



Ministry
of Defence



UK Defence in Numbers 2023

Contents

Foreword	4
Defence spending	6
International defence	8
Where we spend our money	10
Our people	16
Global networks	20
International procurement	24
Defence activities	26
The King's Coronation	28
Sustainability	30
Science and technology	32
Defence estate	33
Dambusters 80th Anniversary	34

Foreword



The RT Hon Grant Shapps MP
Secretary of State for Defence

Eighty years ago, Commander Guy Gibson led the RAF's 617 Squadron in a series of spectacular raids during World War 2, becoming immortalised as the Dambusters. As we can see across the globe, danger continues to exist in today's world and defence is vitally important to our nation's safety and prosperity.

As brave Ukrainians confront Russian aggression on our European continent, British industry is aiding and abetting their fightback. From our anti-tank weapons and Javelins to our battle tanks and combat and logistics vehicles, our capabilities have helped hold back the Russian tide. Meanwhile, our Storm Shadows and uncrewed sea systems have enabled Ukraine to open up a corridor in the Black Sea. In each of 2022 and 2023 we committed £2.3 billion in military support. Next year we increase that amount by £200 million to £2.5 billion.

In addition to leading the international response to aggression, the UK is deterring it as well – spending more than £71 billion over the next 10 years on our submarines and Atomic Weapons facilities to gain a strategic advantage.

Our continuous-at-sea nuclear deterrent has kept this nation safe for more than 54 years and now we're building a new generation of Dreadnought class boats to protect our nations for the future.

This publication also tells the story of great partnerships. From North Africa to North America, from the Middle East to East Asia, Britain is projecting a global presence and remains the partner of choice for nations across the world. As we prepare to mark the 75th year of NATO's founding, our commitment to the Alliance is stronger than ever.

Above all, this booklet uses numbers to tell the incredible story behind our whole force. Defence employs more than 400,000 people, extending to every corner of the United Kingdom. We spent £52.8 billion on defence in 2022/23, rising to £54.2 billion in 2023/24. For 2024/25, our core budget of £51.7 billion combined with assumed additional funding from the Treasury Reserve including for support to Ukraine, means our total defence budget is expected to be £55.6 billion. This is an increase of around £1.4 billion (1.8% in real terms) compared to 2023/24 and more in cash terms than ever before.

And our brave personnel – our Regulars and Reserves – remain our greatest asset. Our sailors are deployed across the oceans protecting precious sea lanes. Our submariners are out of sight but never out of mind. Our Royal Marine Commandos are ever ready to act at a moment's notice. Our soldiers are protecting NATO's flanks from Russian advances, and our pilots are on guard to protect our air space and that of our allies.

While our people will always be at the heart of what we do, this booklet is a powerful reminder that numbers can help tell the story.

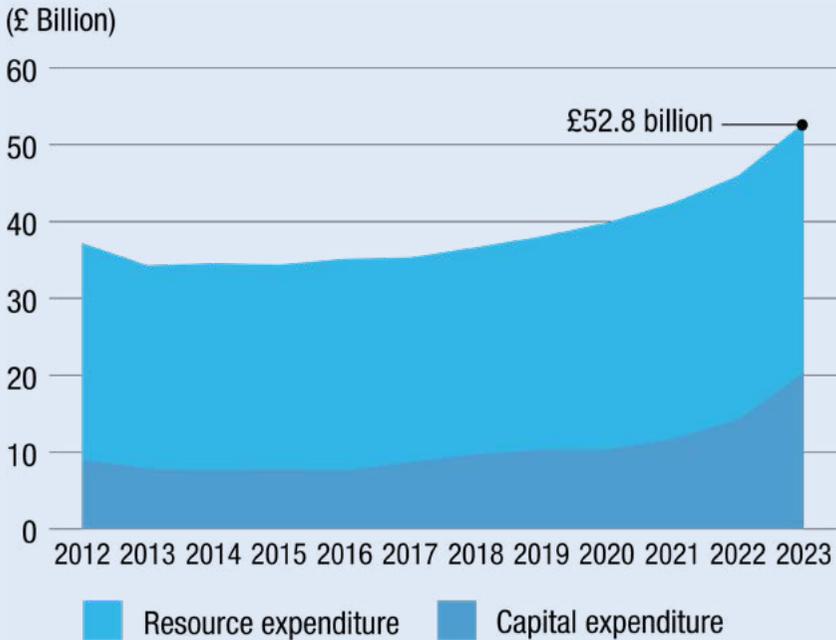
Defence spending

In 2022/23:

MOD expenditure totalled £52.8 billion.

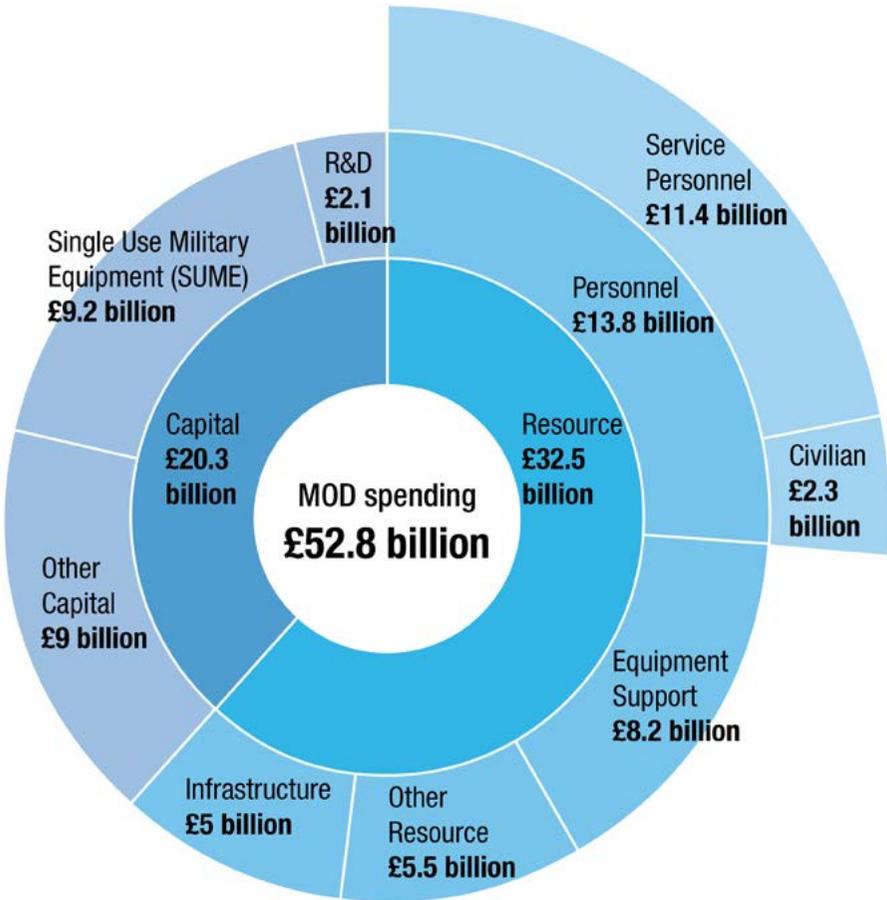
£20.3 billion was spent on capital investments in equipment and infrastructure.

Defence spending in nominal terms, 2011/12 – 2022/23



Source: MOD Annual Report and Accounts 2022/23.
MOD Departmental Resources 2023.

2022/23 breakdown of MOD spending



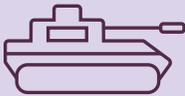
Source: MOD Annual Report and Accounts 2022/23.
MOD Departmental Resources 2023.

International defence

The UK continues to set a high priority for defence by continuing to deliver our commitments on the world stage, investing in equipment to enhance our capabilities and in our people who remain the strength of defence.

↑2%

The UK has met the NATO commitment to spend **at least 2%** of national GDP on defence every year since its introduction in 2006.



The UK also continues to meet NATO guidelines of at least 20% of Defence Spending being on equipment.



The Spring Budget 2023 provided an **extra £5 billion** in cash for defence and national security **over the next 2 years**, and £2 billion per year in subsequent years up to 2027–28.

Source: MOD Annual Report and Accounts, 2022–23.

The UK has the fourth largest defence budget in the world.

Top 15 defence budgets, 2022 (US \$ billions)¹

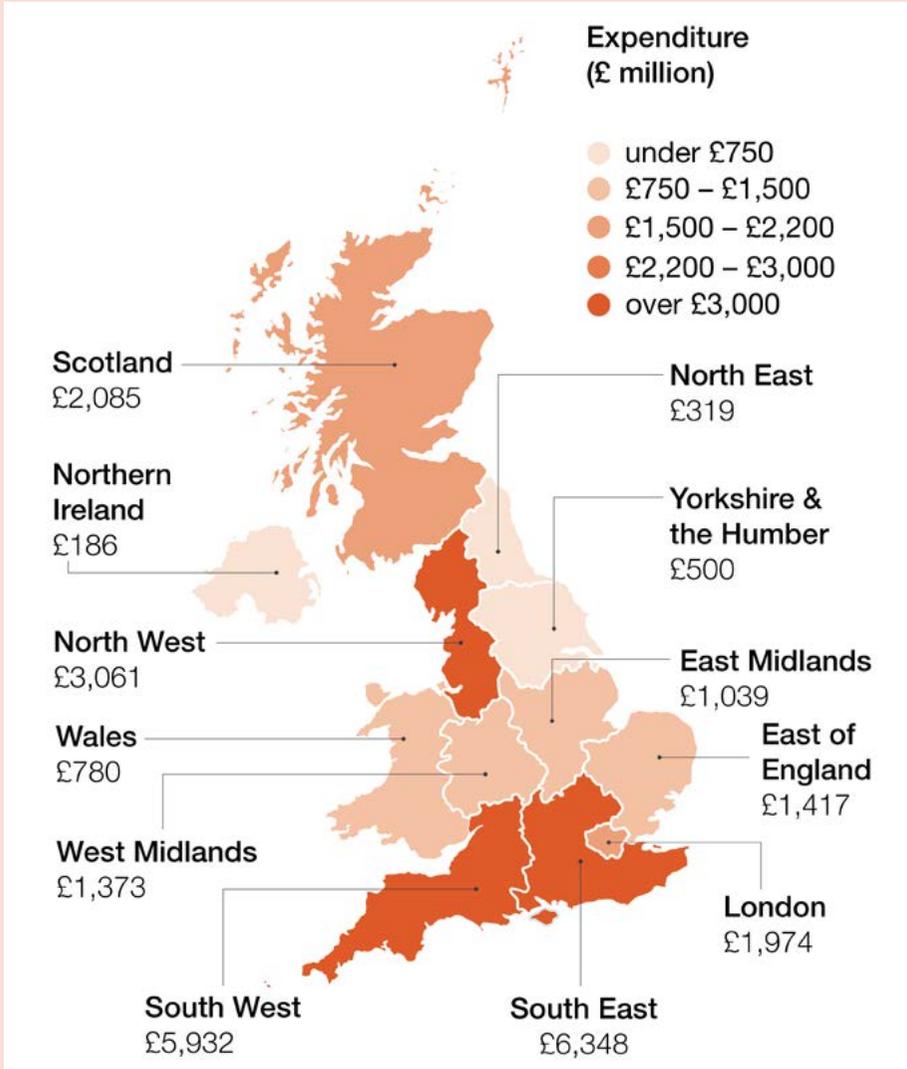


Source: IISS Military balance 2023.

¹ Based on the IISS definition of 'defence'. This will differ to governmental departmental budgets (such as the MOD spending figure on page 6).

Where we spend our money

The MOD spent **£25 billion** with UK Industry, the equivalent of **£370** per person, in 2022/23.



Source: MOD Regional Expenditure with UK Industry, 2022/23.

MOD spending with UK industry went to a variety of industry groups, including:



£6.15 billion

on technical, financial services
and other business



£5.50 billion

on shipbuilding and repairing



£2.09 billion

on weapons and ammunition



£1.94 billion

on aircraft and spacecraft

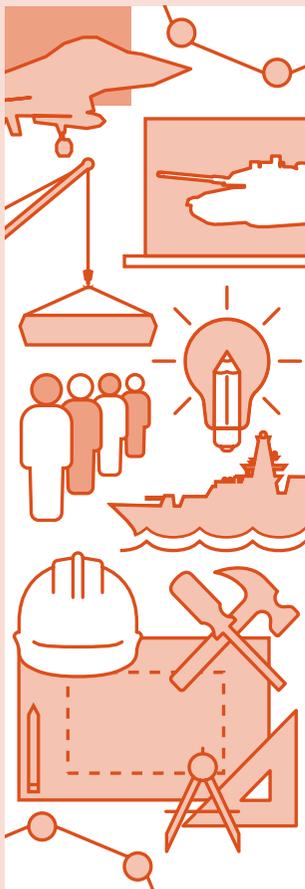


£1.80 billion

on construction

Source: MOD Regional Expenditure with UK Industry, 2022/23.

The MOD supported a total of **406,000** jobs in the UK in 2021–22. This is the equivalent of **one in every 70 UK jobs**. This comprised of:



130,000 direct jobs with UK industry, supported through MOD expenditure.

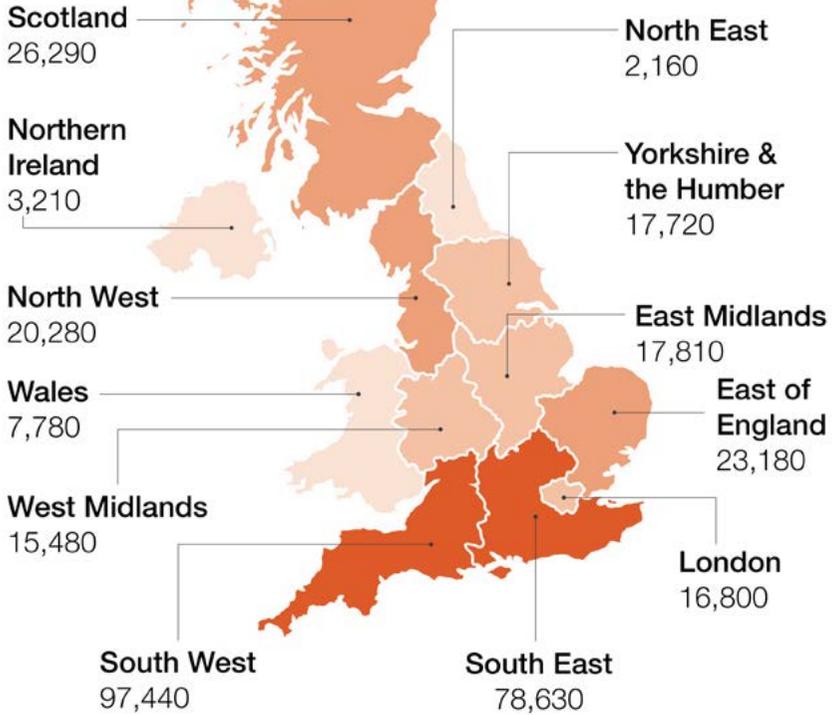
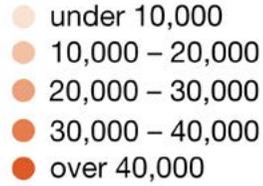
A further **79,000** indirect jobs supported through industry supply chains.

Direct employment of **143,000** service personnel, stationed in the UK, as of April 2021.

Direct employment of **54,000** civilian personnel in the UK, as of April 2021.

Source: MOD Regional Expenditure with UK Industry and Supported Employment, 2021–22.
Location of UK Regular Service and Civilian Personnel Annual Statistics, 2021.

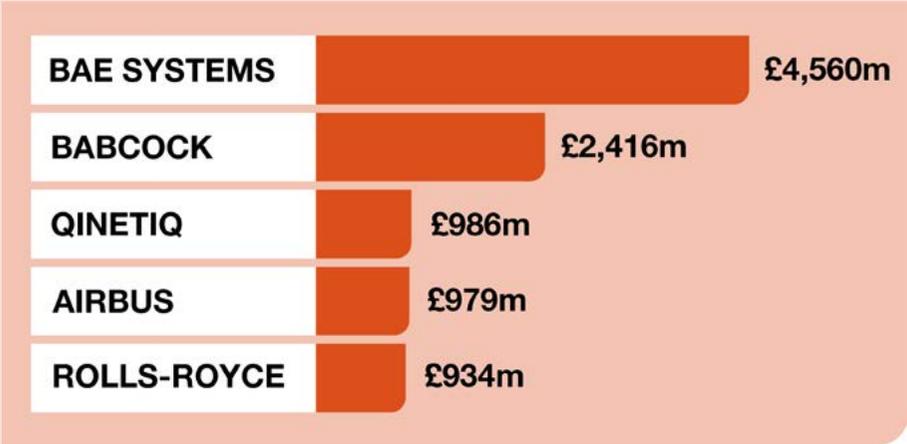
Total MOD-supported direct jobs, service and civilian personnel employment 2021/22



Note: Excludes indirect jobs with industry as regional data is not available.

Source: MOD Regional Expenditure with UK Industry, 2021/22.
 Location of UK Regular Service and Civilian Personnel Annual Statistics, 2021.

The MOD works closely with our strategic suppliers to assess risks to supply chain and maintenance of defence capabilities. The top five suppliers to MOD in 2022/23 were:



Source: MOD Trade, Industry and Contracts, 2023.

We have committed to spending £288.6 billion on the Equipment Plan over the next ten years.²



Nuclear Enterprise – £71.5 billion

All submarines and Atomic Weapons Establishment



Defence Digital – £28.6 billion

Ensuring defence has the latest IT systems and services available



Ships – £24.8 billion

e.g. Fleet Solid Support Ships and Type 26, Type 31 and Type 32 Frigates



Land equipment – £17.8 billion

e.g. Ajax, Boxer and Challenger 3



Weapons – £14.4 billion

e.g. air defence weapons, air and land launched missiles



Air support – £14.4 billion

e.g. A400M



Combat air – £17.2 billion

e.g. Future Combat Air Systems (FCAS)



Helicopters – £10.9 billion

e.g. Merlin, Apache, Chinook



Integrated battlespace – £6.8 billion

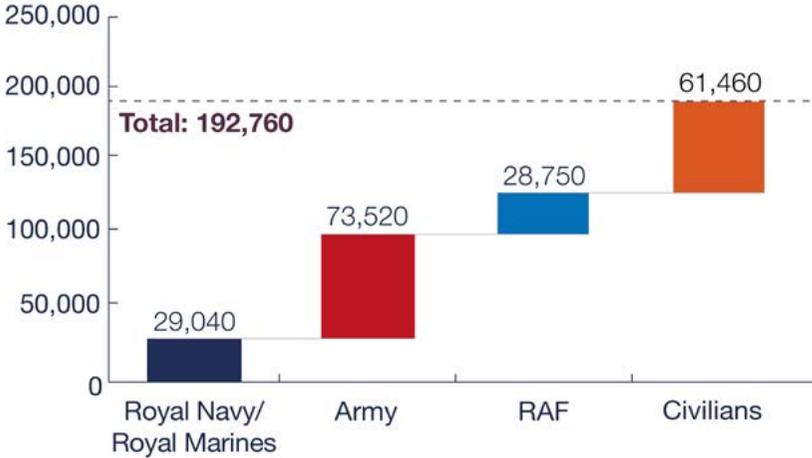
Air traffic management and multiple small programmes

Source: MOD Equipment Plan 2023-2033.

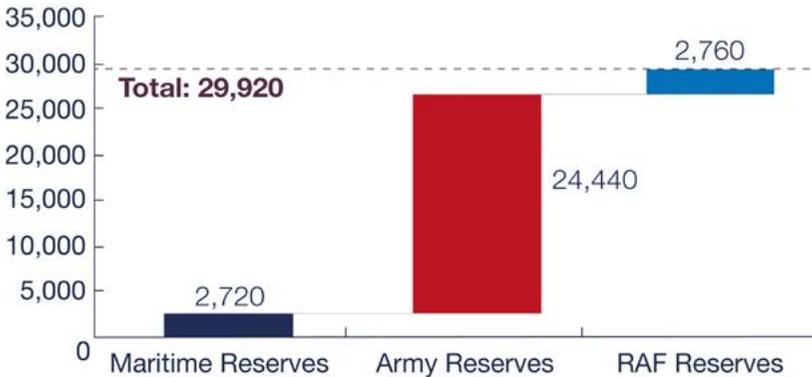
² Additional funding of £34.5bn for nuclear and £9.4bn non-nuclear was held centrally for equipment as at the end of financial year 22/23

Our people

Full Time UK Armed Forces³ and Civilians as of 1 October 2023



Future Reserves 2020 Trained Strength⁴ as of 1 October 2023



Source: MOD Quarterly Service Personnel Statistics (QSPS) 1 October 2023; MOD Biannual Civilian Personnel report October 2023

3 Defined as Military Full-Time Trained Strength (RN/RM and RAF), Trade Trained Strength (Army)

4 FR20 includes Volunteer Reserves who are mobilised, High Readiness Reserves and those Volunteer Reserves serving on Full-time Reserve Service (FTRS) and Additional Duties Commitment (ADC)

As of 1 October 2023, there were over **26,130** current civilian and military apprenticeships being undertaken.⁵



12,780 current Army apprenticeships



7,240 current Naval Service apprenticeships



4,180 current RAF apprenticeships



1,930 current civilian apprenticeships



The MOD sponsors five cadet forces in schools and the community with a total of **135,290** cadets as of April 2023.

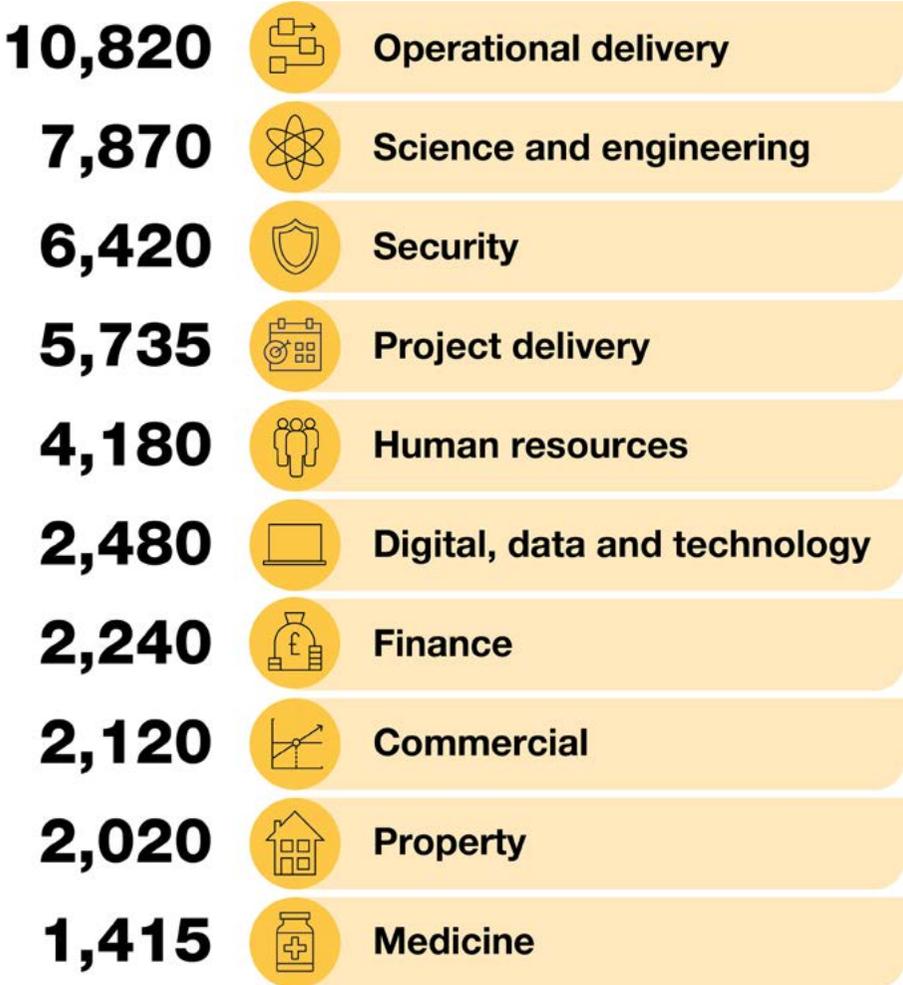


Nearly **500** schools have cadet units, with Government ambition to increase school cadet numbers to **60,000** by 2024.

Source: MOD Annual Report and Accounts, 2022–23

⁵ Apprenticeship numbers include those on agreed breaks in learning, which accounts for around 3,300 of the total on-scheme numbers.

The top ten professions in the MOD civilian workforce (FTE, as of 31 March 2023) include:



Source: Civil Service Statistics, 2023

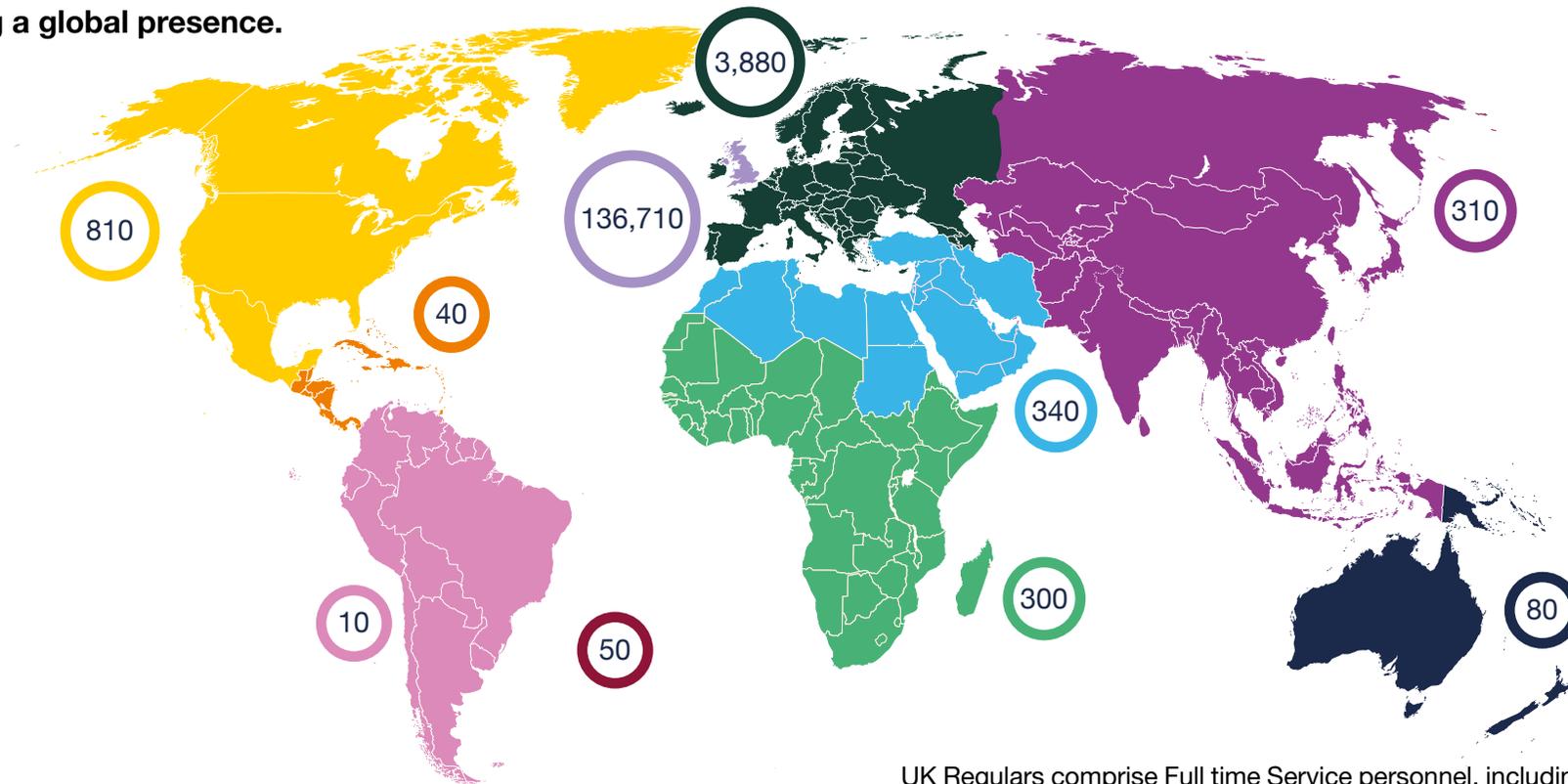
The MOD is committed to developing a more inclusive culture within defence, and a diverse workforce at all levels, with representation of both women and ethnic minority groups on an upward trajectory over the last five years. As of October 2023:

	MOD civilian personnel	UK regular forces
 Female representation	 45.6% (Up 0.7 percentage points since last year)	 11.7% (Up 0.3 percentage points since last year)
 Ethnic minority representation (excluding white minorities)	 6.5% (Up 0.4 percentage points since last year)	 10.6% (Up 0.7 percentage points since last year)

Source: MOD Diversity Dashboard: October 2023, UK Armed Forces Biannual Diversity Statistics: October 2023

Global networks

Our regular forces are also stationed all around the world projecting a global presence.



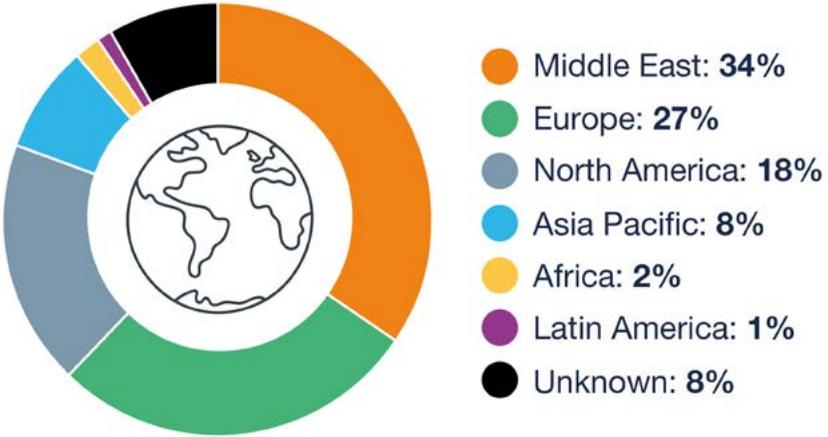
- UK: 136,710
- Europe: 3,880
- Asia (excl. Middle East): 310
- North Africa/Middle East: 340
- Sub-Saharan Africa: 300
- North America: 810
- Central America/Caribbean: 40
- South America: 10
- South Atlantic: 50
- Oceania: 80

UK Regulars comprise Full time Service personnel, including Nursing Services, but excluding Full Time Reserve Service (FTRS) personnel, Gurkhas, mobilised Reservists, Military Provost Guard Service (MPGS), Locally Engaged Personnel (LEP), Non-Regular Permanent Staff (NRPS), High Readiness Reserve (HRR) and Expeditionary Forces Institute (EFI) personnel. Unless otherwise stated, includes trained and untrained personnel.

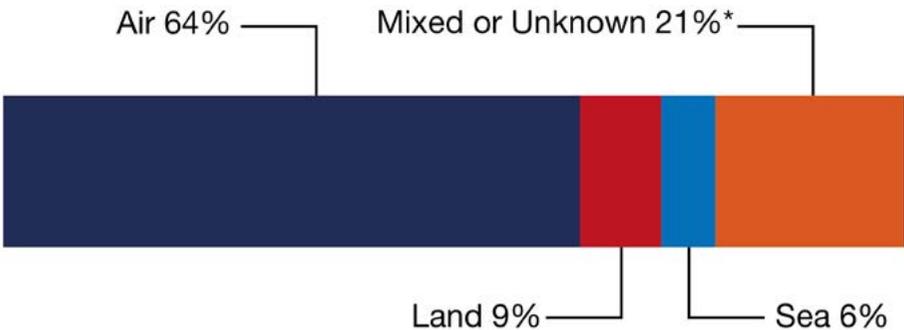
Personnel deployed on operations and temporary assignments are shown against their permanent stationed location. As such, figures for locations such as in North Africa/Middle East and South Atlantic exclude large numbers of personnel deployed in those locations.

Source: MOD Location of UK Regular Service and Civilian Personnel Annual Statistics: April 2023.

Our defence industry is one of the largest in the world, receiving export orders from all across the globe. The Middle East had the largest share of export orders at **34%** in 2022.



The aerospace sector accounted for the largest proportion of the total value of UK defence export orders in 2022, at **64%**.



*It is not always possible to relate contract information to a specific sector

Source: UK Defence Export Statistics, 2022

We have a global network of **89** Defence Attachés and Defence Advisors who deliver a broad range of Defence tasks including Defence engagement, policy advice, sales, representative duties and management of UK Defence activity within host nations on behalf of the Secretary of State for Defence and the Chief of Defence Staff.



Source: MOD Annual Report and Accounts 2022/23

International procurement

The MOD works with international partners to procure the latest cutting-edge defence equipment, ensuring good value for money and quality. In 2022–23, MOD spending on procurements through **OCCAR**, **NETMA** and **FMS** included:

£138m with OCCAR on A400M Atlas C.1 aircraft.



UK



Spain



Turkey



Belgium



France



Germany

£74m with OCCAR on Boxer Mechanised Infantry Vehicle.



UK



Lithuania



Netherlands



Germany

£98m with OCCAR on PAAMS Sea Viper anti-air missile.



UK



France



Italy

Source: MOD Trade, Industry and Contracts, 2023
OCCAR Work Programmes

£32m with OCCAR on Maritime Mine Counter Measures



UK



France

In 2022–23, **£817m** was spent on Typhoon FGR4 multi-role combat vehicles with NETMA, alongside three participating nations.



UK



Spain



Italy



Germany

In 2022–23, the MOD spent **£733m** on FMS agreements with the US. Procuring a variety of equipment such as Apache, C17 and P-8A aircraft.



UK



USA

Countries listed are participating states in the procurements. In many cases, the work may take place in a different location to the identified countries.

FMS – Foreign Military Sales with US

OCCAR – Organisation for Joint Armament Co-operation

NETMA – NATO Eurofighter and Tornado Management Agency

Defence activities



In 2022–23 MOD delivered **71 Military Aid to Civilian Authorities** operations, deploying over **6,716** personnel.



Over **50 years** of Continuous At Sea Deterrence



Explosive Ordnance Disposal teams performed **1,967** Conventional Munitions Disposals and **372** Improvised Explosive Devices disposals.



Quick Reaction Alert Aircraft tracked **213 National Incidents** with **4 launches** in response to potential counter terrorism incidents.



280 personnel on deployment for UN Peacekeeping missions, including missions in Cyprus and Somalia (as of 31 October 2023).

Source: MOD Annual Report and Accounts 22/23 and UN Peacekeeping Contributors

Support to Ukraine



The UK committed **£2.3 billion** in military support to Ukraine in 2022, and has sustained this into 2023. The UK has committed a further **£2.5 billion** in 24/25, an increase of **£200 million** on the previous two years.



In January 2023, the UK became one of the first allies to announce it would **gift main battle tanks** to Ukraine with a squadron of **14 Challenger II tanks**.



The UK donated its first package of **Storm Shadow missiles** with long-range strike capabilities in May 2023.



In July 2023, the UK announced a further package of military support of over **70 combat and logistics vehicles**.

Source: Military assistance to Ukraine since the Russian invasion – House of Commons Library (parliament.uk)

The King's Coronation



The King's Coronation was the largest military ceremonial operation for **70** years and involved around **7,000** UK Armed Forces personnel, **33** Commonwealth nations and **six** British Overseas Territories.

Over **4,000** Armed Forces personnel formed the coronation procession from Westminster Abbey to Buckingham Palace, composed of **eight** groups and **19** military bands. More than **1,000** members of Armed Forces personnel lined the route of the processions.

MOD Main Building was transformed into a forward mounting base for **900** personnel taking part in the ceremonial activity.

Source: MOD

Sustainability

The Greening Government Commitments set out the actions UK government departments and their partner organisations will take to reduce their impacts on the environment. The MOD continues to work towards the GGC commitments. In 2022–23:



27% of vehicle fleet are Ultra Low Emission, against a 2025 target of **25%**.



The amount of waste going to landfill was **3%**, down from **15%** in 2017-18, meeting the **5%** target for 2025.



37% of waste went to recycle, up seven percentage points on 2021-22, against a 2025 target of **70%**.



Over **200+ tonnes** of Defence Information Infrastructure equipment decommissioned across **750 sites**, with less than **0.02%** of that waste going to landfill.



Defence continues to fund and deliver nature recovery projects across the estate with almost **£1.5 million** invested in over **130 projects** to improve the condition of Sites of Special Scientific Interest.



£1 million was invested in other biodiversity projects across the UK and overseas.

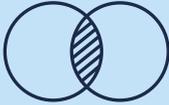


The Defence Carbon Footprint has reduced from **3.34mt CO₂e** in 2021-22 to **3.13mt CO₂e** in 2022-23.

Source: MOD Annual Report and Accounts, 2022-23

Science and technology

We have made progress in delivering our defence commitments to sustain strategic advantage through science and technology in 2022-23.



£2.05 billion spent on Frascati defined research and development.



The Defence and Security Accelerator allocated over **£49 million** across **249 projects**, of which **56%** were with small and medium-sized enterprises.



UK Space Command has achieved initial operating capability of over **500** personnel.

Source: MOD Annual Report and Accounts 2022–23

Defence estate

The MOD owned **232,200** hectares of land and foreshore in the UK (either freehold or leasehold), which is about **1.0% of the total UK land mass** as of 1 April 2023.

The MOD also held rights over a further **111,300 hectares**, which is a further **0.5% of the total UK land mass**.

The Defence Estate includes **169 Sites of Special Scientific Interest** and land in **13 National Parks**.

MOD land holding by type of use 2022–23:



Source: MOD Land Holdings, 2022–23
MOD Annual Report and Accounts, 2022–23

Dambusters 80th Anniversary

2023 marked the **80th anniversary** of the famous Dambusters raids by the 617 Squadron, who played a vital role in the Second World War with their Lancaster Bombers. Today the 617 Squadron fly the F-35B Lightning.



Lancaster B.III Bomber at a glance:

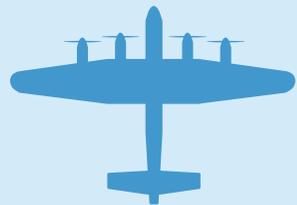
Wingspan: 31m

Length: 21m

Aircrew: 7

Altitude: 20,000ft

Weapons: 6x Browning Machine Guns



Source: www.raf.mod.uk

Produced by Analysis Directorate

Designed by Design102

© Crown Copyright 2024

Published by Ministry of Defence

This document is available at [GOV.UK](https://gov.uk)