

UK to provide 1,000 more surface to air missiles to Ukraine

- UK has provided approximately 1,000 additional surface to air missiles to help counter the Russian threat to Ukrainian infrastructure
- The Defence Secretary made the announcement while visiting training sites alongside the Secretary General of NATO and JEF Defence Ministers
- The UK has now trained over 7,400 recruits from the Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU), and over 60 AFU Junior leaders

The Defence Secretary Ben Wallace has announced that the UK will shortly complete the delivery of approximately 1,000 additional surface to air missiles to the Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU). This comes in response to Ukrainian requests for more air defence capabilities, and the missiles will play a vital role in the provision of air defence for Ukraine and the protection of its critical infrastructure which is being continually targeted by Russia.

The missiles can be used in conjunction with existing Armed Forces of Ukraine capabilities. The equipment consists of launchers and missiles and is capable of shooting down air targets, including Russian drones and cruise missiles.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:

This commitment of hundreds more surface to air missiles continues our defensive support for Ukraine against Russian aggression – and will help Ukraine counter the threat from illegal targeting of critical national infrastructure.

The announcement comes as Defence Secretary has today visited two training sites where over 7,400 Ukrainian recruits have been trained by UK forces alongside eight partner nations.

At the sites being used for training, the Defence Secretary welcomed the NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg in the morning, and his counterparts from the Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF) nations this afternoon, some of whom were able to see their own military personnel conducting the training.

Currently 1,900 Ukrainian recruits are in the UK taking part in the training programme and will soon return to their home country. When they complete the training, they are provided with items including combat clothing, body armour and ear defence, waterproofs and sleeping bags.

Recruits are also issued with a fully stocked individual First Aid Kit after learning how to use tourniquets, field dressings and chest seals during training. Recruits leaving the UK will now be provided with extreme cold weather kits, announced by the Prime Minister today, including 25,000 set of extreme cold weather clothing, 20,000 sleeping bags and 150 insulated tents.

The announcement comes in response to Ukrainian requests for more cold weather equipment. Ukraine's troops continue to battle to liberate their country from Russian forces as winter rapidly approaches, when temperatures can sink to minus 20°C and below in parts of the country.

Heavy duty sleeping bags and roll mats, combined with heated accommodation and personal winter clothing, will help to prevent cold-related injuries and ensure troops can operate effectively and efficiently.

Brigadier Justin Stenhouse, Commander of the UK's basic training for Ukrainian recruits said:

We have equipped more than 9,000 Ukrainian recruits to ensure they have the necessary personal protective equipment, including helmet, body armour and webbing, to aid them in fighting against Russian aggression. The effort to support this from across the entire logistic community has been hugely impressive and no small undertaking.

The Ukrainian recruits, many of whom have little to no military experience, have shown exemplary courage, resilience, and a desire to learn which is deeply humbling to observe. Our instructors have done an excellent job in training these recruits to live and fight using their new equipment and transforming them from civilians to soldiers in just five weeks.