

MOD access and recreation: frequently asked questions (FAQs)

Can I walk anywhere on MOD land? It is not possible to have unlimited access because of operational, safety and conservation interests. However, where our duty of care to the general public, safety and security considerations permit, we will seek to increase the overall amount, quality and certainty of access to the estate.

What is live firing and how do I know when there is a live fire exercise on a training area? Live firing is a training activity involving the use of live ammunition. It can take place either in open country or on fixed ranges and exercises can take place during the day or at night.

When a live firing exercise is being carried out public access is prohibited. At these times red flags will be flown or red lamps lit around the range danger area. Details on firing times will also be available from the range officer and will be printed in the local newspaper. Some training areas also communicate firing times via the local radio or on their website.

What is dry training and how does this affect me accessing a training area? Dry training activities do not use live ammunition but may use pyrotechnics, blank ammunition and other battle simulators such as smoke grenades and thunder flashes. On some training areas public access may be available when dry training exercises are being undertaken but the public are not to interrupt any military training activities.

What access rights do I have under the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000? The Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000, often referred to as CROW, provides the public with a right of access on foot to designated access land in England and Wales, which includes registered common land. Certain areas of the Defence Estate have been designated under CROW. The right of access may be subject to restrictions or exclusions. Further details on access opportunities and restrictions are provided on the Natural England's website and the Countryside Council for Wales website.

What access rights do I have under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003? The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 establishes a statutory right of responsible access to land and inland waters in Scotland including the Defence Estate. It does not apply to airfields or secure defence facilities, and the public are excluded from live-firing ranges when red flags are flying. The following three key principles for responsible access apply to both the public and land managers:

- Respect the interests of other people: be considerate, respect privacy and livelihoods and the needs of those enjoying the outdoors
- Care for the environment: look after the places you visit and enjoy, care for wildlife and historic sites
- Take responsibility for your own actions: the outdoors cannot be made risk free for people exercising access rights; land managers should act with care for people's safety

Further information is available on the Scottish Natural Heritage Outdoor Access website.

What should I do if I find a suspicious object whilst walking on a training area?

It is very unlikely that you will come across any military objects, but if you do see any metal objects on a training area you should not approach or pick them up. Report the item to the local range officer or Police or telephone the following Defence Estate hotline 0191 239 4245 (Landmarc Support Services).

Can I camp on training areas? No. Camping and lighting fires on any part of the training estate are prohibited for health and safety and fire-protection reasons.