



Vehicle & Aircraft Holdings within the scope of the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty 2017

Published 23 February 2017

This is an annual publication which provides information on equipment holdings of the UK, and other nations, within the scope of the [Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty \(CFE\)](#). Figures provided in this report are therefore not representative of the total equipment holdings of the UK and other nations.

Under the terms of the Treaty all participating states are required to exchange information annually on their equipment holdings within the terms of coverage. The Treaty covers a specific geographical area and has particular guidelines on what types of equipment are counted as part of the information exchange. Further details about the coverage of the Treaty are provided in the Background Information.

This publication is accompanied by Excel data tables which provide UK equipment holdings within the scope of the CFE by equipment type, and other nations' equipment holdings for 2000 to 2017 as at 1 January each year.

Key Points and Trends

- Between 2016 and 2017 there were reductions in the numbers of combat aircraft (8%), battle tanks (6%) and artillery pieces (3%) held by the UK in the UK, Germany, Cyprus and Gibraltar within the scope of the CFE.
- However there have been increases in the numbers of attack helicopters (20%) and armoured combat vehicles (11%). Primarily, these are due to increases in the numbers of Gazelle attack helicopters (increasing from 24 to 45) and Mastiff armoured combat vehicles (increasing from 72 to 222) since 2016.
- Between 2007 and 2017 the number of unarmed transport helicopters held by the UK decreased by 82%, attack helicopters by 48%, combat aircraft by 46% and primary trainers by 43%. The number of combat support helicopters has increased by 1%.
- The number of declared artillery pieces held by Turkey has reduced since 2016 from 3208 to 2807 (a reduction of 13%).
- The data for the Russian Federation continues to be unavailable since it suspended the implementation of the CFE Treaty on 12 December 2007.

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Background quality report: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/conventional-armed-forces-in-europe-equipment-holdings-statistics-index>

Would you like to be added to our **contact list**, so that we can inform you about updates to our statistics and consult you if we're thinking of making changes? You can subscribe to updates by emailing DefStrat-Stat-WDS-Pubs@mod.uk

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Excel data tables (listed below) are published alongside the 2017 report and can be accessed on GOV.UK:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/conventional-armed-forces-in-europe-equipment-holdings-statistics-index>

UK Holdings in the UK, Germany, Cyprus and Gibraltar within the scope of the CFE Treaty at 1 January each year

Table 1 – UK Tank and Artillery Holdings

Table 2 – UK Armoured Combat Vehicle Holdings

Table 3 – UK Aircraft Holdings

International Holdings within the scope of the CFE Treaty at 1 January each year

Table 4 – Declared Tank Holdings and Ceilings

Table 5 – Declared Armoured Combat Vehicle Holdings and Ceilings

Table 6 – Declared Artillery Holdings and Ceilings

Table 7 – Declared Attack Helicopter Holdings and Ceilings

Table 8 – Declared Combat Aircraft Holdings and Ceilings

A National Statistics publication

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

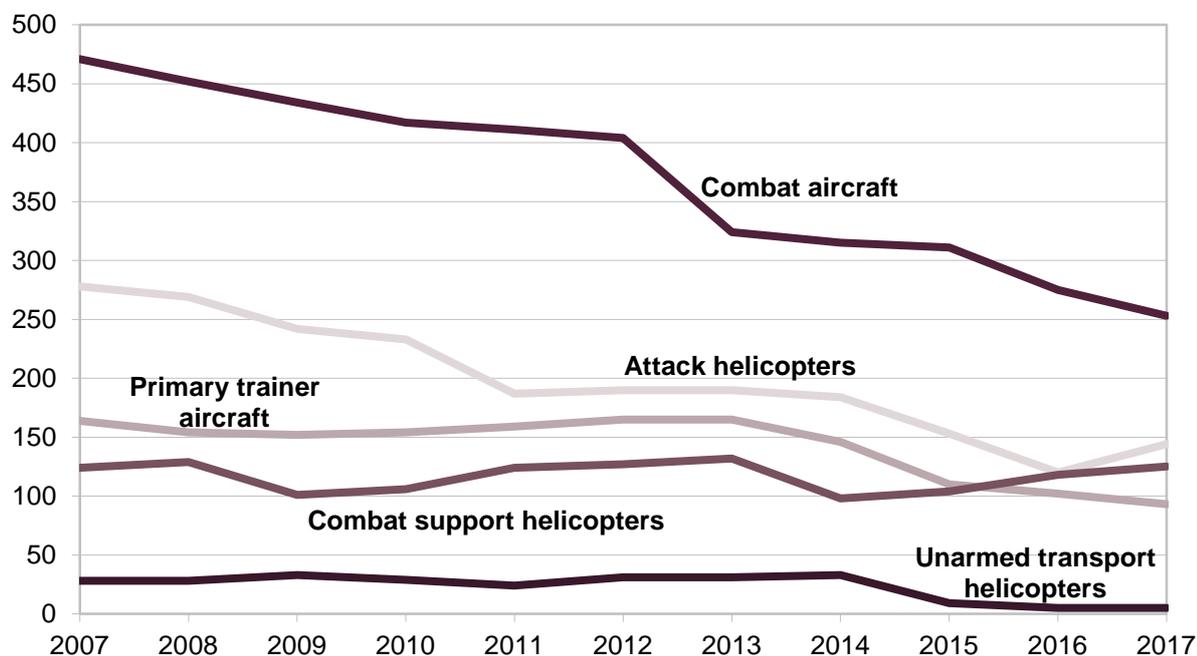
Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs;
- are well explained and readily accessible;
- are produced according to sound methods; and
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest.

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.

Key Findings

UK Aircraft Holdings¹ within the scope of the CFE, at 1 January each year



- At 1 January 2017 a total of 620 UK aircraft holdings were declared within the scope of the CFE², which is the same as in 2016, and 445 fewer than in 2007. Despite an increase in combat support and attack helicopters in 2017, this decreasing trend is largely due to a reduction in combat aircraft and attack helicopters.
- Since 2007, the number of Tornados declared within the scope of the CFE has been reduced by 69% to 80, and the number of Gazelle attack helicopters has reduced by 64% to 45.
- As a result of the planned drawdown of Lynx attack helicopters as part of the [Wildcat programme](#), the number of Lynx has almost halved since 2010 (63 to 34). There are now 16 Wildcats declared within the scope of the CFE.
- Of the 620 aircraft, 2% of these are considered to be obsolete, non-operational equipment.

Other Countries' Declared Holdings within the scope of the CFE

- In 2017, Ukraine increased the number of declared artillery pieces by 205 (to 2800). However, there was a reduction in the numbers of declared armoured combat vehicles by 101 (to 2985) and battle tanks by 100 (to 1818).
- The number of declared artillery pieces held by Turkey has reduced since 2016 from 3208 to 2807 (a reduction of 13%).

¹ Located either in the UK, Germany, Cyprus or Gibraltar.

² Details about holdings that are declared within the scope of the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty can be found in the Background Information section of this publication.

Background Information

What vehicles and aircraft figures are covered by this publication?

The vehicle and aircraft figures in this publication do not simply provide counts of equipment as they are subject to a number of restrictions which are determined by the [Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty \(CFE\)](#). The Treaty, signed in 1990, established an agreement between NATO and Warsaw Pact members (collectively known in the Treaty as the 'States Parties') to reduce the possibility of military confrontation in Europe, through limiting the numbers of armaments e.g. artillery, battle tanks, as well as military personnel.

The Treaty refers to a specific geographical area and has particular guidelines on what types of equipment are counted as part of the information exchange with participating States Parties. Further details about the geographical and equipment coverage of the Treaty are provided below.

Exchange of this data between States

Under the terms of the Treaty all participating states are required to exchange information annually with all other participating states on their equipment holdings within the terms of coverage outlined below. This data is exchanged no later than 15th December and is valid as at 1st January the following year. Therefore the figures in this publication have been available to all other participating states since 15th December.

Public accountability requires that the MOD should account for its assets, as well as knowing where they are and how they are used. The publication of this information means that the data is available publicly, regularly and as a time series.

Geographical Coverage of the Treaty

As stated in the Treaty, the area of application is:

- The States Parties' entire land territory in Europe from the Atlantic Ocean to the Ural Mountains, which incorporates all the European island territories of the States Parties, including the Faroe Islands of the Kingdom of Denmark, Svalbard including Bear Island of the Kingdom of Norway, the islands of Azores and Madeira of the Portuguese Republic, the Canary Islands of the Kingdom of Spain, and Franz Josef Land and Novaya Zemlya of the USSR;
- In relation to the USSR, the area of application includes all territory lying west of the Ural River and the Caspian Sea; and
- In the case of the Republic of Turkey, the area of application includes the territory of the Republic of Turkey north and west of a line extending from the point of intersection of the Turkish border with the 39th parallel to Muradiye, Patnos, Karayazi, Tekman, Kemaliye, Feke, Ceyhan, Dogankent, Gözne and thence to the sea.

Equipment that is held by States Parties outside Europe, such as in Afghanistan and the Falkland Islands, and in parts of Europe which are not their own territory or the territory of other States Parties, are not within the area of application of the Treaty, and so are not

included in this publication. Therefore, while historically these statistics may have given a good estimate of the total equipment resources available to the UK Armed Forces, this is no longer the case.

Although Cyprus is a non-CFE territory, the UK Sovereign Base Areas on Cyprus **are** CFE territory.

Geographical Coverage of the Treaty

Conventional armaments and equipment **numerically limited by the Treaty** are:

- Battle tanks
- Armoured combat vehicles
- Artillery
- Combat aircraft
- Attack helicopters

These, as defined in Article II of the Treaty, within the area of application, are subject to specific **numerical limitations** and other provisions as set out in Articles IV, V, and VI, with the exception of those which, in a manner consistent with a State Party's normal practices:

- a) are in the process of manufacture, including manufacturing-related testing;
- b) are used exclusively for the purposes of research and development;
- c) belong to historical collections;
- d) are awaiting disposal, having been decommissioned from service in accordance with Article IX;
- e) are awaiting, or being refurbished for, export or re-export and are temporarily retained within the area of application. Such battle tanks, armoured combat vehicles, artillery, combat aircraft and attack helicopters shall be located elsewhere than at sites declared under the terms of Section V of the Protocol on Information Exchange, or at no more than 10 such declared sites which shall have been notified in the previous year's annual information exchange. In the latter case, they shall be separately distinguishable from conventional armaments and equipment limited by the Treaty;
- f) are, in the case of armoured personnel carriers, armoured infantry fighting vehicles (AIFVs), heavy armament combat vehicles (HACVs) or multi-purpose attack helicopters, held by organisations designed and structured to perform in peacetime internal security functions; or,
- g) are in transit through the area of application between an origin and final destination both outside the area of application, and are in the area of application for no longer than a total of seven days.

Conventional armaments and equipment **subject to the Treaty** are:

- Battle tanks
- Armoured combat vehicles
- Artillery
- Combat aircraft
- Combat helicopters
- Primary trainer aircraft
- Unarmed trainer aircraft
- Unarmed transport helicopters
- Armoured vehicle launched bridges
- Armoured personnel carrier look-alikes
- Armoured infantry fighting vehicle look-alikes

These are subject to information exchange in accordance with the Protocol on Information Exchange.

Accompanying Excel tables are published alongside this report:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/conventional-armed-forces-in-europe-equipment-holdings-statistics-index>

Tables 1 to 3 provide information on holdings by the UK of equipment subject to both information exchange and numerical limitation (battle tanks, armoured combat vehicles, artillery, combat aircraft, and attack helicopters), and holdings by the UK of equipment subject to information exchange only (armoured combat vehicle look-alikes, armoured vehicle launched bridges, primary trainer aircraft, combat support helicopters, and unarmed transport helicopters). Navy equipment in these categories has not been included as it is not subject to numerical limitation, and only some is subject to information exchange.

Tables 4 to 8 provide information on holdings by the CFE States Parties of equipment which is subject to both information exchange and numerical limitation.

A complete set of definitions for all the equipment terms can be found in the Glossary.

Data Sources and Data Quality

Primarily, this information is sourced to meet the data requirements of the CFE, The Vienna Document 2011 (VD11), and The Global Exchange of Military Information (GEMI). The figures in this publication are compiled annually via a census, which is sponsored by the Joint Arms Control Implementation Group (JACIG). JACIG directs all UK military Formations and Units to provide detailed information on their holdings of military hardware.

Further information about data sources and quality can be found in the [Background Quality Report](#).

Revisions

There are no regular planned revisions of this publication.

Corrections to the published statistics will be made if errors are found, or if figures change as a result of improvements to methodology or changes to definitions. When making corrections, we will follow the Ministry of Defence Statistics [Revisions and Corrections Policy](#). All corrected figures will be identified by the symbol “r”, and an explanation will be given of the reason for and size of the revision. Corrections which would have a significant impact on the utility of the statistics will be corrected as soon as possible, by reissuing the publication. Minor errors will also be corrected, but for convenience these corrections may be timed to coincide with the next annual release of the publication.

Contact Us

Defence Statistics welcomes feedback on our statistical products. If you have any comments or questions about this publication or about our statistics in general, you can contact us as follows:

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For general MOD enquiries, please call: 020 7218 9000.

If you require information which is not available within this or other available publications, you may wish to submit a Request for Information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to the Ministry of Defence. For more information, see:

<https://www.gov.uk/make-a-freedom-of-information-request/the-freedom-of-information-act>

Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

CFE Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty.

Ministry of Defence The Ministry of Defence (MOD) is the United Kingdom government department responsible for implementation of government defence policy and is the headquarters of the British Armed Forces. The principal objective of the MOD is to defend the United Kingdom and its interests. The MOD also manages day to day running of the armed forces, contingency planning and defence procurement.

NATO North Atlantic Treaty Organisation.

UK Statistics Authority The UK Statistics Authority is an independent body, and is directly accountable to Parliament. It was established on 1 April 2008. The Authority's overall objective is to promote and safeguard the quality of official statistics that serve the public good. It is also required to safeguard the comprehensiveness of official statistics, and ensure good practice in relation to official statistics. The UK Statistics Authority has three main functions: oversight of the Office for National Statistics (ONS) (its executive office), monitoring and reporting on all UK official statistics, and independent assessment of official statistics.

Descriptions of Equipment

The following descriptions are paraphrased from Article II of the CFE Treaty.

Armoured combat vehicle A self-propelled vehicle with armoured protection and cross-country capability. These vehicles include armoured personnel carriers, armoured infantry fighting vehicles and heavy armament combat vehicles.

Armoured infantry fighting vehicle An armoured combat vehicle designed and equipped primarily to transport a combat infantry squad, normally providing the capability for the troops to deliver fire from inside the vehicle under armoured protection, and armed with an integral or organic cannon of at least 20 millimetres calibre and sometimes an antitank missile launcher. These vehicles serve as the principal weapon system of armoured infantry or mechanised infantry or motorised infantry formations and units of ground forces.

Armoured infantry fighting vehicle look-alike An armoured vehicle based on the same chassis as, and externally similar to an armoured infantry fighting vehicle, which does not have a cannon or gun of 20 millimetres calibre or greater and has been constructed or modified in such a way as not to permit the transportation of a combat infantry squad. Taking into account the provisions of the Geneva Convention "For the Amelioration of the Conditions of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field" of 12 August 1949 that confer a special status on ambulances, armoured personnel carrier ambulances shall not be deemed armoured combat vehicles or armoured personnel carrier look-alikes.

Armoured personnel carrier An armoured combat vehicle designed and equipped to transport a combat infantry squad and, as a rule, armed with an integral or organic weapon of less than 20 millimetres calibre.

Armoured personnel carrier look-alike An armoured vehicle based on the same chassis as, and externally similar to, an armoured personnel carrier, which does not have a cannon or gun of 20 millimetres calibre or greater and has been constructed or modified in such a way as not to permit the transportation of a combat infantry squad. Taking into account the provisions of the Geneva Convention "For the Amelioration of the Conditions of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field" of 12 August 1949 that confer a special status on ambulances, armoured personnel carrier ambulances shall not be deemed armoured combat vehicles or armoured personnel carrier look-alikes.

Armoured vehicle launcher bridge A self-propelled armoured transporter-launcher vehicle capable of carrying and, through built-in mechanisms, of emplacing and retrieving a bridge structure. Such a vehicle with a bridge structure operates as an integrated system.

Artillery systems Large calibre systems capable of engaging ground targets by delivering primarily indirect fire. Such artillery systems provide the essential indirect fire support to combined arms formations. Large calibre artillery systems are guns, howitzers and artillery pieces combining their characteristics; mortars and multiple launch rocket systems with a calibre of 100 millimetres and above. In addition, any future large calibre direct fire system with a secondary effective indirect fire capability shall be counted against the artillery ceilings.

Attack helicopter A combat helicopter equipped to employ anti-armour, air-to-ground, or air-to-air guided weapons and equipped with an integrated fire control and aiming system for these weapons. The term "attack helicopter" comprises specialised attack helicopters and multi-purpose attack helicopters.

Battle tank A self-propelled armoured fighting vehicle, capable of heavy firepower, primarily of a high muzzle velocity direct fire main gun necessary to engage armoured and other targets, with high cross-country mobility and a high level of self-protection, not designed and equipped primarily to transport combat troops. Such vehicles serve as the principal weapon system of ground-force tank and other armoured formations. Battle tanks are tracked armoured fighting vehicles which weigh at least 16.5 metric tons unladen weight and which are armed with a 360-degree traverse gun of at least 75 millimetres calibre. Also, any wheeled armoured fighting vehicles entering into service which meet all the other criteria stated above shall also be deemed battle tanks.

Combat aircraft A fixed-wing or variable-geometry wing aircraft armed and equipped to engage targets by employing guided missiles, unguided rockets, bombs, guns, cannons, or other weapons of destruction, as well as any model or version of such an aircraft which performs other military functions such as reconnaissance or electronic warfare. The term "combat aircraft" does not include primary trainer aircraft.

Combat helicopter A rotary wing aircraft armed and equipped to engage targets or equipped to perform other military functions.

Combat support helicopters A combat helicopter which does not fulfil the requirements to qualify as an attack helicopter and which may be equipped with a variety of self-defence and area suppression weapons, such as guns, cannons and unguided rockets, bombs or cluster bombs, or which may be equipped to perform other military functions.

Heavy armament combat vehicle An armoured combat vehicle with an integral or organic direct fire gun of at least 75 millimetres calibre, weighing at least 6.0 metric tonnes unladen weight, that does not fall within the definitions of an armoured personnel carrier, or an armoured infantry fighting vehicle or a battle tank.

Multi-purpose attack helicopter An attack helicopter designed to perform multiple military functions and equipped to employ guided weapons.

Primary trainer aircraft These aircraft are designed and constructed for primary flying training and means aircraft which may possess only limited armament capability necessary for basic training in weapon delivery techniques.

Specialised attack helicopter An attack helicopter designed primarily to employ guided weapons

Unarmed transport helicopters These helicopters are not equipped for the employment of weapons.