

IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST:

TIME TO RESCUE OUR ARMED FORCES

A DEFENCE POLICY FOR AN INDEPENDENT BRITAIN

A POLICY STATEMENT

APRIL 2008



UK INDEPENDENCE PARTY

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1. Introduction

Defence of the Realm is normally considered to be the pre-eminent duty of government. With this policy statement the UK Independence Party alone holds firm to that principle.

Over the years the British armed services have been starved of money by successive governments who chose to believe that they lived in a post-conflict world. Events of recent years have shown this idea to be wrong, and the actions of these governments to be nothing less than culpably complacent.

So complacent as to have broken the covenant between the nation and those who serve it. So disreputable as to have led to dirty homes, closed military hospitals, insufficient equipment, unjust persecutions of military personnel, and ever longer and recurrent tours of duty which damage the fabric of family life, always with consistent financial and manpower overstretch.

What is missing from any of the other main parties is an understanding of the threats – both current and future – that face our nation, how much money we must commit to counter those threats, and the hard decisions needed to prioritise the United Kingdom's choices.

When thinking about the national interest and the position of our services in defending them, it always does well to remember Aristotle's dictum: 'We make war that we may live in peace.'

This policy statement addresses these serious concerns, tackles the disgraceful betrayal of our great armed forces, and charts a bold and imaginative alternate direction.

2. UK Defence Today – What’s Gone Wrong ?

1. Successive Governments, Labour and Conservative equally, have gravely weakened our Armed Services in manpower, morale and equipment. They are overstretched and losing people rapidly. The strength of the UK Regular Armed Forces has fallen by just over a third since 1990 (Source: UK Defence Statistics)
2. We have all but abandoned our ‘Duty of care to those who serve.’ Pay is low; service accommodation is poor; service medical facilities for the treatment of our wounded are few, individual servicemen are persecuted for spurious rights abuses without Crown immunity.
3. Our forces in Iraq and Afghanistan have no clearly defined achievable aims, military or political. There is no single mission in Afghanistan.
4. The Army is undermanned for the tasks it has, and is generally poorly equipped for the roles it is expected to fulfil.
5. The Navy has been badly run down. The Government endlessly postpones building much needed new aircraft carriers. There is a desperate shortage of frigates and coastal forces and major bases such as Plymouth are under threat of closure.
6. The Air Force is under strength in personnel, and has a severe shortage of tankers, transports and helicopters.
7. The defence budget has been cut by too much and can no longer sustain the commitments we have taken on or fund necessary new capital equipment programmes.
8. Our involvement in the European Union is undermining our cornerstone alliances with NATO and the USA, breaking Commonwealth bonds, as well as compromising our defence procurement strategy.

3. UKIP's Defence Vision - Executive Summary

Our recommendations:

1. To defend our national interests, maintain the NATO alliance, support our traditional partners. To disentangle our forces from the EU To keep our independence by retaining – always – ultimate command and control over our national forces.
2. To stop trying to buy defence on the cheap. UKIP will spend an extra 1% GDP year on defence – an increase of 40% on current budgets. UKIP believes in establishing a defence budget which will properly sustain Britain's defence commitments. To keep defence costs down by smarter defence procurement, and with more involvement of British industry wherever possible.
3. To increase the Army to at least 125,000 personnel (trained requirement) in order to enable it to cope with its existing deployment and roles. To double the Territorial Army in size from 37,000 to 75,000 soldiers.
4. To restore the Navy to its 2001 strength, with 3 new aircraft carriers (one extra), 4 assault ships, 30 destroyers and frigates, 12 Fleet Submarines, 25 coastal vessels and 50 Merlin helicopters, with around 7,000 extra personnel to 42,000 (2003–41,550). UKIP would guarantee the futures of Plymouth, Portsmouth and Rosyth and not close any of these ports.
5. To increase the Air Force's capabilities by enlarging the tanker fleet, modernising the transport fleet, buying more helicopters and 50 extra JSF aircraft, and increasing RAF personnel to 50,000.
6. To restore many traditional regiments, such as the Black Watch and Staffords, subsumed as battalions of EU-inspired 'super-regional' regiments such as the Royal Welsh, Royal Mercian and Royal Regiment of Scotland, in order to serve in EU battlegroups
7. To renew the Covenant between the Country and those who are asked to risk their lives on its behalf: through better pay, generous compensation for injury, restoration of Crown immunity, private medical and dental care, reinstatement of military hospitals, decent accommodation, an offence of treason for those UK citizens who seriously attack serving personnel, and above all, respect and support.
8. To withdraw our forces from Iraq, in good order, at an early date. To reappraise our operations in Afghanistan to a single mission.
9. To maintain Britain's independent nuclear deterrent with existing Trident submarines, and to replace them with four British built US missile armed submarines.
10. To retain and increase Army and Territorial Army personnel by pay, free medical and dental care for them and their families, retention 'warrants', school recruitment and other incentives.

4. Our Responsibilities

Our unconditional responsibilities are:

- The Defence of the Realm from direct attack by land, air or sea, from other states and/or from international terrorism
- Being an aid to the civil power in emergencies
- Defence of our 13 remaining overseas territories, principally the Falklands and Gibraltar
- Honouring our obligations under international treaties, primarily NATO, where we have formal commitments to come to the aid of treaty partners
- Defence of our fisheries, shipping, overseas trade including energy supplies, and our embassies and official representatives.

Our conditional responsibilities, where circumstances will present us with options, are:

- United Nations peacekeeping or intervention operations
- Support of our Commonwealth partners
- Continued participation in NATO operations in accordance with our treaty commitments.

5. The Threats to our National Interest

The Middle East

UKIP believes that our forces should not be maintained indefinitely in **Iraq**. As senior officers have said, we are now becoming part of the problem. There is no long term victory to be had.

We should not ‘cut and run’ but should continue to downsize our force and withdraw in an orderly fashion as soon as we can.

Our military presence in **Afghanistan** is part of a NATO mission, rightly supported by the U.K. in order to assist reconstruction there. However it has turned into a long running battle. The history of such wars is unpromising – even the Soviet Union was defeated there. There is no attainable military aim achievable by the size of forces NATO is willing to contribute. **We should re-appraise our operations there, ensure the goals are achievable goals, that a single achievable mission is agreed (rather than current multi missions) and review our commitment.**

The **Middle East** as a whole is an area in constant turmoil that spawns international terrorism, threatens the West’s energy supplies, and may shortly pose a nuclear threat as well. Apart from diplomacy, the UK has no independent ability for military action in the area. Despite the unsustainability of our present military efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan, we must be ready to consider carefully any proposed international missions if we judge that they are in our national interest. **Accordingly, UKIP believes we should maintain**

the ability to operate in the Middle East at an appropriate scale.

International terrorism will normally be the responsibility of the security services and the police. The armed forces may be required if a threat of this kind is expected by sea or air, or if the scale of an event by land is too large for the police to contain. It will be the task of the forces to maintain effective links and procedures with the security services so that they can act in their support.

Among other things, this will require the improvement of our present woefully inadequate coastal forces.

Rogue States will continue to have to be dealt with internationally. As a global trading nation, member of the UN Security Council and one of the leading military powers it will often be in our national interest to be involved. Some of these states are likely to have nuclear weapons in the future, so that it would be irresponsible to abandon our own strategic nuclear deterrent.

Russia is now more prosperous and is becoming stridently nationalist. Russian armed forces are not what they were, but are still considerable and are being modernised. Although the direct threat to the UK is low it still has to be watched. Defence against a Russian threat is a NATO responsibility – **UKIP policy is that British Armed Forces must be maintained at an appropriate level and effectiveness to play its part in any possible threat to the NATO Alliance.**

The Far East /Asia. China is rapidly increasing its economic and military power. What it will do with this is as yet unclear, but the potential is clear. There are focal points of instability in the region between North and South Korea, between China and Taiwan, issues of internal protests in Tibet, between Indonesia and Australia, and to the west of the region between India and Pakistan.

It is safe to say that there will be recurring crises, some of a military nature. As a major global trading nation we cannot be indifferent, but neither do we have much capability to act at this range. We do however have historic ties to Australia and New Zealand.

UKIP policy is that UK should apply to join, as an associate or a full member, the ANZUS defence pact. This involves joint exercises and consultations but has no integrated defence structure or dedicated forces. We should also examine other wider means of Commonwealth defence co-operation.

Fisheries Protection has been lamentably ignored by successive governments.

UKIP policy is that an adequate sea and air capability should be restored. This could well be combined with a more effective Coastguard that would be needed when we reclaim our own territorial waters of up to 200 miles, and using Mine Countermeasures Ships capable of dual purpose minesweeping and fishery patrols (as proposed in UKIP Fishing Paper). UKIP opposes the EU's declared

aim of a full scale Coastguard, which would be an EU Navy by the back door. In addition, UKIP would maintain strict dividing lines between the responsibilities of HM Coastguard and the Royal Navy, and resist EU-inspired moves towards a US-style EU Coastguard.

6. Commitments to Alliances

The **NATO Alliance** which has served us so well must remain a cornerstone of UK Defence Policy. It is the only way in which a major threat to the UK can be countered. It should be remembered that Clause 4 of the NATO treaty still obliges all members to come to the aid of any member who is attacked.

UKIP is deeply concerned at NATO moves to become a part of the EU defence project, as described in de Hoop Scheffer's speech on 15th March 2008 concerning the 'Atlantic Charter' due to be in place for NATO's 60th Anniversary in 2009. NATO must not be Europeanised, its success has been in its transatlantic bonds and with the central role and contribution of the USA and Canada. UKIP will strongly resist NATO Europeanisation.

In addition, NATO has recently begun to intervene in areas outside its membership and its original remit. Since NATO has well tested military command, control, and interoperability procedures well in advance of any other conceivable group of countries, this can be advantageous. However we will only be involved in such operations when it is in our own national interest and when there are specific objectives to be attained.

UKIP will maintain our historic and important defence relationship with our **American** allies. Our military links with the US are vital to our defence effectiveness. We have the only forces sufficiently hi-tech to operate alongside them; so it is in the US interest to maintain our defence effort with R & D and technology we could not possibly develop. Thus our forces, although small, stay world class.

It is foreseeable that in pursuit of our common objectives of global stability and democracy that we shall often be operating with US forces. This is to be welcomed – but it is UKIP policy that we must still consider such operations case by case and against the criteria of **our own national interest**.

From time to time the UK has committed forces to **United Nations** peacekeeping or intervention forces. As a member of the Security Council and the leading second rank military power this is likely to continue – but the UK is no longer policeman to the world.

UKIP policy is that we should be involved only when it is an area of our own historic or economic interest, when we can make a real difference, and when there are defined and achievable objectives.

It is a major objective of the **European Union** to have its own military capability,

operating to EU policies under a single EU command.

The Helsinki Headline Goal¹, adopted in 1999 and revised in 2004, sets the following targets for the EU:

- A European Rapid Reaction Force of up to 60,000 for up to 60 days
- A European Defence Agency
- A full strategic lift capability and European Airlift Centre by 2010
- The establishment of EU Battle groups
- The availability of an Aircraft Carrier and Air Wing by 2008.

UKIP believes Britain should have no involvement with this EU Army. If the UK commits its forces this way we would lose US classified R & D and equipment support, and overall effectiveness. We would lose our independence of action, and thus our Sovereignty.

7. Authorisation, Command and Control of UK Force Deployments

The UK Government must always have the freedom of action to respond instantly when the national interest requires it. Such deployment should also be authorised by Parliament, desirably before commitment but in emergencies immediately after.

In most (but not all) situations where UK forces are deployed they will be operating with forces from other nations, sometimes in command and sometimes under their command.

UKIP believes that our national independence lies in our ability at all times to retain ultimate command and control over our own armed forces, i.e. to assign, re-assign or withdraw them.

8. The UK Nuclear Deterrent

Despite all international disarmament efforts, more and more nations are acquiring nuclear weapons and associated missiles. Currently the nuclear powers are USA, Russia, UK, France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel, with Iran and North Korea well advanced towards them. South Africa and most former Soviet Republics have the know-how.

UKIP believes there is only one defence against countries who threaten to use it – well tested in the Cold War – which is to possess one’s own nuclear weaponry. Mutually Assured Destruction will never be a comfortable concept, but it works.

It is sometimes argued that nuclear weapons will never be used. To accept this is a gamble too far, particularly in the light of emerging nuclear capable extremist states. In any case, the threat is from the coercive power of a nuclear state against a non nuclear

state. Quite simply, there would be no alternative to giving in to whatever demands were being made.

For the foreseeable future only governments will have the ability to control nuclear weapons and to launch nuclear missiles. Such governments are – it has been well demonstrated – deterred from their use by the immediate and certain prospect of their own destruction.

The important factor here is the certainty. A deterrent has to be invulnerable and able to be launched under all and any circumstances. The Vanguard class ‘bomber’ submarines meet these requirements but will soon need replacing. Day to day, operationally, they are independent; although long term their Trident missile system’s supply and refurbishment clearly depends on the US

UKIP’s policy is that the design of four new British built American armed ‘bomber’ missile submarines should start immediately, to preserve the skills base which might otherwise be lost through delay.

9. The UK Defence Budget

The Defence Budget is of course a result of the country’s defence commitments and society’s willingness to pay for them. Defence spending dropped sharply at the end of the Cold War. A ‘Peace Dividend’ was reasonably taken and money diverted to other requirements such as Health and Social Security – but it was overdone. Severe strains in equipping and maintaining our forces in Iraq and Afghanistan have become obvious to the public, and severe and justified criticism has been made by senior servicemen in the House of Lords and by the new UK National Defence Association.

The 2004 Future Capabilities White Paper committed us to supporting three simultaneous small to medium scale operations, including one long running peace keeping operation; or a one off large scale operation and a small scale peace keeping one. UKIP believes this is a reasonable analysis, but one that is not being met in practice.

UKIP policy is that we should spend sufficient monies to carry out effectively the UK’s responsibilities as set out in the 1998 Strategic Defence Review and the 2004 White Paper. At the moment we are achieving neither. The Armed Forces have seen a fall of just over one third since 1990, the Royal Air Force by nearly half (49%) (Source: UK Defence Statistics).

Our defence expenditure in 2005 was 2.3% of the UK’s GDP² (France 2.5%, Germany 1.4%, Italy 1.8%, USA 3.8%, NATO Europe 1.7%). **In short, Britain is spending head for head less than France and much less than the US. We cannot do defence on the cheap. The budget will have to rise substantially to meet the commitments we already have, prepare for others, and to look after those who serve.**

About 50% of the existing defence budget goes on R & D and purchase of equipment.³ The problem – addressed further in the section on Procurement – is that we have not been getting value for money. Witness the reduction in front line forces from 1997 to 2006, despite a slowly rising defence budget.

The Navy went down from 49 destroyers and frigates in 1990 to 25 in 2007 and from 12 submarines to 9; the Army reduced from 55 to 36 Infantry battalions in the same period; the Air Force lost 8 out of 19 strike/attack/reconnaissance squadrons and 5 out of 9 air defence squadrons. Soldiers receiving P45s on the battlefield is not easily forgiven.

As a result the strains on our overstretched armed forces have become so clear that even the Government was forced to acknowledge them. **In January 2007 the then Prime Minister talked of the need to renew the covenant between the Armed Forces, Government and People which means ‘increased expenditure on equipment, personnel and the condition of our armed forces, not in the short run but for the long run.’ (Tony Blair, RUSI Journal 2007)**

UKIP believes that the Defence Budget must rise substantially to meet our present responsibilities, but that if we learn to spend it smarter the rise can be kept within affordable limits.

10. Defence Procurement

The total M.O.D. procurement and research budget for 2007/8 is some £18 billion,⁴ about half of the total defence budget. This is a huge sum, in fact the largest national manufacturing programme, vitally important to UK’s economic welfare. Over the last few decades its management has been decidedly poor.

Many reforms and changes – perhaps too many - have been made. The results are evident for all to see, in the Nimrod programme, the Chinook failures, the submarine building cost/time overruns, the lack of appropriate equipment in Iraq/Afghanistan, and the shrinking military forces we can afford on a rising budget. The recent move to Integrated Project Teams has been in the right direction but much remains to be done, particularly in keeping all sides of the team in post throughout a project.

Joint European procurement has in the main been a failure. Political and management problems, divided administration and national workshare almost invariably make the project late and over budget. Over and above this, there is the political problem of being dependent on the EU for supply.

Buying too much from the US also has problems. There is often a case for doing this when the numbers we need are small but the R.& D. is very high (e.g. Naval Harpoon missile) But going too often to this well would make us a virtual satellite of the US and lose our technological capability to the extent that we could no longer maintain or under-

stand the equipment we had bought (e.g. problems with the specialised Special Forces Chinook Mk 3).

In UKIP's view, the way forward is to:

- **Encourage investment in research and development in the British arms industry so that our armed forces can be supplied with the best possible equipment, preferably by 'buying British' whenever possible; and for the most part obliging major contractors to make better use of medium and small companies, and strengthen the national manufacturing base**
- **Buy a proportion of US equipment where essential but wherever possible ensure British industry is involved in such programmes**
- **Be prepared to buy other foreign equipment where it represents excellent value, but only where there is an overwhelming case for doing so**
- **Trust British industry more. Let them stop chasing the rainbow, change to achievable specifications earlier, and use more commercial components**
- **Keep the new M.O.D. integrated project teams, but keep the same people over the life of the project. Make more use of the customer**
- **Delay production orders until the technology is stable, design frozen, and extensive real time acceptance tests have been passed**
- **Move to fixed priced contracts, and then to limit design changes.**

UKIP believes that Defence Procurement is a very large scale business. Using the money well is the key to better armed forces. It can revitalise our national industrial base. But we have to do it smarter, and we have to increase defence spending by an order of magnitude. UKIP is prepared to increase substantially the capital and resource budgets on defence, including funding a multi-billion investment in defence equipment (see Appendix One for figures).

11. Our Duty to Those who Serve

The men and women in the armed forces voluntarily surrender many of the freedoms enjoyed by civilians. They often face long periods of separation from their families. When duty calls, they must face the possibility of injury or death.

Those who serve understand that it will not make them rich, but their reward is the comradeship they enjoy and the respect of their fellow countrymen on whose behalf they fight. Such respect must certainly extend to an average wage, decent accommodation both in barracks and married quarters, and the best treatment the country can afford if they are wounded.

This respect is now sadly lacking and the country has let its forces down in many ways:

- **Pay has fallen to levels well below that of the Fire and Police services who share equivalent risks**
- **The new tri-service JPA pay system has been poorly managed. Some**

reservists in Iraq/Afghanistan have called home, to find no money has been paid into their accounts for months

- The new and hastily arranged tax rebate for our troops there is evidence of the Government's embarrassment
- Some married quarters and single accommodation at military bases in the UK are not far removed from shanty towns. Senior officers have voiced their concern
- Members of the armed forces in uniform or in hospital have been subject to obscene verbal and physical threats
- Press reports reveal expensive programmes of MOD office and senior residence refurbishment, with luxury items. This reveals MOD insensitivity and lack of care about those who serve.

Medical Facilities are the most shocking situation of all. The systematic closure of 16 military hospitals and associated service medical facilities, and the 55% shortfall in service medical officers, is a folly that has been highlighted by the treatment of wounded servicemen returning from the Middle East.

They have been treated in mixed and open NHS wards, deprived of their uniforms, and sometimes accosted by hostile visitors or patients. Some servicemen visiting their wounded comrades have 'felt more comfortable out of uniform', which speaks volumes.

The only place for those wounded or traumatised in combat is in a military facility where they can recover and be treated by those who understand what they went through.

At the front line, the shortage of Medevac helicopters and the poor state of aeromedical VC 10 aircraft contrasts badly with the attention that US forces pay to their wounded.

UKIP believes this state of affairs – with service men and women poorly paid, badly accommodated, ill equipped and not even properly treated when wounded – is the result of Governments trying to get defence on the cheap. Ministers, MOD civil servants and sometimes senior officers are all culpable for shutting their eyes to the problems. It brings shame on us all. It is time for a new deal between the people and those who put their lives at risk in their service.

UKIP policy is to:

- **Substantially increase compensation for serious injuries for those injured serving their country**
- **Restore Crown immunity for all armed forces, scrap the Human Rights Act and not hold individuals responsible for collective military actions**
- **Offer service personnel, in both the regular and reserve/Territorial Army forces, and their families free private medical and dental cover and care in restored military hospitals**

- **Remedy the shortfall in service doctors, and make it a point of principle that service people are treated in service medical facilities**
- **Reinstate a building/refurbishment programme for military hospitals, primarily for service personnel but available to retired military and also to serve the NHS when space is available**
- **Make a commitment to provide decent modern housing standards for the military and their families**
- **Fund a substantial increase in Service pay, aligning it broadly to that of the Police and Fire Services**
- **Enhance retention of personnel through incentives such as ‘warrants’ - regular cash incentives to make longer service more attractive**
- **Facilitate major recruitment in schools, colleges and universities**
- **Recognise the social benefits of military service in terms of pride, discipline and skills, and taking people off welfare**
- **Make physical or serious verbal assault of serving personnel either a treasonable offence or one of assisting the enemy**
- **Bring military service back to the respected profession it once was.**

12. The Army

Manpower. Of the three services, the Army has suffered most from overstretch in recent years. The Army are fighting what amounts to major wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and simultaneously maintaining large numbers of troops on active service spread throughout Northern Ireland, Sierra Leone, Kosovo, Bosnia, the Falklands, Cyprus and Germany – all on an establishment of about 100,000 men and women.

To achieve these commitments, the Army has consistently breached the Government’s ‘harmony’ targets and ‘maximum commitment’ policy, and has been forced to rely heavily on the Territorial Army. Not surprisingly the Army has a crisis in recruiting and too many are leaving, so the situation is getting steadily worse. Recent amalgamation of the remaining County regiments Recent amalgamation of the remaining County regiments in order to fit them into the EU’s ‘Battlegroup’ structure has been bad for morale. It is probably too late for yet has been bad for morale. It is probably too late for yet another re-organisation, but more infantry are desperately needed.

UKIP believes that UK defence commitments need an Army of at least 125,000, backed by larger numbers of personnel in the Territorial Army, and UKIP is totally committed to the reinstatement of many traditional regiments, and reverse amalgamations since 2001 in particular.

Battalions within new EU-regional ‘super-regiments’, such as the Black Watch (3rd Battalions) and The Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders (5th Battalion) within the EU’s Royal Regiment of Scotland, will be restored to full regimental status, as will the Royal Welsh Fusiliers from the EU’s Royal Welsh (1st Battalion) and the English EU-regional regiments such as the Royal Anglian Regiment or the Staffords amalgamated into the

Royal Mercian Regiment. Famous disbanded regiments such as the Gordon Highlanders and the Rifles will be restored.

At present many units are forced to draw personnel from different regiments and corps to perform operational duties for which they were not recruited. Infantry tasks are being done by Royal Armoured Corps and Royal Artillery specialists, for example. The first priority is therefore to bring all units up to full establishment.

UKIP would seek to recruit more extensively in the Commonwealth, in parallel with UKIP's proposals to restore economic and cultural links to the Commonwealth. UKIP would consider recruiting more Gurkhas – famed for their loyalty and courage. However it is abundantly clear that in present conditions no recruiting drive could succeed without substantial reform of pay and conditions.

Regarding the Territorial Army, UKIP believes the TA has an important social as well as military reserve role, and will seek to double the numbers serving in the Territorial Army.

UKIP recognises that excessive mobilisation (there are currently 1,300 Army reservists mobilised - approaching one in 10 of the TA - ref UKDS) has been a significant deterrence, and should be resisted for future operations. The increase in regular forces should be aimed to reduce this pressure on reserves. UKIP would ensure a good supply of TA specialists, and not just infantry. Incentives such as free medical and dental care will assist recruitment and the passing of medical tests.

Equipment. The job in hand is counter insurgency and low intensity close range warfare – yet far too much money and time is still spent in trying to repel the Russian hordes on the plains of Germany. The EU's Future Rapid Effect System (FRES) combat vehicles, at £16 billion are a case in point. We need to pay much more attention to the supply and delivery of equipment for counter insurgency and low intensity close range warfare. Deficiencies in armoured vehicles, personal equipment, personal armour, and personal weapons have all been extensively criticised by those serving.

A parallel deficiency is the acute shortage of helicopters – Apache assault helicopters, and helicopters for troop transports, supply, medical evacuation, communications, command and control.

At the same time we cannot forget the possibility of higher intensity warfare. We must cut ourselves free from designing future equipment to operate with an EU Battlegroup or EU Rapid Reaction Force, employing EU electronics and Galileo GPS system. It is vital that we equip ourselves to be inter-operable with US forces.

Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Defence (NBCD) is of renewed importance in the face of international terrorism, and must be given more priority.

UKIP recognises the superb contribution the British Army makes in fighting

and peacekeeping operations around the world, but recognises that overstretch is destroying the armed forces, with continuing serious losses of trained personnel. The Army must be increased to meet both current requirements and future needs.

Summary: UKIP's suggested Army measures include:

- **An Army of at least 125,000 and an appropriate number in the Territorial Army**
- **Improved pay, greater incentives for staying on, and better accommodation**
- **Recruit more in the Commonwealth**
- **Better and quicker supply of armoured vehicles and personal equipment**
- **More – and more versatile – helicopters**
- **Spend less time and money aligning our equipment and organisation to EU force requirements.**

13. The Royal Navy

The Royal Navy is now under strength, despite manning standards being reduced on board ships. There are particular shortages in medical staff, weapons systems operators, leading hands (21% short), nuclear watch keepers, and Royal Marines.

Aircraft Carriers - The key to the effectiveness of the Navy – and indeed to the capability of the UK to operate overseas at any kind of intensity – is the possession of fairly large aircraft carriers capable of operating multi-role aircraft and helicopters. After two years' delay the Government has announced that two carriers will be built, but they have not yet been ordered. The first was due to have been in service in 2012, and will now be years late. Meanwhile we have only the 2 light carriers that fought in the Falklands 25 years ago. The UK Independence Party would order a third aircraft carrier (with no extra JSF aircraft), to allow deployment of two carriers in emergencies (as happened during the Falklands), whilst the third is in refit.

Destroyers and Frigates - Royal Navy destroyers and frigates in service were down from 49 in 1990, to 33 in 2001 to just 25 in 2007,⁵ with many confined to port.

New Type 45 destroyers are large ships (over 7,000 tons) designed to operate with and support the carriers. 8 were to have been built, now reduced to 6, with only two launched to date.

Our frigates – the maids of all work for any Navy – have seen comparatively new three Type 23 frigates, the latter built in 1994, sold off, whilst there is no new frigate construction in sight.

Submarines - These, together with Aircraft Carriers, are the ‘Strike Force’ of a modern Navy. Britain has cut its fleet from 37 in the Cold War to just 9 nuclear propelled Fleet ‘attack’ submarines (SSNs) in 2007. Nearly all are over 20 years old – still effective, but needing more maintenance to keep them going. New submarine construction – the impressive Astute Class – has nevertheless been a sorry tale of cost overruns and delays. Eight were planned, and it seems that only 6 or 7 may be built. The first will enter service in 2008.

Trident Strategic Missile Submarines (SSBNs) – The Government has said it will replace the 4 Vanguard class ‘bomber’ submarines, that carry the national nuclear strategic deterrent, with a new British class of SSBN. This is to be welcomed. It is crucially important that the new class, like the Vanguards, is armed with the latest US missiles (to carry the British warheads). A ‘co-operation’ deal with the French would lead to the usual delays and cost overruns and is likely to be taken over as an EU deterrent, with consequent loss of British independence.

Amphibious Vessels – The recently built HMS Albion and Bulwark, together with the Bay class Royal Fleet Auxiliaries, are probably adequate to land a brigade group if they are all operational at one time, which may be unlikely. However one of the amphibious ships is already under threat of mothballing. UKIP would like to see 2 decommissioned Invincible class carriers used as back-up amphibious vessels (HMS Ark Royal is already designated as a LPH amphibious ship).

Mine Warfare and Coastal Vessels – Mines are a weapon ideally suited to terrorists and to small states, and the Royal Navy used to have the world’s leading capability in dealing with them. These vessels also played a key role in fisheries protection and coastal defence (an anti-terrorist requirement just emerging over the horizon). But very few are now left, and UK mine countermeasures expertise has mostly been lost. There are 5 small patrol vessels, and 18 very small patrol boats.

The Naval Reserves and reserve ships – UKIP is in favour of the principle of Naval Reserves, but needs to be convinced of the best means of maintaining naval reserves in such a technological and specialist age. Further study of such reserves will be undertaken.

Summary. Twenty-five years ago Britain retook the Falklands from Argentina in the face of technologically advanced ships, missiles and aircraft. It is now extremely doubtful whether today’s Navy is strong enough to do this.

Britain’s international role, the UK’s greater vulnerability to energy supplies from abroad, and UKIP’s desired shift to greater global and Commonwealth trade, and the globalised nature of the terrorist threat suggest a greater role for the Royal Navy, and for Britain’s ability to project forward power. **UKIP would rebuild the Navy over 10 years to:**

- **3 large Aircraft Carriers with associated Air Group**

- **4 Assault ships, with troop landing helicopters, and converted carriers**
- **6 RFA troop landing ships, with troop landing helicopters (not Roll on/off)**
- **30 destroyers and frigates, all with multi purpose helicopters, kept operational**
- **4 SSBNs (Trident Strategic Missile Submarines)**
- **12 nuclear propelled attack Fleet submarines (SSNs)**
- **25 Minesweepers/Coastal Protection craft**
- **3 RFA Tanker / Support ships**
- **20 extra naval Merlin helicopters**
- **An increase in Royal Navy personnel by around 7,000 to 42,000 (2003 – 41,550)**
- **Safeguard all the Royal Navy ports at Plymouth, Portsmouth and Rosyth - there would be no closures of these ports under UKIP.**

14. The Royal Air Force

The Eurofighter (now designated ‘Typhoon’) – The very large purchase of Eurofighters was conceived for the Cold War, and continued for industrial reasons. However they have been bought and are good aeroplanes, with a largely British engine and radar. It is clear that if these aircraft had been designed and ordered these as an all-British project we would have had them earlier and at less cost.

The Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) – This is a US project, and the MOD requirement is for 150 aircraft at £7.5 billion (2003 prices) This is too many for just 2 Aircraft carriers, and presumably half the aircraft are to replace the Harriers. 150 would be sufficient to supply 2 carriers at sea in an emergency however, with 3 carriers ordered, as per UKIP policy. UKIP would order an additional 50 JSFs (‘Lightnings’) for RAF use, but which would be available for naval use from carriers and supports ships if required, as with Harriers.

Transport and Tanker Fleet - The RAF currently has a tanker fleet of 21 aircraft (VC-10 and Lockheed Tristar), to be replaced in 2013 by just 14 Airbus A330s operating under a PFI agreement. The existing 21 seem inadequate for our Iraq/ Afghanistan operations, and a reduction to 14 will be grossly inadequate. UKIP suggests a like for like replacement of 21 A330s. UKIP considers that PFI agreements and part ownership with commercial airlines are not suitable for military purposes and will buy direct.

The current transport fleet is 57 aircraft, 50 of which are the Hercules. The plan is to replace these with the Airbus A400M. This aircraft has not yet flown and its carrying capacity is doubted. UKIP proposes that the UK buys 10 of the very satisfactory Boeing C-17, replacing the 4 leased (up to 6 in 2008), before its production line shuts in 2009.

Helicopters - Operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have revealed a desperate shortage of

all types of helicopters in all 3 services. UKIP sees a minimum requirement of:

- 60 Chinook heavy lift helicopters (up from 35 now)
- Medium lift helicopters – more Merlins to replace the RAF Puma and the RN Sea King HC4, and more Merlins to replace RAF and RN Air Sea rescue assets (and which should not be provided through a PFI contract)
- Light helicopters – We should buy as many inexpensive commercial helicopters as we can, for multiple duties across all 3 services. There is always a need.

Maritime Patrol Aircraft - The requirement for surveillance aircraft, over land and sea, will extend far into the future. The electronic fits of these aircraft are necessarily sophisticated and expensive, particularly given the tragic and scandalous loss of life from current Nimrod fuel leaks.

The difficulties faced by this presently ageing Nimrod fleet, and the delays in the NMRA 4 replacement programme, are of great concern.

The RAF has been decimated most by defence cuts, with a 49% fall in personnel since 1990, but the role for ground support, heavy lift, surveillance is a growing and under resourced need owing to UK commitments abroad at present. The RAF needs to be built up again.

Summary – UKIP supports:

- **Bringing the R.A.F. up to strength in personnel, with an extra 6,000 personnel**
- **Backing the Joint Strike Fighter programme and adding 50 extra planes**
- **Enlarging the tanker fleet**
- **Modernising the transport fleet, and buying C-17s outright**
- **Buying more helicopters, as a matter of priority**
- **Putting the maritime patrol aircraft programme back on track as soon as possible.**

Appendix One: UKIP Additional Defence spending - indicative figures

Overall Defence Budget figures

UKIP is committed to an increase of 40% in defence spending, around 1% of UK GDP.

For illustration, a 40% increase on 2007/08 figures of £32.6 billion (source: MOD), would equate to an additional defence spend of £13.04 billion p.a., and an increase in the defence budget to £45.92 billion p.a. for that year.

The increase in the total capital spend is indicated below as an additional £27.4 billion over the proposed 10 year programme (plus the army capital spend which is less programme specific and is included in the overall spending increase). This equates to an average of £2.7 billion p.a. over the 10 years.

The increase in the total revenue spend (which includes a proportionate increase in army capital spend and extra personnel, pay, incentives and facilities) is £10.43 billion p.a.

ROYAL NAVY

	Current Strength	UKIP proposal	UKIP Change	Cost (£bn)
Nuclear Submarines	4	4	0	17.0*
Aircraft Carriers	2	3	+ 1	1.9
Assault Ships	3	5	+ 2	0.5**
Fleet Submarines	9	12	+ 3	1.5
Minesweepers/ C o a s t a l Protection	16	25	+ 9	0.6
Frigates/ Destroyers	17	30	+ 13	7.3***
RFA Troop Landing ships (Bay class)	4	6	+ 2	0.25****
RFA T a n k e r s / Supports	17	20	+ 3	0.45*****
Merlin Naval Helicopters	30	50	+ 20	0.4*****
Total	102	155	+ 53	+ 12.9*
Naval Personnel (Trained requirement)	36,470	42,000	+ 6,890	N/A

Notes

* UK government already spending this, therefore not included in total increased costs by UKIP

** UK proposes using 2 of the Invincible class aircraft carriers as back-up assault ships, with a minimal cost for refits. The necessary Aircraft are covered elsewhere

*** Figure assumes order as if for Type 45 destroyers at £560 million each, but refitting of Type 23, 22 or Type 42 destroyers such as the HMS York upgrade would be a lower cost alternative, or an updated new batch of Type 23 frigates

**** MOD July 2006 suggested unit cost of £93.5m for BAE, assume 125m for 2

***** Navy News: RFA Wave Ruler launched 2003 cost £110m . Allowing for £150m
 *****22 May 2007 Written Answer to Ann Winterton MP for RAF Mk3 = £19
 million each.

ROYAL AIR FORCE

	Current Strength	UKIP proposal	UKIP Change	Cost (£bn)
Chinook	27HC2 + 8HC3 unused = 35	60	+ 25	2.5*
Boeing C-17	4 + 2 extra = 6 (leased)	10 (purchase)	+ 10	1.9**
Merlin Air Force Helicopters	15	35	+ 20	0.8
Joint Strike Fighters	0	200	+ 50	2.5***
Commercial Helicopters	0	15	+ 15	0.3****
A330 Airbus MRTT tankers	14 ordered	21	+ 7	6.5*****
Total	46	295	+ 249	14.5
RAF Personnel (Trained requirement)	42,160	50,000	+ 6,060	N/A

Notes

* Chinook cost is calculated at approximately 100 million each. 14 Chinooks were purchased by the RAF in 1995 for £240 million, a cost of £60 million each.

** US cost of C-17 to USAF estimated at \$330.8m including training and spares @\$1.80 = £1 pound = £183.8 million each. Leasing cost savings would also be made.

*** The MOD has 150 JSV orders projected at a cost of £7.5 billion (£50 million each) UKIP would increase the order by 50 RAF aircraft, which could be used off carriers if required

**** Assuming commercial helicopters at price of Merlin(Parliamentary answer as above) of £19 million each - reports in October 2006 suggested Danish Merlin helicopters may be available or leasing of Russian made Mi17 Hip and/or three giant Mi26 Halo transporters

***** The MOD ordered 14 Airbus A330 MRTT tankers to replace 21 L-1001 and VC-10 Tankers in June 2007. UKIP believes this is insufficient and is against the PFI deal mechanism. UKIP is recommending a straight swap of 21 planes for 21 existing planes, at £309.5 million each.

ARMY

	Current Strength	UKIP proposal	Change	Cost (£bn)
Regiments	120*	165	+ 45	N/A***
Totals	120	165	+45	N/A
Regular Army personnel (Trained Requirement)	101,800	125,000	+ 23,200	N/A
Territorial Army Personnel	36,790**	75,000	+ 38,210	N/A

Notes

* 120 regiments include combat arms, such as infantry and armour, combat support such as artillery and engineers, and combat services support such as medical and logistics. UKIP would aim to reverse cuts made post 1997 in Armoured regiments - 9 cut, 9 restored, Infantry - 19 battalions cut, restore 20, Artillery - 8 cut, restore 8, Medical regiments /field hospitals - 8 cut, 8 restored. At around 600 men per batallion / regiment this equates to 27,000 extra troops, 2,000 to make up the deficit in troop levels.

** Territorial Army at 1 April 2007, excluding university and cadet forces.

*** Costings per soldier not available. UKIP's costings assume broadly similar costs to existing regular or reserve costings, and UKIP assumes an across board increase in personnel and equipment, rather than specific capital programmes. This is allowed for in overall spending figures. It is also assumed equipment is passed from regular to reserve forces as new equipment is introduced.

References

- 1 Helsinki Headline Goal 2010, adopted in June 2004 at the Brussels European Council when the member states acknowledged that the 1999 Headline Goal had not been achieved
- 2 Ministry of Defence Annual Report & Accounts for 2005-2006, HC 1394, 14 July 2006
- 3 Defence Industrial Strategy, UK MoD Cm 6697, December 2005
- 4 Budget 2007, Summary Leaflet PU204, HM Treasury, March 2007
- 5 Details from UK Defence Statistics 2006

Acknowledgements

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Annexes to the UKIP Defence Policy Paper (unpublished)

- A. Britain's Defences and the European Union: Gerard Batten MEP
- B. Defence Procurement: David MacDonald
- C. Service Family Accommodation: David Rutland
- D. Defence Medical Policy & Practice: Simon Dandy.



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