncture is the largest collective defence exercise NATO has seen in over a decade.

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News story: Defence Secretary welcomes Qatari counterpart to UK

Gavin Williamson welcomed his counterpart, His Excellency Khalid bin Mohammad Al Attiyah, to London. They spoke about the future of the defence relationship, underpinned by the recently agreed partnership on a Joint Typhoon Squadron and Qatar's acquisition of the aircraft.

Regional security and the furthering of defence collaboration and dialogue across the Gulf, in the face of mutual threats to security and stability, was also discussed.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

Our two nations enjoy extremely strong links. From the coalition air campaign headquarters in Qatar, we work together to stamp out the threat from Daesh. We trade together, significantly boosting the British economy, and it is vital that we continue to forge this relationship to ensure the mutual safety of our people.

As part of his visit to the UK, the Qatari Defence Minister also visited BAE Systems sites in Warton and Samlesbury to cut steel, officially marking the start of production on the first Typhoon fighter jets. Qatar's acquisition of Typhoon will see the first aircraft will be delivered to the Qatari Amiri Air Force (QAAF) in 2022.

Qatar's deal to purchase the Typhoon and Hawk recently achieved contract effectiveness, supporting BAE Systems, its nearly 35,000 employees and the 9,000 companies in its supply chain.

The deal, representing a distinct and tailored package will see the Royal Air Force and QAAF working together in a new Typhoon Joint Squadron. This unique partnership was marked by the visit to the UK by His Highness the Amir of Qatar in July, and his participation in a ceremony marking the reformation of 12 Squadron as the new Joint Squadron.

The joint squadron will initially be based in the UK, comprising of pilots and ground crew, based at RAF Coningsby. This represents a unique initiative,

which will allow QAAF to familiarise themselves with the aircraft ahead of delivery. Not since the Battle of Britain has the UK formed a squadron with another nation and this new partnership will help forge lasting bonds between the RAF and their Qatari counterparts.

Qatar is the ninth country to purchase the Typhoon, with the deal sustaining thousands of jobs. The UK is a world-leader in the combat air sector, with a mix of skills and technologies unique in Europe. The sector delivers a turnover of more than £6bn a year and has made up over 80% of defence exports from the UK over the last ten years.