



Army 2020

Standard Note: SN06396
Last updated: 26 July 2012
Author: Louisa Brooke-Holland and Tom Rutherford
Section: International Affairs and Defence

The Ministry of Defence announced a major re-structuring of the British Army in July 2012. It comes nearly two years after the publication of the 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) which outlined a vision of Future Force 2020.

Army 2020 is the Army's response to the SDSR's expectations of its capabilities; the need to reduce the regular army by 20,000 and accommodate cuts to the defence budget. The Army says the change "is as significant as any seen over the last fifty years." It envisages an Army of two elements: a Reaction Force and an Adaptable Force, supported by Force Troops; the integration of the Reserves into the Army Structure and a trained Reserves of 30,000, to be achieved by 2020.

To accommodate the reductions in the Regular army, 23 units are to be disbanded or amalgamated resulting in 17 fewer units overall. A redundancy scheme is already in place to manage the initial reductions announced in the SDSR. The Ministry of Defence says individuals in units to be cut are no more or less likely to be selected for redundancy.

The greater use and integration of the Reserves and the disbandment of a number of units and infantry battalions has drawn the most attention and criticism. The Army says this change is "as significant as any seen over the last fifty years."

The Government will publish a consultation document in autumn 2012 to discuss the relationship between the Reserves, the Government and employers. A Basing Review is also expected towards the end of the year.

This information is provided to Members of Parliament in support of their parliamentary duties and is not intended to address the specific circumstances of any particular individual. It should not be relied upon as being up to date; the law or policies may have changed since it was last updated; and it should not be relied upon as legal or professional advice or as a substitute for it. A suitably qualified professional should be consulted if specific advice or information is required.

This information is provided subject to [our general terms and conditions](#) which are available online or may be provided on request in hard copy. Authors are available to discuss the content of this briefing with Members and their staff, but not with the general public.

Contents

1	Summary	3
2	Army 2020: Why now?	4
	2.1 Army 2020: The review process	6
3	Army 2020: Key issues	7
	3.1 The New force structure	7
	3.2 Units to be disbanded/amalgamated	10
	3.3 Reduction in headcount	12
	The smallest army since 1850?	13
	Redundancy	13
	3.4 The criteria – why cut those units?	14
	3.5 What will happen to regimental titles?	18
	3.6 Single or multi-battalion regiments?	20
	3.7 Future Reserves – an integrated Army	20
	3.8 Future basing	25
	3.9 ‘How we Fight’	26
4	Reaction to the Army 2020 announcement	26
5	Previous restructures	28
	5.1 1990s: ‘Options for Change’ and ‘Frontline First’	29
	5.2 The Labour Government 1997 - 2010	31
	Appendix 1: Army 2020 Regular Regimental Structure	34
	Appendix 2: Infantry battalions by strength, April 2012	36

1 Summary

The Defence Secretary, Philip Hammond, announced a major restructuring of the British Army - *Army 2020* - on 5 July 2012. The Army will be divided into two distinct elements with different roles: A Reaction Force and an Adaptable Force. It involves the reduction of 20,000 regular army personnel; the disbandment or amalgamation of 23 units resulting in 17 fewer major units; the greater integration of the Reserve Force with the Regular Force and doubling the number of trained reservists. It is based on a future Army strength by of 120,000: 82,000 Regular and 30,000 Reserves, totalling 112,000, plus a further 8,000 in training.¹ This is all to be achieved by 2020.

Army 2020 is the Army's response to the Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR), published by the Government in October 2010 alongside the National Security Strategy (NSS), and to cuts to the defence budget. The SDSR laid out the commitments expected of the UK Armed Forces and the Army and at the time envisaged a reduction of 7,000 personnel, reducing the number of Regular soldiers from around 102,000 to 95,000.

The Government also commissioned an independent report into the Reserve Forces which was published in July 2011. It recommended greater integration of the Reserves into the Army structure. As a result, the Government announced further reductions in regular army personnel as part of a plan to adjust the Regular-to-Reserve ratio to around 70:30 with a future total force of around 120,000.

Lt Gen Nick Carter was tasked with restructuring and reducing the size of the army to fulfil this lower personnel target while also remaining able to fulfil the commitments laid out in the SDSR: provide light, specialist forces for short-duration interventions; sufficient multi-role forces to provide larger intervention or enduring stabilisation operations; command forces up to theatre level in the field and contribute to standing commitments (e.g. defending the South Atlantic Overseas Territories).

An Armed Forces redundancy scheme was launched after the SDSR to reduce the headcount across the whole of the Armed Forces. Two tranches of redundancy have been announced, with so far approximately 3,820 Army personnel selected for redundancy (920 in Tranche One and approximately 2,900 in Tranche Two). Further tranches are expected for the Army only. The Ministry of Defence (MoD) says the withdrawal or merger of units announced in *Army 2020* is completely separate from the redundancy process. Individuals in a unit which is withdrawn or merged are no more or less likely than any other individual to be selected for redundancy. Personnel will be reassigned to other units, where possible within the same regiment.

23 units are to be removed from the Order of Battle², six of whom are to be merged, resulting in a total of 17 fewer units. This includes five infantry battalions (one will become a Public Duties Company³), two regiments from the Royal Armoured Corps (four regiments are merging into two) and reductions in the Royal Regiment of Artillery, The Corps of Engineers, Royal Corps of Signals, the Army Air Corps and Royal Logistical Corps. These changes are to be implemented by 2015.

¹ HC Deb 23 May 2012 c131WH

² The Order of Battle refers to the structure of units within the Army.

³ 5 Scots will become a Public Duties Company and will provide sentries to Edinburgh Castle and the Palace of Holyroodhouse on a permanent basis

Maintaining a balance and geographic spread of capabilities; regimental recruiting patterns over the last decade; future demographic trends and anticipated affect on recruitment patterns; and the merger and disbandment history of individual battalions were the factors that informed the restructure, according to the Defence Secretary.

Reaction to the announcement focused heavily on three areas: loss of infantry battalions; the integration of the Reserves into a “Whole Force concept” including doubts over whether the target of 30,000 was achievable; and whether a smaller Army will be able to deliver the expectations laid out in the SDSR.

Achieving the future Army strength of 120,000 involves the doubling of trained reservists over the next six years and the reduction of 20,000 Regular personnel. The size of the Regular Army – at 82,000 – will be the lowest it has been since 1850.

This is the latest of a long line of restructures for the Army. In the last two decades it has undergone two major changes: “*Options for Change*” in the early 1990s saw a number of units cut. The Labour Government cut four infantry battalions in its infantry restructure in 2004-2006.

Two significant further announcements are expected in the autumn:

- Basing Review: expected in the autumn, this will lay down the future basing pattern, taking into account the return of British forces from Germany by 2020. This is in addition to the initial armed forces basing announcement of July 2011.
- A Consultation Paper on the use of Reservists: to be launched in the autumn to explore the implications of the increased reliance on the Reserves for employers including proposals on appropriate legislation and liability to allow routine use of the Reserves.

2 Army 2020: Why now?

Several major factors have driven the need for a new Army structure. Lt Gen Nick Carter, who led and designed *Army 2020*, identified them in an article for the *British Army Journal 2012*. They include:

Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR)

Published by the Government in October 2010, alongside *The National Security Strategy (NSS)*, the SDSR laid out a Future Force 2020 structure for the Armed Forces involving major changes to the structure and composition of the three services. This included reductions in personnel and equipment.

For the Army, the SDSR called for the Army to be structured to provide⁴:

- A contribution to our standing commitments including defending the South Atlantic Overseas Territories and UK tasks such as bomb disposal;
- Light, specialist forces for short-duration interventions;
- Sufficient multi-role forces to provide flexibility for larger or more complex intervention operations or to undertake enduring stabilisation operations; and
- The ability to command UK and coalition forces at up to theatre level⁵

⁴ HM Government, [Strategic Defence and Security Review](#), Cm7948 October 2010 p24

The SDSR laid out a new structure for the Army based around five multi-role brigades (MRB): one brigade to be kept at high-readiness, available for an intervention operation, and four in support to provide the ability to sustain an enduring operation. Each brigade will include reconnaissance forces, tanks and armoured infantry:

- Reconnaissance forces to gain information even in high-threat situations;
- Tanks, which continue to provide a unique combination of protection, mobility and firepower; and
- Infantry operating from a range of protected vehicles⁶

The SDSR also identified specific reductions for the Army, including a 7,000 reduction in service personnel, a 40% reduction in the number of Challenger 2 Main Battle Tanks and a 35% reduction in heavy artillery vehicles.

Withdrawal of all UK forces from Germany

The SDSR also announced the intention to withdraw all UK forces from Germany by 2020, half of whom, approximately 20,000, are to return to the UK by 2015.⁷ This involves a major basing review to accommodate the returning forces and decisions about the future use of equipment currently in Germany. This also means that the bulk of the Army in the future will be UK-based.

Further personnel reductions

In July 2011 the then Defence Secretary, Liam Fox, announced a further reduction in the number of army personnel, envisaging a future army strength of around 120,000, by 2020. This was based on a regular to reserve ratio of around 70:30.⁸ This has since been refined by Defence Ministers as meaning a trained strength of 82,000 Regulars and at least 30,000 Reserves, with a training margin of 8,000 Reserves.⁹ The Army says the goal is the reach the target of the 82,000 regular and 30,000 reserves by 2018.¹⁰

Withdrawal from Afghanistan

Combat operations in Afghanistan will end in December 2014. This means the Army will no longer be permanently engaged on an enduring stabilisation operation.

Future Reserves 2020

The Government commissioned an independent review of the Reserves and how they are used, published in July 2011. It concluded the Reserves were under exploited, were not used efficiently and had not been modernised. It argued in favour of integrating better the Reserves into a 'Whole Force Concept' and increasing the Army Reserves to 30,000.

Defence budget

The 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review set the overall budget of the Ministry of Defence, and other government departments to 2014/15. The MoD resource budget was slated to fall by 7.5% in real terms over this period – a slightly smaller fall than the 8.3% reductions in resource budgets as a whole. The government announced in May 2012 that the MoD budget would be balanced for the first time in several years, with Secretary of State

⁵ "Fact Sheet 7: Future Force 2020 – British Army", MOD website

⁶ "Fact Sheet 7: Future Force 2020 – British Army", MOD website

⁷ [HC Deb 19 October 2010](#), c797

⁸ [HC Deb 18 July 2011](#), c644

⁹ [HC Deb 19 January 2012](#), c939W

¹⁰

Phillip Hammond MP referring to a “Yawning black hole” in the budget for equipment that had been filled.¹¹

No single enemy = broad range of tasks

The range of threats and risks the UK faces, as outlined in the SDSR and the National Security Strategy, means there is no single clear enemy the Army can be structured against. As such, the emphasis is on an Army that is adaptable and flexible. The focus on armoured infantry corps and air-assault means the size of the Armoured Corps is being reduced from 11 to 9 units.

2.1 Army 2020: The review process

After the SDSR was published, the Chief of the General Staff initiated an Army 2020 review to reconfigure the army to meet the posture it set out. It was led by Lt Gen Nick Carter. He said he was tasked:

To develop and recommend options, starting from first principles, for the design, structure, capabilities and capacities of an integrated Army of 2020 – that importantly – would be designed to cost and deliver the 20 per cent saving required.¹²

The Chief of the General Staff General Sir Peter Wall outlined the three core purposes the future force has been structured around:

- Intervention and conventional deterrence
- Overseas operations in multinational alliances to prevent conflict at source
- Activity within the UK, including domestic operations such as flood relief and the Olympics, and improve homeland resilience¹³

Lt Gen Nick Carter told *British Forces News*:

“The Army was asked a very difficult question back in July last year when it had to downsize its Regular strength to 82,000 and up-rate its Reserve strength to 30,000. And you have to look at the whole proposition. And what we did was go back to first principles...and we then concluded pretty quickly which bits of the Army were going to go to the Reserve and which bits would stay in the Regular structure, so that we’ve ended up with this integrated model.

[...] If you are going to reduce the Regular strength by some 20,000, it’s inevitable that all parts of the Army are going to have to take a share of that pain. Nobody wants to see the downsizing that we’ve had to do, but the fact of the matter is that is what we’ve been directed to do by the Government.

[...] What we’ve got is a new and imaginative and original structure that is designed to meet the challenges of the 2020 era. Getting there will be challenging. There are going to be further redundancies, there’s going to be downsizing, units will be removed from the Army’s Order of Battle and merged and amalgamated, and there will be some uncertainty associated with all of that. And none of this happens very quickly, it will be a gradual process... It will not be easy.¹⁴

¹¹ HC Deb 14 May 2012 c262

¹² “Transforming the Army for new strategic circumstances”, *The British Army 2012*, p56

¹³ “CGS outlines rationale behind today’s Army 2020 announcement”, *MOD news*, 5 July 2012

¹⁴ “Decision on forces’ cuts explained”, *British Forces News*, 5 July 2012

3 Army 2020: Key issues

The Defence Secretary, Philip Hammond, delivered the outcome of *Army 2020* on 5 July 2012.¹⁵ The Army published an accompanying booklet *Transforming the British Army*.¹⁶ Mr Hammond separately made a written ministerial statement on 5 July entitled *Future Reserves 2020*.¹⁷

The key changes are:

- Restructuring the army into two distinct elements: a reaction force and an adaptable force
- An integrated Army of Regulars and Reserves
- Future army strength of 120,000: 82,000 regulars, 30,000 reserves and 8,000 reserves in training
- 17 fewer major units in the Army with a reduction of 23 units from the Order of Battle in total by disbanding and merging several units:
 - Five infantry battalions to be removed from Order of Battle
 - Armoured Corps reduced from 11 to 9 units
 - 3 units cut from the both the Royal Logistics Corps and the Royal Engineers
 - 2 units cut from the Royal Artillery¹⁸
 - 1 unit cut from Army Air Corps and from the Royal Military Police

The Government will publish a consultation paper in the Autumn setting out its detailed proposals for how to change the relationship between Defence, the employer and Reservists to ensure the full integration of Reserves can be achieved.

3.1 The New force structure

The future Army will have two distinct elements:

- Reaction Force
- Adaptable Force

The Army says the new force structure represents a “fundamental and imaginative break” from the current Army structure and is “as significant” a change as any seen over the last fifty years.¹⁹

The Reaction Force

The reaction Force will provide the high readiness force, ready to undertake short notice contingency tasks, including the provision of forces for the first phases of any future brigade-

¹⁵ [HC Deb 5 July 2012](#), c1085

¹⁶ “[Transforming the British Army 2012](#)”, *Army website*, 5 July 2012

¹⁷ [HC Deb 5 July 2012](#) c65WS

¹⁸ Mr Hammond named only 39 Regiment Royal Artillery in his statement. His predecessor announced last year that 40 Regiment Royal Artillery was to be placed in suspended animation. These are the units to be removed from the Order of Battle.

¹⁹ “[Transforming the British Army 2012](#)”, *Army website*, 5 July 2012

scale enduring operation. It will be based around 16 Air Assault brigade and three Armoured Infantry brigades under a divisional headquarters with associated enablers. It will comprise predominantly Regular forces with approximately 10% coming from the Reserve Force.

According to the Army:

The Reaction Force will provide the lead Armoured Infantry Battle Group and the lead Airborne or Air Assault Force to provide a rapid reaction war fighting/deterrent capability.

It will consist of three Armoured Infantry Brigades and 16 Air Assault Brigade under the command of a divisional headquarters. Each Armoured Infantry Brigade will have three manoeuvre units: a type 56 tank regiment and two armoured infantry battalions. They will also have a heavily protected mobility infantry battalion, and an armoured cavalry regiment which will be able to task organise with intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance.

The Reaction Forces will also have 101 Logistic Brigade under their command for logistic support.²⁰

Or to put it another way:

- 1 x Armoured Cavalry Regiment with CVR(T) then Scout²¹; 3 Sabre Squadrons each with 16 vehicles, one Command and Support Squadron
- 1 x Type 56 Armoured Regiment with Challenger 2 tanks; 3 Sabre Squadrons each with 18 Challenger 2 tanks, 1 Command and Recce Squadron
- 3 x Armoured Infantry Battalions with Warrior combat vehicles, 3 Rifle Companies each with 14 Warrior, 1 Support Company
- 1 x Heavy Protected Mobility Battalion with Mastiff then UV²², 3 Rifle Companies each with 14 Mastiff, 1 Support Company
- Combat Support, Combat Service Support and Command Support²³

Mr Hammond said:

The reaction forces will generate high-readiness contingent capability, trained and equipped to undertake the full spectrum of intervention tasks, including provision of forces for the first phases of any future brigade-scale enduring operation..... The reaction forces will form a powerful UK contribution to a coalition effort and act as the initial land component of a joint war fighting operation, alongside air and maritime components. At best effort, it will deliver a division into the field.²⁴

Adaptable Force

The Adaptable Force is a pool of Regular and Reserve units commanded by seven infantry brigade headquarters during peacetime for training and administrative purposes. A force package will be selected from across the pool of forces for an operation depending on the

²⁰ "Army 2020 structure explained", *Army website*, 6 July 2012

²¹ CVR(T) are Combat Vehicle Reconnaissance Vehicle (Tracked) i.e. small armoured vehicles; Scout is the new range of specialist vehicles under development.

²² Mastiff is a type of protected patrol vehicle, UV refers to Utility Vehicle

²³ "Transforming the British Army 2012", *Army website*, 5 July 2012, Figure 4

²⁴ HC Deb 5 July 2012 c1086

capabilities required. It will deliver the force elements for the Army's Standing Commitments (Cyprus, Brunei, the Falkland Islands and Ceremonial Duties) and UN commitments. It will also be capable of undertaking a range of tasks including:

- Overseas military capacity building – training and developing indigenous armies in order to strengthen nations and prevent future conflict.
- Military support to homeland resilience – including maintaining a contingent capability to deal with natural disasters, public service strikes and other tasks.
- Follow-on forces for future enduring operations requiring the Adaptable Forces to maintain institutional readiness at an appropriate level of training.²⁵

It will include:

Seven Regular infantry brigades, paired with a Reserve unit, reporting to a divisional headquarters. How these paired forces will be deployed will depend on the operational requirement, but the Reserves could make up as much as 30 per cent of a deployed unit in an enduring operation, whereas simple operations could have the Reserves deployed as a complete battalion.

Like the Reaction Force, the Adaptable Force will have its own logistic support provided by 102 Logistic Brigade, which will be predominantly made up of Reserve troops.²⁶

It will include:

- Light Cavalry Regiments: equipped with Jackal protected patrol vehicles; 3 Sabre Squadrons each with 16 vehicles, paired with Yeomanry Regiment
- Protected Mobility Battalions: equipped with Foxhound protected patrol vehicles, 3 Rifle Companies, One support company, paired Reserve battalion
- Light Role Battalions: 3 Rifle Companies, one support company, paired Reserve battalion²⁷

Mr Hammond made clear that over a full career “soldiers and officers in infantry and armoured units will expect to serve in both reaction and adaptable forces.”²⁸ Lt Gen Nick Carter says it is not a “two-tiered Army” but a “multi-role army that is being organised and tasked for the challenges of the future”.²⁹

Force Troops

Force troops will support both of these forces:

They will consist of an Artillery brigade with supplementary Fire Support Teams, and an Engineer Brigade that will integrate the Explosive Ordnance Disposal squadron in response to the improvised explosive device threat of the modern battlefield. It will also include the Medical Brigade, and 104 Logistic Support Brigade, which might take on the Joint Force Logistic Support role.

²⁵ “Transforming the British Army 2012”, *Army website*, 5 July 2012, p5-6

²⁶ “Army 2020 structure explained”, *Army website*, 6 July 2012

²⁷ “Transforming the British Army 2012”, *Army website*, 5 July 2012, Figure 5

²⁸ HC Deb 5 July 2012 c1086

²⁹ “Decision on forces’ cuts explained”, *British Forces News*, 5 July 2012

In addition, there will be two Signals brigades, one of which will include five multi-role signals regiments providing Information Communication Support, together with a newly created non-deployable Surveillance Brigade under a 1-star headquarters. Furthermore, there will be a newly created Security Assistance Group pulling together the soft effect capabilities of the Military Stabilisation Support Group, 15 Psychological Operations Group and potentially Media Operations Group.³⁰

Lord Astor of Hever told Lords “despite the cuts that have been announced, Army 2020 will deliver approximately 90% of [...] current combat effect.”³¹

3.2 Units to be disbanded/amalgamated

The Army is to be reduced by 23 Regular units following the Strategic Defence and Security Review as part of Army 2020.³² In his 5 July statement, the Defence Secretary, said: “there will be 17 fewer major units as a result of this announcement”. This is because six units in total are to be merged. The changes are to be implemented by 2015.³³

The Army website lists the changes to the Order of Battle (ORBAT):

Household Cavalry and Royal Armoured Corps

- **The Queens Royal Lancers** will amalgamate with **9th/12th Royal Lancers (Prince of Wales's)** upon completion of scheduled operational commitments and not before October 2014.
- The **1st Royal Tank Regiment** and the **2nd Royal Tank Regiment** will merge upon completion of scheduled operational commitments and not before April 2014.³⁴

Royal Regiment of Artillery

- **39 Regiment Royal Artillery** and **40 Regiment Royal Artillery**³⁵ will both be removed from the ORBAT by October 2015.

Corps of Royal Engineers

- **24 Commando Engineer Regiment** will be removed from the ORBAT not before April 2013.
- **25 Engineer Regiment** and **28 Engineer Regiment** will be removed from the ORBAT not before October 2015.
- **38 Engineer Regiment** will be removed from the ORBAT.
- **67 Works Group** will also be removed from the ORBAT not before April 2015.

³⁰ “[Army 2020 structure explained](#)”, *Army website*, 6 July 2012

³¹ HL Deb 5 July 2012 c868

³² [Army 2020: Army to reduce by 23 units](#)”, *Army website*, 5 July 2012

³³ “[Army 2020: Army to reduce by 23 units](#)”, *Army website*, 5 July 2012

³⁴ In July 2011 the MOD announced the specialist Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) capabilities of the 1st Royal Tank Regiment were to be transferred to the RAF Regiment’s Defence CBRN wing in December 2011.

³⁵ 40th Regiment The Royal Artillery is to be placed into suspended animation in December 2012. This was announced in July 2011 as part of the decision to disband 19 Light Brigade and place its combat support and service support elements into suspended animation (HC Deb 18 July 2011 c69WS). The disbandment parade was held at Edinburgh Castle on 22 June 2012.

Royal Corps of Signals

- **7th Signal Regiment (Allied Rapid Reaction Corps)** is to be removed from the ORBAT.

Infantry

- **5th Battalion the Royal Regiment of Scotland (The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders)** will be reduced to form a Public Duties Incremental Company on completion of current task and not before August 2013.³⁶
- **2nd Battalion the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers** will be removed from the ORBAT and absorbed into the rest of The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers upon completion of scheduled operational commitments in the autumn of 2014.
- **The 2nd Battalion the Yorkshire Regiment (Green Howard's)** will be removed from the ORBAT and absorbed into the rest of The Yorkshire Regiment on completion of their Cyprus tour and not before the autumn of 2013.
- **The 3rd Battalion the Mercian Regiment (Staffordshire)** will be removed from the ORBAT and absorbed into the rest of The Mercian Regiment on completion of Op HERRICK 19 and not before October 2014.
- **2nd Battalion the Royal Welsh (The Royal Regiment of Wales)** will be removed from the ORBAT and absorbed into the rest of The Royal Welsh not before autumn 2013.
- 1st Battalion the Royal Irish Regiment will join the Prince of Wales' Division.³⁷

Army Air Corps

- **1 Regiment Army Air Corps** will merge with **9 Regiment Army Air Corps**, bringing the Wildcat force under a single HQ based at Yeovilton not before October 2015.

Royal Logistic Corps (RLC)

- **1 Logistic Support Regiment** will be removed from the ORBAT not before April 2015.
- **Logistic Support Regiment** will be removed from the ORBAT not before October 2014.
- **23 Pioneer Regiment** will be removed from the ORBAT not before October 2015.
- **8 Regiment, 19 Combat Service Support Battalion and 24 Regiment RLC** will be removed from the ORBAT.

³⁶ The Defence Secretary said later in the debate the 100 or so men who will make up the Public Duties Company will be drawn in rotation from the other battalions in the Royal Regiment of Scotland. Mr Hammond said the Public Duties Company is being created in order to raise the profile of the Royal Regiment of Scotland, and of the Army, in Scotland. It will provide sentries to Edinburgh Castle and the Palace of Holyrood House.

³⁷ For clarity, the 1st Battalion The Royal Irish Regiment is not being cut. It is being moved into a different division.

Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineer

- **101 Force Support Battalion** will be removed from the Regular Army ORBAT not before autumn 2015, and will transfer to the Reserve.

Royal Military Police unit

- **5 Regiment Royal Military Police** is to be removed from the ORBAT as part of the drawdown from Germany. The three remaining Regiments will be re-organised.
- All Special Investigation Branch (SIB) capabilities will be reorganised under one headquarters, while the Military Provost Service will be increased, and a specialist Support Operations group will be created.

The Royal Gurkha Rifles are to remain with two Battalions to sustain their capability and meet their unique operational requirement in Brunei.

The current Regular and Reserve structure for the Army Medical Services will remain largely unchanged with three Regular and ten Reserve field hospitals.

The Intelligence Corps will retain three Regular military intelligence battalions.³⁸

Mr Hammond said in his statement:

We looked at the option of reducing the size of battalions, so as to avoid the need to withdraw them, but that would have created a tremendous inefficiency. It would have created a top-heavy structure with, proportionately, a large amount of expenditure going on administration.³⁹

A table listing the Army 2020 Regular regimental structure, as provided in *Transforming the British Army 2012*, can be found in appendix 1.

3.3 Reduction in headcount

Army 2020 envisages a future strength of 120,000 personnel, consisting of:

- 82,000 regular army
- 30,000 reserves
- 8,000 reserves in training

The 2010 *Strategic Defence and Security Review* outlined an Army of 95,000, a reduction of 7,000 from the then trained strength of 102,000.⁴⁰ The accompanying notes for the SDSR said these would come from non-front line areas and no infantry battalions would be cut.⁴¹

In July 2011 the then Defence Secretary, Liam Fox, announced a further reduction in the number of army personnel, envisaging a future army strength of around 120,000. This was

³⁸ "Army 2020: Army to reduce by 23 units", *Army website*, 5 July 2012

³⁹ HC Deb 5 July 2012 c1103

⁴⁰ Library note *Defence Personnel Statistics*, SN02183, 15 March 2012

⁴¹ SDSR Briefing Pack

based on a regular to reserve ratio of around 70:30.⁴² The ratio figure given suggested a regular army of approximately 84,000.

That total and ratio has since been refined (by Defence Ministers) as meaning 82,000 regulars and 30,000 reserves with a training margin of 8,000 Reserves.⁴³ The Army says the goal is to reach the target of the 82,000 regular and 30,000 reserves by 2018.⁴⁴

Mr Hammond made clear in his 5 July 2012 statement that since his predecessor had previously announced the future strength of the Army to be 120,000; his Army 2020 statement “is not about the size of the army... it is about how we structure the future army.”⁴⁵

The smallest army since 1850?

In 2010 the regular army had 102,200 service personnel. The goal laid out in Army 2020 of 82,000 regular personnel means a reduction of 20,000 personnel. The table below shows the comparative strengths of the regular army since 1800:

Army Strength, 1800-2010

Year	Army Strength
1800	80,300
1850	99,100
1900	301,500
1950	364,100
1960	257,800
1970	174,000
1980	159,000
1990	152,800
2000	110,100
2010	108,900

Source: MoD, UK Defence Statistics

Mr Hammond said in his statement the total future trained strength of 120,000 is “not dissimilar to the pre-SDSR level”. MoD figures show that in 2010, the trained strength of the Army (including Ghurkhas) was 101,610⁴⁶ with provisional data showing 33,130 reserve personnel, although a significant proportion of these will be untrained.⁴⁷

Redundancy

The MOD launched a redundancy process for Armed Forces personnel following the 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review. It will be managed in three or four tranches. The first tranche was announced in autumn 2011 and the second in January 2012. Further tranches are expected for the Army but no more are expected for the Royal Air Force or the Royal Navy.⁴⁸

Will soldiers in decommissioned units lose their jobs?

The Defence Secretary said:

⁴² [HC Deb 18 July 2011](#), c644
⁴³ HC Deb 19 January 2012, c939W and HC Deb 23 May 2012 c32WH
⁴⁴ “[Army 2020: Army to reduce by 23 units](#)”, *Army website*, 5 July 2012
⁴⁵ HC Deb 5 July 2012 c1085
⁴⁶ UK Defence Statistics 2012
⁴⁷ MOD Armed Forces Personnel Statistics TSP 7 April 2012
⁴⁸ More on the redundancy scheme can be found in Library Note [Armed Forces Redundancies](#) SN05951

I should emphasise to the House that the withdrawal or merger of units is completely separate from the redundancy process. An individual in a unit which is withdrawn or merged is no more or less likely than any other individual with similar skills and service record to be selected for future redundancy. When units are withdrawn, their personnel are reassigned to other units, where possible within the same regiment.⁴⁹

[...] The disbandment or withdrawal of a regiment or battalion does not mean that the individuals in it will lose their jobs. As the Army works on its manning plan over the next couple of years—there will be further tranches of redundancy—people will be able to move across the Army to fit the newer structure.⁵⁰

Armed Forces Minister Nick Harvey later confirmed that the precise numbers and timings of future redundancies to achieve the 82,000 target have yet to be decided. He added the reductions will be achieved through natural wastage as well as redundancy.⁵¹

3.4 The criteria – why cut those units?

The following factors have been identified as informing the process of deciding which units to select for disbandment/amalgamation: recruitment over the last ten years; future recruitment patterns based on demographic projections; geographic spread of capabilities; previous disbandment's and mergers.

Mr Hammond outlined the criteria in a speech previewing *Army 2020* at the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) on 7 June 2012:

The truth is, that even with a reduced Regular manning requirement, the Army faces a major recruitment challenge.

Looking forward to 2020, the Army will recruit against the backdrop of, we hope and expect, a growing economy, and without the recruiting-sergeant of an enduring overseas operation.

Demographic changes suggest particular challenges in some regions to supply the number of recruits to the infantry that are required. Against a background of an increasing UK population overall, it is projected there will be around 12% fewer males by 2020 in the typical infantry recruiting age range. Although all regions face this decline, there is some local variation: in particular, the south and south east of England will see the lowest decline.

So while we are determined to maintain an effective regimental system, it must be based on the realities of today, and the primacy of capability. That means focussing on analysis of recruitment performance, demographic trends and future recruiting needs.

Taking account of regional identities, previous mergers, disbandments and deletions.

Designed to support proper career advancement for soldiers and officers alike.

These are the criteria against which our decisions must be made.⁵²

Mr Hammond said in his 5 July 2012 statement:

⁴⁹ HC Deb 5 July 2012 c1097

⁵⁰ HC Deb 5 July 2012 c1098

⁵¹ HC Deb 17 July 2012 c754W

⁵² [Address to the Royal United Services Institute Land Warfare Conference 2012, MOD website, 7 June 2012](#)

In selecting battalions for withdrawal, the Army has focused on the major recruiting challenges it faces in the infantry. It has looked carefully at recruiting performance, not just at a point in time but over the last decade; at recruiting catchment areas; and at demographic projections for the age cohort from which infantry recruits are drawn. It has also considered regional and national affiliations, the merger and disbandment history of individual battalions, and existing commitments of battalions to future operations. The overriding objective has been to arrive at a solution that those currently serving in the Army will see as fair and equitable.

[...] These withdrawals and mergers, unwelcome as I know they will be in the units affected, are fair and balanced and have been carefully structured to minimise the impact of the regular manpower reduction and maximise the military effectiveness of the Army.⁵³

He later added:

The cohort from which the infantry recruits—typically they are men aged between 18 and 24—is set to decline across the UK as a whole by 12% over the next decade. There are specific issues in some specific regional geographies, and there is also a projected change in the composition of that population cohort, including a relative increase in groups in which the Army is not very successful at recruiting at the moment. There are therefore some very big challenges ahead.⁵⁴

The *Transforming the British Army 2012* summarised the criteria:

The decision on which units are to be affected by these changes has been driven by the following:

- Fewest number of cap-badges to be lost across the Army, to sustain the regimental system
- Long term manning sustainability based on recruiting demographics over: the past decade, now and predicted out to 2022
- No more than one battalion is to be removed from any one regiment⁵⁵

In response to a PQ, Armed Forces Minister Nick Harvey stated that of the units to be disbanded/amalgamated, 8 units are within 5% (plus or minus) of their full unit establishment and a further six units are within 10% (plus or minus) of their full unit establishment.⁵⁶

The Armoured Corps

The Armoured Corps is to be reduced from 11 to 9 regiments. This will be achieved by amalgamating 9/12th Royal Lancers and the Queen's Royal Lancers⁵⁷, and merging the 1st and the 2nd Royal Tank Regiments.

Mr Hammond explained the reasoning behind this decision in his statement:

Army 2020 calls for a greater focus on mobility and the ability to mount expeditionary warfare based around the air assault and armoured infantry brigades of the reaction forces. This evolution of our posture still further away from the cold war lay-down

⁵³ HC Deb 5 July 2012 c1088

⁵⁴ HC Deb 5 July 2012 c1105

⁵⁵ "Transforming the British Army 2012", MOD website, July 2012

⁵⁶ HC Deb 17 July 2012 c755W

⁵⁷ The Queen's Royal Lancers was formed in 1993 by the amalgamation of the 17/21st Lancers and the 16/5th Lancers.

inevitably means a reduction in the size of the Armoured Corps from 11 units to nine. After careful consideration of all the factors, including regional distribution and the requirement for a balance of capability, the Army has decided that this will be achieved by an amalgamation of the Queen's Royal Lancers with the 9th/12th Royal Lancers and a merger between the 1st and 2nd Royal Tank Regiments.⁵⁸

Nick Harvey later provided more detail, saying the decision was taken on the basis of advice provided by the Royal Armoured Corps, adding to the criteria given above:

a desire to minimise the number of cap badge reductions to promote the regimental system, taking account of past amalgamations within the Royal Armoured Corps, so wherever possible those who amalgamated most recently were less likely to be affected, and merging or amalgamating regiments with similar history and tradition, and current capabilities.⁵⁹

In 1990 the Armoured Corps had 19 regiments. This was reduced to 11 under *Options for Change* in the 1990s.⁶⁰

Infantry recruitment

The selection of the five infantry battalions to be removed from the Order of Battle is causing particular consternation among not only current and former soldiers in the units affected but also MPs representing areas the battalions traditionally recruit from. A number of Members have tabled questions asking for the detailed ten year recruitment figures for specific units.

Selecting which regiments or battalions to cut by recruitment levels is a relatively modern phenomenon, according to Charles Messenger in his history of the British infantry. Until then, it had more to do with seniority. Writing about the cuts in 1990s:

Unlike previous exercises of this type, the decision over which regiments were to amalgamate was not determined primarily on seniority within each division. The key factor was to be current strength, with the weakest going to the wall, tempered by spreading the burden throughout the six administrative divisions.⁶¹

Messenger writes it was a "particular shock" for the Royal Scots, the oldest and most senior regiment of the Line, to be informed they were to be amalgamated with The King's Own Scottish Borderers.⁶²

The MOD does not publish battalion strength figures, although they are made available in response to PQs.

⁵⁸ HC Deb 5 July 2012 c1087

⁵⁹ HC Deb 17 July 2012 c753W

⁶⁰ [UK Defence Statistics 2007](#), Chapter 3, table 3.2

⁶¹ C. Messenger *For the love of Regiment – a history of British Infantry Volume Two 1915 – 1994*, 1996 p219

⁶² *Ibid*

The table below shows the establishment and strength of the five infantry units, as of April 2012:

	Establishment	Strength
3 Yorks	599	593
Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders (5 Scots)	556	465
2 Royal Welsh	575	529
2 Royal Regiment of Fusiliers	532	523
3 Mercian	604	507

Source: HC Deb 26 June c191-191W

A full list of all the strength of all the infantry battalions can be found in appendix 2.

The reference to battalion strength of the last ten years as a criteria has provoked some discussion as to the actual level of recruitment in those battalions, versus those that have not been cut.

Brigadier David Paterson, Colonel of The Regiment, The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, wrote to the Chief of the General Staff (CGS) questioning the demographic and sustainability argument put forward by the CGS in explaining why one of his two Regular battalions was to be cut. The letter, dated 11 June 2012, was leaked to the Daily Telegraph on 2 July:

At our meeting you indicated that the selection data was based on demographics and sustainability. Having re-looked at the figures available to us I am afraid that this simply does not meet our current understanding of the Regimental situation. I am sure you will have seen the most recent Infantry Battalion Strength Report which shows us amongst the strongest in raw manning and deployable strength, with average F&C and indeed, the only Regiment growing in the next 6 months. Analysis of these reports over the past several years shows a continuous and steady improvement of our manning situation; a success story of which we are especially proud, particularly given our high operational tempo and often with both Battalions overseas. This record, current position and future potential stacks up very strongly particularly against other Regiments who have not been selected.

Additionally I, as Colonel, have the duty to tell my Officers, Warrant Officers, NCOs and Fusiliers why it is their Battalion, which at the time of the announcement will be the best manned Battalion in the Army, with recruits waiting in the wings, was chosen by CGS. I will then also have to explain to my Fusiliers in a fully manned Battalion why they are likely to be posted to Battalions that cannot recruit.⁶³

The Shadow Defence Minister, Jim Murphy, cited the Brigadier's letter during the Army 2020 debate. In response, Mr Hammond said:

The right hon. Gentleman talked about the strength of individual units. He referred to a leaked letter from the colonel of the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers. The Army has looked at the recruiting ability of regiments and battalions not at a spot-point in time, but over a

⁶³ ["In full: Brigadier David Paterson's letter to the Chief of Defence Staff"](#), *Daily Telegraph*, 2 July 2012

period of 10 years. It has looked at the demographic projections in the areas where the regiments and battalions recruit and drawn the appropriate conclusions.⁶⁴

John Baron MP later raised the question of recruitment to the 2nd Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, his former regiment, during the debate:

I am very sorry to say that I think the Government are making a very grave error with these decisions. Not only does the decision to cut the Army by a fifth smack of accountants running amok, but the decision to axe the better recruited English battalions, such as 2RRF, at the expense of the more poorly recruited Scottish battalions smacks of a grubby political fix, given the advent of the Scottish referendum.

Mr Hammond replied:

[...] he is simply wrong to describe the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers as one of the best recruited regiments in the Army. If we look at the position over a 10-year period and at the demographics going forward, along with all the other issues that the Army has set out as criteria to be taken into account, the conclusions are clear.⁶⁵

With reference to the 5th Battalion, Royal Regiment of Scotland, that is to be re-roled as a Public Duties Company, Mr Hammond said “the regiment is under-recruited, so the merging of that battalion into the remainder of the regiment should be done without the need for a loss of personnel.”⁶⁶ He described the Royal Regiment of Scotland as “one of the most under-recruited regiments in the British Army” and “has one of the highest percentages of overseas-recruited troops in the British Army.”⁶⁷

Regarding the 2nd Battalion, The Yorkshire Regiment (the Green Howard’s), Mr Hammond said:

It is simply not right, I am afraid, to talk about the Yorkshires as a regiment that has historically been well recruited. It is a regiment that has had difficulty in recruiting historically. Looking over a 10-year period—the Army does not look at a point in time—the Yorkshire Regiment has been under-recruited consistently.⁶⁸

Mr Hammond told the Defence Select Committee “the infantry in particular faces significant challenges on recruitment.” He repeated the three criteria identified above – recruitment levels over a ten-year period, future demographic changes and histories of units involved.

In 1990 the army had 55 infantry battalions. This was cut to 40 by 1997 under the *Options for Change* and to 36 by the Labour Government’s restructuring of 2004-06.⁶⁹ Five battalions are to be removed from the Order of Battle under *Army 2020*.

3.5 What will happen to regimental titles?

Throughout the Army’s long history, battalions and regiments have been raised, disbanded and amalgamated. In the case of amalgamations, antecedents are sometimes included in the new title in some format. For example: the 2nd Battalion, The Yorkshire Regiment (the Green Howard’s) or The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders 5th Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland (also commonly referred to as 5 Scots).

⁶⁴ HC Deb 5 July 2012 c1091

⁶⁵ HC Deb 5 July 2012 c109

⁶⁶ HC Deb 5 July 2012 c1094

⁶⁷ HC Deb 5 July 2012 c1095

⁶⁸ HC Deb 5 July 2012 c1103

⁶⁹ UK Defence Statistics, DASA

Mr Hammond said in his 5 July statement “no current regimental names or cap badges will be lost as a consequence of the changes that I am announcing today.”⁷⁰ When questioned by members about regimental titles, he said “it is for the regiments to decide how the antecedents and the thread behind those battalions are merged into the other battalions.”⁷¹ In a separate debate he said:

We expect regiments to come forward with proposals for restructuring within the boundaries we have announced. We will support decisions made within the regimental families to do that, whichever way they propose going.⁷²

By way of illustration of the antecedents and naming of a current regiment, below are the antecedent Regiments of The Mercian Regiment, formed in 2007 as a result of an amalgamation of four county regiments. It currently consists of 3 Regular and 1 Reserve battalion. The 3rd battalion is to be disbanded and absorbed into the rest of the Regiment on completion of Operation Herrick 19 in Afghanistan but not before October 2014. The table below sets out the history of the 3 Regular battalion antecedents:⁷³

The Mercian Regiment				
Formed in September 2007 from the amalgamation of:				
Cheshire (1 Mercian)	Worcestershire and Foresters (2 Mercian)		Staffordshire (3 Mercian)	
The Cheshire Regiment 22 nd since 1881	The Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regiment (29 th and 45 th Foot), formed in 1970 by the amalgamation of:		The Staffordshire Regiment, formed in 1959 by amalgamation of:	
	The Worcestershire Regiment, 29 th and 36 th	The Sherwood Foresters (Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Regiment), 45 th and 95 th	South Staffordshire Regiment, 38 th and 80 th	North Staffordshire Regiment, 64 th and 98 th
1689 Duke of Norfolk's Regiment of Foot 1751 22 nd Foot 1782 22 nd (The Cheshire) Foot 1881 The Cheshire Regiment	1694 Farington's Regiment of Foot 1751 29 th Foot 1751 36 th Foot 1881 The Worcestershire Regiment	1741 Houghton's Regiment of Foot 1748 Warburton's Regiment of Foot (45 th) 1823 95 th Foot 1881 The Sherwood Foresters (Derbyshire Regiment) 1902 The Sherwood Foresters	1705 Lillingstone's Regiment of Foot 1751 38 th Foot 1758 80 th (Light Armed Foot), disbanded 1793 80 th (Staffordshire Volunteers Foot) 1881 The South Staffordshire	1756 2 nd Bn, 11 Foot 1758 64 th Foot 1760 98 th Foot (renumbered and disbanded) 1824 94 th foot 1881 The North Staffordshire Regiment (the Prince of Wales's

⁷⁰ HC Deb 5 July 2012 c1087

⁷¹ HC Deb 5 July 2012 c1091

⁷² HC Deb 16 July 2012 c669

⁷³ D. Ascoli "A companion to the British Army 1660-1983", p113 -174

		(Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Regiment)	Regiment	Regiment
--	--	---	----------	----------

3.6 Single or multi-battalion regiments?

Over the years the number of battalions in a regiment has waxed and waned. In the 1960s there was a shift away from the single-battalion regiments towards larger infantry regiments, for example with the formation of the Royal Anglian Regiment out of the four battalions of the East Anglian Brigade and the creation of the four-battalion Royal Regiment of Fusiliers from the four English fusilier regiments.⁷⁴

Dan Byle MP raised this with Mr Hammond in the 5 July debate, asking the Secretary of State to “tell us what has changed from just a few years ago, when the Army was actively moving towards multi-battalion regiments as being more flexible and more efficient formations?”

Mr Hammond replied:

The main things that changed are the fiscal crisis that we have inherited and the need to restructure our forces in the post-Afghanistan era. I say to my hon. Friend, however, that it is open for single battalion regiments to make proposals for future structural change. If they want to merge and look at changes within their divisional structures, they are absolutely free to negotiate them with other regiments and divisions and to make proposals on that basis.⁷⁵

This shift was raised by Brigadier David Paterson, the Colonel of the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, in his leaked letter to the Chief of General Staff ahead of the Army 2020 announcement. He asked what has changed from the Options for Change view of the 1990s that favoured large regiments to the new preference for single battalions (as the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers will become, in terms of its regular battalions). He wrote:

As a Regiment with a ‘large’ history and ethos we have been working for many years within the Queen’s Division to move towards the direction of a single large Regiment. As Trevor Minter indicated to you it is what we want but, in our view, this will only happen if you order it; not necessarily now but by making it clear to the Queen’s Division Regiments that they will be told to amalgamate post 2014/15 This is also what the serving grass roots across the Division understand and desire even if some retired officers are rooted in the past. Such an unequivocal order will enable sensible and considered planning to create what is best for the Regiments, the Army and Defence Capability as a whole. Single Battalions fail to meet the criteria of sustainability and operational capability envisaged under the Orbat (Order of Battle) and tasks of the FF 2020 Armed Forces; neither do they offer the variety and career opportunities of larger Regiments.⁷⁶

3.7 Future Reserves – an integrated Army

Army 2020 sets out the following plans with regard to the Reserves:

- Target of 30,000 trained Reservists by 2018

⁷⁴ Richard Holmes “*Soldiers*”, 2011, p423

⁷⁵ HC Deb 5 July 2012, c1109

⁷⁶ “[In full: Brigadier David Paterson’s letter to the Chief of Defence Staff](#)”, *Daily Telegraph*, 2 July 2012

- £1.8 billion in additional investment over next ten years for Reserves
- Reserves to be fully integrated into Army structure
- Consultation Paper to be published in Autumn 2012 to discuss employer/Reserve/MoD relations

One of the biggest changes to the Army announced by Mr Hammond is the integration of the Reserve into the Army structure. As Mr Hammond said “In the past, the reserve may have come to be seen by some as an add-on to the Army; in future, the reserve will be a vital integrated component of the Army.”⁷⁷

This will involve not just a wholesale shift in the relationship between the Regulars and Reservists but also a shift in the relationship between the Army, its Reservists and employers. Mr Hammond announced plans to publish a consultation document in the autumn to explore this issue further.

The significance of the Reservists in the new Army 2020 structure is made clear in the accompanying *Transforming the British Army 2012* document. It warns that without integration “the reduced Regular force would be unable to complete all of the tasks set out in the Strategic Defence and Security Review.”⁷⁸

The Reserve Force has played a significant role in recent operations. At the peak in 2004, Reservists made up 20% of British forces in Iraq and 12 in Afghanistan.⁷⁹

Army Reserves are known as the Territorial Army. Regular Reserves are slightly different – they are members of the Regular Army who have left the service but remain liable to be recalled in times of need. The length of time they remain on regular reserve depends on a number of factors, including length of service, age and sex.⁸⁰

The 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review announced a six month study into the future role and structure of the Reserves.⁸¹ The Independent Commission published its findings in July 2011 as *Future Reserves 2020*. It was led by the Vice Chief of Defence Staff, General Sir Nicholas Houghton, who was supported by Julian Brazier MP and Lieutenant General (Retd) Sir Graeme Lamb. The Commission recommended a Reserve Force that is “an integral element of the Whole Force”.⁸²

The Commission recommended:

- Immediate resources be committed to stabilise and improve the state of the Reserve
- Increase the size of the Reserve
- Consider a potentially significant shift in the Regular:Reserve balance

It argued forcefully in favour of the Reserve becoming “more integrated within the overall Force Structure” by both expanding the roles they play but also to form units and sub-units,

⁷⁷ HC Deb 5 July 2012 c1086

⁷⁸ “*Transforming the British Army 2012*”, *Army website*, 5 July 2012, p8

⁷⁹ *Future Reserves 2020*, MOD, July 2011 p11

⁸⁰ *Territorial and Reserves*, *Army website*, accessed 13 July 2012

⁸¹ HM Government, *Strategic Defence and Security Review*, Cm7948 October 2010 p28

⁸² *Future Reserves 2020*, MOD, July 2011

rather than just be used as individual specialists and augmentees. The Commission observed that since the introduction of the Reserve Forces Act 1996 there have been around 30,000 Reservist mobilisations, but mostly as individual augmentees or specialists and less frequently as formed bodies.

The Commission concluded the availability and quality of the Reserves has to be guaranteed if they are to become an integrated part of the Whole Force Structure. Such a guarantee, the Commission said, will require “a significant change in mind-set and a change in the nature of the bargain between the Government, the country and its Reserves.”

Then Defence Secretary, Liam Fox, in announcing the publication of the report on 18 July 2011, said:

The report makes it clear, and I fully agree, that our reserve forces make an outstanding contribution to operations but have been shamefully neglected in recent years. For example, by some estimates, the Territorial Army has a trained and active strength as low as 14,000.⁸³

Mr Fox announced a £1.5 billion investment package over the next ten years to “enhance the capability of the reserves, of which £400 million is to be spent in the current Parliament. He also said Government will work with employers “and legislate if necessary” to ensure the reserves are more readily usable on operations.

Future Force statement

Mr Hammond provided more detail about the Future Reserves in a written statement laid on 5 July 2012⁸⁴. He said the Government accepts the broad thrust of the Commission's recommendations. The statement said:

Army 2020 has defined the Army reserves' role and we are establishing more predictable scales of commitment in the event that reserves are committed to enduring operations.

[.....] Our concept for Army reserves sees them ready and able to deploy routinely at sub-unit level and in some cases as formed units. They will be trained, equipped and supported accordingly. Officers and soldiers will have command opportunities which have not always been available in the recent past.⁸⁵

The MOD is investing an additional £1.8 billion over the next 10 years to ensure Reservists have “the kit and training they need”. This includes Wolf Land Rover and Bowman radios.⁸⁶

The difference between the two figures mentioned by Mr Fox and Mr Hammond is explained by the MOD:

The figures refer to different ten year periods. £1.5bn is 2011-12 to 2020-21. £1.8bn is 2012-13 to 2021-22. The 18 July 2011 speech refers to the former. Once we moved into the latter stages of planning round 12 (at the start of this year), which considered the period from 2012-13, the relevant figure changed.⁸⁷

⁸³ [HC Deb 18 July 2011](#) c644

⁸⁴ [HC Deb 5 July 2012](#) c65WS

⁸⁵ [HC Deb 5 July 2012](#) c65WS

⁸⁶ More specific information about kit for the Reserves can be found in [HC Deb 17 July 2012](#) c766W

⁸⁷ MOD email to House of Commons Library Defence Specialist, 26 July 2012

According to Mr Hammond, the Army has already started overseas Reserve training exercises at Company level and is putting in place routine partnered training of Army Reserve and Army Regular units.

Consultation Paper – relations with employers

The MOD will publish a consultation paper in the autumn setting out detailed proposals for how to ensure employers support employers who are reservists. Mr Hammond said in *The Future Force 2020* statement:

Delivering this step change in the size and role of the reserves will require a change in the relationship between Defence, the employer and the reservist. Many employers already give excellent support to reservists, for which we, and the nation, are grateful. But we need a new framework of partnership, with public and private sector employers, that gives us the confidence that trained reservist manpower will be available when it is really needed. We are examining how this might work through, for instance, the “Partnering for Talent” programme, which seeks to identify clear business benefits for employers who support the reserves. The public sector is already a major employer of reservists, and should set an example. Cross-Government work, led by the head of the civil service, is promoting the benefits of employing reservists within Government.

This scale of change needs the support of society as a whole and of employers in particular. I intend therefore to publish a consultation paper in the autumn, setting out our detailed proposals. Following consultation, we will be able to make informed decisions early next year on terms and conditions of service, employer engagement, the Government’s own commitments as an employer, and on any legislation necessary to underpin and support our vision for the reserves. I have also set up an independent external scrutiny team to assess progress in implementation of our vision for the reserves. This will be led by Lieutenant General (Retired) Robin Brims, who will make his first report in the summer of 2013.⁸⁸

Transforming the British Army 2012 says key areas for implementation include:

- Establishing a framework of strategic partnerships with private and public sector employers.
- A basing plan that is optimised geographically and matched to civilian employers.
- Appropriate legislation and liability to allow routine use of the Reserves.⁸⁹

Speaking to the Defence Select Committee on 12 July 2012, Mr Hammond recognised “It is a challenge” to get the numbers required, adding “we will have to do a lot more imaginative thinking is about how we engage with small and medium employers”. He said they are considering whether it is possible to offer more flexible call-outs for reservists working in small companies and to look at the offer available to self-employed people.⁹⁰ The Ministry of Defence launched a new campaign ten years ago, in October 2002, to promote a positive relationship between members of the TA and their employers. It is known as [SaBRE](#).

Currently, Reservists can claim for loss of earnings and some benefits, up to specified financial ceilings and certain allowable expenses. Employers are not obliged to pay Reservists’ salaries or benefits during the time that they are mobilised. If an employer

⁸⁸ HC Deb 5 July 2012 c66WS

⁸⁹ “[Transforming the British Army 2012 2012](#)”, MOD website, July 2012 p10

⁹⁰ Defence select committee, *The work of the Ministry of Defence and the Armed Forces*, 12 July 2012 HC 525-i; Q19

chooses to continue paying the Reservist, they cannot claim for this. Employers can claim ongoing costs for replacing the Reservist (up to a limit of £110 a day), one-off costs, and training expenses for the Reservist upon his/her return to employment and employer pension payments.⁹¹

How many Reserves are there?

There are 31,160 Army volunteer reservists but only approximately 14,000 or 15,000 are considered trained reservists. Mr Hammond told the Defence Committee “we are effectively talking about doubling the number of trained reservists over the next six years”. He said the people in charge of the project “do not underestimate the scale of the challenge that faces them.”⁹²

The number of Army reservists has declined in recent years, from 33,130 in 2010 and 40,900 a decade ago.⁹³

Future Reserve roles

Army 2020 envisages using Reserve Forces predominantly in the Adaptable Force with only 10% of the Reaction Force expected to be made up of Reservists. In addition, it envisages using Reserves routinely, rather than in extremis, for roles such as overseas defence engagement and United Nations commitments.

Reserve units will be routinely partnered with Regular units for training in peacetime. The MOD says “this pairing will also allow closer links to be built with the local communities to aid recruiting and engagement with UK society”.⁹⁴

Training and service commitments

The MOD expects reservists to commit to specific amounts of training time and to accept a liability for up to 6 months deployed service, plus pre-deployment training, in a five year period, depending on operational demand. There will be opportunities for shorter periods of deployed service commitment for those in some specialist roles.⁹⁵

Reservists can already expect to be mobilised for operational service within five years, unless an individual joins within 3 years of leaving the Regular Army, when mobilisation can be deferred for up to three years.

The current time commitment varies depending on the type of unit. Those in Regional Units (which recruit locally and make up the majority of the Territorial Army) complete a minimum of 27 days training a year, including an annual two-week camp. This is reduced to 19 days per year for ex-Regulars who have recently left the army. Those in National units, which tend to be specialists, have a lower level of commitment and complete 19 days training a year, including an annual two-week camp.

Philip Hammond told the Defence Select Committee that the “deal – the compact” between the army and reserves has broken down and the army needs to make a clearer commitment

⁹¹ [Preparing for mobilisation](#), *Territorial Army website*, accessed 13 July 2012

⁹² Defence select committee, *The work of the Ministry of Defence and the Armed Forces*, 12 July 2012 HC 525-i; Q19

⁹³ MOD Armed Forces Personnel Statistics TSP 7 April 2012

⁹⁴ “[Transforming the British Army 2012 2012](#)”, *MOD website*, July 2012 p8

⁹⁵ HC Deb 5 July 2012 c66WS

to reservists. This includes overseas and regular training with regular forces, proper kit and personal protection and communications equipment.⁹⁶

Other Reserve forces

The *Future Reserves 2020* statement also discussed the Royal Naval and Royal Marines Reserves and the Royal Auxiliary Air Force. The Royal Navy's Maritime Reserves will be expanded to a trained strength of 3,100. The Royal Auxiliary Air Force will grow to a trained strength of 1,800 and five new reserve squadrons will be established: one each in Northern Ireland and Wales and three in England.⁹⁷

3.8 Future basing

The MOD began a basing review after the 2010 SDSR was published. Initial conclusions were announced in the House on 18 July 2011. On 10 November 2011 the MOD announced both the timeframe for the restructuring of the UK Divisional HQ and the first tranche of moves as part of the Defence Rebasing Programme, which will take place in 2012 and early 2013. This included such measures as the closure of RAF Leuchars and RAF Kinloss as RAF stations and the transfer of both to the Army.⁹⁸

The Government announced as part of the SDSR its intention to return all personnel based in Germany back to the UK by 2020. Armed Forces Minister Nick Harvey said in July 2012 that "it is too early at this stage to give any more detail on the precise time scales for the withdrawal of troops from Germany".⁹⁹

The Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO – part of the MOD) is still developing the *Basing Optimisation Plan* for Army 2020. It is expected to be announced in the autumn 2012.¹⁰⁰

The *Transforming the British Army 2012* document outlines the proposed geographical lay down which:

Will seek to maximise training resources and the provision of logistic and administrative support. This will ideally see the Reaction Forces centred on Salisbury Plan Training Area and the Adaptable Force brigades and those Force Troop brigade headquarters with regional responsibilities, being centred close to principle population centres across the UK.¹⁰¹

The Target Army 2020 Brigade Lay down, as outlined in *Transforming the British Army 2012*¹⁰²:

- 7 x Infantry Brigades:
 - 1 x in Scotland
 - 1 x in Northern Ireland

⁹⁶ Defence Select Committee, *The work of the Ministry of Defence and the Armed Forces*, 12 July 2012 HC 525-i; Q19

⁹⁷ HC Deb 5 July 2012 c66WS

⁹⁸ See Library Note [Defence Basing Review SN06038](#), November 2011

⁹⁹ HC Deb 17 July 2012 c756W

¹⁰⁰ Defence Select Committee, *The work of the Ministry of Defence and the Armed Forces*, 12 July 2012 HC 525-i;

¹⁰¹ "Transforming the British Army 2012", MOD website, July 2012 p10

¹⁰² "Transforming the British Army 2012", MOD website, July 2012 p11

- 1 x in Wales
- 4 x in England (North West, North East, East and London)
- Air Assault Brigade in Colchester (Reaction Force Brigade Headquarters)
- Signal Brigade in West of England (Force and Logistic Troop Brigade headquarters)
- Artillery Brigade in South-West England (Adaptable Force Brigade Headquarters)
- Logistic Support Brigade – South England (Force and Logistic Troop Brigade headquarters)
- Engineer Brigade – South East England (Force and Logistic Troop Brigade headquarters)
- 3 x Armoured Infantry Brigades – Salisbury Plain Training Area

The Defence Secretary told the Defence Select Committee the plan published in the *Transforming the British Army 2020* document is:

Really just confirming our intention to maintain a regional distributed presence of the Army around the UK, and confirming the locations that have already been identified for the big chunks of the Army.¹⁰³

3.9 'How we Fight'

The Chief of the Defence Staff, General Sir David Richards, has ordered a review of the way the armed forces fight, entitled 'How we Fight', the Defence Secretary told the Defence Select Committee in evidence on 12 July 2012. It is being undertaken at the Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre at Shrivenham.¹⁰⁴

4 Reaction to the Army 2020 announcement

The confirmation of the loss of 20,000 soldiers from the regular army and the greater use of Reservists dominated much of the response to the announcement. Cuts to individual units also received widespread coverage with newspapers in traditional recruiting grounds mounting campaigns to save their local unit – the *Manchester Evening News*, for example, is running a “[Save Our Fusiliers](#)” campaign. Before the announcement, the newspapers were also full of speculation as to which regiments/battalions were to be cut, with *The Sun* leaking the infantry cuts two days before the announcement.

For MPs responses to the announcement see HC Deb 5 July 2012 c1089-1111. For Lords responses please see HL Deb 5 July 2012 c861. A number of MPs have signed the following Early Day Motions calling for an individual battalion to be preserved:

- [Early Day Motion 377](#): 2nd Battalion, The Yorkshire Regiment (The Green Howard's)
- [Early Day Motion 354](#): 2nd Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers

¹⁰³ Defence select committee, *The work of the Ministry of Defence and the Armed Forces*, 12 July 2012 HC 525-i

¹⁰⁴ Defence select committee, *The work of the Ministry of Defence and the Armed Forces*, 12 July 2012 HC 525-i Q17

The Guardian suggested it was a “statement of official war-weariness” and after “a decade of grim news, muffled funeral processions, mutilated soldiers and bereaved families, Army 2020 fits the national mood of 2012.”¹⁰⁵

Robert Fox, writing in the *Evening Standard*, said:

It is simply not possible to provide cheaply the quality now required in all our forces, by designating them part-time reserves on full-time standby for operations and combat.

The Government's defence plans have cut the combat power, or effectiveness, of the forces by 30 per cent at a stroke. All three forces are too small for what they are called on to do, the Navy particularly so.¹⁰⁶

Concern about morale and retaining soldiers has been a commonly expressed concern. Before the review was announced, *The Daily Telegraph* reported the planned departure of at least six senior officers, linking it to the Army cuts. The paper quotes a serving infantry colonel expressed concern about “the complete lack of thinking for the future... We could be asked to fight a war in eight years time but we just won't have the resources.”¹⁰⁷ Mr Hammond acknowledged “morale is fragile” in response to questioning by the Defence Select Committee, particularly because there “is still quite a large sense of uncertainty about things”. He suggested the basing plans and the new employment model will help ease some of that uncertainty but “until the last tranche of redundancy is out of the way and announced, people are not going to breathe entirely easily.”¹⁰⁸

Concern about the ability to recruit and retain enough Reserves was a common theme. *The Daily Telegraph* said “over the last two years the TA has failed to meet its recruitment targets by 20 per cent.” It quotes a former senior commander, Gen Sir John Kiszely: “It is going to be a hell of a challenge to achieve this. You need to find enough people to double the reserve and train them to a high standard and get employers to be far more flexible about suddenly losing staff for long periods. You have to ask whether this can seriously be achieved.”¹⁰⁹

Military historian Allan Mallinson said Hammond's plan to integrate the Reservists into the Army structure will work:

Only if there is legislation in place to compel or encourage employers to release reservists for training and deployment; only if the basing of the regular army is reorganised to permit the necessary integration of reservists for training (for which there is inadequate funding at present); only if the reservist equipment programme is protected in the future as additional costs begin to bite; and only if 30,000 men can be found who are willing to make the necessary commitment.¹¹⁰

However he was quite positive about the reforms, saying:

The Hammond plan is hugely ambitious, and equally risky. If he can pull it off, his name will deserve to go down in history with those of Cardwell and Haldane. The

¹⁰⁵ “UK defence: an Army for a war-weary nation”, *The Guardian*, 6 July 2012

¹⁰⁶ “Forget nostalgia and bruised egos – will forces still be fit for purpose?” *Evening Standard*, 5 July 2012

¹⁰⁷ “At least six ‘talented’ generals quit army over defence cuts”, *The Daily Telegraph*, 2 July 2012

¹⁰⁸ Defence select committee, *The work of the Ministry of Defence and the Armed Forces*, 12 July 2012 HC 525-i Q25

¹⁰⁹ “TA can't recruit enough ‘quality troops’ for plans”, *The Daily Telegraph*, 8 July 2012

¹¹⁰ “Echoes of the past in these army cuts”, *The Daily Telegraph*, 8 July 2012

Prime Minister owes it to the nation and the Army at least to let him stay at the MoD until his work is done.¹¹¹

The former head of the Army, General Lord Dannatt, described it as a “big ask” to increase the Reservists to 30,000. He said “employer engagement” is “really, really important” and the reforms were a “big risk”.¹¹²

Three former senior armed forces personnel - Air Chief Marshal Sir Michael Graydon, General Sir Michael Rose and Vice Admiral Sir Jeremy Blackham – wrote a letter in which they described the cuts as “cynical”:

How ironic that in the Jubilee year the Government appears hell-bent on policies that are reducing the Armed Forces to numbers that are close to token. Before long this will be apparent to our allies and enemies alike, with a loss of prestige and influence for our politicians.¹¹³

Brigadier Ben Barry, senior fellow for land warfare at the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) argued that given the need for a 20% cut in army personnel “it is difficult to see a credible alternative plan.” He wrote:

Taken as a whole, Army 2020 is an imaginative and radical series of initiatives that not only creates new organisations but envisages using both new and existing organisations in new ways. It is perhaps the most radical reorganisation of the army since the end of national service 50 years ago, and has the potential to genuinely transform the army's capability – provided that it is properly led, managed, resourced and politically supported.¹¹⁴

Professor Michael Clarke, Director General of RUSI, describes Army 2020 as a “bold and imaginative design” and says it is “unquestionably the right way to go”. He dismisses the focus on numbers, arguing “though sheer quantity is certainly not irrelevant, the numbers in the Regular Army are rather less important than the structure, training and equipment that it embraces.” He said Lt Gen Nick Carter has “done a good job in putting the British Army's conceptual thinking some way ahead of its allies and counterparts.” He acknowledged the challenges ahead:

Integrating the Reserve Force into the structure, building new bases to accommodate the 20,000 troops coming back from Germany, finding money to introduce new kit into the force, and getting equipment in Afghanistan that was procured under the urgent operational requirements framework back home and into the core programme.¹¹⁵

5 Previous restructures

The British Army has been restructured many times over its lifetime, absorbing numerous changes to its regimental structure. Units have been disbanded, re-formed or amalgamated countless times and most of today's regiments trace their lineage to some of the finest regiments in military history.

Lord Cardwell's reforms of 1881 saw the infantry organised into two-battalion regiments and geographical recruiting areas established. The 1957 Defence Review reduced the size of the

¹¹¹ “Echoes of the past in these army cuts”, *The Daily Telegraph*, 8 July 2012

¹¹² “Lord Dannatt on doubling numbers of Army Reservists”, *BBC The Daily Politics*, 5 July 2012

¹¹³ “Cuts to the Army will weaken our military capabilities and national pride”, *The Daily Telegraph*, 15 July 2012

¹¹⁴ “Army 2020: Fighting for the Future”, *The Guardian*, 5 July 2012

¹¹⁵ “The long and winding road: Army 2020”, *RUSI Analysis*, 9 July 2012

army by amalgamating numerous single-battalion regiments with a neighbour to form a new single-battalion regiment (e.g. the Devonshire Regiment merged with the Dorset Regiment to become the Dorset and Devonshire Regiment). Larger regiments emerged in the 1960s (e.g. the four battalions of the East Anglian Brigade became the Royal Anglian Regiment, while the four English fusilier regiments were merged into the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers).¹¹⁶⁺¹¹⁷

5.1 1990s: 'Options for Change' and 'Frontline First'

The framework for the Armed Forces resulting from the *Options for Change*¹¹⁸ review was announced in July 1990. Unlike previous reviews, which had been conducted primarily in response to financial considerations, *Options for Change* was intended as a response to the changing strategic environment in the post-Cold War era. Nonetheless, the end of the Cold War saw a global opportunity to 'reap the peace dividend' and make savings in defence and this was subsequently recognised.

The review implemented a major restructuring of the Armed Forces and was regarded as the beginning of a shift towards a capability-based rather than a threats-based policy in determining future force structure.

The main conclusions of the review outlined a reduction in manpower across all three Services of approximately 18% (56,000) by the mid-1990s.¹¹⁹ The most significant cuts fell on the Army, which was reduced in strength by one-third, from 160,000 to 120,000. The largest cuts were in the ground forces based in Germany which were reduced by over half.¹²⁰ Tactical air power based in Germany was significantly reduced with the closure of two out of four RAF bases and the withdrawal of six RAF squadrons. The review also advocated a reduction in the Royal Navy fleet from 48 destroyers and frigates to 40 and a 15% reduction in Nimrod Maritime Patrol Aircraft. The review reiterated the importance of retaining a strategic nuclear deterrent, although sub-strategic nuclear forces based in Germany were marginally reduced.

In 1994 the then Conservative government undertook a further review of defence spending. The focus this time was on making savings with respect to frontline support functions within the Armed Forces.

Three main conclusions came out of the *Front Line First* review. Firstly, that management and command structures across the whole of the MOD should be streamlined; secondly that many defence support functions could be outsourced to the private sector, mainly through the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) and thirdly that, as future defence operations were likely to be carried out on a joint Service basis, the rationalisation of command, training and support structures could potentially increase operational effectiveness as well as offering savings. The establishment of a Defence Helicopter Flying School for all three Services by 1997 was one such recommendation. Proposals to rationalise primary and secondary care functions

¹¹⁶ R. Holmes *Soldiers*, 2011 p422

¹¹⁷ Library Note [A Brief Guide to Previous British Defence Reviews](#) SN/IA/5714 provides a more detailed summary of defence reviews and the changes made to the armed forces since the Second World War, including the Sandys Review and the Healey Reviews and the restructuring in the 1990s under the Conservative Government.

¹¹⁸ HC Deb 25 July 1990, c470-88 and *Statement on the Defence Estimates 1991: Britain's Defence for the 1990s*, Cm 1559, July 1991

¹¹⁹ By the mid-1990s the manpower requirement of the British Army would be reduced from 160,000 to 120,000; the Royal Navy and Royal Marines from 63,000 to around 60,000 and the RAF from 89,000 to around 75,000. HC Deb 25 July 1990, c470-88

¹²⁰ The British Army of the Rhine was cut from three static divisions to two, with one based in the UK in peacetime

provided by the Defence Medical Services were also outlined, prompting considerable criticism.

As a result of these recommendations military and civilian personnel within the Armed Forces were to be reduced by 18,700 by the year 2000. The manpower requirement of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines was reduced by 1,900, the Army was cut by 2,200 and the RAF was cut by 7,500. An estimated 7,100 civilian posts were also lost.¹²¹

The restructuring of the 1990s saw huge changes to the regular army. The following table illustrates the reductions of regiments and battalions:¹²²

		1990	1997
Combat arms			
Armour	Regiments	19	11
Infantry	Battalions	55	40
Special Forces	Regiments	1	1
Aviation	Regiments	2	2
Combat support			
Artillery	Regiments	22	15
Engineers	Regiments	13	10
Signals	Regiments	13	11
Combat service support			
Equipment support	Battalions	..	6
Logistics	Regiments	..	24
Medical regiments/field hospitals	Number	16	12

Infantry changes:

- Seven regiments each lost a battalion:
 - The **Grenadier**, **Coldstream** and **Scots Guards** all lost their second battalion.

¹²¹ A further breakdown of manpower reductions is available on p.39 of *Front Line First: The Defence Costs Study*, 1994

¹²² [UK Defence Statistics 2007](#), Chapter 3, table 3.2

- The **Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, Royal Anglians, Light Infantry and Royal Green Jackets** lost their third battalions.
- The **Highlanders (Seaforth, Gordons and Camerons)** was formed from the amalgamation of **The Queen's Own Highlanders (Seaforth and Cameron)** and **The Gordon Highlanders**.
- The **Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment** was formed from the amalgamation of **The Queen's Regiment** and **The Royal Hampshire Regiment**, with two battalions.
- The **Royal Irish Regiment** was formed with the merger of the **Royal Irish Rangers** and **The Ulster Defence Regiment**, with one battalion.
- The **Royal Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and Berkshire regiment** was formed from **The Gloucestershire Regiment** and the **Duke of Edinburgh's Royal regiment**.
- The **Royal Ghurkha Rifles** was formed from the merging of the four regiments of **Ghurkha Rifles** into three battalions, later reduced to two as part of the rundown of British forces in Hong Kong.

It was not just the infantry that was affected - the Royal Armoured Corps was cut from 19 to 11 regiments and The Royal Artillery was reduced from 22 regiments in 1990 to 15 by 1997.

5.2 The Labour Government 1997 - 2010

The last major restructuring of the Armed Forces occurred in 2004. The number of regular infantry battalions was reduced from 40 to 36 with the disbanding of one battalion from the six battalions of the Scottish Division, and three battalions from the thirteen battalions of the Prince of Wales and King's Divisions. The remaining infantry battalions from across all the divisions were to be amalgamated into an infantry structure organised on a division basis but comprised of large single cap badge regiments of two or more battalions. This was outlined in the *Defence White Paper* of December 2003 and the *Future Capabilities* chapter published in July 2004. The new regimental/battalion titles were announced in November 2005 after a period of consultation between the individual regiments and divisions.¹²³

Changes to the composition of the RAF and the Royal Navy were regarded as minimal, with only marginal cuts to both the Royal Navy and RAF fleets.¹²⁴ Changes to the structure and composition of the Army were more significant. The restructuring and 're-rolling' of the Army at brigade and regiment level were intended to transform the Service in line with the notion of rapidly deployable and flexible expeditionary forces.¹²⁵

The restructuring of the Armed Forces included changes to the size and composition of the Infantry. As a result of the intention to phase out the Infantry Arms Plot (regularly moving units) and reduce the Army's commitments in Northern Ireland, those recommendations

¹²³ Library Note The Defence White Paper: Infantry Restructuring SN03329 provides more information about this restructuring.

¹²⁴ The Royal Navy destroyer/frigate fleet was reduced from 35 to 32 ships and the attack submarine fleet was reduced from 12 to 10. The Mine Counter Measures Vessel fleet was reduced from an original requirement of 25 ships to 22. The net effect of changes was a reduction in the Royal Navy's manpower requirement of 1,400. The RAF's fast jet aircraft were reduced from 177 to 154 and 17 Squadron based in Germany disbanded. The air defence force was cut from 100 to 87 aircraft with 29 Squadron disbanded. The RAF Regiment was also reduced from 14 to 13 squadrons.

¹²⁵ More information on the specific recommendations of the SDR is available in Library Research Paper RP98/91 *The Strategic Defence Review White Paper*, 15 October 1998.

envisaged reducing the number of infantry battalions from 40 to 36, with the disbandment of one battalion from the Scottish Division and three from the existing battalions of the King's and Prince of Wales Divisions. The remaining battalions within the Regular Army would be amalgamated into an infantry structure organised on a divisional basis but comprised of large single-cap badge regiments of two or more battalions.¹²⁶

The number of infantry battalions was reduced from 40 to 36:

- **One battalion from the Scots Division:** The Royal Scots and The King's Own Scottish Borderers were merged to become the Royal Scots Borderers, 1st Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland.
- **One battalion from the King's Division:** The King's Own Royal Border Regiment, The King's Regiment and the Queen's Lancashire Regiment were amalgamated into two battalions of a new Regiment called the King's, Lancashire and Border Regiment.
- **One battalion from the Prince of Wales Division:** The Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment and the Devonshire and Dorset Regiment, resulting in a new regiment that would merge with the Light Infantry.
- **The 1st Battalion The Parachute Regiment** was removed from the infantry structure to form the core of a new, tri-service 'Ranger' unit, which came into being as the Special reconnaissance Regiment and is part of the UK Special Forces Group.

Six new regiments were formed in 2006 and 2007 by the following mergers:

- **The Royal Regiment of Scotland** was formed out of the new **Royal Scots Borderers** battalion mentioned above and the **remaining four battalions of the Scottish Division**. The identities of each regiment were preserved by including them in the battalion titles of the new regiment e.g. The Royal Highland Fusiliers, 2nd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland. The Royal Regiment of Scotland has 5 regular battalions.
- **The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment (King's, Lancashire and Border)** was formed by the amalgamation of the King's Own Royal Border Regiment, The Kings Regiment and the Queen's Lancashire Regiment. Initially the regiment was formed of three battalions but reduced to two with the merger of the 3rd battalion into the 1st and 2nd battalions in 2007.
- **The Royal Welsh Regiment** was formed by the combination of the **Royal Welch Fusiliers** and the **Royal Regiment of Wales**, consisting of two battalions. Both retain their regiment name in the suffix in each battalion title e.g. 1st Battalion The Royal Welsh (The Royal Welch Fusiliers).
- **The Mercian Regiment** was formed out of the **Staffordshire Regiment**, the **Cheshire Regiment** and the **Worcester and Sherwood Foresters Regiment**. Each retains its regimental name in its new title e.g. 1st Battalion The Mercian Regiment (Cheshire).

¹²⁶ Library Note SN03329 [The Defence White Paper: Infantry Restructuring](#). April 2007 provides a more detailed examination of the changes made and reaction to those changes.

- **The Yorkshire Regiment** was formed from the Duke of Wellington's Regiment, the Prince of Wales' Regiment and the Green Howards. Each retained its name in the new battalion title as a suffix e.g. 1st Battalion The Yorkshire Regiment (Prince of Wales' Own).
- **The Rifles** was formed from **The Devonshire and Dorset Light Infantry, The Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Light Infantry, The Light Infantry** and **The Royal Green Jackets**, comprising five regular battalions. The 1st Battalion The Rifles was formed from the merger of the Devonshire and Dorset Light Infantry and The Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Light Infantry. The 2nd Battalion and 4th Battalion The Rifles were the new regimental titles of the 1st and 2nd Battalions The Royal Green Jackets respectively; while 1st and 2nd Battalions the Light Infantry became the 5th and 3rd Battalions The Rifles respectively. It is the largest infantry regiment in the British army.

Appendix 1: Army 2020 Regular Regimental Structure

The *Transforming the British Army 2012* document lays out the Regular Regimental Structure for Army 2020¹²⁷:

Household Cavalry and Royal Armoured Corps

Household Cavalry Regiment
Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment
1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards
The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards (Carabiniers and Greys)
The Royal Dragoon Guards
The Queen's Royal Hussars (The Queen's Own and Royal Irish)
The King's Royal Hussars
The Light Dragoons
The Royal Tank Regiment

912 Royal Lancers (Prince of Wales's) & The Queen's Royal Lancers } to amalgamate

Infantry

Regiments of Foot Guards
Grenadier Guards
Coldstream Guards
Scots Guards
Irish Guards
(3 x Public Duty Incremental Companies)

Regiments of Infantry
The Royal Regiment of Scotland
(Four battalions)
(1 x Public Duty Incremental Company)

The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment (Queen's and Royal Hampshires)
(Two battalions)

The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment (King's Lancashire and Border)
(Two battalions)

The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers
(One battalion)

The Royal Anglian Regiment
(Two battalions)

The Rifles
(Five battalions)

The Yorkshire Regiment (14/15th, 19th and 33rd/76th)
(Two battalions)

The Mercian Regiment
(Two battalions)

The Royal Welsh Regiment

¹²⁷ "Transforming the British Army 2012 2012", MOD website, July 2012 p15

(One battalion)

The Royal Irish Regiment (27th (Inniskilling), 83rd, 87th and The Ulster Defence Regiment)
(One battalion)

The Parachute Regiment
(Three battalions – 1st Battalion provides the framework for the Special Forces Support Group)

The Royal Ghurkha Rifles
(Two battalions)

Army Air Corps

1 Regiment AAC
3 Regiment AAC
4 Regiment AAC
5 Regiment AAC

Royal Regiment of Artillery

1st Regiment Royal Horse Artillery
3rd Regiment Royal Horse Artillery
4th Regiment Royal Artillery
5th Regiment Royal Artillery
7th Parachute Regiment Royal Horse Artillery
12th Regiment Royal Horse Artillery
16th Regiment Royal Horse Artillery
19th Regiment Royal Horse Artillery
26th Regiment Royal Horse Artillery
29th Commando Regiment Royal Artillery
32nd Regiment Royal Artillery
47th Regiment Royal Artillery
The King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery

Corps of Royal Engineers

21 Engineer Regiment
22 Engineer Regiment
23 Engineer Regiment (Air Assault)
26 Engineer Regiment
32 Engineer Regiment
33 Engineer Regiment (Explosive Ordnance Disposal)
35 Engineer Regiment
36 Engineer Regiment
39 Engineer Regiment
42 Engineer Regiment (Geographic)
101 (city of London) Engineer Regiment (EOD)
62 Works Group Royal Engineers
64 Works Group Royal Engineers
66 Works Group Royal Engineers
Headquarters Works Group Royal Engineers (Airfields)
59 Independent Commando Squadron Royal Engineers

Appendix 2: Infantry battalions by strength, April 2012

	Establishment	Strength	Strength of Commonwealth and other non-UK personnel
1 Grenadier Guards	536	520	70
1 Coldstream Guards	535	462	25
1 Scots Guards	603	545	45
1 Irish Guards	537	483	95
Welsh Guards	530	506	40
Public Duties element	300	306	30
1 Scots	535	517	55
2 Scots	528	448	65
3 Scots	537	520	75
4 Scots	608	460	90
5 Scots	556	465	80
1 Princess of Wales Royal Regiment	599	594	90
2 Princess of Wales Royal Regiment	535	541	65
1 Royal Regiment of Fusiliers	599	601	70
2 Royal Regiment of Fusiliers	532	523	65
1 Royal Anglian	571	565	35
2 Royal Anglian	538	528	25
1 Lancs	571	551	35
2 Lancs	523	489	35
1 Yorks	533	408	65
2 Yorks	532	487	60
3 Yorks	599	593	70
1 Mercian	533	494	35
2 Mercian	527	439	50
3 Mercian	604	507	75
1 Royal Welsh	527	501	45
2 Royal Welsh	575	529	50
1 RIFLES	532	504	70
2 RIFLES	528	506	85
3 RIFLES	527	511	60
4 RIFLES	571	551	65
5 RIFLES	599	575	90
1 Royal Irish	554	554	150
2 Para	553	463	25
3 Para	548	500	30
1 Royal Gurkha Rifles	552	608	608
2 Royal Gurkha Rifles	573	628	628
Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment	379	390	35
Household Cavalry Regiment	306	336	25
Queen's Dragoon Guards	295	281	15
Scots Dragoon Guards	415	337	65
Royal Dragoon Guards	396	340	15
Queen's Royal Hussars	411	354	15
9/12 Lancers	295	264	10
King's Royal Hussars	396	358	10

Light Dragoons	379	352	15
Queen's Royal Lancers	379	340	10
1 Royal Tank Regiment	358	340	30
2 Royal Tank Regiment	396	370	20

The establishment and strength figures comprise only those soldiers from that unit's specific Arm or Corps, and thus exclude any supporting personnel from other Corps.

Some units will have lower establishment levels than is required due to historic recruiting problems and therefore a more realistic recruiting target has been set.

The term "Commonwealth and other non-UK strength" comprises individuals from Commonwealth countries, the Republic of Ireland and Nepal. Numbers under this category have been rounded to the nearest five.¹²⁸

¹²⁸ [HC Deb 26 June 2012 c190W](#)