

RAF fighter aircraft deploy to Finland and Sweden for joint training

The deployments, which took place over the last month at the request of the host nations, allowed the partner air forces to develop their joint tactics and strengthen their ability to operate alongside each other.

Two [F-35Bs](#) and four [Typhoons](#) conducted high-end warfighting training with Finnish F-18 Hornets and Swedish Gripen aircraft, underlining the UK's commitment to strengthening our collective defence capabilities.

The deployments are a practical demonstration of [the mutual security assurance declarations that the UK signed with these nations](#) in May, as they progress their respective applications to join NATO. All three nations already work together through the UK-led Joint Expeditionary Force, which is a coalition of 10 member nations who cooperate to maintain the security of Northern Europe.

Secretary of State for Defence, Ben Wallace, said:

Finland and Sweden are important defence partners and we welcome their applications to join NATO, which will make the alliance stronger as we face a renewed threat in Europe.

These deployments highlight our determination to enhance that partnership and ensure our forces can work together seamlessly.

The F-35 deployment to Finland was only the second time that the aircraft type has landed in the country, after two US F-35A visited for an air show in June. The F-35B's arrival was of particular interest to the Finns as they recently announced that they will purchase F-35 aircraft. The UK Lightning Force will continue to develop their partnership with the Finnish Air Force as they integrate their new aircraft.

Swedish Defence Minister Peter Hultqvist said:

The Joint Expeditionary Force contributes to regional security and stability. Joint exercises, like the one here in Såtenäs, strengthen our ability to operate together in response to a crisis in our neighbourhood. This is particularly important in today's challenging security environment.

The fighter jets were supported by teams of specialists from [RAF Marham](#) and [RAF Lossiemouth](#). A Voyager aircraft from RAF Brize Norton also provided air-to-air refuelling to extend the duration of the combat sorties and an A400M Atlas deployed the support team to Sweden.

Working with similarly advanced air forces such as the Finnish and Swedish also provides an opportunity to learn from each other and identify areas of mutual benefit. The deployed teams spent time further integrating their systems, so that they can share information quickly on the exercise and in the future.

These exercises are part of a series of bilateral and Joint Expeditionary Force exercises planned this year at Finland and Sweden's request. Later this month the UK will deploy the F-35B to Norway for further integration training with the Norwegian Air Force.

The Typhoon Force also deployed aircraft to Konya in Türkiye for similar integrated fighter training with the Turkish Air Force, flying alongside Turkish, Pakistani, Jordanian and Azerbaijani aircraft in simulated combat scenarios. The Typhoons forward deployed from Romania where they are currently supporting the NATO Air Policing mission.

[Defence Secretary Ben Wallace visits Armed Forces of Ukraine as training programme starts across the UK](#)

News story

The first cohort of Ukrainian soldiers taking part in a major new UK-led military programme, which will train up to 10,000 Ukrainians over the coming months, have arrived in the UK.



Ukrainian soldier

The programme is part of the UK's enduring commitment to support Ukraine in its fight against Russia's unprovoked invasion, which so far amounts to more than £2.3 billion in military aid and includes more than 5,000 NLAW anti-tank

weapons and M270 multiple launch rocket systems.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace, who visited the training this week, said:

This ambitious new training programme is the next phase in the UK's support to the Armed Forces of Ukraine in their fight against Russian aggression.

Using the world-class expertise of the British Army we will help Ukraine to rebuild its forces and scale-up its resistance as they defend their country's sovereignty and their right to choose their own future.

Around 1,050 UK service personnel are deploying to run the programme, which will take place at MOD sites across the North West, South West and South East of the UK. Each course will last several weeks and will be conducted by elements from 11 Security Force Assistance Brigade.

The training will give volunteer recruits with little to no military experience the skills to be effective in frontline combat. Based on the UK's basic soldier training, the course covers weapons handling, battlefield first aid, fieldcraft, patrol tactics and the Law of Armed Conflict.

The Government has rapidly procured AK variant assault rifles for the training programme, meaning Ukrainian soldiers can train on the weapons they will be using on the front line. This effort was supported by the Welsh Guards, who tested more than 2,400 such rifles in 17 days to ensure they were ready for the Ukrainians to commence their training.

The UK has also gifted clothing and equipment to support Ukrainian soldiers in their training and deployment back to Ukraine. Each soldier will be issued with:

- Personal protective equipment including helmets, body armour, eye protectors, ear protectors, pelvic protection, and individual first aid kits
- Field uniforms and boots
- Cold and wet weather clothing
- Bergens, day sacks and webbing
- Additional equipment required for field conditions including ponchos, sleeping bags, and entrenching tools

The UK has a long history of supporting Ukrainian service personnel through Operation ORBITAL, which trained 22,000 Ukrainians between 2015 and 2022. The new programme will build on this success and demonstrate the UK's continued leadership in responding to Ukraine's military requirements as the war evolves.

Curfews proposed for parents who fail to pay child maintenance

The change is being considered as part of fresh proposals that will get more of the money that is owed to the children of separated parents.

The Child Maintenance Service (CMS) collected or arranged £1 billion in child maintenance payments last year, operating as a crucial weapon in the battle against child poverty. Child support payments help lift around 140,000 children out of poverty each year.

Curfew orders would be another method of enforcement, alongside current powers which include passport and driving license confiscation and earnings deduction orders, to tackle parents who continually refuse to pay maintenance owed.

As an alternative sanction to prison, which is costly and prevents maintenance getting to children, curfews would act as a deterrent by restricting and disrupting non-compliant parents' lifestyles, stopping them, for example, from going out for dinner, to the pub or going on holiday.

The curfews would be monitored by an electronic tag with an electronic monitoring service applying the tag, monitoring and making sure the parent complies with the rules of the tag. If parents fail to comply, the CMS would be able refer them back to court which might then extend the curfew order or impose a prison sentence.

DWP Lords Minister Baroness Stedman-Scott said:

For children in low-income households, maintenance payments can make all the difference, lifting them out of poverty.

We are not afraid to go after those parents who deliberately and repeatedly refuse to pay for their children.

Curfew orders are another step towards providing the CMS with a full arsenal of powers to make sure children get the financial support they need to have the best start in life.

This builds on a [new powers introduced earlier this year](#) to digitise all communications to parents and improvements to help the service trace the paying parent, calculate maintenance and enforce arrears more effectively.

The consultation is published [here](#) and closes on 12 August 2022.

Further information

- The Child Maintenance Service was established in 2012 to replace the old Child Support Agency, to increase levels of cooperation between separated parents and encourage parents to meet their responsibilities to provide their children with the financial support they need to secure better outcomes in life.
- [Get help arranging child maintenance] (<https://child-maintenance.service.gov.uk/get-help-arranging-child-maintenance/>) is a new digital service that helps parents decide what type of child maintenance arrangement is right for them and their circumstances.
- Curfew orders will take account of each individual's circumstances.
- This power will only apply to paying parents living in England, Scotland, or Wales as with our current powers of driving licence and passport disqualification and commitment to prison.
- The consultation period begins on 9 July 2022 and runs until 12 August 2022.
- Curfew orders will be added to the enforcement powers of the CMS subject to parliamentary approval.

Media enquiries for this press release – 0115 965 8781

Follow DWP on:

[Russia's deeply irresponsible veto will have a tragic impact on 4.1 million Syrians](#)

Thank you President.

I'd like to start by expressing the UK's deep condolences following the deaths of former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and former President José Eduardo dos Santos.

I'd like to start by thanking Ireland and Norway for their sterling efforts and masterful diplomacy as penholders to find a reasonable compromise on this text.

It is deeply regrettable that Russia has yet again vetoed a humanitarian resolution on Syria. This is a deeply irresponsible veto that will have a tragic impact.

The UN and humanitarian organisations have repeatedly described a 12-month renewal as essential, not least to provide operational hope for the 4.1 million Syrians who desperately rely on the support provided by the cross-

border mechanism.

The penholders consulted Council members extensively and their balanced text also provided important support for early recovery, resilience and livelihoods planning, reflected in the widespread support it received.

A renewal for six months will create significant operational challenges for frontline NGOs – to their planning, their procurement, their hiring of staff and ultimately their sustainability.

We will not support the resolution tabled by the Russian Federation, which simply serves to slice in half the fragile certainty we are giving to humanitarian operations, and to bolster the Assad regime.

We do need to find a way forward to preserve this vital humanitarian lifeline and the penholders have our full support as they seek to do that.

Thank you Mr President.

[Monkeypox: continuing transmission in interconnected sexual networks](#)

The latest UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) [technical briefing](#) on the current UK monkeypox outbreak shows no signs of a decline in the outbreak. In line with global observations, there is no evidence of sustained transmission beyond these networks.

The outbreak continues to grow and information from cases strongly suggests the virus is passing primarily via close or sexual contact. UKHSA Health Protection teams in all regions of England continue to identify and risk assess close contacts of confirmed cases.

The majority of people with monkeypox can be safely managed at home and there have been no deaths in the UK. Most people experience mild disease but it can cause a significant illness in some that requires hospitalisation, including severe pain.

A vaccination programme is beginning, and sexual health services will offer the vaccine to anyone considered to be at higher risk of exposure. This includes people with a recent history of multiple partners, participating in group sex, attending sex on premises venues, or have recently had a bacterial sexually transmitted infection.

Up to 6 July 2022, there were 1,517 laboratory confirmed cases in the UK. The median age of confirmed cases in the UK was 36 years old. In England, 99% of cases are male and 74% are known to be London residents. 16% (226) of England

cases reported recent foreign travel, with 176 of these reporting travel within Europe.

The briefing includes a breakdown of events that cases reported attending, 572 in total. 17% of those who provided information had been to a sex-on-premises venue and while this does not confirm transmission occurred there, UKHSA continues to conduct outreach work with event organisers and to provide guidance on how to minimise risk across a range of settings.

Dr Meera Chand, Director of Clinical and Emerging Infections, UKHSA said:

It's concerning that we are continuing to see the outbreak grow and we urge the public to do all they can to help us slow the spread.

If you've recently had new or multiple sexual partners, please be vigilant to the symptoms of monkeypox, and be aware that many of the cases we're seeing are finding only a single, or few, lesions.

If you are concerned that you may have monkeypox, take a break from events, meeting with friends or having sexual contact. Instead, stay at home and contact 111 or your local sexual health service for advice. Please contact the clinic ahead of your visit and avoid close contact with others until you've been reviewed by a clinician.

To assist with our contact tracing, we encourage everyone to ensure they exchange contact details with sexual partners.

If you are called forward for vaccination, we strongly recommend that you take it.

UKHSA will continue to publish regular technical briefings as the response to the outbreak continues.

Latest UK case numbers are available on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).