

# UK defence invests more than £1 billion in Wales

[UK defence spending in Wales](#) reached more than £1 billion for the first time last year (2018-19) supporting more than 7,000 jobs.

Ministry of Defence figures published today (30 January) show that the department's procurement spend in Wales increased from £960m in 2017-18 to £1.08bn last year – an increase in per capita spending from £310 to £350.

Major defence projects in Wales include the production of the Army's next generation of AJAX armoured fighting vehicles at General Dynamics UK in Merthyr Tydfil and Oakdale, the development of a new £11m Royal Naval Reserve centre in Cardiff Bay and a £250m contract with Raytheon in Broughton to provide support services to the Royal Air Force's fleet of surveillance aircraft.

It is estimated that around 7,700 jobs in defence in Wales are now being supported by UK Government defence spending, up from 6,300 in 2017-18.

## **Secretary of State for Wales Simon Hart said:**

UK Defence spent more than £1bn with Welsh industry last year supporting thousands of private sector jobs.

This investment in businesses such as General Dynamics, Raytheon and others makes Wales a genuine defence industry hub and one of the most competitive places in the world from which to innovate and deliver security.

Among the military bases in Wales is the home of 160 Brigade HQ Wales in Brecon while a light infantry unit is to be based at MOD St Athan which will become the main Army base in Wales as well as a major RAF base.

In 2017, the runway at RAF Valley on Anglesey was restored as part of a £20m refurbishment extending its operational life for a further 25 years. All new UK fighter pilots pass through Valley before reaching their frontline squadron.

The area around Brecon and Sennybridge are home to major Army training facilities and every year hosts Exercise Cambrian Patrol which sees military units from across the world travel to Wales to test themselves on the demanding two-day course.

**Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:**

Defence continues to provide security and prosperity as we see billions invested across the UK and the subsequent hundreds of thousands of jobs supported.

Other recent UK Government defence investments in Wales include the awarding of an £82m contract to Qioptiq, based in St Asaph, to maintain surveillance and targeting equipment over the next five years.

**ENDS**

**Notes to editors:**