

EXTERNAL CONSULTATION ON THE CESSATION OF VEHICLES & AIRCRAFT HOLDINGS WITHIN THE SCOPE OF THE CONVENTIONAL ARMED FORCES IN EUROPE TREATY

SUMMARY

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) currently publishes the [Vehicles and Aircraft Holdings within the scope of the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty](#) on an annual basis. We are now seeking external users' views on ceasing publication of this report.

BACKGROUND

This is an annual publication which provides information on equipment holdings (vehicles, artillery and aircraft) of the UK, and other nations, within the scope of the [Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty \(CFE\)](#).

The vehicle and aircraft figures in this publication do not simply provide counts of UK Armed Forces equipment as they are subject to a number of restrictions which are determined by the CFE Treaty. Signed in 1990, the Treaty established an agreement between NATO and Warsaw Pact members (collectively known in the Treaty as the 'States Parties') to reduce the possibility of military confrontation in Europe, through limiting the numbers of armaments e.g. artillery, battle tanks, as well as military personnel. The Treaty refers to a specific geographical area and has particular guidelines on what types of equipment are counted under the Treaty.

REASONS FOR THE PROPOSED CHANGE

Until 2016, *Vehicles & Aircraft within the scope of the CFE Treaty* was the only Official Statistics source for UK Armed Forces land equipment (albeit with the inclusion of obsolete, non-operational equipment and the limitations described above).

This position has now changed following the 2016 review of the *UK Armed Forces Equipment and Formations* publication (formerly known as 'Formations, Vessels & Aircraft'). The aim of the review was to assess whether the publication's definitions, terminology and coverage still met users' needs. Following a public consultation, a number of changes were made to the publication including the addition of land equipment statistics. *UK Armed Forces Equipment and Formations* also provides statistics on the numbers of vessels, submarines and aircraft in the UK Armed Forces.

Although the statistics presented in *Vehicles & Aircraft within the scope of the CFE Treaty* are accurate, the fact that they do not represent the total numbers of equipment in the UK Armed Forces can result in discrepancies when figures are quoted. As the statistics published in *UK Armed Forces Equipment and Formations* are not limited by the CFE Treaty (i.e. it excludes obsolete, non-operational equipment and its coverage is not limited by geographical location), it provides a more accurate picture of the current numbers of UK Armed Forces equipment and thus, supersedes *Vehicles & Aircraft within the scope of the CFE Treaty*.

Furthermore, interest in this publication is low; this is evidenced by the number of web hits being less than 750 hits in both 2015/16 and 2014/15 - this is lower than those achieved by the *UK Armed Forces Equipment and Formations*. Freedom of Information requests and Parliamentary Questions rarely, if ever, refer specifically to statistics on equipment within the scope of the CFE Treaty. Any requests for information about equipment numbers can and have included a link to the *UK Armed Forces Equipment and Formations* publication.

TIMINGS

This consultation will run for four weeks, from 17th July 14th August 2017. This consultation complies with the Government's Code of Practice on Consultations.

RESPONDING TO THE CONSULTATION

If you have any comments on the proposed changes, these can be submitted by either email or post:

Email: DefStrat-Stat-WDS-Pubs@mod.uk

Post:

Defence Statistics (WDS),
Ministry of Defence,
Floor 3 Zone M,
Main Building,
Horse Guards Avenue,
London, SW1A 2HB.

When sending your comments please include contact details (your name and either email address, postal address or telephone number) so that we can follow up if clarification is needed.