

News story: UK troops arrive in Estonia for major NATO deployment

Soldiers from the 5th Battalion The Rifles Battlegroup (5 RIFLES), including members of an Armoured Engineer Squadron, Military Police Detachment, Artillery Group and Port Task Group, arrived at Amari airbase last night.

They were welcomed by Estonia's Defence Minister Margus Tsahkna, having flown from RAF Brize Norton by Voyager aircraft.

The 120 soldiers are fundamental to setting up a UK headquarters in the country before the rest of the UK deployment arrives next month, increasing the total number of troops in Estonia to around 800.



Soldiers from the 5th Battalion The Rifles Battlegroup arrive at Amari airbase, Estonia.

The UK is taking a leading role in NATO's enhanced Forward Presence, alongside several other contributing nations. The deployments are designed to assure NATO allies of the mutual commitment to collective European security.

Working alongside the UK forces this year will be French personnel, and from next year, Danish partners. All are there at the request of the Estonian Government. The Battlegroup will provide a proportionate, defensive, and combat capable force to defend our NATO ally and deter any form of hostile activity against the Alliance.



An AS90 and a Challenger 2 tank being loaded onto cargo ship in the port of Emden, Germany, before deployment to Estonia.

The UK-led Estonia Battlegroup is one of four NATO multinational deployments to the eastern part of the Alliance. Other nations are deploying to Latvia, Lithuania and Poland, the last of which will include 150 UK personnel, on a persistent, rotational basis.

Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon said:

In the face of an increasingly assertive Russia, NATO is stepping up its commitment to collective defence. British troops will play a leading role in Estonia and support our US allies in Poland, as part of wider efforts to defend NATO.

Our rising defence budget means we can support those deployments in the long-term and strengthen our commitment to European security.

Commanding Officer of 5 Rifles Lieutenant Colonel Mark Wilson added:

The UK and Estonia have a long and proud history of serving together, including in Afghanistan, so it is an honour to lead 5 RIFLES on this deployment as part of NATO's enhanced Forward Presence. My soldiers are looking forward to again be working, training and exercising alongside their Estonian counterparts.

This week, around 300 UK vehicles have also departed to Estonia, including Warrior infantry fighting vehicles, Challenger 2 tanks and AS90 self-propelled artillery pieces. These vehicles, loaded onto a Roll-On-Roll-Off ferry, are currently on their way and set to arrive towards the middle of next week. French armoured vehicles, including tanks, are also due to arrive in Estonia via train after being loaded yesterday.



Personnel from the 5th Battalion The Rifles depart from RAF Brize Norton for Estonia.

[News story: Army's future is secure in Brecon](#)

Sir Michael confirmed that the Brecon Infantry Battle School will remain open, providing world-class training to 3,500 infantry soldiers each year who are preparing to become future Army leaders.

During the visit he also announced that the Regimental Museum of The Royal Welsh is likely to remain in its current location for at least a decade as the Ministry of Defence discusses a long-term lease for the site.

Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon said:

Brecon has a long Army history. The Infantry Battle School and Sennybridge Training Area will stay and continue to be a vital location for training and exercises for thousands of soldiers every year.

Today was an opportunity to review our plans for the Barracks and Regimental Museum with Chris Davies and others to ensure that we help attract jobs and investment when we leave the Barracks by 2027

With a brigade headquarters and combat units continuing to be based in Wales, Wales' long term future as a key defence location is secure.

The Armed Forces has a strong connection to Wales, and the Defence Secretary also revealed figures showing that Defence spent £870 million with Welsh industry in 2015/16, amounting to around £280 per person and supporting 5,250 jobs. Wales is also home to one of the Army's major UK training areas at Sennybridge, which is used for various exercises throughout the year.

As part of the MOD's Better Defence Estate strategy, Brecon Barracks will be released, opening up a prime town centre site for redevelopment with the potential to bring economic opportunities and job creation to the area. By selling sites such as these, the MOD is investing £4 billion over 10 years to provide accommodation and facilities better suited to our modern Armed Forces and their families.

160 Brigade will continue to be based out of Wales, as well as the RAF's fast jet pilot training school at RAF Valley. Around 2180 regulars are based across the country plus a thousand of MOD civilian staff, demonstrating Defence's continued long-term commitment to Wales.

Sir Michael's announcements came as he met Rangers and Riflemen from 160th Infantry Brigade and presented two members of the Royal Irish Regiment with St Patrick's Day shamrocks.

[News story: Accelerator face-to-face meetings: 4 April 2017 in Harwell](#)

[Book an Accelerator meeting at Harwell on 4 April 2017.](#)

These 30-minute face-to-face meetings give you the opportunity to discuss your innovative research idea with Accelerator staff in private.

The Accelerator funds innovative proof-of-concept research that could lead to a cost-effective capability advantage for UK armed forces and national

security. This is through the enduring competition or specific themed competitions.

Before you come to your meeting please prepare by thinking about:

- what is your research idea?
- what do you think is the military benefit?
- will it save time/costs, improve capability/performance/reliability?
- why should MOD invest in this work?
- what will your approach be?
- how will you structure your research?
- what will you deliver?
- what evidence will you produce?
- what will the impact of your research be?
- how will you demonstrate progress towards the claimed benefit?

The main purpose of this meeting is for you to ask questions, and most importantly, receive advice from the team, so please leave time for this during your 30 minutes.

Spaces will be on a first-come, first-served basis and an organisation should only register once.

The Accelerator is part of the [Defence Science and Technology Laboratory](#) (Dstl) and only funds novel, high-risk, high-potential-benefit research.

If your proposal is a product that is already used in the defence and security market, you should speak to the [Defence Suppliers Service](#), or see other ways of [how to sell to Dstl](#).

The Accelerator team hold regular regional meetings. Join our [Accelerator LinkedIn group](#) for notification of future meetings.

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[News story: Defence Secretary confirms 30,000 defence jobs in South West](#)

During the visit to Devon, Sir Michael revealed figures showing the significant contribution Defence makes to the region, with the Ministry of Defence spending billions of pounds with industry and supporting one in 70 roles or 30,000 local jobs.

Defence Secretary Sir Michael Fallon said:

Creating an economy that works for everyone means investing and supporting jobs across the UK. Backed by a rising defence budget, we spent more than £4 billion with industry in the South West last year to help keep Britain safe.

Our commitment to the future of defence in the south west is enduring, a region that is vital to the Royal Navy and for the many serving personnel that live and work there.

I welcomed the opportunity to review with Peter Heaton-Jones and others how we can work together to ensure that the future use of Chivenor in a decade's time helps create jobs and investment.

While at the base, the Defence Secretary met with personnel from 24 Commando who have recently been engaged in climatic training, including deploying to Belize on exercise and a winter deployment to Norway. He also awarded two Long Service and Good Conduct medals to 3 Commando's Lance Corporal Kenny McBain and Staff Sergeant Daniel Moseley, from the Army's Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers in recognition of their hard work and 15 years of exemplary service.

24 Commando Royal Marines will remain in the South West when they relocate from RM Chivenor by 2027 as part of the Better Defence Estate strategy. The MOD is engaging closely with local authorities and other interested parties on the future of the base.

This visit allowed for further discussion with community members to make sure the release of the site will bring the best possible opportunities like jobs, housing and economic benefits to the local area.

[News story: MOD signs £14 million contract for lifesaving medical technology](#)

The Tempus Pro monitors, designed and manufactured by Remote Diagnostic Technologies (RDT), can help facilitate emergency treatment for Royal Navy, British Army, and RAF personnel if they are injured or taken ill on active duty.

The lightweight, robust and portable monitor, which is battery operated, can be used on land, at sea and in the air. It transmits medical data such as blood pressure, pulse and respiratory rate in real time back to medical facilities and treatment teams, giving them a better understanding of a patient's condition ahead of time.



A demonstration of the Tempus Pro medical monitor.

Minister for Defence Procurement, Harriett Baldwin said:

Our Armed Forces serve with incredible commitment and bravery, and the new Tempus Pro monitor will ensure that they will receive the best possible care and treatment should they be wounded or taken ill on operations.

Backed by our rising defence budget and our £178 billion equipment plan, our investment in these cutting edge medical monitors demonstrates how we are working with our NATO allies to provide lifesaving equipment to our frontline personnel.

This deal, which will sustain over 60 UK jobs, has already seen 444 monitors delivered to the Armed Forces, with plans for around 900 more to be purchased over the next five years. The contract is part of the MOD's Innovation Initiative, aiming to encourage imagination, ingenuity and entrepreneurship in pursuit of maintaining a military advantage in the future.

Ministry of Defence **de&s**

Tempus Pro:

Deal to deliver around 900 lifesaving medical monitors to Armed Forces

900 DE&S is purchasing around 900 Tempus Pro medical monitors

£14m £14 million contract with Remote Diagnostic Technologies

60 The contract will help sustain 60 UK jobs in Basingstoke

Can be used remotely across the UK Armed Forces on ships, vehicles, aircraft and deployed medical facilities.

Procured through the NATO Support and Procurement Agency and used by our key allies including US and Canada.

The monitor can transmit medical data such as blood pressure, pulse and respiratory rate in real time back to a treatment facility.

Remote Diagnostic Technologies' Tempus Pro medical monitor.

Tempus Pro can be used remotely on medical evacuation vehicles and aircraft, battalion aid stations, hospital ships and field hospitals. It will help to provide consistent and streamlined medical support, meaning the records of all sick and injured Armed Forces personnel can easily move with them as they progress through different levels of care. The monitors are being purchased through the NATO Support and Procurement Agency (NSPA).

Chief Executive Officer of the MOD's Defence Equipment and Support body, Tony Douglas, said:

This state of the art piece of equipment shows how we are delivering proven, world-leading equipment to our Armed Forces. The Tempus Pro monitor is a step forward in innovation and safety,

demonstrating how we are committed to improving the medical care received by those keeping our country safe.

This deal also highlights DE&S' strong, collaborative partnership with industry, benefitting both our Armed Forces and the wider UK economy by sustaining around 60 UK jobs.