

Fact Sheet 7: Future Force 2020 – British Army

Re-structuring and re-equipping to be relevant for the 21st Century

By 2020, the Army will be structured to provide:

- a contribution to our standing commitments including defending the South Atlantic Overseas Territories and UK tasks such as bomb disposal;
- light, specialist forces for short-duration interventions;
- sufficient multi-role forces to provide flexibility for larger or more complex intervention operations or to undertake enduring stabilisation operations; and
- the ability to command UK and coalition forces at up to theatre level.

Multi-role forces for complex interventions and enduring stabilisations

We will restructure the Army around five multi-role brigades, keeping one brigade at high readiness available for an intervention operation and four in support to provide the ability to sustain an enduring stabilisation operation.

Key to the utility of these multi-role brigades is their “building-block” structure, allowing greater choice in the size and composition of the force that might be deployed, without having to draw on other elements from the rest of the Army as has been the case in recent times. With suitable warning time, the brigades could be combined to generate a larger formation.

The multi-role brigades will include:

- reconnaissance forces to gain information even in high-threat situations;
- tanks, which continue to provide a unique combination of protection, mobility and firepower; and
- infantry operating from a range of protected vehicles.

The brigades will be self-supporting, having their own artillery, engineer, communications, intelligence, logistics and medical support. Territorial Army personnel will be fully integrated into the new structures, in both specialist roles and reinforcing combat units.



Specialist Brigade

In addition to the multi-role brigades, 16 Air Assault Brigade is a high-readiness, short-duration intervention capability, organised and trained for parachute and air assault operations, with its own supporting units. This Brigade, along with 3 Commando Brigade, is trained and equipped to be one of the first ground forces to intervene in a new conflict.



Preparing to be airlifted by a Chinook

The Army will have a range of other capabilities:

- we will retain the ability to command operations at very senior level through the UK-led Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC) headquarters (part of NATO). We will also retain the capacity to deliver one UK, fully deployable, senior level (divisional) headquarters, and the ability to regenerate a second deployable divisional headquarters;
- a range of intelligence, surveillance, target-acquisition and reconnaissance (ISTAR) capabilities including: unmanned aerial vehicles; man-portable and vehicle-fitted electronic warfare equipment; deployable surveillance to protect forward operating bases and a force protection system to protect against indirect fire such as artillery and mortars;
- precision Guided Multiple Launch Rocket System (GMLRS) rockets that can strike targets up to 70 km away and Loitering Munitions able to circle over a battlefield for many hours ready for fleeting or opportunity targets;
- armour - holdings of heavy armoured vehicles will be reduced but still sufficient to conduct operations in high-threat situations. A new range of medium weight armoured vehicles will be purchased, including the Terrier engineer vehicle and Future Rapid Effects System reconnaissance and utility vehicles;
- protected support vehicles to move logistic supplies around the battlefield will replace unprotected versions.



Protected logistic vehicles

Helicopters will continue play an important role:

- we are buying an additional 12 Chinook support helicopters to give a total of 60. This will increase battlefield mobility, using Chinook heavy lift and Merlin and Puma medium lift helicopters to move personnel and equipment over long distances.



The Apache helicopter

- we will also field 67 Apache attack helicopters able to provide precision firepower and ISTAR in support of ground forces, and Wildcat helicopters for reconnaissance, command and control, and escort duties.
- the future helicopter force will be more effective; we are retiring older, less adaptable aircraft such as the SeaKing and Gazelle and reducing the number of fleets to increase efficiency. It will have even greater lift capacity than today, and will be based on more capable, modern helicopters better able to support ground forces.

In order to meet the Future Force 2020 structure, the Army will:

- reduce by around 7,000 to c.95,000 personnel by 2015, but with no changes to combat units involved in Afghanistan;
- reduce our holdings of Challenger 2 tanks by 40% and our heavy artillery by 35%;
- reduce by one the number of deployable brigades, as we restructure to five multi-role brigades;
- significantly reduce our non-deployable regional administrative structure;
- rationalise our deployable headquarters by reducing the communications and logistics support to Headquarters ARRC and convert the second of our operational divisional headquarters to a force preparation role.