



House of Commons  
Scottish Affairs Committee

---

# Defence in Scotland: military landscape

---

**First Report of Session 2022–23**

*Report, together with formal minutes relating  
to the report*

*Ordered by the House of Commons  
to be printed 13 June 2022*

## The Scottish Affairs Committee

The Scottish Affairs Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration and policy of the Scotland Office (including (i) relations with the Scottish Parliament and (ii) administration and expenditure of the offices of the Advocate General for Scotland (but excluding individual cases and advice given within government by the Advocate General)).

### Current membership

[Pete Wishart MP](#) (*Scottish National Party, Perth and North Perthshire*) (Chair)

[Mhairi Black MP](#) (*Scottish National Party, Paisley and Renfrewshire South*)

[Andrew Bowie MP](#) (*Conservative, West Aberdeenshire and Kincardine*)

[Deidre Brock MP](#) (*Scottish National Party, Edinburgh North and Leith*)

[Wendy Chamberlain MP](#) (*Liberal Democrat, North East Fife*)

[Alberto Costa MP](#) (*Conservative, South Leicestershire*)

[Jon Cruddas MP](#) (*Labour, Dagenham and Rainham*)

[Sally-Ann Hart MP](#) (*Conservative, Hastings and Rye*)

[John Lamont MP](#) (*Conservative, Berwickshire, Roxburgh and Selkirk*)

[Douglas Ross MP](#) (*Conservative, Moray*)

[Liz Twist MP](#) (*Labour, Blaydon*)

### Powers

The Committee is one of the departmental select committees, the powers of which are set out in House of Commons Standing Orders, principally in SO. No.152. These are available on the internet via [www.parliament.uk](http://www.parliament.uk).

### Publication

© Parliamentary Copyright House of Commons 2022. This publication may be reproduced under the terms of the Open Parliament Licence, which is published at [www.parliament.uk/copyright](http://www.parliament.uk/copyright).

Committee reports are published on the [Committee's website](#) and in print by Order of the House.

### Committee staff

The current staff of the Committee are Stephen Aldhouse (Senior Committee Specialist), Zoe Backhouse (Second Clerk), Pete Brook (Financial Analyst, Scrutiny Unit), Samantha Colebrook (Committee Operations Officer), Nerys Davies (Committee Specialist), Kay Gammie (Committee Operations Manager), Simon Horswell (Committee Specialist), Chloe Jago (Senior Media and Communications Officer), Alex Knight (Senior Economist, Scrutiny Unit), Leoni Kurt (Clerk), Zac Mead (Second Clerk), Ellen Parry (Committee Researcher) and Chloe Smith (Committee Specialist).

### Contacts

All correspondence should be addressed to the Clerk of the Scottish Affairs Committee, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA. The telephone number for general enquiries is 020 7219 8204; the Committee's email address is [scotaffcom@parliament.uk](mailto:scotaffcom@parliament.uk).

You can follow the Committee on Twitter using [@CommonsScotAffs](#)

# Contents

---

<b>Summary</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1 Introduction</b>	<b>5</b>
Our inquiry	5
This Report	5
<b>2 The MOD in Scotland</b>	<b>6</b>
Spending	6
Personnel	6
Estate	7
Defence reviews	8
MOD operations in Scotland	8
HMNB Clyde	9
RAF Lossiemouth	9
Economic benefits of MOD bases	10
Joint working with military allies	10
<b>3 Defence industry in Scotland</b>	<b>12</b>
Overview	12
Prime contractors	13
Defence SMEs	14
MOD and prime contractor spending with Scottish SMEs	14
Scottish SME access to the defence sector	15
Military shipbuilding	16
Procurement of Royal Navy warships	17
<b>4 MOD base closures and base expansion</b>	<b>19</b>
MOD base closures in Scotland	19
Negative effects of MOD base closures on local communities	20
Positive effects of MOD base closures on local communities	21
Speculation on MOD base closures	21
MOD base expansion in Scotland	21
Positive effects of MOD base expansion on local communities	22
Negative effects of MOD base expansion on local communities	23
MOD engagement with local authorities on basing decisions	23
Redford Cavalry and Infantry Barracks (Edinburgh City Council)	23
Glencorse Barracks (Midlothian Council)	24

MOD Caledonia (Fife Council)	24
HMNB Clyde (Argyll and Bute Council)	24
RAF Lossiemouth (Moray Council)	25
MOD perspective on engagement with local authorities	25
<b>5 MOD collaboration with the Scottish Government</b>	<b>27</b>
Scottish Government perspective	27
Engagement on MOD basing decisions	27
Structures for future engagement	28
UK Government perspective	28
Engagement on MOD basing decisions	29
<b>6 Movement of personnel in and out of Scotland</b>	<b>30</b>
Child education	30
Healthcare	30
Spousal/partner employment	31
Recognition of professional qualifications between UK nations	31
Income tax	32
Information	32
<b>Conclusions and recommendations</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Annex 1: Defence reviews: impacts on Scotland</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Annex 2: Note from Committee visit to Moray, 29 November 2021</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>Formal minutes</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>Witnesses</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>Published written evidence</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>List of Reports from the Committee during the current Parliament</b>	<b>52</b>

## Summary

Scotland is experiencing a new era of confidence and investment in the defence sector. Record UK Government spending on defence has led to major MOD investment in Scotland, primarily at HMNB Clyde and RAF Lossiemouth. Clyde is in the midst of a £1.6 billion infrastructure project—which will see its personnel grow from 7,000 to 8,200—and has become home to the UK’s entire submarine service. Lossiemouth—which in 2011 was at threat of closure—has now become a ‘superbase’, receiving £470m in infrastructure investment. It is one of two RAF Quick Reaction Alert stations protecting UK airspace and has become home to four Typhoon squadrons, two Poseidon squadrons and, in 2023, will welcome the new E-7 Wedgetail aircraft. Scotland’s contribution is vital to the defence of the UK and pivotal to the UK’s contribution to NATO.

The defence landscape in Scotland is not limited to the MOD’s activities; there is also significant defence activity in the private sector amongst both prime contractors and SMEs who are able to benefit from increases in MOD investment. MOD spending with Scottish industry was close to £2 billion in 2020/21, which was almost 10% of the MOD’s total spending with industry that year; higher than Scotland’s 8% population share of the UK. We heard that the UK’s status on the world stage is very dependent on the defence industry facilities it has in Scotland. That said, defence SMEs in Scotland are currently losing out. The MOD admits that Scotland accounts for a small proportion of the MOD’s spending with SMEs. Only 2.5% of the MOD’s total spending with UK SMEs in 2020/21 was spent in Scotland, far lower than Scotland’s population share of the UK. We heard that culture change was needed in the MOD, and in its prime contractors, to address perceptions of engrained hesitancy towards working with Scottish SMEs.

The MOD has embarked on a great rationalisation of its bases across the UK, including in Scotland. It says it is working hard to deliver a fit for purpose, affordable and smaller defence estate, with the goal of a 30% reduction by 2040. MOD Caledonia, Forthside Barracks and Meadowforth Barracks are scheduled for closure in Scotland this year, followed by Redford Cavalry and Infantry Barracks in 2029 and Fort George in 2032 (although some bases may be retained in part). We heard that the impacts of base closures depend on where they are. In prosperous areas bases can become much-needed sites for housing or businesses but, in less affluent areas, the consequences can be damaging and long-lasting, exacerbating falling and ageing population challenges facing much of rural Scotland. The MOD should intensify its collaboration efforts with all Scottish local authorities facing base closures and base expansions, and engage with them at earlier stages in those processes, for example by jointly producing and acting on impact assessments.

Collaboration between the UK and Scottish governments on defence matters is viewed very differently between governments. While the UK Government says it is committed to working closely and positively with the Scottish Government, the Scottish Government says that, although MOD basing decisions often have consequences for devolved areas of policy, the UK Government is failing to maximise opportunities through robust intergovernmental dialogue that would bring benefits to both governments. The MOD admits that collaboration on defence matters has suffered disruption due to the

pandemic, but is keen to do better. For the benefit of military communities who rely on locally-provided services, and communities nearby to MOD bases who share the same local services, it is important that collaboration improves.

Military personnel and their families can face many challenges when moving bases between England and Scotland—for example in relation to child education (due to differing education systems and learning styles), the transfer of healthcare between NHS services, differing income tax rates and spousal employment, especially the transfer of professional qualifications between UK nations. The importance of providing useful information to such personnel and their families—and in varying and accessible formats—is vital to a smooth transition. While improvements have been made, there is scope for the MOD to be more proactive in the information it routinely shares with Armed Forces personnel and their families when they move to bases in Scotland, and from Scotland. The UK Government should also accelerate work with relevant responsible bodies across the UK to reduce barriers that military spouses and partners face when attempting to transfer their professional qualifications between UK nations.

# 1 Introduction

---

1. Our Committee is assessing the defence challenges and opportunities facing Scotland. This Report—providing an introductory overview of the military landscape in Scotland—is the first in a series of Scottish Affairs Committee reports in our ‘Defence in Scotland’ series. This is the first time since 2013 that we have explored defence matters.

## Our inquiry

2. We launched our inquiry into *Defence in Scotland: military landscape* on 30 July 2021 and published a call for written evidence to address the following terms of reference:

- What impacts are the UK’s changing defence priorities having on investment, employment and communities in Scotland?
- How important are military installations in Scotland for supporting the UK’s international military alliances?
- How well are Scottish people and places represented in the UK military?
- How have recent military infrastructure investments affected employment and communities in Scotland?
- How might planned military personnel reductions and estate reductions affect employment and communities in Scotland? What impacts are already occurring from planned reductions/closures?
- Should the UK Government offer any additional support to individuals and communities affected?

3. As part of the inquiry we received 17 written evidence submissions, held four public oral evidence sessions—hearing from 24 witnesses, including the UK and Scottish governments—and visited RAF Lossiemouth and Kinloss Barracks in Moray. We would like to thank everyone who contributed to our inquiry—whether in person or in writing—and everyone in Moray for the warm welcome we received. We would also like to thank Dr Andrew Corbett, our Specialist Adviser for this inquiry, for his valuable insights.<sup>1</sup>

## This Report

4. This Report examines Ministry of Defence (MOD) personnel levels, estate and spending in Scotland (Chapter 2). It explores the growing defence industry in Scotland—from prime contractors to SMEs—and the vital functions they provide (Chapter 3). It explores the level of MOD base closures and base expansions facing Scotland, and how these can affect local communities (Chapter 4). The fifth section assesses how effectively the MOD works with the Scottish Government to support both military communities and local communities surrounding MOD bases (Chapter 5). Finally, it examines the movement of personnel in and out of Scotland, and the support they and their families receive during that relocation (Chapter 6).

---

<sup>1</sup> Dr Andrew Corbett was appointed on 25 October 2021 (see the Committee’s [Formal Minutes](#)). He had no relevant interests to declare.

## 2 The MOD in Scotland

### Spending

5. In 2019/20 UK Government spending on defence was £39.8 billion. This was a nominal increase of around £1.8 billion on the year before and a real-terms increase of around £1 billion.<sup>2</sup> The UK Government has committed to increase defence spending with “record investment”<sup>3</sup> of over £24 billion over the course of the Parliament.<sup>4</sup> According to Rt Hon Baroness Goldie DL, Minister of State, Ministry of Defence, this investment may be more important to global stability than ever before.<sup>5</sup>

6. Other than the MOD’s significant spending with the defence industry in Scotland, which was almost £2 billion in 2020/21 (9.7% of the MOD’s total UK-wide spending;<sup>6</sup> detailed further in Chapter 3), it is unclear how much, or what proportion, of the MOD’s total budget is spent, or will be spent in future, in Scotland. Professor Phillips O’Brien, University of St Andrews, found this figure “almost impossible” to calculate.<sup>7</sup> What we do know is that MOD spending in Scotland is spread unevenly, with certain regions benefitting much more than others.<sup>8</sup> In the view of Professor Trevor Taylor from RUSI, however, Scotland does “pretty well” overall out of MOD spending.<sup>9</sup>

### Personnel

7. Just like MOD spending, military employment is particularly important in certain parts of Scotland, for example in Argyll & Bute and in Moray, where the MOD accounts for over 20% of all jobs in both areas.<sup>10</sup> As of April 2021, Regular Armed Forces in Scotland consisted of 3,790 in the Army, 4,270 in the Royal Navy and 2,060 in the RAF.<sup>11</sup> Between 2014 and October 2021, while the overall number of MOD personnel in Scotland rose (largely due to a significant increase in the number of reserves), the number of Regular Armed Forces dropped by 660. This is detailed further below:

**Table 1: MOD personnel in Scotland**

	2014	2021
Regular Armed Forces personnel	11,100	10,440
Reserve personnel	2,200	5,320
Civilian personnel	4,000	4,030
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,300</b>	<b>19,790</b>

Source: Ministry of Defence, *Scotland analysis: Defence*, 2014, p 2; Ministry of Defence (DIS0032) p 3 (Table 1)

2 UK defence expenditure, Briefing Note [8175](#), House of Commons Library, 21 June 2021, p 4

3 [Q214](#)

4 Ministry of Defence (DIS0014) para 3

5 [Q214](#)

6 Ministry of Defence, ‘MOD regional expenditure with UK industry and commerce and supported employment 2020/21’, published 20 January 2022

7 [Q3](#)

8 [Q11](#) & [Q12](#)

9 [Q11](#)

10 GMB Scotland, *The Defence Industry in Scotland* (July 2016), p 6

11 Ministry of Defence (DIS0014) para 21



8. In 2014, the MOD committed to increase the number of Scottish-based Regular Armed Forces personnel from 11,100 to 12,500 by 2020.<sup>12</sup> As stated above, however, the most recent figure is 10,440.<sup>13</sup> According to the Scottish Government, there has been no explanation for the delay in reaching the 2014 commitment.<sup>14</sup> We asked Baroness Goldie if the 2014 commitment had been dropped by the MOD and she told us it had been “overtaken”.<sup>15</sup> This was because events since 2014 have “changed the character of what defence is trying to do” and there is now “a very different character emerging for how we begin to address threat”.<sup>16</sup>

## Estate

9. The MOD estate covers about 1.8% of total UK land mass.<sup>17</sup> As of April 2021, the MOD had 136 establishments in Scotland and a footprint covering 11,700 hectares of built environment and 22,600 hectares of rural environment. In all three of these measurements, Scotland has the third highest footprint across the UK’s 12 countries and regions.<sup>18</sup> This is detailed further in the table below. In terms of whether Scotland has a ‘fair share’ of MOD installations, Professor O’Brien believed Scotland has, and looks like it will retain, a “significant facility” in all the major areas of defence procurement and operation, which is a key metric in assessing Scottish representation in the defence estate.<sup>19</sup>

**Table 2: The distribution of the defence estate across the UK, April 2021**

Country/Region	1. Northern Ireland	2. Scotland	3. Wales	4. North West	5. North East	6. Yorkshire and the Humber	7. West Midlands	8. East Midlands	9. Eastern	10. South West	11. South East	12. London
Number of establishments	39	136	56	42	14	70	52	52	84	173	215	87
Built estate in hectares	400	11,700	3,300	6,100	400	4,300	2,700	4,600	20,200	12,700	8,800	500
Rural estate in hectares	1,400	22,600	16,300	7,500	23,300	9,300	2,600	7,000	10,700	42,900	13,700	-

Source: National Audit Office, [Optimising the defence estate](#) (June 2021), p 17 (Figure 1 continued)

10. The UK Government said in the 2015 Strategic Defence and Security Review that it wanted to “reduce the built estate by 30%”<sup>20</sup> by 2040.<sup>21</sup> For Scotland this means an effort by the MOD to consolidate its bases,<sup>22</sup> creating fewer but larger sites and providing better economies of scale by, for example, reducing security costs. Professor Taylor says the MOD has been trying, but “struggling”, to achieve the 30% target.<sup>23</sup> The National Audit Office identified only a 2% reduction in the MOD’s built estate between 2015 and 2021.<sup>24</sup> Base closures and expansion are covered in more detail in Chapter 4.

12 HM Government, [Scotland: Defence](#), 2014, p 2

13 Ministry of Defence ([DIS0032](#)) p 3

14 Scottish Government ([DIS0015](#)) p 5

15 [Q217](#)

16 [Q216](#)

17 Ministry of Defence ([DIS0014](#)) para 44

18 National Audit Office, [Optimising the defence estate](#) (June 2021), p 17 (Figure 1 continued)

19 [Q3](#)

20 HM Government, [National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015](#), November 2015, para 4.62

21 Ministry of Defence, ‘[MOD estate optimisation strategy](#)’, published 24 March 2016

22 [Q214](#)

23 Professor Trevor Taylor, RUSI ([DIS0010](#)) p 1

24 National Audit Office, [Optimising the defence estate](#), 11 June 2021, p 4

## Defence reviews

11. There has been a number of UK Government defence reviews in recent years. The MOD notes that “changing defence priorities inevitably have an impact on investment, employment, and communities, including in Scotland”.<sup>25</sup> In the view of Professor Taylor, the UK’s defence priorities are not just changing but growing; there are no obvious cutback areas.<sup>26</sup> Some of the key developments for Scotland since 2015 are:

- **2015 Strategic Defence and Security Review:** purchase of nine Boeing P8 Maritime Patrol Aircraft, to be based in Scotland.
- **2016 Better Defence Estate Strategy:** 30% reduction in the defence estate leading to the closure of a number of bases in Scotland (although this would coincide with the expansion of other Scottish bases).
- **2017 National Shipbuilding Strategy:** BAE (Govan and Scotstoun) and Babcock (Rosyth) assured a steady medium-term shipbuilding pipeline.
- **2021 Defence in a Competitive Age:** shipbuilding investment to double over the current Parliament, rising to over £1.7 billion a year, and infrastructure improvements at HMNB Clyde worth £1.6bn over 10 years.
- **2021 Future Soldier:** Scotland to be home to more battalions, going from six to seven units, and a greater proportion of the Army.

All recent defence reviews and their implications for Scotland are detailed further in Annex 1. Professor Taylor argues that collectively they suggest “Scotland is pretty central” to the UK’s defence planning.<sup>27</sup>

## MOD operations in Scotland

12. The UK and Scottish governments agree that Scotland plays a crucial role in the defence of the UK.<sup>28</sup> The UK Government states that Scotland’s contribution to the deterrence and defence capability of NATO, and the UK’s role as the leading European Ally, is “considerable”.<sup>29</sup> Baroness Goldie told us that “Scotland plays an integral part in all parts of our UK defence capability” and has a “vital role in our combined defence and security”.<sup>30</sup> Professor Taylor similarly argues that “the strategic importance of [Scotland’s military installations] for the defence of the UK and the UK’s contribution to NATO” is something that stands out.<sup>31</sup> The UK Government points to HMNB Clyde and RAF Lossiemouth as of particular importance to the MOD’s strategic basing;<sup>32</sup> these are detailed further below.

---

25 Ministry of Defence ([DIS0014](#)) para 31

26 [Q17](#)

27 [Q11](#)

28 Scottish Government ([DIS0015](#)) p 6; Ministry of Defence ([DIS0014](#)) para 4

29 Ministry of Defence ([DIS0014](#)) para 6

30 [Q214](#)

31 Professor Trevor Taylor, RUSI ([DIS0010](#)) p 2

32 Ministry of Defence ([DIS0014](#)) para 8

## HMNB Clyde

13. The UK's nuclear deterrent is based at HMNB Clyde (also known as Faslane), which is the Royal Navy's main presence in Scotland.<sup>33</sup> The base has recently become home to UK's entire submarine service, including its hunter-killer submarines. The Royal Naval Armaments Depot at Coulport (also part of HMNB) is eight miles from Faslane, and is responsible for the storage, processing, maintenance and issue of key elements of the UK's Trident Deterrent Missile System and the ammunitioning of all submarine weapons.<sup>34</sup> HMNB Clyde directly employs nearly 7,000 personnel (civilian and military), making it the second largest single site employer in Scotland.<sup>35</sup> The uniformed personnel at HMNB Clyde (4,800) represent nearly 40% of the total regular forces in Scotland.<sup>36</sup> The MOD says HMNB Clyde's total numbers will grow to 8,200 over the next decade.<sup>37</sup> The MOD's Clyde Infrastructure Programme is investing £1.6 billion in improvements at HMNB Clyde over a 10-year period.<sup>38</sup>

## RAF Lossiemouth

14. RAF Lossiemouth is now the RAF's main operating base in Scotland<sup>39</sup> and we had the pleasure of visiting this facility in November 2021 (a note from the visit is provided in Annex 2). In 2011 the base was threatened with closure but was saved following a large community effort.<sup>40</sup> According to the MOD, RAF Lossiemouth's location in Moray gives it "strategic oversight over the northern arc of UK airspace, protecting the country and NATO air space from attempted air terrorism and other incursions".<sup>41</sup> It is one of two RAF Quick Reaction Alert stations protecting UK airspace. RAF Lossiemouth protects the UK's northern airspace and RAF Coningsby protects the south. Aircraft and crews are maintained on "high alert" in order to scramble and intercept unidentified aircraft approaching UK airspace from any direction.<sup>42</sup> RAF Typhoons from RAF Lossiemouth have, on "numerous occasions", intercepted foreign aircraft in UK airspace.<sup>43</sup>

15. RAF Lossiemouth is home to four Typhoon combat aircraft squadrons, two Poseidon P-8A Maritime Patrol squadrons and an RAF Regiment squadron.<sup>44</sup> In addition, the new E-7 Wedgetail aircraft is set to join RAF Lossiemouth in 2023,<sup>45</sup> "further solidifying defence's presence in Scotland and emphasising RAF Lossiemouth's strategic location". RAF Lossiemouth is home to 2,500 personnel (regulars, reservists, civil servants and contractors).<sup>46</sup> As of March 2021, the MOD was still to spend approximately £160m of £470m committed to ongoing infrastructure improvements, which will lead to an extra 550 service personnel and their families moving to the base.<sup>47</sup>

---

33 Royal Navy, '[HMNB Clyde](#)', accessed 20 January 2022  
 34 Royal Navy, '[HMNB Clyde](#)', accessed 20 January 2022  
 35 Ministry of Defence ([DIS0014](#)) para 18  
 36 Ministry of Defence ([DIS0014](#)) para 19  
 37 Ministry of Defence ([DIS0014](#)) para 18  
 38 Ministry of Defence ([DIS0014](#)) para 45  
 39 Ministry of Defence ([DIS0014](#)) para 26  
 40 "[Ten years ago in Moray: RAF Lossiemouth saved](#)", The Northern Scot, 19 July 2021  
 41 Ministry of Defence ([DIS0014](#)) para 26  
 42 Royal Air Force, '[RAF Lossiemouth](#)', accessed 20 January 2022  
 43 BAE Systems plc ([DIS0007](#)) p 4  
 44 Royal Air Force, '[RAF Lossiemouth](#)', accessed 20 January 2022  
 45 Boeing, '[RAF Lossiemouth](#)', accessed 20 January 2022  
 46 Ministry of Defence ([DIS0014](#)) paras 26–27  
 47 Ministry of Defence, [Defence in a competitive age](#), March 2021, p 63

### *Economic benefits of MOD bases*

16. The councils of Argyll and Bute (home of HMNB Clyde) and Moray (home of RAF Lossiemouth) both welcome the significant economic benefits that MOD bases bring to their communities.<sup>48</sup> HMNB Clyde and RAF Lossiemouth are significant employers in their local communities.<sup>49</sup> Rhona Gunn from Moray Council told us that she could not overstate the “importance and significance” of RAF Lossiemouth to the Moray economy.<sup>50</sup> Fergus Murray from Argyll and Bute Council highlighted that HMNB Clyde brought a significant transfer of people into their area, which was important as Argyll and Bute has a falling population overall.<sup>51</sup> The economic benefits of MOD bases are outlined further in Chapter 4.

### *Joint working with military allies*

17. According to Baroness Goldie, Scotland has “diverse military capabilities that are vital to the UK and our NATO allies”,<sup>52</sup> adding that the facilities the MOD has at Faslane and Lossiemouth are “pivotal” to the UK’s NATO contribution.<sup>53</sup> Twice a year, in the waters around and skies above Scotland, the UK hosts Exercise ‘Joint Warrior’, the largest military exercise in western Europe. Joint Warrior brings together the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, the Royal Air Force and the British Army, as well as forces from 13 other nations to test NATO’s ‘Very High Readiness’ forces.<sup>54</sup> These exercises regularly involve twenty or more NATO ships;<sup>55</sup> the most recent involved 58 aircraft and 3,725 military personnel.<sup>56</sup> Allied ships pre-position for maintenance, and/or remain in Scottish waters on completion for regular port visits.<sup>57</sup> According to the MOD, the exercise not only allows participating units to hone their specialist roles within a larger war-style setting, it also helps foster vital links between the UK, NATO and other allied militaries.<sup>58</sup>

18. RAF Lossiemouth personnel and aircraft regularly support operations worldwide and host national and international exercises<sup>59</sup>—for example the international defence engagement exercise ‘Blue Flag’ with Israel in October 2021, where knowledge and combat experience were shared. In addition, RAF Lossiemouth squadrons provide NATO Air Policing services over large parts of northern Europe, supporting NATO allies such as Iceland.<sup>60</sup>

**19. Scotland is experiencing a new era of confidence and investment in the defence sector. We welcome the MOD’s clear commitment to Scotland, shown, for example, by making it home to the UK’s submarine service, the new fleets of P8 Maritime Patrol and E-7 Wedgetail aircraft and that Scotland will host a greater proportion of the**

48 Argyll and Bute Council ([DIS0013](#)) p 5–6 & [Q162](#); Moray Council [Q175](#)

49 Argyll and Bute Council ([DIS0013](#)) p 5–6 & [Q140](#), Moray Council [Q175](#); GMB Scotland, [The Defence Industry in Scotland](#) (July 2016), p 6

50 [Q175](#)

51 [Q137](#)

52 [Q214](#)

53 [Q226](#)

54 Royal Navy, ‘[Exercise Joint Warrior](#)’, accessed 20 January 2022; Ministry of Defence ([DIS0014](#)) para 8

55 Ministry of Defence ([DIS0014](#)) para 8

56 Royal Navy, ‘[Exercise Joint Warrior](#)’, accessed 20 January 2022

57 Ministry of Defence ([DIS0014](#)) para 8

58 Royal Navy, ‘[Exercise Joint Warrior](#)’, accessed 20 January 2022

59 Royal Air Force, ‘[RAF Lossiemouth](#)’, accessed 20 January 2022

60 Annex 2: Note from visit to Moray, 29 November 2021

**Army, with an increase in the number of battalions, as outlined in the 2021 Future Soldier review. We also welcome the MOD's significant investment in Scotland, in particular in Argyll & Bute and Moray, and the economic benefits this brings to local communities.**

**20. We welcome the increased military capabilities the MOD is gaining in Scotland, especially in light of ongoing increases in Russian aggression, and the importance that Scotland's military capabilities play in strengthening the UK's international alliances, such as NATO.**

**21. We note that the 2014 commitment to increase the number of Regular Armed Forces personnel has been superseded by changing strategic priorities. We welcome the 2021 Future Soldier programme to increase the number of battalions in Scotland and that Scotland will host a greater proportion of the Army in the future.**

## 3 Defence industry in Scotland

---

### Overview

22. Professor Taylor highlighted the fact that the MOD spends more than 60% of its total budget with the private sector.<sup>61</sup> Total UK-wide MOD expenditure with industry was £20.5 billion in 2020/21. MOD expenditure with Scottish industry decreased by 4%<sup>62</sup> to £1.989 billion in 2020/21 (compared to 2019/20),<sup>63</sup> reflecting a 5% UK-wide decrease in spending in 2020/21 (after adjusting for inflation).<sup>64</sup> This followed an increase of almost 15% in Scotland in 2019/20 (compared to 2018/19).<sup>65</sup>

23. Spending in the ‘shipbuilding and repairing’ sector has remained consistent in 2020/21, but was offset by reductions in the ‘construction’ and ‘manufacturing’ sectors.<sup>66</sup> 9.7% of UK-wide MOD spending with industry was in Scotland in 2020/21 (£1.989 billion out of £20.5 billion), compared to 10% in 2019/20.<sup>67</sup> As of mid-2020, 8.1% of the UK’s population lived in Scotland,<sup>68</sup> meaning that Scotland receives more MOD investment with industry per head than the UK average. £360 was spent per head in Scotland in 2020/21; the UK average was £310. As a comparison, £1,070 was spent per head in the South West of England (the highest of any UK region), £270 was spent per head in Wales and £30 was spent per head in Northern Ireland.<sup>69</sup> This is detailed further below:

---

61 Professor Trevor Taylor, RUSI ([DIS0010](#)) p 2

62 Ministry of Defence, ‘[MOD regional expenditure with UK industry and commerce and supported employment 2020/21](#)’, published 20 January 2022

63 HM Government, ‘[UK annual defence procurement worth almost £2 billion to Scotland](#)’, published 20 January 2022

64 Ministry of Defence, ‘[MOD regional expenditure with UK industry and commerce and supported employment 2020/21](#)’, published 20 January 2022

65 Ministry of Defence, ‘[MOD regional expenditure with UK industry and commerce and supported employment 2019/20](#)’, updated 12 August 2021

66 Ministry of Defence, ‘[MOD regional expenditure with UK industry and commerce and supported employment 2020/21](#)’, published 20 January 2022

67 Ministry of Defence, ‘[MOD regional expenditure with UK industry and commerce and supported employment 2019/20](#)’, updated 12 August 2021

68 Office for National Statistics, ‘[Population estimates for the UK, England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland: mid-2020](#)’, published 25 June 2021

69 Ministry of Defence, ‘[MOD regional expenditure with UK industry and commerce and supported employment 2020/21](#)’, published 20 January 2022

**Figure 1: MOD expenditure per person with UK industry by region 2020/21**

Source: Ministry of Defence, '[MOD regional expenditure with UK industry and commerce and supported employment 2020/21](#)', published 20 January 2022

24. In Professor Taylor's view, "Scotland does very well" on defence industry investment, but the footprint in Scotland should not just be measured on size; it can also be measured "on industrial capability that would be very difficult to reproduce elsewhere."<sup>70</sup> In his view the UK's status on the world stage is "very dependent" on the defence industry facilities it has in Scotland.<sup>71</sup>

### **Prime contractors**

25. The largest prime contractors in Scotland are BAE Systems, with their ship-building yards in Govan and Scotstoun, and Babcock International, with their yard in Rosyth.<sup>72</sup> Other major contractors in Scotland include Leonardo, which employs nearly 2,000 people in Edinburgh designing and producing airborne radars and advanced lasers, Thales, which employs around 600 people in Govan, designing and building optronics systems for all three UK Armed Services,<sup>73</sup> and Boeing, which is heavily integrated into operations at RAF Lossiemouth.<sup>74</sup>

70 [Q2 & Q11](#)

71 [Q2](#)

72 Professor Trevor Taylor, RUSI ([DIS0010](#)) p 2

73 Scottish Government ([DIS0015](#)) p 6

74 Boeing UK Limited ([DIS0019](#)) p 1; Annex 2: Note from visit to Moray, 29 November 2021

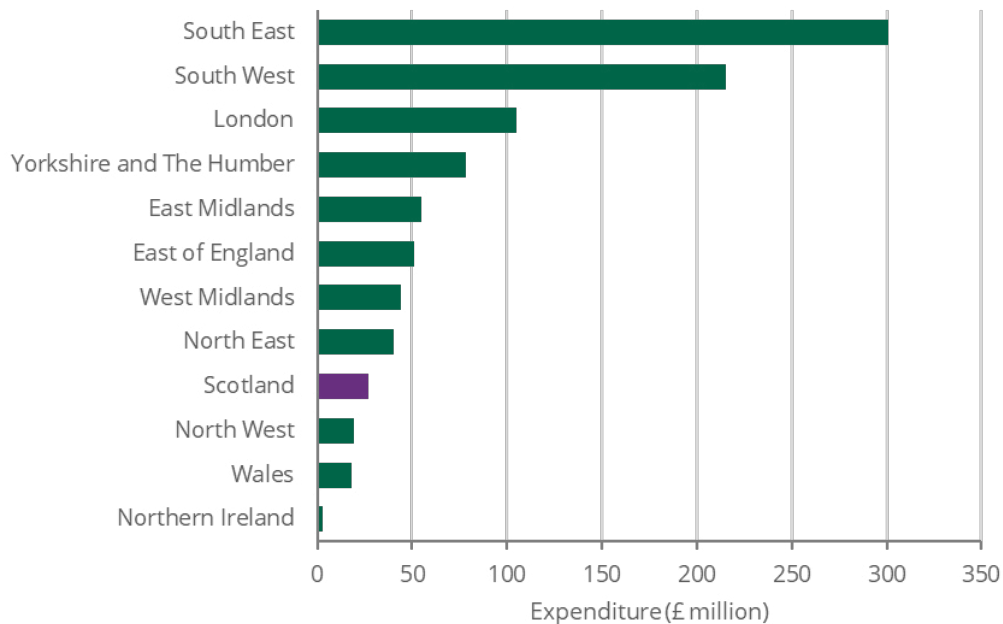
## Defence SMEs

26. In addition to the defence primes and major sub-system providers there are a “swathe” of SMEs in Scotland, supporting the defence sector and civil markets.<sup>75</sup> The UK Government (and OECD) defines an SME as an enterprise or business with fewer than 250 employees and an annual turnover of less than €50 million.<sup>76</sup> These businesses in Scotland have products ranging from bespoke electronic devices, casting goods, metal unit fabrication for ships to wiring looms and connectors.<sup>77</sup>

### *MOD and prime contractor spending with Scottish SMEs*

27. Some 5% of the MOD’s procurement spending was with UK SMEs in 2020/21, which equates to just under £1 billion. However, according to the UK Government, Scotland accounts for a “small proportion” of the MOD’s spending with SMEs.<sup>78</sup> Of the £1 billion the MOD spent with UK SMEs in 2020/21, £25 million (2.5% of the total) was spent with Scottish SMEs.<sup>79</sup> SMEs in the South of England (excluding London) received 54% of all SME spending across the whole of the UK. The only UK regions to receive less spending with SMEs than Scotland were the North West of England, Wales and Northern Ireland.<sup>80</sup> This is detailed further below:

**Figure 2: MOD expenditure on small and medium-sized enterprises by region 2020/21**



Source: Ministry of Defence, ‘[MOD regional expenditure with UK industry and commerce and supported employment 2020/21](#)’, published 20 January 2022

75 Professor Trevor Taylor, RUSI ([DIS0010](#)) p 3

76 Ministry of Defence, ‘[MOD regional expenditure with UK industry and commerce and supported employment 2020/21](#)’, published 20 January 2022

77 Professor Trevor Taylor, RUSI ([DIS0010](#)) p 3

78 Ministry of Defence, ‘[MOD regional expenditure with UK industry and commerce and supported employment 2020/21](#)’, published 20 January 2022

79 Ministry of Defence ([DIS0032](#)) p 8

80 Ministry of Defence, ‘[MOD regional expenditure with UK industry and commerce and supported employment 2020/21](#)’, published 20 January 2022



28. In terms of spending with SMEs by the MOD's major contractors, BAE spends about 5% of its total UK-wide SME spending in Scotland (£30 million out of £600 million) and Thales spends about 7% of its total UK-wide SME spending in Scotland (£5 million out of £70 million).<sup>81</sup> Both of these percentages are lower than Scotland's 8.1%<sup>82</sup> population share of the UK.

### **Scottish SME access to the defence sector**

29. The UK industry body ADS Group says Scottish SMEs “want to contribute to the UK defence sector in a greater way” and “want to win MOD business on merit”, because they “have the potential to do so”.<sup>83</sup> Jamie Mincher, from the SME Glenalmond Group, was likewise “concerned” that some Scottish SMEs, which have “great innovative technology that could be very valuable to the MOD”, “might not get the visibility” they deserve because they don't have partnerships with major MOD contractors.<sup>84</sup> According to Kevin Craven, ADS Group, part of the reason for the disparity in Scottish SME spending (vs the south of England) is “legacy issues around the way contracts have been awarded”.<sup>85</sup> He added that “the MOD is an enormous beast, and it is slow to change”.<sup>86</sup> In his view the trend for Scotland is “improving, but clearly it has a long way to go before it is anywhere near equitable, so there is a good opportunity for levelling up”.<sup>87</sup>

30. Jamie Mincher, Glenalmond Group, found it “extremely difficult” to access the defence sector in Scotland.<sup>88</sup> Dr Hina Khan, from the SME Spire Global UK Limited, likewise found it “challenging” to access the UK defence sector,<sup>89</sup> especially because “the MOD likes to work with known entities”.<sup>90</sup> Dr Suzanne Costello, from the SME MCS Limited, thinks spending figures with Scottish SMEs “speak volumes”,<sup>91</sup> arguing that a cultural shift is needed as defence organisations are “much more open” to working with SMEs in the south of England compared to Scotland.<sup>92</sup> Keith Brown MSP, Scottish Government, agreed, telling us that the MOD was “not good” at engaging with SMEs in Scotland.<sup>93</sup> Kevin Craven, ADS Group, was also of the view that “culture change is required” to address UK disparities in spending with SMEs.<sup>94</sup> He encourages more “early market engagement” and “local engagement” to improve the situation.<sup>95</sup>

---

81 [Q78](#)

82 Office for National Statistics, ‘[Population estimates for the UK, England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland: mid-2020](#)’, published 25 June 2021

83 ADS Group Ltd ([DIS0018](#)) p 1

84 [Q114](#)

85 [Q117](#)

86 [Q128](#)

87 [Q117](#)

88 [Q108](#)

89 [Q109](#)

90 [Q114](#)

91 [Q117](#)

92 [Q118](#)

93 [Q208](#)

94 [Q118](#)

95 [Q114](#)

31. Baroness Goldie told us that the SME supply chain was “absolutely critical”.<sup>96</sup> She pointed to the MOD’s new SME Action Plan and said improvements would come from “trying to relate better to the challenges SMEs have, and that is a pan-MOD approach across the UK”.<sup>97</sup> She said the MOD would deploy that approach in Scotland in the same way as they would anywhere else.<sup>98</sup>

**32. We welcome the MOD’s high level of spending with Scottish industry (around 10% of total spending with industry) but are concerned that this spending is very heavily skewed towards major international prime contractors rather than SMEs. This is illustrated by the fact that only 2.5% of the MOD’s spending with UK SMEs goes to Scottish businesses. While this figure is higher than the MOD’s spending with SMEs in the North West of England, Wales and Northern Ireland, it is far lower than both the UK average and Scotland’s population share of the UK. Scottish SMEs have the skills and ambition to match any other part of the UK yet are losing out. While the MOD’s SME Action Plan is timely and relevant, it is unlikely to tackle engrained hesitancy within the defence sector towards working with Scottish SMEs.**

**33. *The MOD should, with the assistance of the Scotland Office, initiate a culture change process within its own ranks, and in its prime contractors, that addresses perceptions of engrained hesitancy towards working with SMEs in Scotland, with a view to increasing the proportion of SME spending north of the border to at least 8% by the end of the MOD SME Action Plan implementation period.***

## Military shipbuilding

34. Scotland is renowned for its rich shipbuilding heritage, spanning hundreds of years, and retains a “significant proportion” of the UK’s shipbuilding capacity.<sup>99</sup> MOD spending in Scotland directly supported 7,500 shipbuilding jobs in 2019/20,<sup>100</sup> many of which are highly skilled.<sup>101</sup> Shipbuilding contributes 0.28% of the total Scottish economy, 8% of marine economy employment and 0.24% of total Scottish employment. Scottish shipbuilding accounted for around 23% of turnover and 19% of Gross Value Added (GVA) of total UK output of the industry in 2019.<sup>102</sup> According to Baroness Goldie, this revitalisation of Scottish shipbuilding follows “feast-and-famine” conditions for the sector in the latter part of the 20th century and early part of the 21st century.<sup>103</sup>

35. Maintaining a strong shipbuilding sector relies on maintaining a steady ‘drumbeat’ of orders. The Royal Navy’s current fleet of eight Type 23 frigates will begin to leave service from 2023.<sup>104</sup> They will be replaced by eight Type 26 frigates and at least five Type 31 frigates, all of which are set to be built in Scotland. The MOD signed a £3.7bn contract with BAE Systems in 2017 to build the first three (of eight) Type 26 vessels in Govan

96 [Q222](#)

97 [Q222](#) & [Q223](#)

98 [Q223](#)

99 National Shipbuilding Office, *National Shipbuilding Strategy*, [CP 605](#), March 2022, p 51

100 National Shipbuilding Office, *National Shipbuilding Strategy*, [CP 605](#), March 2022, p 12

101 UK Defence Journal, ‘[Scottish shipyards now to launch 18 ships between 2015 and 2035](#)’, published 12 September 2019

102 Scottish Government, ‘[Scotland’s Marine Economic Statistics 2019](#)’, published 23 March 2022

103 [Q228](#)

104 Royal Navy, ‘[Defence Secretary announces Type 23 base port moves](#)’, published 24 November 2017

and Scotstoun, near Glasgow.<sup>105</sup> The MOD then signed a £1.25bn contract with Babcock in 2019 to build five Type 31 vessels in Rosyth.<sup>106</sup> One of the next Royal Navy frigates is likely to be the Type 32 from which, according to Baroness Goldie, Scotland is likely to benefit.<sup>107</sup> Given the significance of the military shipbuilding sector to industry in Scotland, in particular the importance of maintaining a steady ‘drumbeat’ of orders, we will be exploring this topic in more detail throughout 2022.<sup>108</sup>

### **Procurement of Royal Navy warships**

36. The UK Government’s 2017 National Shipbuilding Strategy stated that ‘warships’ (e.g. destroyers, frigates and aircraft carriers) should be designed, built and integrated in the UK, but that “all other naval ships” should be “subject to open competition” (unless were security reasons not to do so).<sup>109</sup> This policy changed with the 2021 Defence and Security Industrial Strategy (DSIS) which removed the ‘warship’ procurement description and instead stated that the procurement approach for each class of ship would be “determined on a case-by-case basis”. Considerations such as ship capability requirements, long-term industrial impact and value for money would now determine whether the MOD’s approach would be “a single source procurement, a UK competition, an international competition or a blended competitive approach”.<sup>110</sup>

37. The House of Commons Defence Committee argued in its 2021 Report “*We’re going to need a bigger Navy*” that the upcoming National Shipbuilding Strategy Refresh “should ensure that warships are built in UK yards”.<sup>111</sup> In response to this, the MOD declined to change its approach, saying that “the removal of the warship definition provides the MOD with greater flexibility in determining its procurement route”.<sup>112</sup> The March 2022 National Shipbuilding Strategy Refresh recommitted the MOD to the “case-by-case” procurement approach.<sup>113</sup>

38. Appearing to contradict the case-by-case procurement approach, Damian Parmenter CBE, the MOD’s Director General Strategy and International, told us that “for operational reasons and strategic security reasons, warships are one of things we want built in the UK”.<sup>114</sup> In addition, the Secretary of State for Defence has classified the upcoming Fleet Solid Support ships as “warships” which, the MOD says, “confirms that the programme is exempt from requiring international competition”.<sup>115</sup> This seems to support a renaissance for the ‘warship’ definition and deviance from case-by-case procurement.

---

105 BAE Systems, ‘[Manufacturing contract for Type 26 Global Combat Ship awarded to BAE Systems](#)’, published 2 July 2017

106 HM Government, ‘[First steel cut for Royal Navy Type 31 programme](#)’, published 23 September 2021

107 [Q229](#)

108 Scottish Affairs Committee, ‘[MPs examine the future of military shipbuilding in Scotland](#)’, published 25 February 2022

109 HM Government, ‘[National Shipbuilding Strategy](#)’, 6 September 2017, p 33

110 HM Government, *Defence and Security Industrial Strategy*, CP 410, March 2021, p 92

111 Defence Committee, Third Report of Session 2021–22, “*We’re going to need a bigger Navy*”, HC 168, para 176

112 Defence Committee, Fifth Special Report of Session 2021–22, “*We’re going to need a bigger Navy*”: *Government Response to the Committee’s Third Report*, HC 1160, p 14–15

113 National Shipbuilding Office, *National Shipbuilding Strategy*, CP 605, March 2022, p 32

114 [Q232](#)

115 [Q232](#) (including related footnote 4 in transcript)

39. **The military shipbuilding sector provides an important pipeline of highly skilled jobs for Scottish industry. While current Royal Navy Type 26 and Type 31 orders are very welcome, the future of the sector is dependent on favourable UK Government policies and a regular ‘drumbeat’ of orders, which we will explore further in our inquiry into military shipbuilding.**

40. *The UK Government should clarify definitively its position on whether current policies potentially allow for Royal Navy warships (such as destroyers, frigates and fleet solid support ships) to be procured and/or built overseas. If this potential exists—which could have a dramatic impact on shipbuilding in Scotland—the MOD should indicate the likelihood of any of its warships being procured or built overseas in the next 30 years.*

## 4 MOD base closures and base expansion

### MOD base closures in Scotland

41. The UK Government says it is working hard to deliver a “fit for purpose”, “affordable” and “smaller” defence estate.<sup>116</sup> Baroness Goldie told us that the MOD makes these decisions “because we have to; we make them because of the circumstances of our capability”.<sup>117</sup> Professor Taylor says there has been a “necessary” “great rationalisation” of MOD bases over the last 25 years.<sup>118</sup> The MOD hopes to make more progress in this area, having said in 2015 that it wanted to “reduce the built estate by 30%” across the UK by 2040.<sup>119</sup> In the view of Professor O’Brien, every base in Scotland is “probably up for grabs” for closure to some degree, with the exception of HMNB Clyde and RAF Lossiemouth, which are seen as the “most stable and safest” from cuts.<sup>120</sup> The following military bases are currently scheduled for closure in Scotland (three of which are due for closure in 2022):

**Table 3: MOD bases scheduled for closure in Scotland**

Year of intended closure	Name and location of base	Information about base
2022	MOD Caledonia (Rosyth)	Home to HMS Scotia, amongst other facilities. <sup>121</sup>
2022	Forthside Barracks (Stirling)	Was home to the 51st Infantry Brigade and Headquarters Scotland until March 2021 (when it moved to Redford Barracks). <sup>122</sup> Parts of the Barracks may be retained. <sup>123</sup>
2022	Meadowforth Barracks (Stirling)	Situated next to Forthside Barracks. Home to reserve units including 154 Medical Squadron and D Company 7 Battalion Royal Regiment of Scotland. <sup>124</sup> Parts of the Barracks may be retained. <sup>125</sup>

116 Ministry of Defence ([DIS0014](#)) para 28

117 [Q239](#)

118 [Q27](#)

119 HM Government, [National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015](#), November 2015, para 4.62

120 [Q26](#)

121 Royal Navy, ‘[HMS Scotia \(Rosyth\)](#)’, accessed 19 January 2022

122 ‘[Farewell to Stirling as Army HQ moves to Edinburgh](#)’, Daily Record, 31 March 2021

123 [Q237](#)

124 Information from Brigadier Ben Wrench, Commander of the 51st Infantry Brigade and Headquarters Scotland, dated 24 January 2022

125 [Q237](#)

Year of intended closure	Name and location of base	Information about base
2029	Redford Cavalry and Infantry Barracks (Edinburgh)	Home to a number of units including Battalion Headquarters 5 Military Intelligence Battalion, Royal Armoured Corps E Squadron and Royal Armoured Corps Regimental Headquarters. <sup>126</sup> Became home to 51st Brigade headquarters in March 2021. Parts of the Barracks may be retained. <sup>127</sup>
2032	Fort George (Inverness)	Home to the 3rd Battalion of the Royal Regiment of Scotland (the Black Watch). <sup>128</sup>

Craigiehall Barracks (which was announced for closure in 2016<sup>129</sup>) closed in 2019.<sup>130</sup> The closure of Royal Marines Condor Airfield (Angus) and Glencorse Barracks (Midlothian)—also announced for closure in 2016<sup>131</sup>—has been cancelled: both will now be retained.<sup>132</sup>

### *Negative effects of MOD base closures on local communities*

42. Many contributors of written and oral evidence have spoken about the negative local economic and employment consequences of base closures. The Scottish Government has warned that decisions on base closures have far-reaching consequences for economies and communities, particularly in relation to employment.<sup>133</sup> Mr Hamish Mitchell, an Air Traffic Controller, argues that, with the removal of all Scottish RAF bases other than Lossiemouth, all the RAF's eggs “are now in one basket”, resulting in the removal of thousands of skilled and well-paid jobs from many local communities.<sup>134</sup> Professor Taylor highlights that much of the MOD's work is now privatised, “so whatever number of military personnel you have on a base, you probably have a similar number of contractors serving them”, leading to those jobs disappearing too.<sup>135</sup>

43. Argyll and Bute Council describes in its written evidence how long-lasting the impacts can be to an area following the closure of a base when there is no suitable comprehensive plan to reinstate lost economic activity.<sup>136</sup> It notes that these economic and social impacts can last for decades, “largely due to a lack of pre-planning by all parties”, and “not having resources in place to continue to develop the wider local economy” when the bases were in operation.<sup>137</sup> Base closures can leave local people with “no option” other than leaving the area and seeking out new job opportunities, exacerbating falling and ageing population challenges facing much of rural Scotland.<sup>138</sup>

126 Army, ‘[Redford Barracks](#)’, accessed 19 January 2022

127 HC Deb, 10 January 2022, [col 282](#) [Commons Chamber]

128 Army, ‘[The Royal Regiment of Scotland](#)’, accessed 19 January 2022

129 Ministry of Defence, [A Better Defence Estate](#), November 2016, p 18

130 “[End Of An Era For Craigiehall: Former Army Headquarters In Scotland Closes](#)”, Forces Net, 6 March 2019

131 Ministry of Defence, [A Better Defence Estate](#), November 2016, p 25

132 Condor Airfield: HM Government, ‘[Defence Secretary announces five-year plan for key military sites](#)’, published 28 February 2019; Glencorse Barracks: HC Deb, 25 November 2021, Army Restructuring: Future Soldier, [col 484](#) [Commons Chamber]

133 Scottish Government ([DIS0015](#)) p 2

134 Mr Hamish Mitchell ([DIS0006](#)) p 1

135 [Q27](#)

136 Argyll and Bute Council ([DIS0013](#)) p 4

137 Argyll and Bute Council ([DIS0013](#)) p 4

138 Argyll and Bute Council ([DIS0013](#)) p 5

### Positive effects of MOD base closures on local communities

44. Professor Taylor highlights the fact that the impact of base closures “tends to depend on where they are”. He notes that when base closures occur in prosperous areas they become much-needed sites for housing or businesses, “so it is not really noticed”, but the opposite is true in less affluent areas.<sup>139</sup> The impact of a base closure is “a local question and it depends on the core appeal of the region in which the base is located”.<sup>140</sup>

45. The MOD says releasing under-used sites “enables greater investment in retained Defence sites that are better supporting military capability”.<sup>141</sup> It argues that, while base closures can clearly have negative consequences on local communities, they can also “provide opportunities for redevelopment of brown field sites for housing and commercial purposes offering regeneration, business growth, job creation, green energy production and the preservation of historic buildings and other heritage assets”.<sup>142</sup> Keith Brown MSP thought “we would all be the winners if we could get very productive use out of former MOD sites, especially in relation to housing”.<sup>143</sup>

### Speculation on MOD base closures

46. In October 2021 there were several media reports, originating from an unnamed source, about the potential closure of Kinloss Barracks in Moray, which contributes around £30 million to the local economy.<sup>144</sup> While the MOD could not immediately rule this out (due to an upcoming spending review)<sup>145</sup> the closure threat was later proved unfounded as, rather than closing, it was announced in November 2021 that the MOD presence at the base would increase.<sup>146</sup> Rhona Gunn from Moray Council told us that “these kinds of rumours can be very damaging” for local areas as “communities are hyper-vigilant about any perceived threats” to bases.<sup>147</sup> This is a concern we also heard directly from Army personnel at Kinloss Barracks.<sup>148</sup> The MOD similarly stated that such speculation, when plans were not yet finalised, was “unhelpful and misleading”.<sup>149</sup>

### MOD base expansion in Scotland

47. While some bases in Scotland are closing or reducing in size, others are growing. Notable investment can be seen at the bases outlined below:

---

139 [Q27](#)

140 [Q6](#)

141 Ministry of Defence ([DIS0014](#)) para 52

142 Ministry of Defence ([DIS0014](#)) para 52

143 [Q194](#)

144 [“Kinloss Barracks closure speculation ‘unhelpful’”](#), The Northern Scot, 20 October 2021; [“Fears Fort George and Kinloss Barracks could be closed early as part of defence cuts”](#), The Courier, 18 October 2021; [“‘It would be a betrayal’: Shots fired as Kinloss Barracks faces latest closure threat”](#), The Press and Journal, 18 October 2021

145 [“Senior MPs to visit Moray military bases amid reported Kinloss Barracks closure threat”](#), The Press and Journal, 19 November 2021

146 HC Deb, 25 November 2021, Army Restructuring: Future Soldier, [col 484](#) & [col 491](#) [Commons Chamber]

147 [Q174](#)

148 Annex 2: Note from visit to Moray, 29 November 2021

149 [“Fears Fort George and Kinloss Barracks could be closed early as part of defence cuts”](#), The Courier, 18 October 2021

Table 4: MOD base expansion/investment in Scotland

Name and location	Investment	Personnel	Information about the base
HMNB Clyde (Argyll and Bute)	£1.6 billion investment over a 10-year period. <sup>150</sup>	Home to 7,000 personnel (civilian and military). Total personnel numbers will grow by 1,200 over the next decade (to 8,200 personnel). <sup>151</sup>	Royal Navy's main presence in Scotland, <sup>152</sup> base for the UK's nuclear deterrent <sup>153</sup> and home to UK's submarine service. <sup>154</sup>
RAF Lossiemouth (Moray)	£470 million infrastructure investment (£160m remaining to be spent as of March 2021). <sup>155</sup>	Home to 2,500 personnel (regulars, reservists, civil servants and contractors). <sup>156</sup> Ongoing investment will lead to an extra 550 service personnel and their families moving to the base. <sup>157</sup>	RAF's main operating base in Scotland <sup>158</sup> and home to the RAF's northern Quick Reaction Alert station. <sup>159</sup>
Leuchars Station (Fife)	£252 million investment. <sup>160</sup>	MOD committed to increase the number and range of units at the base. <sup>161</sup> Likely to benefit from the Future Soldier Review, which outlined that Scotland would become home to more battalions (going from six to seven units) and a greater proportion of the Army. <sup>162</sup>	Centre of the Army's operations in Scotland. <sup>163</sup> Home to units including the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards, the Royal Engineers and Military police units. <sup>164</sup>

In addition to the above, the MOD is investing around £90 million in Glenmallen (North Ammunition Jetty) and £60 million at DEO Edinburgh (Dreghorn), which are part of 40 active MOD projects in Scotland.<sup>165</sup>

### *Positive effects of MOD base expansion on local communities*

48. According to the RAF Families Federation, there are both negatives and positives of basing Armed Forces personnel and their families in larger sites, noting for example that “larger bases offer an opportunity of scale that can support a wider range of amenities”.<sup>166</sup> While they do have some concerns (detailed further below), Argyll and Bute, Fife,

150 Ministry of Defence (DIS0014) para 45

151 Ministry of Defence (DIS0014) para 18

152 Royal Navy, ‘HMNB Clyde’, accessed 20 January 2022

153 Ministry of Defence (DIS0014) para 7

154 Royal Navy, ‘HMNB Clyde’, accessed 20 January 2022

155 Ministry of Defence, *Defence in a competitive age*, March 2021, p 63

156 Ministry of Defence (DIS0014) para 26

157 Ministry of Defence, *Defence in a competitive age*, March 2021, p 63

158 Ministry of Defence (DIS0014) para 26

159 Royal Air Force, ‘RAF Lossiemouth’, accessed 20 January 2022

160 Ministry of Defence (DIS0014) para 45

161 Fife Council (DIS0009) p 3

162 HC Deb, 25 November 2021, Army Restructuring: Future Soldier, [col 484](#) [Commons Chamber]

163 ‘Leuchars to be Army base for Scotland’, BBC News, 24 February 2017

164 Royal Air Force, ‘Leuchars Station’, accessed 24 February 2022

165 Ministry of Defence (DIS0014) para 45

166 RAF Families Federation (DIS0017) p 1



Midlothian and Moray councils all welcome the significant economic benefits that MOD base expansion brings to their communities.<sup>167</sup> Rhona Gunn from Moray Council told us that she could not overstate the “importance and significance” of RAF Lossiemouth to the Moray economy.<sup>168</sup> Fergus Murray, from Argyll and Bute Council, noted also that base expansion “involves quite a lot of transfer of people into our area” which, given local population challenges, is beneficial for the area.<sup>169</sup>

### **Negative effects of MOD base expansion on local communities**

49. The RAF Families Federation told us that “rapid expansion can be demanding on housing, local school places and childcare”. It notes that these negatives may lead to more people living further from their units, which can “impact on their sense of inclusion in the service community”.<sup>170</sup> Fergus Murray notes that Argyll and Bute’s private rented market is “under pressure from people wanting to live close to the base” and that there is particular pressure on their senior school.<sup>171</sup> Similar concerns were raised by Rhona Gunn, who said Moray was feeling “significant pressure” in its private rented sector, and that this would “only expand” as further personnel arrive.<sup>172</sup>

50. Argyll and Bute Council says base increases can “place additional demands on local services such as schools and health services”.<sup>173</sup> During our visit to Moray, we heard from Armed Forces personnel that, while the MOD is increasing its spending in the area with the expansion of RAF Lossiemouth, increased spending does not seem to be going to local authorities or local healthcare providers to cover increasing need for things like maternity and dentistry care. We heard that this is causing a “lag” in the supply of local healthcare, and that NHS Scotland is struggling to accommodate the military growth.<sup>174</sup>

### **MOD engagement with local authorities on basing decisions**

51. While defence is reserved to Westminster, Scotland’s 32 local authorities are responsible for providing a range of public services including education, social care, housing and planning and cultural and leisure services.<sup>175</sup>

### **Redford Cavalry and Infantry Barracks (Edinburgh City Council)**

52. The MOD announced in 2016 that Redford Cavalry and Infantry Barracks would close in 2022.<sup>176</sup> In 2019, closure was delayed to 2025.<sup>177</sup> Then, in November 2021, the MOD announced that Redford’s closure would be delayed again, this time to 2029.<sup>178</sup> In January 2022 it was announced that parts of the Barracks would be retained by the MOD.<sup>179</sup>

167 Argyll and Bute Council ([DIS0013](#)) p 5–6 & [Q162](#); Fife Council ([DIS0009](#)) p 1 & [Q139](#); Midlothian Council ([DIS0011](#)) p 2–3; Moray Council [Q175](#)

168 [Q175](#)

169 [Q137](#)

170 RAF Families Federation ([DIS0017](#)) p 1

171 [Q141](#)

172 [Q143](#)

173 Argyll and Bute Council ([DIS0013](#)) p 5

174 Annex 2: Note from visit to Moray, 29 November 2021

175 Scottish Government, ‘[Local authorities: factsheet](#)’, published 8 May 2017

176 HM Government, ‘[Better defence estate strategy](#)’, updated 14 March 2019

177 HM Government, ‘[Defence Secretary announces five-year plan for key military sites](#)’, published 28 February 2019

178 ‘[“Transformation” of Army in Scotland planned](#)’, BBC News, 25 November 2021

179 HC Deb, 10 January 2022, [col 282](#) [Commons Chamber]

Edinburgh City Council had included the MOD's Redford site as an integral part of its Edinburgh 'City Plan 2030' (published in September 2021, before the base closure delay to 2029 was announced), involving planning proposals for mixed housing, a recreation park and active travel routes,<sup>180</sup> which would now need to be cancelled or delayed.

### **Glencorse Barracks (Midlothian Council)**

53. The MOD announced in 2016 that Glencorse Barracks would close in 2032.<sup>181</sup> Five years on from that announcement, the decision was reversed in November 2021.<sup>182</sup> Rather than being closed, Glencorse Barracks would now be expanded.<sup>183</sup> Midlothian Council says the 2016 announcement was "met with some trepidation", especially with regards to the impact this would have "on the service personnel, their families, and the staff at the Barracks, and the subsequent impact on the wider Midlothian economy and communities".<sup>184</sup> Midlothian Provost Smaill told us that the level of communication the Council received from the MOD during the five years when the Barracks was expected to close was minimal: "there was not a great deal of communication at all". He noted that, had the Council had more collaboration with the MOD, it "might have done some sort of impact assessment and taken into account multiplier effects when 552 generally quite good-quality jobs might disappear".<sup>185</sup>

### **MOD Caledonia (Fife Council)**

54. The MOD announced in 2016 that MOD Caledonia would close in 2022.<sup>186</sup> The Council's 'Fife Employment Land Strategy' will also be refreshed in 2022. Fife Council says it is "essential" that that the MOD engages with it on its plans for retention, disposal or any other arrangement for MOD Caledonia.<sup>187</sup> Councillor Rod Cavanagh told us that Fife Council sees a need for "more open and direct communication" from the MOD in relation to the closure of MOD Caledonia, because "there is a fair amount of obfuscation".<sup>188</sup> The MOD told us in March 2022 that they now expect the MOD Caledonia closure date to slip.<sup>189</sup>

### **HMNB Clyde (Argyll and Bute Council)**

55. Argyll and Bute Council says it currently "enjoys a good working relationship with the local MOD", and that this had been the result of entering into a beneficial formal partnership agreement with the MOD in 2017.<sup>190</sup> Fergus Murray noted that it had been a somewhat "difficult journey" for Argyll and Bute Council in terms of its relationship with the MOD prior to the partnership agreement in 2017.<sup>191</sup> Those involved in the partnership now meet regularly every quarter, with participants including the Commodore of the

180 Edinburgh City Council, [City Plan 2030](#) (September 2021), p 92, 150, 163, 168, 172

181 HM Government, '[Better defence estate strategy](#)', updated 14 March 2019

182 HC Deb, 25 November 2021, Army Restructuring: Future Soldier, [col 484](#) [Commons Chamber]

183 HC Deb, 10 January 2022, [col 282](#) [Commons Chamber]

184 Midlothian Council ([DIS0011](#)) p 1

185 [Q154](#)

186 HM Government, '[Better defence estate strategy](#)', updated 14 March 2019

187 Fife Council ([DIS0009](#)) p 3

188 [Q150](#)

189 [Q237](#)

190 Argyll and Bute Council ([DIS0013](#)) p 5

191 [Q163](#)

base, the Council’s Chief Executive and a working group of officers beneath that.<sup>192</sup> The group has four principles: (1) building economic success, (2) trying to grow the population, (3) delivering infrastructure that supports the sustainable growth of the base, and (4) ensuring that education, skills and training maximise opportunities for everyone in the community.<sup>193</sup>

56. Despite the benefits of the formal partnership arrangement, Argyll and Bute Council would still like to see “further input and support from the UK Government to help integrate the base further with the local community”.<sup>194</sup> It says that the UK Government needs to recognise the potential impacts of the base on local services, such as schools and health services, and provide additional support.<sup>195</sup> Fergus Murray also said it would be “very useful” if the MOD would commit resources to provide the Council with better data regarding personnel moves to the area, which they have waited for “for a number of years”.<sup>196</sup> The Council does however note the important positive contributions and interventions the UK Government has made in Argyll and Bute.<sup>197</sup>

### **RAF Lossiemouth (Moray Council)**

57. Rhona Gunn says Moray Council has “similar arrangements” to those in Argyll and Bute, with regular partnership meetings.<sup>198</sup> She added that, like Argyll and Bute, Moray Council would “welcome early engagement on expected transitions, particularly transitions at scale, to the area” to assist with its planning.<sup>199</sup>

### **MOD perspective on engagement with local authorities**

58. In relation to base closures Baroness Goldie told us that the MOD “will engage with the local communities and authorities; we will discuss what we can do to help the community to absorb the consequence of the closure”.<sup>200</sup> She accepted that when local authorities are planning ahead—for example thinking about housing and schools—there is a need for them to have security in the MOD’s plans for the disposal of its sites.<sup>201</sup> On hearing that the local authorities we had spoken to all desired increased engagement with the MOD, Baroness Goldie said she would “take that away” as she saw “no reason why the Department cannot improve in its engagement”.<sup>202</sup>

59. On base expansion, Baroness Goldie told us she appreciated the pressure it places on local authority provision of education, and on local health boards. She said the MOD works “closely with the local authorities and the relevant statutory bodies affected”, and that the MOD “will engage with them from the outset, with an assessment study on a site, and all the way through to the final construction and delivery of the project”.<sup>203</sup> Baroness Goldie

---

192 [Q152](#)

193 [Q162](#)

194 Argyll and Bute Council ([DIS0013](#)) p 6

195 Argyll and Bute Council ([DIS0013](#)) p 5

196 [Q165](#)

197 Argyll and Bute Council ([DIS0013](#)) p 5–6

198 [Q166](#)

199 [Q144](#)

200 [Q239](#)

201 [Q236](#)

202 [Q242](#)

203 [Q248](#)

agreed that the MOD's formal partnership agreement with Argyll and Bute Council had been "very successful" and she could see "absolutely no bar" to more of these agreements being struck.<sup>204</sup>

**60. MOD base closures, base expansions, speculation on base closures and reversals/ changes in basing decisions can all have major consequences for local communities in Scotland. All of the local authorities we heard from—regardless of whether they were facing MOD increases or decreases—desired greater collaboration with the MOD on basing decisions.**

***61. The formal partnership arrangement between the MOD and Argyll and Bute Council has been a great success and should be seen as a model for MOD interactions with Scottish local authorities. The MOD and relevant local authorities in Scotland should work together to increase the use of formal partnership arrangements.***

***62. The MOD should intensify its collaboration efforts with all Scottish local authorities facing base closures or base expansions, and engage with them at earlier stages in those processes. The MOD should also work with Scottish local authorities to jointly produce, and act on, impact assessments to help ease local challenges caused by MOD basing decisions. These should be produced within a suitable timeframe to inform and enable appropriate action ahead of base closures or major expansions.***

## 5 MOD collaboration with the Scottish Government

---

### Scottish Government perspective

63. While defence policy is reserved to Westminster, health and social care, education and training, local government, housing, some taxation and some welfare policies are devolved to the Scottish Government.<sup>205</sup> The Scottish Government argues “it is right” that it should be “consulted fully” on all defence matters that impact on Scotland. While the Scottish Government recognises that defence is fully reserved to the UK Government, it argues it has “a clear locus” in such decisions.<sup>206</sup> This is because the decisions “can have far-reaching implications for Armed Forces personnel based in Scotland and Scottish communities and industries”, which it has “an active role in supporting”. It says the UK Government is “failing to maximise opportunities through robust intergovernmental dialogue” that “would bring benefits to both governments”.<sup>207</sup>

64. In the Scottish Government’s view, if consultation was better, some of the consequences of decisions which can be “very damaging to local communities” could be avoided.<sup>208</sup> The Scottish Government told us that “for the most part, direct involvement has not yet been invited even where there is essential or desirable Scottish Government interest, particularly those that will stray into the devolved competence of this Government”. It says “the overall quality of engagement is unsatisfactory”,<sup>209</sup> taking the form of “being told what is going to happen after it has been decided”.<sup>210</sup> Keith Brown MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Veterans, Scottish Government, thought collaboration had got worse in recent years as there used to be “much more willingness to discuss” things, and a more constructive relationship than there is now.<sup>211</sup>

65. The Scottish Government does however highlight some areas of joint working that do work well, for example on resilience matters. The Scottish Government says it “received broadly timely and effective communication on the Civil Contingencies aspects of the Integrated Review and [was] in a position to provide input, although occasionally this had to be done at speed”. It says this level of communication was achieved “through longstanding existing relationships” with the Cabinet Office.<sup>212</sup>

### Engagement on MOD basing decisions

66. Keith Brown MSP told us that, given the impact of base closures on things like schools and leisure facilities, it makes “eminent sense that we work together”.<sup>213</sup> The Scottish Government says that if it “had been properly consulted on base closures”, it “could have added information about the impact on a community or the best way to ameliorate the

---

205 HM Government, [Devolution: Factsheet](#), May 2019, p 2

206 Scottish Government ([DIS0015](#)) p 1

207 [Q179](#)

208 [Q180](#)

209 Scottish Government ([DIS0015](#)) p 3

210 [Q196](#)

211 [Q196](#)

212 Scottish Government ([DIS0015](#)) p 3

213 [Q196](#)

effects of a base closure on communities”.<sup>214</sup> It says it would be able to provide useful information on such matters, for example the Scottish Government’s own economic impact assessments.<sup>215</sup>

67. In relation to base increases, Keith Brown MSP told us that “the UK Government have not been good at sharing with us their economic analysis”.<sup>216</sup> The Scottish Government argues that “when you have a devolved Government that is going to be providing health, transport, education and various other public services, which are of immediate relevance to people serving in the Armed Forces, it would make some sense to consult with it”.<sup>217</sup>

### **Structures for future engagement**

68. The Scottish Government says it “stands ready” to provide information to inform decisions made by the UK Government.<sup>218</sup> It asks that the UK Government “commits to meaningful engagement [...] through clear structures that facilitate discussion leading to productive outcomes”. It says this would “help build confidence between governments that decisions on defence will be made based on evidence and mutual cooperation”.<sup>219</sup> Keith Brown suggests that a formal engagement structure could be “a really collegiate approach”, for example if it invited people with relevant interests, such as local authorities, the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Economy and himself, as well as counterparts from Westminster and the other devolved administrations. He accepts there would need to be “a degree of confidentiality and trust”, and that that “would have to be built up over time”.<sup>220</sup>

### **UK Government perspective**

69. Baroness Goldie told us that she and her MOD ministerial colleagues “are committed to working closely and positively with the Scottish Government”.<sup>221</sup> She added that her officials were also “often in touch with their counterparts in the devolved governments”.<sup>222</sup> Baroness Goldie highlighted that her engagement with the Scottish Government was “fairly regular” pre-covid, usually taking the form of a phone call. She admitted however that, due to the pandemic, “there was inevitably a bit of disruption”, but she was now keen to resume previous engagement levels.<sup>223</sup>

70. In relation to the Scottish Government’s view that there is a deteriorating relationship on defence matters, Baroness Goldie said: “I have to hold my hands up and say, “Mea culpa,” because it is my job to engage”.<sup>224</sup> Baroness Goldie highlighted to us that she “would not want there to be any sense that the MOD is deliberately excluding the Scottish Government. That is not the issue at all; we would not do that.”<sup>225</sup>

---

214 [Q180](#)

215 [Q180](#) & [Q182](#)

216 [Q182](#)

217 [Q185](#)

218 Scottish Government ([DIS0015](#)) p 8

219 Scottish Government ([DIS0015](#)) p 3

220 [Q212](#)

221 [Q214](#)

222 [Q221](#)

223 [Q220](#)

224 [Q221](#)

225 [Q249](#)

### **Engagement on MOD basing decisions**

71. In relation to basing decisions, Baroness Goldie told us that the MOD is “very much aware” of pressures on education and healthcare systems, and works closely with local authorities and relevant statutory bodies affected.<sup>226</sup> She added, however, that, given the nature of what an MOD base is and where it is, most decision-making is taken by—and therefore engagement is with—local authorities and health boards, rather than necessarily with the Scottish Government.<sup>227</sup>

72. We asked the MOD if one of the difficulties of engaging with institutions in Scotland was that, in England, there is little need to engage much more widely than with relevant local authorities, whereas in Scotland, there is potentially a challenge as to how the MOD can incorporate the Scottish Government into an established engagement process that may work well elsewhere. David Brewer, Defence Infrastructure Organisation, said in response: “I guess it is a possibility, yes”. He added: “I think there is a potential that we have not really tuned our ways of working to reflect the fact that there is a different structure [in Scotland]”.<sup>228</sup>

**73. While defence is wholly reserved to the UK Government, MOD decisions on military basing nonetheless have significant implications for areas of devolved competence, such as child education, healthcare and housing.**

**74. MOD engagement processes on military basing decisions currently take place predominantly between the MOD and affected local authorities and health boards. While this approach might work in England, in Scotland an adapted approach is needed in order to recognise the different regulatory frameworks and the role of the Scottish Government in devolved policy areas. Nevertheless, we recognise that engagement with local authorities and health boards is also important due to their operational role.**

*75. The MOD should increase its efforts to collaborate with the Scottish Government on basing decisions. This would facilitate improved information sharing, in both directions—for example, in relation to future basing intentions and the likely impact on local communities.*

*76. The Scottish Government must commit to properly funding local authorities and health boards local to military bases to ensure there is sufficient provision in place. This was not the case for dental and maternity services for military families in Moray. Both of these efforts would benefit military communities who rely on locally provided services, and Scottish communities nearby to MOD bases who share the same local services.*

---

226 [Q248](#)

227 [Q248–Q249](#)

228 [Q246](#)

## 6 Movement of personnel in and out of Scotland

---

77. As covered in Chapter 4, there are a number of MOD base closures and base expansion projects scheduled for Scotland in the years ahead. These will usually involve military personnel—and their families—being redeployed around the UK. In addition to base closures and base expansion, there are also significant numbers of personnel moving between UK bases for other reasons. This is illustrated in the 2021 Future Soldier review which lists Army regiments, the various locations to which they are moving, and when.<sup>229</sup> We heard from Army personnel at Kinloss Barracks that it can take 10 years to embed units into a new location.<sup>230</sup> To illustrate the kinds of challenges military communities face when moving between England and Scotland (and vice versa), some impacts of personnel movement are outlined below.

### Child education

78. During our visit to Moray we heard that it can be difficult for the children of Armed Forces personnel to move between England and Scotland due to the differing education systems and learning styles. This can lead to pupils missing/skipping years, which can be disruptive.<sup>231</sup> Child education is an issue we also heard about from the RAF Families Federation, the Army Families Federation, SSAFA—The Armed Forces Charity and from Sarah Clewes from the Naval Families Federation, who said:

If people know the impact and they are prepared for that, and they understand that it is different, they can make informed choices, but without that information they do not feel empowered.<sup>232</sup>

Maria Lyle from the RAF Families Federation agreed with Sarah Clewes, telling us that managing challenges in relation to transitioning child education between UK nations was often down to information, and being clear with families what the differences are and what the implications could be.<sup>233</sup>

### Healthcare

79. Armed forces personnel we spoke to at RAF Lossiemouth and Kinloss Barracks expressed concerns about healthcare provision in Moray following increases in military personnel in the area.<sup>234</sup> Fife Councillor Rod Cavanagh also highlighted issues around the different medical services operating in England and Scotland, saying there was “a level of awareness that the MOD need to apprise themselves of to get full understanding of the potential pitfalls”.<sup>235</sup>

80. The 2022 *Duty and Care Armed Forces Family Mobility and Health Care Report* flags that a commonly reported issue among those who had experienced problems with

---

229 Army, [Future Soldier Guide](#), 25 November 2021, p 30–103

230 Annex 2: Note from visit to Moray, 29 November 2021

231 Annex 2: Note from visit to Moray, 29 November 2021

232 [Q53](#)

233 [Q63](#)

234 Annex 2: Note from visit to Moray, 29 November 2021

235 [Q167](#)



the primary care providers in Scotland was that practice staff “failed to understand and empathise with lived experiences of mobile military families”. Some people felt that declaring their status as a military family means “practice staff sometimes felt that they were trying to jump the queue or secure preferential treatment when in fact all they were trying to achieve was a seamless transfer of care and to ensure that they were not disadvantaged as a result of their mobility”. A further issue highlighted in the report was military personnel and their families experiencing difficulties sharing their medical records between NHS services in the two countries: a case study was flagged of a person moving from Scotland to England and their notes, for some reason, “never made it over the border”.<sup>236</sup>

### Spousal/partner employment

81. Maria Lyle and Collette Musgrave from the RAF and Army Family Federations raise spousal employment as a particular area that merits greater “leaning in from governments” to make it easier for service personnel and their families to move between England and Scotland.<sup>237</sup> Maria Lyle said “more direction and support on this would be welcomed” from governments.<sup>238</sup> Collette Musgrave said “there are some things that only Government can do, such as pieces of information and documents in support of spousal employment or changes in the way that student finance is allocated”.<sup>239</sup>

### Recognition of professional qualifications between UK nations

82. Collette Musgrave told us that the recognition of qualifications is the “top area of concern for Army families”.<sup>240</sup> According to the Army Families Federation some professions have different qualification requirements in each UK nation—for example teachers, lawyers, nurses and social workers—and this can result in spouses facing difficulties gaining or transferring employment when moving to and from Scotland.<sup>241</sup> Collette Musgrave highlighted that that “dual incomes are required almost wherever you are in the UK” so this topic “remains a real source of frustration”.<sup>242</sup>

83. Army families (in particular) are “used to moving around frequently so they tend to have jobs such as teaching or nursing where they have qualifications that they feel should be easily and fairly quickly transferrable into areas of need”. Collette Musgrave says there is “frustration when it becomes apparent that that is not the case”.<sup>243</sup> Sir Andrew Gregory raised in addition that there are also different ways of establishing the validity of qualifications between England and Scotland.<sup>244</sup> The Army Families Federation would welcome greater collaboration between the UK and Scotland on the validity of professional qualifications between nations.<sup>245</sup>

---

236 Armed Forces Family Federations, [Duty and Care: Armed Forces Family Mobility and Health Care Report](#) (February 2022), p 30

237 [Q50](#)

238 [Q50](#)

239 [Q51](#)

240 [Q66](#)

241 Army Families Federation ([DIS0016](#)) para 4

242 [Q66](#)

243 [Q66](#)

244 [Q54](#)

245 Army Families Federation ([DIS0016](#)) para 6

84. Keith Brown MSP notes that the recognition of teaching qualifications in Scotland is “not within the gift of the Scottish Government”, but that teachers from other parts of the UK “would be more than gratefully received in Scottish schools”, and they “want to try to do more in relation to that”.<sup>246</sup> Mr Brown thinks the “MOD could be more proactive” in this area too, for example by providing information about “the different ways of registering with the General Teaching Council for Scotland”, noting that the Scottish Government would be happy to work with the MOD on that.<sup>247</sup>

85. Baroness Goldie was “not aware” of the recognition of professional qualifications being a barrier to Armed Forces families moving between England and Scotland. In her view, taking teaching as an example, while individuals may need to satisfy some additional criteria, “if you have been teaching in Scotland and you want to move to England, there should not be some insuperable barrier”.<sup>248</sup> Baroness Goldie did see the value that military partners bring, noting “there was probably something better [the MOD] could do” when trying to match up skilled military partners with appropriate organisations, and agreed to see how that piece of work was progressing.<sup>249</sup>

## Income tax

86. Scotland has different income tax rates to England. Broadly speaking this means that lower earners pay slightly less while middle and higher earners pay more.<sup>250</sup> For Armed Forces personnel this means that those who pay income tax in Scotland and earn around £28,000 or more need to pay a higher rate of income tax in Scotland than they would if they were posted to other parts of the UK. The MOD said in 2020 that this affects more than 7,000 personnel in Scotland. To ensure that Armed Forces personnel “are treated equally and fairly wherever they are based”, the MOD makes an annual payment to those affected to counteract the higher rate of income tax. In 2020 the average payment across the 7,000 personnel was £850.<sup>251</sup>

87. The Army Families Federation notes however that while the MOD has introduced an allowance to address the income tax differences for service personnel, this “does not apply to spouses/partners”. It flags that “this this is not widely understood, and can prompt frustration”.<sup>252</sup>

## Information

88. Although it notes that the provision of information “has improved in recent years”, the RAF Families Federation highlights the importance of the quality of information available to personnel and families when moving between England and Scotland.<sup>253</sup> Fife Councillor Rod Cavanagh also believed this “absolutely” needed attention so that everyone is “fully prepared”.<sup>254</sup> The Army Families Federation says signposting to location-specific

---

246 [Q199](#)

247 [Q201](#)

248 [Q254](#)

249 [Q221](#)

250 “Military personnel based in Scotland compensated for tax rises”, BBC News, 19 July 2018

251 HM Government, ‘[Permanent protection from higher tax for military personnel in Scotland](#)’, published 9 July 2020

252 Army Families Federation ([DIS0016](#)) para 4

253 RAF Families Federation ([DIS0017](#)) p 2

254 [Q168](#)

information is an MOD responsibility.<sup>255</sup> Rhona Gunn from Moray Council noted that she would ask that both the UK and Scottish governments to “liaise on their policy approaches” as “there are distinctions that staff moving from England to Scotland can find quite challenging”.<sup>256</sup>

89. The Scottish Government says, if it can do anything to eliminate any disadvantage Armed Forces personnel or their families face when moving around the UK because of their service, it is “more than happy and keen to work with the MOD” on those issues.<sup>257</sup> Baroness Goldie said the quality of information provided was “important” as people are often accustomed to particular structures of service provision and may find, in moving to Scotland, that all of that is different, so “it is vital that we as the MOD understand that and have arrangements in place to address it”, which she thought they did.<sup>258</sup>

90. The RAF Families Federation notes that the provision of information has been “much aided” by the ‘Welcome to Scotland’ guide produced by the Scottish Government. The Federation highlights that another good practice example is recent work done by RAF Lossiemouth to engage with a large group of personnel and families at a Lincolnshire-based squadron due to move to Lossiemouth, where local representatives from education, health and the local council visited Lincolnshire to talk to families; this could be of benefit to other military personnel before redeployment. A specific area of development suggested by the RAF Families Federation is Scottish MOD bases having career managers and a chain of command who routinely—and as standard practice—direct personnel and families to the ‘Welcome to Scotland’ website and the service Family Federations when they are first posted to Scotland.<sup>259</sup>

**91. While improvements have been made in this area—for example the Scottish Government’s ‘Welcome to Scotland’ guide—there is scope for the MOD to be more proactive in the information it routinely shares with Armed Forces personnel and their families when they move to bases in Scotland, and from Scotland.**

*92. The MOD should conduct a review of the formats and quality of information it proactively and routinely shares with all Armed Forces personnel and their families when they move to bases in Scotland, and from Scotland. The Scottish Government should also review their own information to make the transition for military families moving to Scotland easier. Particular focus should be given to the provision of clear information in relation to the implications of the differing child education, healthcare, tax and professional qualifications systems between UK nations. As part of these reviews, the MOD should ensure that ‘best practice’ is shared between Services and the MOD and Scottish Government should ensure that details of the three service Family Federations and SSAFA are proactively and routinely signposted.*

*93. The UK Government should accelerate work with relevant responsible bodies across the UK to reduce barriers that military spouses and partners face when attempting to transfer their professional qualifications—for example, teaching qualifications—*

---

255 Army Families Federation ([DIS0016](#)) para 5

256 [Q144](#)

257 [Q202](#)

258 [Q251](#)

259 RAF Families Federation ([DIS0017](#)) p 2

*between UK nations. In line with the Armed Forces Covenant, military spouses and partners should not be disadvantaged in their employment by virtue of their association with the Armed Forces.*

94. *We welcome the MOD's annual payment to 7,000 Armed Forces personnel in Scotland. However, the Scottish Government should consider an exemption from the extra income tax in Scotland, and for the spouses of Armed Forces personnel.*

# Conclusions and recommendations

---

## The MOD in Scotland

1. Scotland is experiencing a new era of confidence and investment in the defence sector. We welcome the MOD's clear commitment to Scotland, shown, for example, by making it home to the UK's submarine service, the new fleets of P8 Maritime Patrol and E-7 Wedgetail aircraft and that Scotland will host a greater proportion of the Army, with an increase in the number of battalions, as outlined in the 2021 Future Soldier review. We also welcome the MOD's significant investment in Scotland, in particular in Argyll & Bute and Moray, and the economic benefits this brings to local communities. (Paragraph 19)
2. We welcome the increased military capabilities the MOD is gaining in Scotland, especially in light of ongoing increases in Russian aggression, and the importance that Scotland's military capabilities play in strengthening the UK's international alliances, such as NATO. (Paragraph 20)
3. We note that the 2014 commitment to increase the number of Regular Armed Forces personnel has been superseded by changing strategic priorities. We welcome the 2021 Future Soldier programme to increase the number of battalions in Scotland and that Scotland will host a greater proportion of the Army in the future. (Paragraph 21)

## Defence industry in Scotland

4. We welcome the MOD's high level of spending with Scottish industry (around 10% of total spending with industry) but are concerned that this spending is very heavily skewed towards major international prime contractors rather than SMEs. This is illustrated by the fact that only 2.5% of the MOD's spending with UK SMEs goes to Scottish businesses. While this figure is higher than the MOD's spending with SMEs in the North West of England, Wales and Northern Ireland, it is far lower than both the UK average and Scotland's population share of the UK. Scottish SMEs have the skills and ambition to match any other part of the UK yet are losing out. While the MOD's SME Action Plan is timely and relevant, it is unlikely to tackle engrained hesitancy within the defence sector towards working with Scottish SMEs. (Paragraph 32)
5. *The MOD should, with the assistance of the Scotland Office, initiate a culture change process within its own ranks, and in its prime contractors, that addresses perceptions of engrained hesitancy towards working with SMEs in Scotland, with a view to increasing the proportion of SME spending north of the border to at least 8% by the end of the MOD SME Action Plan implementation period.* (Paragraph 33)
6. The military shipbuilding sector provides an important pipeline of highly skilled jobs for Scottish industry. While current Royal Navy Type 26 and Type 31 orders are very welcome, the future of the sector is dependent on favourable UK Government policies and a regular 'drumbeat' of orders, which we will explore further in our inquiry into military shipbuilding. (Paragraph 39)

7. *The UK Government should clarify definitively its position on whether current policies potentially allow for Royal Navy warships (such as destroyers, frigates and fleet solid support ships) to be procured and/or built overseas. If this potential exists—which could have a dramatic impact on shipbuilding in Scotland—the MOD should indicate the likelihood of any of its warships being procured or built overseas in the next 30 years. (Paragraph 40)*

### MOD base closures and base expansion

8. MOD base closures, base expansions, speculation on base closures and reversals/changes in basing decisions can all have major consequences for local communities in Scotland. All of the local authorities we heard from—regardless of whether they were facing MOD increases or decreases—desired greater collaboration with the MOD on basing decisions. (Paragraph 60)
9. *The formal partnership arrangement between the MOD and Argyll and Bute Council has been a great success and should be seen as a model for MOD interactions with Scottish local authorities. The MOD and relevant local authorities in Scotland should work together to increase the use of formal partnership arrangements. (Paragraph 61)*
10. *The MOD should intensify its collaboration efforts with all Scottish local authorities facing base closures or base expansions, and engage with them at earlier stages in those processes. The MOD should also work with Scottish local authorities to jointly produce, and act on, impact assessments to help ease local challenges caused by MOD basing decisions. These should be produced within a suitable timeframe to inform and enable appropriate action ahead of base closures or major expansions. (Paragraph 62)*

### MOD collaboration with the Scottish Government

11. While defence is wholly reserved to the UK Government, MOD decisions on military basing nonetheless have significant implications for areas of devolved competence, such as child education, healthcare and housing. (Paragraph 73)
12. MOD engagement processes on military basing decisions currently take place predominantly between the MOD and affected local authorities and health boards. While this approach might work in England, in Scotland an adapted approach is needed in order to recognise the different regulatory frameworks and the role of the Scottish Government in devolved policy areas. Nevertheless, we recognise that engagement with local authorities and health boards is also important due to their operational role. (Paragraph 74)
13. *The MOD should increase its efforts to collaborate with the Scottish Government on basing decisions. This would facilitate improved information sharing, in both directions—for example, in relation to future basing intentions and the likely impact on local communities. (Paragraph 75)*
14. *The Scottish Government must commit to properly funding local authorities and health boards local to military bases to ensure there is sufficient provision in place. This was not the case for dental and maternity services for military families in Moray.*

*Both of these efforts would benefit military communities who rely on locally provided services, and Scottish communities nearby to MOD bases who share the same local services. (Paragraph 76)*

### Movement of personnel in and out of Scotland

15. While improvements have been made in this area—for example the Scottish Government’s ‘Welcome to Scotland’ guide—there is scope for the MOD to be more proactive in the information it routinely shares with Armed Forces personnel and their families when they move to bases in Scotland, and from Scotland. (Paragraph 91)
16. *The MOD should conduct a review of the formats and quality of information it proactively and routinely shares with all Armed Forces personnel and their families when they move to bases in Scotland, and from Scotland. The Scottish Government should also review their own information to make the transition for military families moving to Scotland easier. Particular focus should be given to the provision of clear information in relation to the implications of the differing child education, healthcare, tax and professional qualifications systems between UK nations. As part of these reviews, the MOD should ensure that ‘best practice’ is shared between Services and the MOD and Scottish Government should ensure that details of the three service Family Federations and SSAFA are proactively and routinely signposted. (Paragraph 92)*
17. *The UK Government should accelerate work with relevant responsible bodies across the UK to reduce barriers that military spouses and partners face when attempting to transfer their professional qualifications—for example, teaching qualifications—between UK nations. In line with the Armed Forces Covenant, military spouses and partners should not be disadvantaged in their employment by virtue of their association with the Armed Forces. (Paragraph 93)*
18. *We welcome the MOD’s annual payment to 7,000 Armed Forces personnel in Scotland. However, the Scottish Government should consider an exemption from the extra income tax in Scotland, and for the spouses of Armed Forces personnel. (Paragraph 94)*

## Annex 1: Defence reviews: impacts on Scotland

There have been a number of UK Government defence reviews in recent years, each of which have altered the MOD's priorities and have implications for Scotland. Headlines for Scotland from recent UK Government defence reviews are detailed below:

**Table 5: UK defence reviews and their implications for Scotland**

Date	Title	Purpose	Implications for Scotland
23 November 2015	<a href="#">Strategic Defence and Security Review</a>	Sets out the Government's National Security Strategy for the coming five years, and how it will be implemented. <sup>260</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Commitment to continue to invest 2% of GDP on defence (as per the NATO target)</li> <li>- Reduction in the UK defence estate by 30% by 2040</li> <li>- Commitment to maintain the size of the regular UK Armed Forces (and to not reduce the Army to below 82,000, and increase the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force by 700 personnel)</li> <li>- Reduction in the number of UK MoD civilians by almost 30% to 41,000</li> <li>- Commitment to maintain the UK's nuclear deterrent</li> <li>- Purchase of nine Boeing P8 Maritime Patrol Aircraft, based in Scotland, to protect the nuclear deterrent</li> </ul>

<sup>260</sup> HM Government, ['National Security Strategy and Strategic Defence and Security Review 2015'](#), published 23 November 2015



Date	Title	Purpose	Implications for Scotland
7 November 2016	<a href="#">A Better Defence Estate Strategy</a>	Long-term plan to reduce the defence built estate by 30%. <sup>261</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reduction of the defence estate in Scotland by 20%.<sup>262</sup></li> <li>- Commitment to release land for 55,000 homes across the UK</li> <li>- Consolidation of the RAF's footprint in Scotland, primarily at RAF Lossiemouth</li> <li>- Consolidation of all UK submarines at HMNB Clyde</li> <li>- Increase of at least one Typhoon Squadron and P8A-Poseidon Maritime Patrol Aircraft at RAF Lossiemouth</li> <li>- Disposal of Craigiehall Barracks in 2018</li> <li>- Disposal of Royal Marines Condor Airfield in 2020<sup>263</sup></li> <li>- Disposal of Meadowforth Barracks in 2022</li> <li>- Disposal of Forthside Stirling in 2022</li> <li>- Disposal of Redford Cavalry and Infantry Barracks in 2022<sup>264</sup></li> <li>- Disposal of MOD Caledonia in 2022</li> <li>- Disposal of Fort George in 2032</li> <li>- Disposal of Glencorse Barracks in 2032<sup>265</sup></li> </ul>
6 September 2017	<a href="#">National Shipbuilding Strategy</a>	Outlines the UK's Government's ambitions for the military shipbuilding sector. <sup>266</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- BAE (Govan &amp; Scotstoun) assured Type 26 construction to mid-2030s (contract for three hulls placed)</li> <li>- Babcock (Rosyth) contracted for five Type 31s, with construction to mid-2020s</li> <li>- Programmes are still subject to review at SDSR and Government major projects portfolio review</li> </ul>

261 HM Government, '[Better defence estate strategy](#)', updated 14 March 2019

262 "[Eight military bases in Scotland to close](#)", BBC News, 7 November 2016

263 Decision later reversed by as per 28 February 2019 Defence Optimisation Programme update

264 Later delayed until 2025 as per 28 February 2019 Defence Optimisation Programme update, then delayed again until 2029 following the 25 November 2021 Future Soldier review

265 Decision later reversed as per statement by the Defence Secretary on 25 November 2021

266 HM Government, '[National Shipbuilding Strategy](#)', published 6 September 2017

Date	Title	Purpose	Implications for Scotland
28 February 2019	<a href="#">Defence Optimisation Programme update</a>	Update on 33 military sites across the UK. <sup>267</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Disposal of Redford Cavalry and Infantry Barracks delayed from 2022 to 2025<sup>268</sup></li> <li>- Disposal of Royal Marines Condor Airfield cancelled</li> </ul>
16 March 2021	<a href="#">Integrated Review</a>	Describes the Government's vision for the UK's role in the world over the next decade and the action it will take to 2025. <sup>269</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- £24bn increase in cash terms to UK defence spending over four years, including at least £6.6bn of R&amp;D</li> <li>- Development of a commercial launch capability from the UK, launching British satellites from Scotland by 2022 as part of the UK Space Agency's programme to enable a UK-wide market for spaceflight services</li> <li>- Renewal of the UK's nuclear deterrent by replacing the Vanguard Class submarines with four new Dreadnought Class submarines</li> <li>- Development of the next generation of naval vessels, including Type 32 frigates and Fleet Solid Support ships, eight Type 26 and five Type 31 frigates</li> </ul>

267 HM Government, ['Defence Secretary announces five-year plan for key military sites'](#), published 28 February 2019

268 Later delayed again until 2029 following the 25 November 2021 Future Soldier review

269 HM Government, ['The Integrated Review 2021'](#), published 16 March 2021

Date	Title	Purpose	Implications for Scotland
22 March 2021	<a href="#">Defence in a Competitive Age</a>	Describes defence's contribution to the Integrated Review. <sup>270</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- UK-wide Army restructuring with a reduction in regular personnel from 76,000 to 72,500 by 2025 (reversing the November 2015 commitment not to reduce the Army to below 82,000)</li> <li>- Commitment to "reinforce" spending on shipbuilding in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland leading to a "renaissance in British shipbuilding"</li> <li>- Shipbuilding investment to double over the life of the Parliament, rising to over £1.7 billion a year</li> <li>- Scotstoun, Rosyth and Govan shipyards will benefit from the shipbuilding pipeline. Babcock in Rosyth will be the principal assembly site for Type 31 frigates, BAE Systems' Glasgow yards are working on Type 26 ships and Scottish yards will likely benefit from the new Type 32 ship</li> <li>- Infrastructure improvements at HMNB Clyde estimated to be worth £1.5bn over ten years</li> <li>- MOD still to spend approximately £160m of £470m on infrastructure improvements at RAF Lossiemouth (leading to an extra 550 service personnel and their families moving to the base)</li> <li>- Target that by 2030 the UK to have the ability to monitor, protect and defend our interests in and through space</li> </ul>
23 March 2021	<a href="#">Defence and Security Industrial Strategy</a>	Provides a framework for Government to work with industry to achieve the ambitions set out in the Integrated Review and Defence in a competitive age. <sup>271</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Orders for Offshore Patrol Vessels and Type 26 and Type 31 frigates will sustain thousands of jobs in Scottish shipyards and the wider supply chain into the 2030s</li> <li>- The number of people employed at HMNB Clyde is due to rise to 8,200 by 2022</li> <li>- Through the Defence Suppliers Forum, support for industry and Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) by piloting a network of new Regional Defence and Security Clusters (RDSCs), including in Scotland, allowing industry and Government to share ideas</li> </ul>

270 HM Government, ['Defence in a Competitive Age'](#), updated 30 July 2021

271 HM Government, ['Defence and Security Industrial Strategy'](#), updated 26 March 2021

Date	Title	Purpose	Implications for Scotland
25 November 2021	<a href="#">Future Soldier: Transforming the British Army</a>	Consideration of what the future Army will look like. <sup>272</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The proportion of the Army based in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland will be sustained or increased</li> <li>- The regular Army military workforce will be reduced by 40%</li> <li>- The overall Army workforce will reduce by around 10,000 personnel across the UK by 2025</li> <li>- Estimated that there will be £355m investment in the army estate in Scotland<sup>273</sup></li> <li>- Scotland will be home to more battalions—going from six to seven units—and a greater proportion of the Army than today<sup>274</sup></li> <li>- Leuchars Station will be expanded with additional investment<sup>275</sup></li> <li>- The Royal Engineers will remain at Kinloss Barracks<sup>276</sup></li> <li>- The closure of Redford Barracks delayed until 2029<sup>277</sup></li> <li>- Announcements of various troop moves and restructures. For example, the 3rd Battalion of the Royal Regiment of Scotland (the Black Watch) to be restructured by March 2025 and move from Fort George to Leuchars in 2029</li> </ul>
1 February 2022	<a href="#">Defence Space Strategy</a>	Outlines how defence will protect the UK's national interests in space in an era of ever-growing threats. <sup>278</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Restated previous commitment to invest more than £5 billion over the next ten years to recapitalise and enhance satellite communications capabilities</li> <li>- Announced further £1.4 billion in space capacity investment over the next 10 years</li> <li>- UK will not develop its own launch system but will support the UK Space Agency in the advancement of UK-based space launch activities, both vertical and horizontal, and work with allies and partners to assure access to space</li> </ul>

272 HM Government, 'Future Soldier: Transforming the British Army', published 25 November 2021

273 "'Transformation' of Army in Scotland planned", BBC News, 25 November 2021

274 HC Deb, 25 November 2021, Army Restructuring: Future Soldier, [col 484](#) [Commons Chamber]

275 HC Deb, 25 November 2021, Army Restructuring: Future Soldier, [col 491](#) [Commons Chamber]

276 HC Deb, 25 November 2021, Army Restructuring: Future Soldier, [col 491](#) [Commons Chamber]

277 "'Transformation' of Army in Scotland planned", BBC News, 25 November 2021

278 HM Government, 'UK cutting-edge space defence backed by £1.4 billion', published 1 February 2022

Date	Title	Purpose	Implications for Scotland
10 March 2022	<a href="#">National Shipbuilding Strategy refresh</a>	Outlines delivery of a pipeline of more than 150 new naval and civil vessels for the UK Government and Devolved Administrations over the next 30 years. <sup>279</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Outlines a 30-year UK shipbuilding pipeline</li> <li>- Reconfirms commitment to a case-by-case procurement approach for all Royal Navy vessels</li> <li>- National Shipbuilding Office to open a Scottish hub in Edinburgh</li> <li>- Commitment to build up to five new Type 32 frigates</li> <li>- Confirmation that the new batch of three Fleet Solid Support ships will be integrated in the UK, and the National Flagship built in the UK</li> <li>- Commitment to fund a cross-sectoral analysis of maritime enterprise in Scotland</li> </ul>

279 HM Government, [‘Refresh to the National Shipbuilding Strategy’](#), published 10 March 2022

## Annex 2: Note from Committee visit to Moray, 29 November 2021

---

### *Visit participants*

Pete Wishart MP (Chair), Deidre Brock MP, Wendy Chamberlain MP, Sally-Ann Hart MP and Douglas Ross MP.

### *Kinloss Barracks*

Kinloss Barracks is an MOD Army base located near the village of Kinloss. Until 2012 it was a Royal Air Force (RAF) station, RAF Kinloss. It is now home to 39 Engineer Regiment and its 800 personnel.<sup>280</sup> The regiment, active from 1977, provides engineering and technical support to both the British Army and the Royal Air Force.<sup>281</sup>

The Committee met with military personnel including Brigadier Ben Wrench (CO 51st Infantry Brigade), Lieutenant Colonel J Monaghan (CO 39 Engineer Regiment) and Major Jo Charlton (39 Engineer Regiment) and discussed that:

- Previously RAF Kinloss, 39 Engineer Regiment (Air Support) of the Royal Engineers moved from Waterbeach Barracks near Cambridge to Kinloss in July 2012;
- Base has a £24.4 million annual income;
- 90% of base spending is on salaries;
- 35–40% of personnel on the base are accompanied by their families;
- Many of the facilities at Kinloss are historic RAF facilities and are not needed or used by the Army;
- Base has earmarked a location for solar panels which will produce energy for one-third of the base's power needs, in effort to reach net zero;
- There are 246 military properties in Kinloss, 47 in Elgin;
- The firm base priorities are: education, spousal employment and maternity & paediatric access;
- There is a lag in the local supply of maternity care and NHS Scotland dentistry provision to accommodate growth;
- Runway has been used for community events such as motor sports and motorcycle training;
- Base carries out lots of community engagement, with big plans for 2022. Activities are focused on promoting STEM learning;

---

280 39 Engineer Regiment, '[Kinloss Barracks](#)', accessed 5 May 2022

281 Army, '[39 Engineer Regiment](#)', accessed 5 May 2022

- Media stories about base closures can cause anxiety and panic amongst personnel;
- Base closures can cause local schools to close and communities to lose employment;
- It takes 10 years to embed a unit in a new location;
- The MOD is increasing spending in Moray but increased spending is not going to local authorities or local healthcare/maternity facilities; and
- The runway was recently resurfaced but is rarely used (it is used as a backup for RAF Lossiemouth).

### *RAF Lossiemouth*

RAF Lossiemouth is one of two RAF Quick Reaction Alert (QRA) stations which protect UK airspace. In general terms, RAF Lossiemouth protects the UK's northern airspace, and RAF Coningsby protects the south.<sup>282</sup> Further information on RAF Lossiemouth is provided in Chapter 2.

The Committee met with the Head Communications & Engagement at RAF Lossiemouth and discussed that:

- There are 1,200 military children in Moray;
- Only four out of 54 local schools in Moray have no MOD children;
- It can be hard for children to move schools due to differing learning styles. Pupils can also mis/skip years when moving between England and Scotland due to the differing education systems;
- Armed forces families may not meet the requirement for Scottish Pupil Equity Funding. Headteachers must apply for this, and argue the case for additional funding; no automatic additional funding is provided for children in Scotland with parents in the Armed Forces;
- In England, the Service Pupil Premium (SPP) does not require an application. There is no automatic additional funding provided by the Scottish Government;
- There is no legal requirement for schools in Scotland to register that they have military children. Whereas in England, due to SPP, the Government will usually know;
- The MOD have asked the Scottish Government for additional funding. One of the justifications for the Scottish Government not providing additional funding is that they believe they fund a higher rate per pupil than the UK Government provide in England; and
- The MOD does not provide funding for additional tutoring for children.

The Committee met with military personnel including Station Commander Group Captain Christopher Layden, Wing Commander Sarah Brewin and Wing Commander Adam Freedman and discussed that:

- The base has supported the local community with power outages and catering as a result of losses from Storm Arwen. It has also made childcare facilities available;
- Recent years have seen a huge reduction in RAF numbers. Lossiemouth is the only remaining RAF base in Scotland, but it is a 'super base' with huge investment and a growing workforce;
- Only schools are a bigger local employer;
- Further capabilities and investment on the way to Lossiemouth include the E-7 Wedgetail aircraft, which is produced by Boeing, who are heavily integrated into Lossiemouth operations;
- Base provides NATO Air Policing services over large parts of northern Europe, supporting NATO allies such as Iceland;
- The base employs local contractors for building works, which are substantial. It also uses locally sourced materials for building works where possible;
- People who join the RAF tend to stay for longer (than the Army) in local communities and put down roots, bringing families, skills and money with them;
- Defence reviews can cause a level of uncertainty amongst the senior members of the Armed forces, but not the junior ranks;
- The RAF does not have local squadrons like the Army, so local recruitment is not something that is targeted. They don't have a problem with attracting people;
- Lossiemouth hosts P6 school children for a 'STEM in the workplace' event and partners with local schools;
- Base has a 24hr on-site mountain rescue team;
- It can be difficult for the RAF to encourage personal to move up to Lossiemouth, especially if they have partners with jobs in a fixed location, but once they are based there, they tend to like it and be willing to plant roots and make it a long-term base;
- Biggest local concern about the base was light pollution (noise pollution isn't the issue it used to be), followed by short-term stays of personnel, and some indications that local people can be uncomfortable about the pay rates for the RAF personnel, which are relatively good in comparison to alternative jobs in Moray;
- 1 (F) Squadron took part in international defence engagement exercise 'Blue Flag' with Israel in October 2021, where knowledge and combat experience were shared; and



- When asked what 1 (F) Squadron needed, we were told they needed more typhoons, more pilots and better quality of life for staff.

# Formal minutes

---

**Monday 13 June 2022**

## **Members present**

Pete Wishart, in the Chair

Andrew Bowie

Deidre Brock

Wendy Chamberlain

Sally-Ann Hart

John Lamont

Douglas Ross

Draft Report (*Defence in Scotland: military landscape*), proposed by the Chair, brought up and read.

*Ordered*, That the draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 94 read and agreed to.

Annexes and Summary agreed to.

*Resolved*, That the Report be the First Report of the Committee to the House.

*Ordered*, That the Chair make the Report to the House.

*Ordered*, That embargoed copies of the Report be made available, in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 134.

## **Adjournment**

Adjourned till Monday 20 June 2022 at 2.30 p.m.

## Witnesses

The following witnesses gave evidence. Transcripts can be viewed on the [inquiry publications page](#) of the Committee's website.

### Monday 31 January 2022

**Professor Trevor Taylor**, Director of the Defence, Industries and Society Programme, Royal United Services Institute; **Professor Phillips O'Brien**, Professor of Strategic Studies, University of St Andrews [Q1-37](#)

**Maria Lyle**, Director, Royal Air Force Families Federation; **Lieutenant General (ret'd) Sir Andrew Gregory KBE CB DL**, Chief Executive, SSAFA, the Armed Forces charity; **Collette Musgrave**, Chief Executive, Army Families Federation; **Sarah Clewes**, Chief Executive Officer, Naval Families Federation [Q38-66](#)

### Monday 21 February 2022

**John Howie MBE**, Chief Corporate Affairs Officer, Babcock; **Oliver Waghorn**, Head of Government Relations, BAE Systems; **Stephen McCann**, Managing Director, Optronics, Thales [Q67-105](#)

**Kevin Craven**, Chief Executive Officer, ADS Group; **Dr Hina Khan**, Senior Project Manager, Spire Global UK Limited; **Dr Suzanne Costello**, Chief Operating Officer, MCS Limited; **Jamie Mincher**, Chief Executive Officer, Glenalmond Group [Q106-134](#)

### Monday 7 March 2022

**Councillor Rod Cavanagh**, Armed Forces and Veterans Community Champion, Fife Council; **Provost Peter Smaill**, Midlothian Councillor and Her Majesty's Forces Champion, Midlothian Council; **Fergus Murray**, Head of Economic Development, Argyll and Bute Council; **Rhona Gunn**, Depute Chief Exec (Economy, Environment and Finance), Moray Council [Q135-178](#)

**Keith Brown MSP**, Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Veterans, Scottish Government; **Kevin McGowan**, Head of Defence Policy Unit, Scottish Government; **Rory McGregor**, Manufacturing Policy Advisor, Scottish Government [Q179-212](#)

### Monday 21 March 2022

**The Baroness Goldie DL**, Minister of State, Ministry of Defence; **Damian Parmenter CBE**, Director General Strategy and International, Ministry of Defence; **Sherin Aminossehe**, Director of Infrastructure, Ministry of Defence; **David Brewer**, Chief Operating Officer, Defence Infrastructure Organisation, Ministry of Defence [Q213-256](#)

## Published written evidence

The following written evidence was received and can be viewed on the [inquiry publications page](#) of the Committee's website.<sup>283</sup>

DIS numbers are generated by the evidence processing system and so may not be complete.

- 1 ADS Group Ltd ([DIS0024](#))
- 2 ADS Group Ltd ([DIS0018](#))
- 3 ADS Group Ltd ([DIS0002](#))
- 4 Argyll and Bute Council ([DIS0013](#))
- 5 Army Families Federation ([DIS0016](#))
- 6 BAE Systems plc ([DIS0030](#))
- 7 BAE Systems plc ([DIS0007](#))
- 8 Babcock International Group ([DIS0029](#))
- 9 Babcock International Group ([DIS0008](#))
- 10 Boeing ([DIS0019](#))
- 11 Fife Council ([DIS0009](#))
- 12 Forces in Mind Trust ([DIS0001](#))
- 13 Hartley, Professor Keith ([DIS0021](#))
- 14 Holmes, Professor James (J. C. Wylie Chair of Maritime Strategy, US Naval War College) ([DIS0020](#))
- 15 Louth, Professor John ([DIS0028](#))
- 16 Midlothian Council ([DIS0011](#))
- 17 Ministry of Defence ([DIS0034](#))
- 18 Ministry of Defence ([DIS0031](#))
- 19 Ministry of Defence ([DIS0032](#))
- 20 Ministry of Defence ([DIS0014](#))
- 21 Mitchell, Mr Hamish (Air Traffic Controller, Employed by NATS Ltd (Commenting as a private individual and not as a NATS spokesperson)) ([DIS0006](#))
- 22 Patel, Jag ([DIS0023](#))
- 23 RAF Families Federation ([DIS0017](#))
- 24 SSAFA, the Armed Forces charity ([DIS0012](#))
- 25 Scottish Government ([DIS0026](#))
- 26 Scottish Government ([DIS0015](#))
- 27 Society of Maritime Industries ([DIS0027](#))
- 28 Taylor, Professor Trevor (Director of the Defence, Industries and Society Programme, Royal United Services Institute (RUSI)) ([DIS0010](#))
- 29 Taylor, Professor Trevor (Director of the Defence, Industries and Society Programme, Royal United Services Institute (RUSI)) ([DIS0033](#))

---

<sup>283</sup> Includes written evidence submitted to date in connection with the Committee's inquiry into military shipbuilding

- 30 Thales ([DIS0005](#))
- 31 The Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions (CSEU); Unite the Union; GMB Union; and Prospect ([DIS0025](#))
- 32 UK Defence Journal ([DIS0022](#))

## List of Reports from the Committee during the current Parliament

---

All publications from the Committee are available on the publications page of the Committee's website.

### Session 2022–23

Number	Title	Reference
1st Special Report	Immigration and Scotland: Government Response to the Committee's Fourth Report of Session 2017–19	HC 84
2nd Special Report	Airports in Scotland: Government Response to the Committee's Fifth Report of Session 2021–22	HC 303

### Session 2021–22

Number	Title	Reference
1st	Universities and Scotland	HC 54
2nd	Welfare policy in Scotland	HC 55
3rd	The UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Scotland	HC 52
4th	Renewable energy in Scotland	HC 51
5th	Airports in Scotland	HC 601
1st Special Report	Welfare policy in Scotland: UK and Scottish Government Responses to the Committee's Second Report	HC 790
2nd Special Report	The UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Scotland: Government Response to the Committee's Third Report	HC 791
3rd Special Report	Renewable energy in Scotland: Government Response to the Committee's Fourth Report	HC 901
4th Special Report	Universities and Scotland: Government Response to the Committee's First Report	HC 1252

### Session 2019–21

Number	Title	Reference
1st	Coronavirus and Scotland: Interim Report on Intergovernmental Working	HC 314
2nd	Coronavirus and Scotland	HC 895
1st Special Report	Problem drug use in Scotland: Government Response to the Committee's First Report of Session 2019	HC 698

<b>Number</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Reference</b>
2nd Special Report	Coronavirus and Scotland: Government Response to the Committee's First and Second Reports	HC 1118