



Joint Forces Command

The Joint Forces Command brings together unique military and civilian strengths to support the delivery of success on operations. We do this through people who command, understand, learn, innovate and adapt.

Genesis

At the end of June 2011 Lord Levene's independent report into the structure and management of the Ministry of Defence was published¹. In it, he proposed fourteen recommendations, all of which were endorsed by the then Defence Secretary and are now being implemented under the Department's 'Transforming Defence' programme.

One of Levene's findings was that joint enabling military capabilities were 'not organised and managed as coherently or effectively as they could be'. These joint enablers are cross-cutting capabilities, functions and organisations – such as medical services, training and education, intelligence, and cyber – which act as the 'operational glue' between the three single Services, and are vital to success on operations. Despite their importance, Levene asserted that these key enablers were 'generally not seen as core to single Service outputs' and therefore not given sufficient priority.

Levene therefore suggested, as one of his key recommendations, the creation of a Joint Forces Command 'to manage and deliver specific joint capabilities and to take the lead on joint warfare development, drawing on lessons and experimentation to advise on how the Armed Forces should conduct joint operations in the future'.

Within just nine months of the publication of the Levene review, the Joint Forces Command has undergone detailed design and development and has now been launched at initial operating capability.

This achievement represents a major milestone in the most significant programme of change across the Ministry of Defence in a generation.

Organisation

The first Commander Joint Forces Command is Air Chief Marshal Sir Stuart Peach - a former Chief of Defence Intelligence and Chief of Joint Operations - who took up the 4-star appointment on 1 December 2011. He reports to the Chief of Defence Staff (General Sir David Richards) as a commander and, as a Top-Level Budget holder (TLB), he is accountable to the Permanent Under Secretary of the Ministry of Defence (Ursula Brennan). The Chief of Joint Operations and Director Special Forces, who sit within the Joint Forces Command, report directly to the Chief of the Defence Staff on operational issues.

On 2 April 2012, the following organisations transferred to the Joint Forces Command:

- The Permanent Joint Headquarters (known as PJHQ)
- The Permanent Joint Operating Bases in Gibraltar, Cyprus, British Indian Ocean Territory and South Atlantic Islands
- The Joint Force Headquarters
- The Joint Force Logistics Component
- The Joint Counter-Terrorist Training and Advisory Team
- The Directorate of Special Forces
- The Defence Academy
- The Development Concepts and Doctrine Centre
- Defence Intelligence
- Surgeon General's Headquarters and the Joint Medical Command
- The Joint Arms Control Implementation Group
- The Defence Centre of Training Support
- The Defence Cyber Operations Group

¹<http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/AboutDefence/CorporatePublications/PolicyStrategyandPlanning/DefenceReform/DefenceReformReportIntoStructureAndManagementOfMod.htm>

The total number of military and civilian personnel in the Joint Forces Command will be around 30,000, which includes forces deployed on operations under command of the Chief of Joint Operations. These personnel are at sites across the UK, overseas in the Permanent Joint Operating Bases, and on operations in military theatres around the world, most notably Afghanistan.

The headquarters of the Joint Forces Command, situated at Northwood, north of London, at initial operating capability, is a lean structure, consisting of around 150 civilian and military staff.

Purpose

The creation of the Joint Forces Command will provide a step-change in the way Defence generates, develops and manages key joint enabling capabilities.

The strategic purpose of the Joint Forces Command is to bring coherence to the delivery of joint effect. The new Command will manage, deliver and champion joint capabilities to support the success of military operations today, tomorrow and in the future.

The Joint Forces Command will also meet the need for a more coherent approach to Joint Warfare in the round, where we are constantly evolving our approach, developing essential cross-cutting capabilities, and ensuring that lessons learnt on operations are applied quickly and consistently.

By integrating a range of joint Defence organisations and functions that were previously managed disparately, the Joint Forces Command will ensure that:

- key joint enabling capabilities are championed, organised and managed effectively and efficiently to reduce duplication and support success on operations;
- investment in joint capabilities is appropriate and coherent; and
- lessons learned from operations are applied in a more structured way, and the link is strengthened between experience in operational theatres and top-level decision-making.

The Joint Forces Command will seek to:

- Improve the preparedness of UK forces by ensuring a better understanding and reporting of operational risk, and ensuring lessons learnt in theatre inform training programmes and drive decisions in planning and resource allocation.
- Ensure joint enabling capabilities are given appropriate prioritisation in resource decisions, and are successfully delivered to meet operational demand.
- Deliver financial savings by ensuring robust governance of its subordinate organisations, and driving efficiencies through more coherent investment in enabling capabilities.
- Further develop the “joint” ethos within the Defence community.

Next steps

The launch of the Joint Forces Command at initial operating capability is not the end of the journey. The Command will reach its full operating capability by April 2013, by when it will have assumed additional responsibilities and functions. As the new Command matures, it will continue to develop Defence foundation and joint capabilities.

Launch event

The launch of the Joint Forces Command at initial operating capability will be marked by a low-key ceremony held at the Command headquarters at Northwood. After a flag-raising ceremony and speeches, the Defence Secretary – as guest of honour – will unveil a plaque and meet staff in the new Command. Each of the three single Services will be represented at very senior levels at the inauguration ceremony.