



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 2016 (figures are given for 1st April each year), with a base year of 2000, and updates figures released in the 2015 edition of this publication, which provided statistics up to 1st April 2015.

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

Key Points and Trends

At 1 April 2016, the MOD owned 220,000 hectares of land and foreshore in the UK (either freehold or leasehold), which is about 0.9% of the total UK land mass. The MOD also held rights over a further 204,000 hectares, which is a further 0.9%¹ of the total UK land mass. On 1 April 2016, the total UK land holdings for the Ministry of Defence was 424,100 hectares.

Since 2015, there has been a decrease in the freehold and leasehold figure by 2,600 hectares. This reduction is in line with the MOD policy objective to reduce the overall size of the MOD estate, and in particular sell off land which is surplus to requirements.

England accounts for the largest portion of land owned or with rights held, at 245,000 hectares (58% of the MOD total), a decrease of 13,200 hectares since 2015.

Training areas and ranges occupy the largest area at 352,700 hectares (83% of the MOD total, this includes land which is owned and that MOD has 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 242,495 thousand hectares. This figure is published by United Nations Statistics and can be found at the following link. <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/dyb/dyb2012/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. The estate, spread over approximately 4,000 sites, is critical to the effectiveness of the Armed Forces and managing UK defence. It is used for training and 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

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.

UK Land holdings for Defence

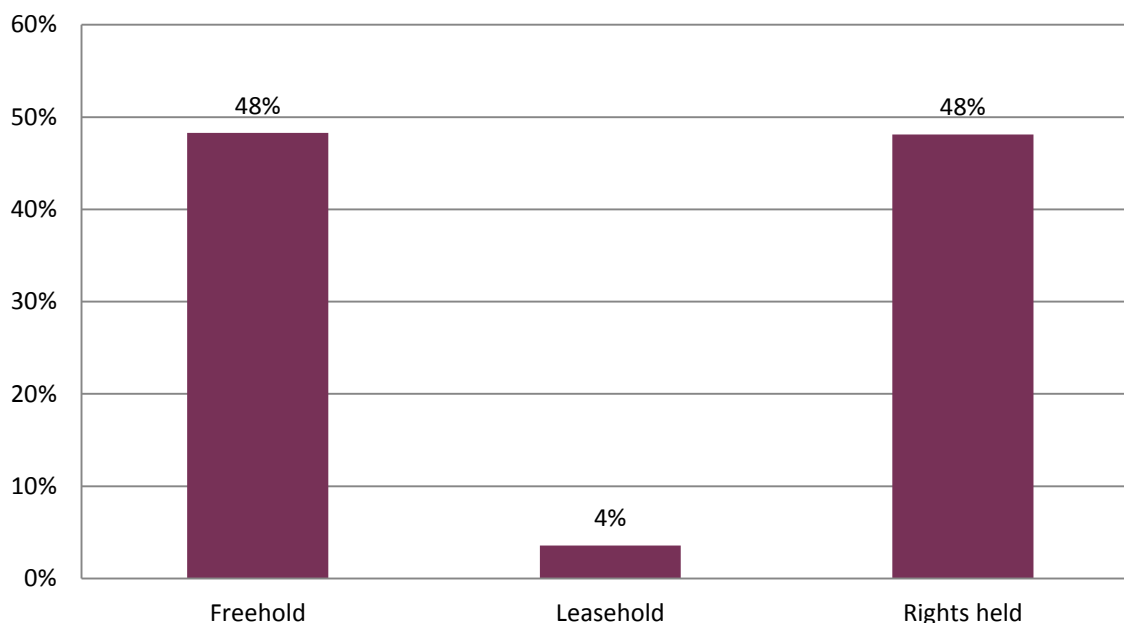
UK Land holdings by type of ownership

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 2016, DIO managed 424,100 hectares of land within the UK. In total, this is about 1.8% of the UK land mass. This is a reduction of 15,500 hectares over the past year, largely due to the reduction in the rights and ownerships held in the Centre. This is consistent with trends in recent years, as the Department seeks to divest itself of properties that are surplus to requirements. Despite the recent reduction, the size of the estate has been broadly stable over the period that DIO has managed.

Chart 1: Type of holding, as at 1st April 2016



Source Data: Table 1 in Supplementary Tables

Chart 1 shows that just over half (220,000 hectares) of the land is owned (either freehold or leasehold), which is 2,600 hectares less than the figure reported at 1 April 2015. This reduction includes:

- A decrease of 2,300 hectares in the freehold figure from 2015, which reflects the disposal of a number of freehold properties during the year. It is also likely that this reduction will also include freehold properties that were disposed of prior to 2015, but due to improving data quality on IMS, these changes have only been recorded in the last year.

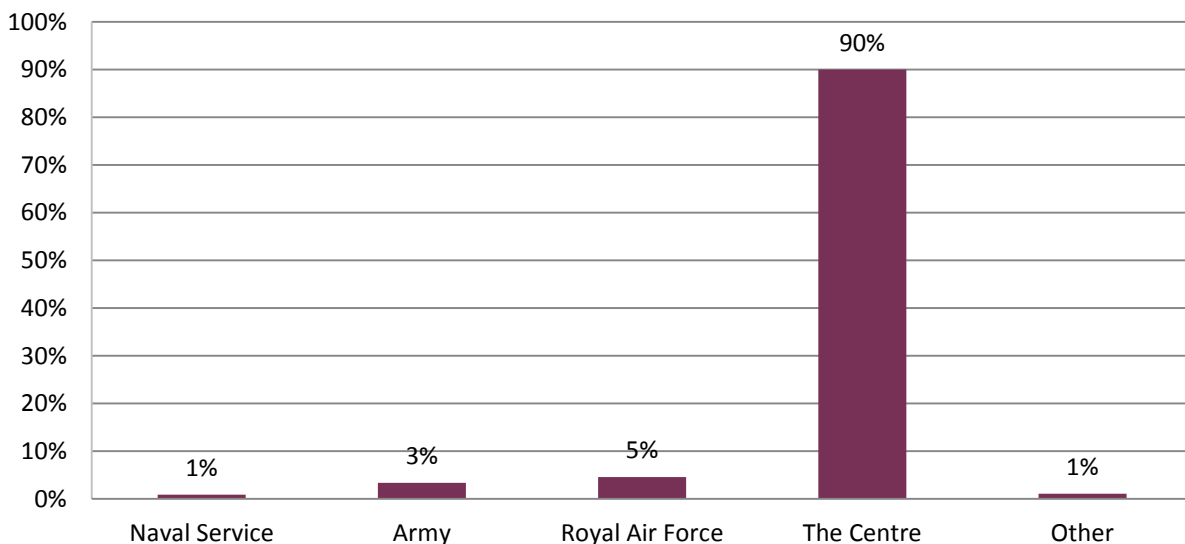
- A reduction (of 300 hectares) in the leasehold figure. This is due to the closure of a number of small training areas.

On 1 April 2016, the MOD held a further 204,000 hectares through legal rights, which is a decrease of 13,000 hectares from the 2015 figure.

UK Land holdings by parent service area

As shown in Chart 2, the Centre² owned or had rights over the largest area, at 381,600 hectares (90% of the MOD total), and much of this forms the training estate. The Centre's total has fallen by 15,000 hectares since 1 April 2015, which can be accounted for partially by the reduction in rights and the disposal of a number of sites, and also by the reattribution of a number of other sites from Centre responsibility due to either a change or use, or data quality improvement activities. The majority of reattributions 2015 to 2016 have moved from the Centre to the Army as assets have changed use (for example to barracks).

Chart 2: Parent service area, as at 1st April 2016



Source Data: Table 1 in Supplementary Tables
 'Other' in this chart includes the Permanent Joint Headquarters and Trading Fund

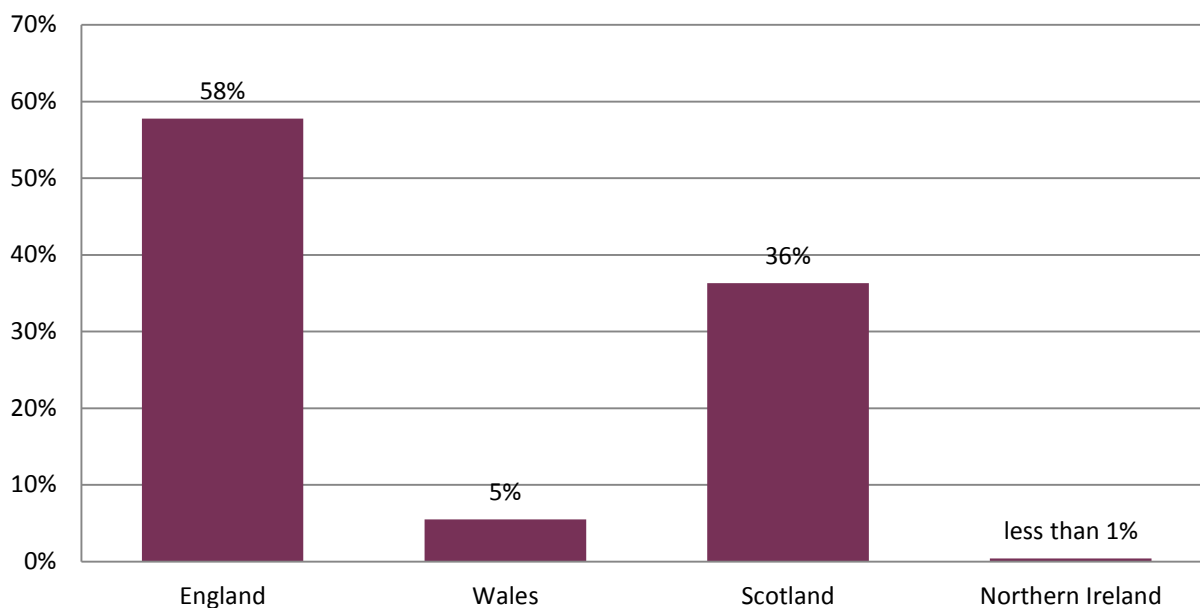
² 'The Centre' includes Defence Equipment & Support, Defence Infrastructure Organisation (including former Defence Training Estate, and Service family quarters leased from Annington Property Ltd.) and Centre TLBs.

UK Land holdings by Country

On 1 April 2016, the majority of land holdings were in England. The England land holdings were 245,000 hectares (58% of the MOD total), a decrease of 13,200 hectares since 2015. This is largely due to the disposal of a number of sites (including operational and residential sites).

There are land holdings in Northern Ireland (1,700 hectares on 1 April 2016) but this is less than 1% of the total UK land holdings for Defence.

Chart 3: Land held by country, as at 1st April 2016

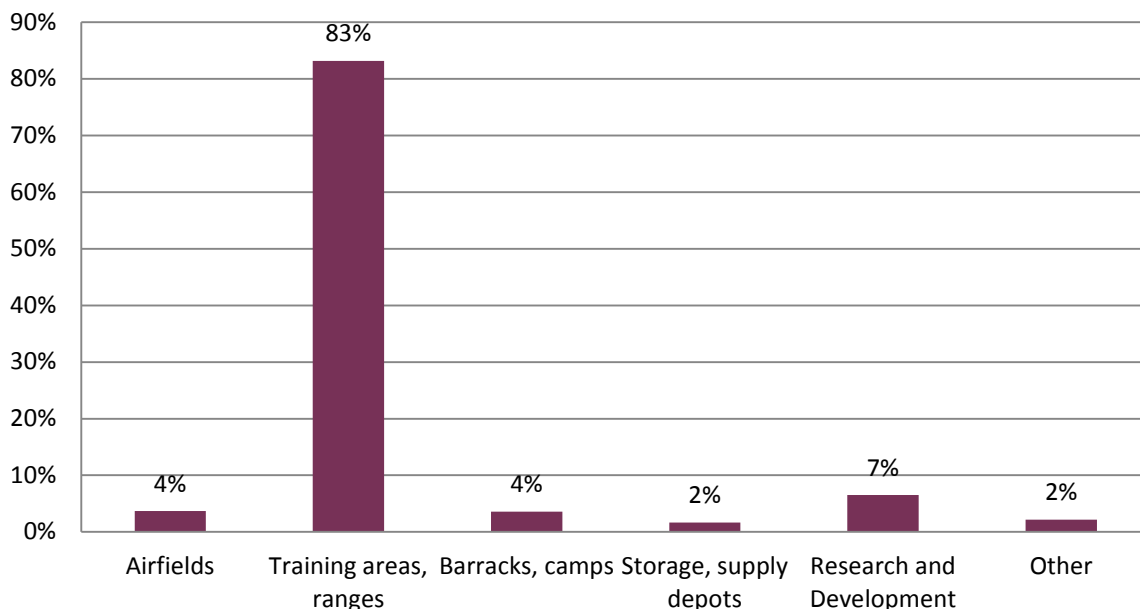


Source Data: Table 2 in **Supplementary Tables**

UK Land holdings by type of use

Chart 5 below shows that on 1 April 2016 training areas and ranges occupy the largest area, at 352,700 hectares (83% of the MOD total), a decrease of 12,300 hectares since 2015. The increase in the area occupied by barracks holdings can be accounted for by genuine changes or use, and improving allocation due to on-going data quality checking.

Chart 4: Type of use, as at 1st April 2016



Source Data: Table 2 in supplementary tables
'Other' in this chart includes radio and W/T Stations, naval bases and miscellaneous

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 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.
- 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. 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
- .. 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 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

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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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>