

Fact Sheet 13: Defence Reform

The Defence Reform Unit was set up to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the Department

The Defence Secretary announced the establishment of a Defence Reform Unit in August, in order to bring about wide-ranging reform to the Ministry of Defence (MOD). The Defence Reform Unit is charged with a full and fundamental review of the way MOD is structured and managed. The aim is to make the Department more efficient and effective.

Ministry of
Defence
Main
Building,
Whitehall



It will be overseen by a steering group of senior experts with extensive public and private sector experience

The Unit's steering group is chaired by Lord Levene. The other members of the group are Conservative peer Baroness Noakes, George Iacobescu (Chief Executive of the Canary Wharf Group), Raymond McKeeve (a partner at law firm Berwin Leighton Paisner), Björn Conway (a partner at Ernst and Young), Dr David Allen (a Non-Executive Director at the MOD), Gerry Grimstone (Chairman of Standard Life), Ursula Brennan (Second Permanent Under Secretary at the MOD) and General Sir Nicholas Houghton (Vice Chief of the Defence Staff). This gives a balance between internal expertise and external challenge.

The scope of the review will be wide-ranging

The Defence Reform Unit will work to develop a new, more cost-effective model for the management of Defence, with clear allocation of responsibility, authority and accountability. As part of this, the review will consider how best to implement the Defence Secretary's vision for the Department. The review is looking at how to bring about a shift to a leaner and less centralised organisation, combining devolved processes with greater accountability and transparency.

The review will examine closely all the major areas of Defence: policy, strategy and finance; the Armed Forces, with a particular focus on non front-line elements; and acquisition, commercial, estates and corporate services. Acquisition reform will be a major part of the work. The Defence Reform Unit will also look at a range of cross-cutting issues, such as whether the current senior rank structure across the Services is appropriate for the future.

Work on the review is already underway and will take account of the outcomes of the Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR)

Work on the review is already underway and will take account of the outcome of the conclusions of the SDSR. Lord Levene's steering group will aim to report by the end of July 2011, but it is likely that decisions will be made and reforms implemented on a rolling basis over the course of the review.