



This is an annual publication which provides figures on Ministry of Defence land holdings in the UK, by parent service, country, type of use and whether owned, leased or with legal rights.

This edition provides statistics for 2009 to 2019 (figures are given for 1st April each year), with a base year of 2000, and updates figures released in the 2018 edition of this publication, which provided statistics up to 1st April 2019.

This publication does not provide information on the overseas Defence estate.

Key Points and Trends

At 1 April 2019, the MOD owned 223,900 hectares of land and foreshore in the UK (either freehold or leasehold), which is about 0.9% of the total UK land mass¹. The MOD also held rights over a further 207,400 hectares, which is a further 0.9%¹ of the total UK land mass. On 1 April 2019, the total UK land holdings for the Ministry of Defence was 431,400 hectares.

Since 1 April 2018, total land holdings have decreased by 100 hectares. The possible reasons for the small decrease in comparison to previous years could be due to a reduction in the number of significant disposals.

England accounts for the largest portion of land owned or with rights held, at 253,400 hectares (59% of the MOD total), a decrease of 300 hectares since 2018.

Training areas and ranges occupy the largest area at 356,800 hectares (83% of the MOD total, this includes land which is owned and that MOD has legal rights over).

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Background quality report: www.gov.uk/government/collections/mod-land-holdings-bulletin-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 DIODData-CorpReporting@mod.uk

¹ The best recorded estimate of total UK land mass 242,495km² or 24,249.5 thousand hectares. This figure is published by United Nations Statistics and can be found at the following link.

<https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic-social/products/dyb/documents/dyb2017/table03.pdf>

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Supplementary tables accompanying this report can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/mod-land-holdings-bulletin-index>

Introduction

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) is one of the largest landowners in the country, with an estate nearly equal to 2% of the UK land mass. MOD sites are used for training, accommodation and provides a base from which operations can be instigated. The estate is currently managed by the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO), who have a remit to ensure the safety, sustainability and rationalisation of the estate. The MOD has published land holdings and building statistics since 1981.

The information in this publication, and the accompanying supplementary tables, have been taken from the Infrastructure Management System (IMS). IMS was implemented by DIO in 2014 as a mechanism to more effectively manage the defence infrastructure. Prior to the implementation of IMS, an asset verification exercise took place to capture accurately the defence estate. DIO have a clear process to ensure that IMS is updated with any changes to the estate, so the information about the defence estate is reflective of the current situation. A number of inclusions and exclusions apply to the figures in this publication. Further details of these can be found in the Background Information and Background Quality Report.

A National Statistics publication

National Statistics status means that our statistics meet the highest standards of trustworthiness, quality and public value, and it is our responsibility to maintain compliance with these standards.

The continued designation of these statistics as National Statistics was confirmed in August 2017 following a compliance check by the Office for Statistics Regulation [<https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/publication/uk-defence-statistics-compendiumletter-of-confirmation-as-national-statistics/>]. The statistics last underwent a full assessment [<https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/archive/assessment/assessment/assessment-reports/assessment-report-210---uk-defence-statistics-compendium.pdf>] against the Code of Practice in 2012.

Since the latest review by the Office for Statistics Regulation, we have continued to comply with the Code of Practice for Statistics, and have made the following improvements:

- Release date of publication moved from August to May in order to release statistics as soon as they are ready.
- Introduced validation against new administrative data sources to better assure ourselves of the quality of the statistics

UK Land holdings for Defence

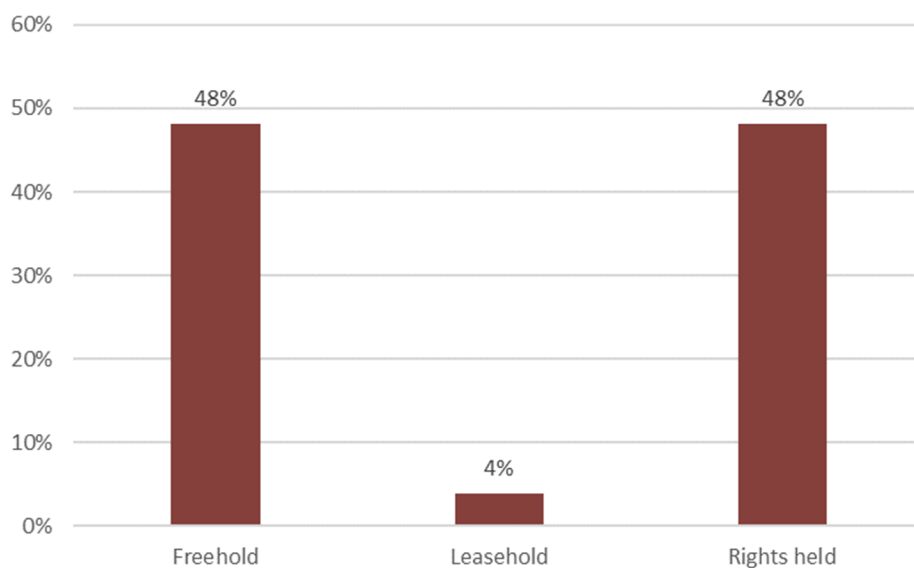
UK Land holdings by type of ownership

There are several ways that land can be held by organisations, DIO manages land through the following three ways:

1. **Freehold** – land which has been bought on a permanent basis
2. **Leasehold** – land which is held by an organisation for a definitive period of time
3. **Rights Held** – land which is held on a (most usually) short term and contractual basis or through grants for a specific purpose. MOD holds a lot of land in this way because it is a more cost effective and flexible way to meet the changing operational requirements for defence.

As at 1 April 2019, DIO managed 431,400 hectares of land within the UK. In total, this is about 1.8% of the UK land mass. This is a decrease of 100 hectares over the past year. This small decrease was largely expected as there has been a reduction in significant disposals in comparison to previous years.

Chart 1: Type of holding, as at 1st April 2019



Source Data: DIO(IMS)

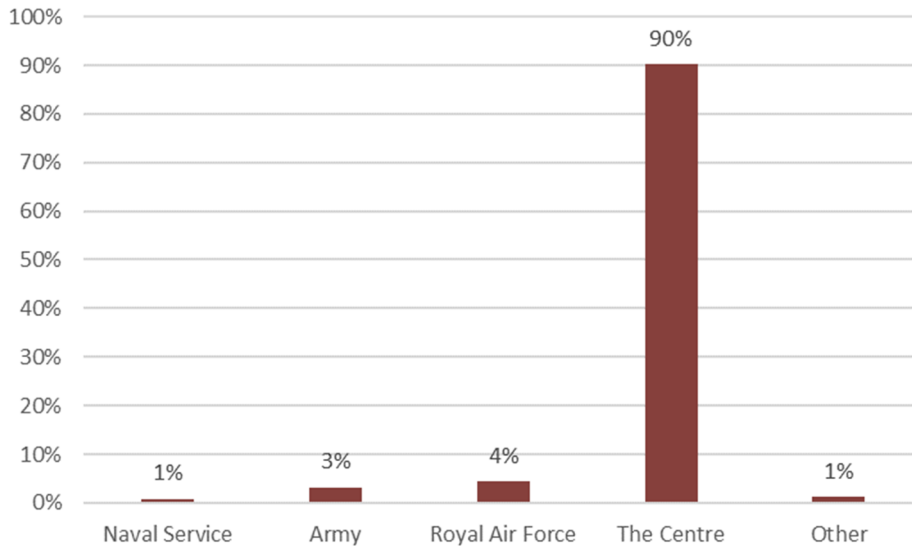
Chart 1 shows that just over half (223,900 hectares) of the land is owned (either freehold or leasehold), which is 200 hectares less than the figure reported at 1 April 2018.

On 1 April 2019, the MOD held a further 207,400 hectares through legal rights, which is the same to the nearest 100 hectares than 1 April 2018.

UK Land holdings by parent service area

As shown in Chart 2, the Centre² owned or had rights over the largest area, at 389,300 hectares (90% of the MOD total), and much of this forms the training estate (92% of the Centre's total). The Centre's total has remained largely the same since 1 April 2018.

Chart 2: Parent service area, as at 1st April 2019



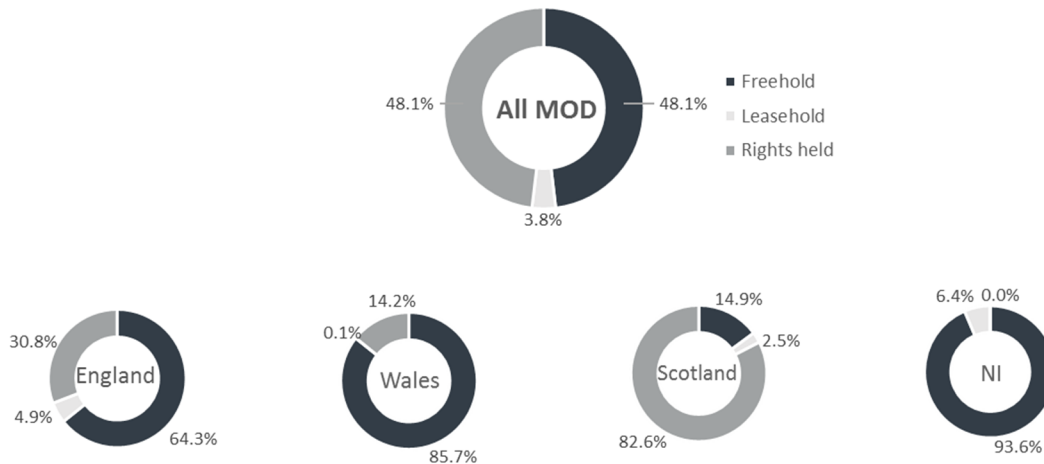
Source Data: DIO (IMS)

² 'The Centre' includes Defence Equipment & Support, Defence Infrastructure Organisation (including former Defence Training Estate, and Service family quarters leased from Annington Property Ltd.) and Centre TLBs.

UK Land holdings by Country

On 1 April 2019, the majority of land holdings were in England. The England land holdings were 253,400 hectares (59% of the MOD total), a decrease of 300 hectares since 2018. Scotland land holdings remained broadly the same accounting for 152,700 (35% of the MOD total). The same can be said for Wales and Northern Ireland accounting for 5% and less than 1% of land holdings respectively.

Chart 3: Type of Land held by country, as at 1st April 2019



Source Data: DIO(IMS)

UK Land Holdings - Total Area

Key
UK Land Holdings
Total Area - Thousand Hectares

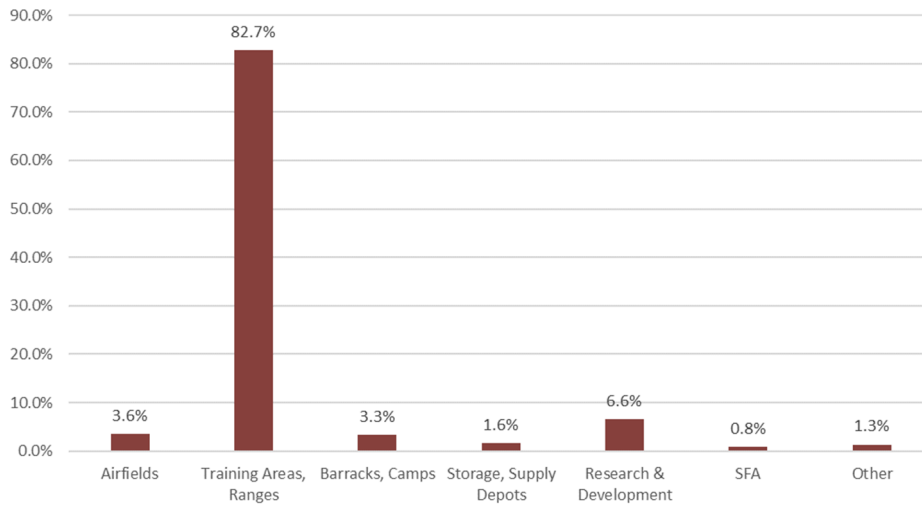
0 - 50.0
50.1 - 100.0
100.1 - 150.0
150.1 - 200.0
200.1 - 250.0
250.1 - 300.0



UK Land holdings by type of use

Chart 4 below shows that on 1 April 2019 training areas and ranges occupy the largest area, at 356,800 hectares (82.7% of the MOD total), this has remained the same. Barracks and camps occupy 14,200 hectares (3.3% of the MOD total), this is a decrease of 100 hectares. Other areas have stayed broadly the same.

Chart 4: Type of use, as at 1st April 2019



Source Data: DIO (IMS)

Detailed figures on the MOD's land holdings at 1 April each year since 2000 can be found in [Table 1](#) (by parent Service), [Table 2](#) (by country) and [Table 3](#) (by type of use).

Background Information

The DIO came into existence on 1 April 2011 as recommended in the Defence Reform Review, replacing the Defence Estates (DE) organisation, and includes Top Level Budget (TLB) property and facilities management functions. The DIO manages property assets ranging from barracks and airfields to rural training areas, which are valued at about £30 billion. The total annual cost to support the Defence Estate is in excess of £3.6 billion, of which over £2 billion covers the cost of new construction, maintenance and property management.

For more information, visit the Defence Infrastructure Organisation website at:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/defence-infrastructure-organisation>

Data Sources and Quality

The land holding figures are derived from the DIO Infrastructure Management System (IMS) which contains information on all non-sensitive property assets that are owned, occupied or over which the MOD hold rights. The figures in the publication do have notable inclusions and exclusions which are as follows (these caveats apply to all figures from 2011):

- The figures presented include land occupied by all MOD TLB holders (including United States Visiting Forces (USVF) occupied sites); all Trading Funds and Agencies (including Defence Support Group, Defence Science & Technology Laboratory (DSTL) and the Hydrographic Office).
- Civil estate (for example offices) owned by MOD, but that could be leased to other Government Departments is included in the figures
- However, Civil estate which is owned by MOD, but is currently being used by another Government Department (and not at all by MOD) is excluded
- The reserve (or volunteer) estate is excluded from all figures, due to concerns over the accuracy of capturing this estate. The reserve estate can take many different forms, and the current consistency of capturing the information is not sufficient, however this is under review and any updates will be reflected in later publications.
- The Rights figures for England & Scotland include those agreements where Training on Private Land (ToPL) has been formalised with the landowner through a legal Agreement.
- Information on PFI, dockyard, and AWE assets are currently being reviewed any updates will be reflected in later publications.
- In Wales significant amounts of ToPL occurs on an informal agreement basis so these figures are not included. As most of the land held under Rights agreements is used for training which is driven by operational requirements the extent of Rights held can vary significantly from year to year
- Changes to the estate which have not been captured on IMS by the time the data is extracted for this bulletin are not included
- Due to the way the data is held in the IMS, it is no longer possible to show the extent of foreshore held by the MOD. Therefore, separate figures for this are no longer shown but are included in the totals provided.

Recent data quality improvements to the IMS were reinforced as a result of recommendations from the National Audit Office report: '[A Defence Estate of the Right Size to meet Operational Needs](#)'. Further information about these improvements and other aspects of data quality can be found in the Background Quality Report.

Symbols and Conventions

Symbols

|| discontinuity in time series

r revised

.. not available

– Zero or rounded to zero

Italic figures are used for percentages and other rates, except where otherwise indicated.

Rounding

Within this publication, all figures have been rounded to the nearest hundred hectares. Where rounding has been used, totals and sub-totals have been rounded separately and so may not equal the sums of their rounded parts.

Revisions

There are several revisions in this publication to the 2018 figures this is due to updates on a live IMS system.

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

This publication has been produced by the Data Analytics and Insight team in Defence Infrastructure Organisation.

We welcome 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>