



DOCUMENTATION

This issue's Documentation section features Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's statement announcing the commencement of Operation Rising Lion. The operation was designed to reduce the Iranian threat to Israel's security. The Documentation section also provides the Introduction and Overview sections of the UK Ministry of Defence's Strategic Defence Review. The Review discusses changes to strategic environment and the best pathway for the UK defence forces to adapt to them. Lastly, the Documentation section provides excerpts from Section 20008 of a January 3, 2025, Act of Congress that provides for the enhancement of resources for nuclear forces, a commendable and overdue step in bolstering U.S. nuclear defense capabilities.

Document No. 1. Benjamin Netanyahu, "Statement by PM Netanyahu," June 13, 2025.¹

Moments ago Israel launched Operation Rising Lion, a targeted military operation to roll back the Iranian threat to Israel's very survival. This operation will continue for as many days as it takes to remove this threat. For decades the tyrants of Tehran have brazenly, openly called for Israel's destruction. They've backed up their genocidal rhetoric with a program to develop nuclear weapons. In recent years Iran has produced enough highly enriched uranium for nine atom bombs, nine.

In recent months Iran has taken steps that it has never taken before, steps to weaponize this enriched uranium. And if not stopped, Iran could produce a nuclear weapon in a very short time. It could be a year, it could be within a few months, less than a year.

This is a clear and present danger to Israel's very survival. 80 years ago the Jewish people were the victims of a holocaust perpetrated by the Nazi regime. Today the Jewish state refuses to be a victim of a nuclear holocaust perpetrated by the Iranian regime.

Now as prime minister I've made it clear time and again Israel will never allow those who call for our annihilation to develop the means to achieve that goal. Tonight Israel backs those words with action. We struck at the heart of Iran's nuclear enrichment program. We struck at the heart of Iran's nuclear weaponization program. We targeted Iran's main enrichment facility in Natanz. We targeted Iran's leading nuclear scientists working on the Iranian bomb. We also struck at the heart of Iran's ballistic missile program. Last year Iran fired 300 ballistic missiles at Israel. Each of these missiles carries a ton of explosives and threatens the lives of hundreds of people. Soon those missiles could carry a nuclear payload, threatening the lives not of hundreds, but of millions.

Iran is gearing up to produce 10,000s of those ballistic missiles within 3 years. Now just imagine, imagine 10,000 tons of TNT landing on a country the size of New Jersey. This is an intolerable threat, it too must be stopped. Iran is now working on what it calls the new plan to destroy Israel. You see the old plan failed. Iran and its proxies tried to encircle Israel with a ring of fire and to attack us with the horrible attack of October 7th. But the people of Israel, the soldiers of Israel, rose like lions to defend our country.

¹. Benjamin Netanyahu, "Statement by PM Netanyahu," *YouTube*, June 12, 2025, available at <https://youtu.be/Vsj5pw4QPls?si=SEwoq88YpmqMRxY2>.



We crushed Hamas, we devastated Hezbollah. We hit Iranian proxies in Syria and Yemen and when Iran directly attacked us twice last year we struck back inside Iran itself. Yet in defending ourselves we also defend others. We defend our Arab neighbors. They too have suffered from Iran's campaign of chaos and carnage. Our actions against Iran's proxy Hezbollah led to the establishment of a new government in Lebanon and the collapse of Assad's murderous regime in Syria. The peoples of those two countries now have a chance for a different future, a better future. So too do the brave people of Iran.

And I have a message for them. Our fight is not with you, our fight is with the brutal dictatorship that has oppressed you for 46 years. I believe that the day of your liberation is near and when that happens the great friendship between our two ancient peoples will flourish once again.

I want to assure the civilized world we will not let the world's most dangerous regime get the world's most dangerous weapons. And Iran plans to give those weapons, nuclear weapons, to its terrorist proxies. That would make the nightmare of nuclear terrorism all too real. The increasing range of Iran's ballistic missiles would bring that nuclear nightmare to the cities of Europe and eventually to America. Remember Iran calls Israel the small Satan, it calls America the great Satan. And this is why for decades it's led millions in the chants of "death to Israel" and "death to America."

Today Israel is responding to those genocidal calls with action and with a call of our own. "Long live Israel" and "long live America." Our action will help make the world a much safer place. I want to thank President Trump for his leadership in confronting Iran's nuclear weapons program. He has made clear time and again that Iran cannot have a nuclear enrichment program. Today it is clear that Iran is just buying for time. It refuses to agree to this basic requirement of peaceful nations. That is why we have no choice but to act and act now.

The hardest decision any leader has to make is to thwart a danger before it is fully materialized. Nearly a century ago facing the Nazis a generation of leaders failed to act in time. They were paralyzed by the horrors of World War I. They were determined to avoid war at all cost and they got the worst war ever. They adopted a policy of appeasement, they closed their eyes and ears to all the warning signs.

That failure to act resulted in World War II, the deadliest war in history. It claimed the lives of 60 million including 6 million Jews, a third of my people. After that war the Jewish people and the Jewish state vowed "Never again." Well "never again" is now. Today Israel has shown that we have learned the lessons of history when enemies vow to destroy you, believe them. When enemies build weapons of mass death, stop them. As the Bible teaches us, when someone comes to kill you, rise and act first. This is exactly what Israel has done today; we have risen like lions to defend ourselves.

Over 3,000 years ago, Moses gave the people of Israel a message that has stealed their resolve ever since: be strong and courageous, he said. Today our strong and courageous soldiers and people stand together to defend ourselves against those who seek our destruction. And by defending ourselves, we defend many others. And we roll back a murderous tyranny. Generations from now history will record that our generation stood its

ground, acted in time, and secured our common future. May God bless Israel. May God bless the forces of civilization everywhere. Thank you.

Document No. 2. Ministry of Defence of the United Kingdom, *Strategic Defence Review, 2025, (Introduction and Overview)*²

1. **A generational challenge demands a generational response.** For the first time since the end of the Cold War, the UK faces multiple, direct threats to its security, prosperity, and democratic values. The world itself is beset by volatility and deep uncertainty.

2. In response, the UK, with its allies—especially those in NATO—must once again be ready to deal with the most demanding of circumstances: **deterring and preventing a full-scale war by being ready to fight and win.** Until recently, such a war against another country with advanced military forces was unthinkable. It would likely be high-intensity, protracted, and costly in every way. Moving to warfighting readiness in this new era is essential.

3. With rapid advances in technology driving the greatest change in how war is fought for more than a century, **the UK must pivot to a new way of war.** It must continually harness new technology and think differently about what conventional ‘military power’ is and how to generate it. In modern warfare, simple metrics such as the number of people and platforms deployed are outdated and inadequate. It is through dynamic networks of crewed, uncrewed, and autonomous assets and data flows that lethality³ and military effect are now created, with military systems making decisions at machine-speed and acting flexibly across domains.

4. **The UK’s Armed Forces must once again be able to endure in long campaigns** through assured access to key capabilities—all underwritten by a thriving industry that is ready to scale and sustain innovation and production as required.

5. And in a decisive shift from the post-Cold War era, **a renewed emphasis on home defence and resilience is also imperative,** with ‘sub-threshold’ activities,⁴ growing access to space

² The full report is available at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/683d89f181deb72cce2680a5/The_Strategic_Defence_Review_2025_-_Making_Britain_Safer_-_secure_at_home_strong_abroad.pdf.

³ Where ‘lethality’ refers to the combat power (disruptive and destructive force) of the Armed Forces.

⁴ Sub-threshold’ attacks do not always meet the legal threshold of ‘war’. They include the use of espionage, political interference, sabotage, assassination and poisoning, electoral interference, disinformation, propaganda, and Intellectual Property theft. Such attacks are often difficult to attribute to a perpetrator with certainty due to the methods used and the frequent reliance of some states on proxy actors. In this Review, we use the term ‘sub-threshold’ attack. Others may refer to ‘grey-zone attacks’ because such acts lie in the ‘grey zone’ between ‘peace’ and ‘war’, challenging the clarity of the legal distinction between the two. The term ‘hybrid warfare’ is often used interchangeably with these terms but we take this to

and cyberspace, and unrelenting advances in weapons systems all making it easier for adversaries to cause the UK harm, even at distance.

6. Where previous reviews have more narrowly addressed the Armed Forces, this Strategic Defence Review (SDR) delivers the **'root-and-branch' review of UK Defence** that was commissioned by the Prime Minister in July 2024 in response to this rapidly changing world. It outlines the deep reform needed **'to ensure the United Kingdom is both secure at home and strong abroad—now and for the years to come'**.⁵

7. Overseen by the Secretary of State for Defence, the SDR was unprecedented in being led by external Reviewers: Lord (George) Robertson; General Sir Richard Barrons; and Dr Fiona Hill. It has been conducted within the Terms of Reference set by the Government and latterly costed within an increased defence budget of 2.5% of GDP from April 2027 and 3% in the 2030s, subject to economic and fiscal conditions.⁶ The Review process, including its extensive engagement with internal and external expertise, is set out in the Appendix.

8. In this report, we set out:

- **Why UK Defence needs to change**, considering the international and security context in the period to 2040 and the current state of Defence (Chapter 2).⁷
- **What roles Defence should perform and where** in the coming years (Chapter 3).
- **How the Armed Forces should fight and how wider Defence should support that fight**, with the transformation of UK warfighting delivered by an empowered and adaptive workforce (Chapter 4).
- **Who Defence should fight alongside**: the centrality of allies and partners with which the UK can build industrial power and common capabilities, and ultimately fight and win (Chapter 5); and the importance of a renewed connection with UK society to ensure resilience and strategic depth in the event of crisis or conflict (Chapter 6).
- **The capabilities with which the Integrated Force should fight** (Chapter 7), addressing the front-line elements and foundational enabling capabilities of UK

have a more specific meaning, whereby 'kinetic' military action is used simultaneously with sub-threshold attacks to pursue a state's objectives.

⁵ Strategic Defence Review 2024-2025: Terms of reference - GOV.UK, 17 July 2024.

⁶ Strategic Defence Review 2024-2025: Terms of reference - GOV.UK, 17 July 2024; Prime Minister's Oral Statement to the House of Commons: 25 February 2025. The Prime Minister also announced the intention to recognise the contribution of the UK Intelligence Community (UKIC) to the defence of the UK, with Defence and UKIC together spending 2.6% of GDP on defence by 2027.

⁷ This Review has considered the strategic context in the period to 2040. However, the MOD's programming works on ten-year cycles. This is reflected in this report, which articulates a vision for Defence and a path to transformation by 2035.

Defence—creating a force fit for war in the 21st century through the new ten-year Defence Investment Plan.⁸

A new era of threat

9. **This is an important moment for the UK and its allies** (Chapter 2). Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022 was a strategic inflection point. It irrefutably demonstrated the changing and dynamic nature of the threat, with state-on-state war returning to Europe, adversaries using nuclear rhetoric in an attempt to constrain decision-making, and the UK and its allies under daily attack beneath the threshold of war as part of intensifying international competition. The conflict has also shown the power of emerging technology to change where, how, and with what war is fought. Armed Forces that do not change at the same pace as technology quickly risk becoming obsolete.

10. Importantly, Ukraine is just one flashpoint of many amid growing global instability and a **volatility that is exemplified by the remarkable rate of change in the international landscape** since this Review was launched in 2024. Most immediately relevant at the time of writing, this includes: negotiations for a ceasefire in the Ukraine-Russia war; the possible deployment of a ‘reassurance force’ to Ukraine in the event of a ceasefire; and major questions about the future of European security that inevitably follow the United States’ change in security priorities, as its focus turns to the Indo-Pacific and the protection of its homeland.⁹ Fundamentally, the UK’s longstanding assumptions about global power balances and structures are no longer certain.

11. UK Armed Forces have begun the necessary process of change in response to this new reality. But progress has not been fast or radical enough. **The Armed Forces remain shaped by the risks and demands of the post-Cold War era**—optimised for conflicts primarily fought against non-state actors on Europe’s periphery and beyond. Although substantial and demanding, these operations also did not require ‘whole-of-society’ preparations for war, home defence, resilience, and industrial mobilisation.

A new era for UK Defence

12. In response to this strategic context, our Review articulates a new era for Defence. Building on changes already underway, **our vision is that, by 2035, UK Defence will be:**

A leading tech-enabled defence power, with an Integrated Force that deters, fights, and wins through constant innovation at wartime pace.

⁸ Which will replace the Equipment Plan.

⁹ Opening Remarks by Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth at Ukraine Defense Contact Group, Brussels, Belgium, 12 February 2025.

Defence must be able to fulfil its fundamental role: to deter threats to the UK and its allies by being ready for war, and to provide the definitive insurance policy should deterrence fail. This should be pursued as part of a whole-of-society approach to deterrence and defence under which Defence combines its strengths with those of wider Government, industry, and society.

Roles for UK Defence

13. The starting point for this Review is the Government's 'NATO First' policy (Chapter 3). There is an unequivocal need for the UK to redouble its efforts within the Alliance and to **step up its contribution to Euro-Atlantic security** more broadly—particularly as Russian aggression across Europe grows and as the United States of America adapts its regional priorities. In a shift in approach, the Alliance should be mainstreamed in how Defence plans, thinks, and acts.

14. **'NATO First' does not mean 'NATO only'**. The UK should take a pragmatic approach to bolstering collective security in the Euro-Atlantic through stronger bilateral and minilateral partnerships.¹⁰ The Alliance itself recognises the importance of working with partners outside the region—reflecting the connection between Euro-Atlantic security and that of other regions such as the Middle East and Indo-Pacific. Defence must also be able to pursue and protect the UK's significant interests, commitments, and responsibilities outside the region, including the defence of its sovereign territory.

15. Nevertheless, the fundamental importance of meeting Alliance commitments and shaping deterrence in the Euro-Atlantic every day is reflected in **the enduring and mutually reinforcing roles that Defence must fulfil**. The three core Defence roles are:

- **Role 1:** Defend, protect, and enhance the resilience of the UK, its Overseas Territories, and Crown Dependencies.
- **Role 2:** Deter and defend in the Euro-Atlantic.
- **Role 3:** Shape the global security environment.
- The two enabling roles for Defence are to:
 - Develop a thriving, resilient defence innovation and industrial base.
 - Contribute to national cohesion and preparedness.

Transforming UK warfighting

16. To meet the threats of today and tomorrow, **Defence must fundamentally change how it fights and how it supports that fight**: rapidly increasing the Armed Forces' lethality and enhancing their ability to fight at the leading edge of technology (Chapter 4). Drawing on lessons from the war in Ukraine and enabled by organisational change under Defence

¹⁰ 'Minilateral' refers to smaller groupings of countries.

Reform, the whole of Defence (the Armed Forces and Department of State together) should be driven by **the logic of the innovation cycle**— able to find, buy, and use innovation, pulling it through from ideas to front line at speed.

17. At the heart of this transformation are three fundamental changes in approach. Defence must be:

Integrated by design. For the Armed Forces to be more lethal than the sum of their parts, they **must complete the journey from ‘joint’ to ‘integrated’**: designed and directed as one force under the authority of the Chief of the Defence Staff, and delivered according to this design by the single Services and Strategic Command. Under this new model, there is no fixed force design to be delivered by a specified date. The design and capabilities of the Integrated Force, and the way that wider Defence supports it, must continue to evolve as threats and technology do. The Integrated Force must be **capable of operating in different configurations**: as part of NATO Component Commands by design; in coalition; and as a sovereign force. To deliver a step-change in lethality, the Integrated Force must be **underpinned by a common digital foundation and shared data**. Delivery should be a top priority. A single ‘digital mission’—to deliver a digital ‘targeting web’¹¹ in 2027—should enable Defence to succeed where it has previously failed, as should the creation of an expert Digital Warfighters group that can be deployed alongside front-line personnel (Chapter 4.1).

Innovation-led. Today, much of the best innovation is found in the private sector, while the increasing prevalence of dual-use technologies¹² has widened the net of potential suppliers that can contribute to Defence outcomes. **Defence must embrace its role in seeding innovation and growth**, rapidly adopting new technology to keep the Integrated Force at the forefront of warfare. In particular, Defence should build relationships with the investors behind the innovators. External expertise should be systematically accessed through a new Defence Investors’ Advisory Group whose membership includes venture capital and private equity investors, while private finance should be crowded in under new funding models. To set itself up for success internally, Defence should reorganize existing structures to create two distinct organisations under the National Armaments Director:

- A Defence Research and Evaluation organisation,¹³ focused on enabling external early-stage research and providing a gateway to academia.
- The new UK Defence Innovation (UKDI) organisation,¹⁴ focused on harnessing commercial innovation, including dual-use technologies. UKDI will have a ringfenced annual budget of at least £400m (Chapter 4.2).

¹¹ The digital targeting web would connect ‘sensors’, ‘deciders’, and ‘effectors’. This creates choice and speed in deciding how to degrade or destroy an identified target across domains and in a contested cyber and electromagnetic domain.

¹² Technology developed for civilian use but with potential military applications.

¹³ Potentially retaining the Dstl brand.

¹⁴ Announced in March 2025. Government to turbocharge defence innovation - GOV.UK.

Industry-backed. To develop a thriving, resilient innovation and industrial base that can scale in support of the Integrated Force, **Defence must create a new partnership with industry.** Under the forthcoming Defence Industrial Strategy and the leadership of the National Armaments Director, this involves **overhauling acquisition processes** from top to bottom: engaging industry early in procurement processes on desired outcomes; ensuring that suppliers are rewarded for productivity and for taking risks; and reducing the burden on potential suppliers from startups to primes. At the heart of this partnership should be a new, segmented approach to procurement:¹⁵

- Major modular platforms (contracting within two years).
- Pace-setting spiral and modular upgrades (contracting within a year).
- Rapid commercial exploitation (contracting within three months), with at least 10% of the MOD's equipment procurement budget spent on novel technologies each year.

Exports and international capability partnerships¹⁶ should also be mainstreamed into acquisition processes from the outset, with responsibility for defence exports returned to the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and a new framework for building and sustaining government-to-government relationships. Investment decisions should consider associated costs to ensure they are genuinely affordable—for example, through-life upgrades, acquisition and support, and attendant changes to infrastructure (Chapter 4.2).

18. By more purposefully using its market power and by prioritising UK-based business, Defence should also strive to **deliver for the UK economy while delivering for the warfighter.** Defence has **significant untapped potential to be a new engine for growth** at the heart of the UK's economic strategy. Radical root-and-branch reform of defence procurement—combined with substantial investment in innovation, novel technology, advanced manufacturing, and skills—would grow the productive capacity of the UK economy. Defence should aim high, measuring success in the number and scale of defence and dual-use technology companies in the UK. Success will also see **significant improvement in Defence productivity, competitiveness, exports, and value for money,** supported by the new Defence Reform and Efficiency Plan (Chapter 4.2).¹⁷

19. **This transformation of UK Defence must ultimately be delivered by its people** (Chapter 4.3), empowered through changes in culture and 'people' policies that remove red tape and eradicate behaviour that is unacceptable in the workplace. Targeted intervention is needed to tackle Defence's workforce crisis—improving recruitment through faster, more

¹⁵ Announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in March 2025. Spring Statement 2025, p. 36.

¹⁶ Such as AUKUS and the Global Combat Air Programme (GCAP). Under AUKUS, Australia, the UK, and the US will develop conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarines that are interchangeable, as well as advanced technologies such as AI, autonomous systems, cyber, hypersonic missiles, and underwater warfare. Under GCAP, Italy, Japan, and the UK will develop a sixth-generation aircraft—part of the Future Combat Air System, comprising crewed aircraft, uncrewed platforms, next-generation weapons, networks, and data-sharing.

¹⁷ Prime Minister's Oral Statement to the House of Commons: 25 February 2025.

flexible options such as military ‘gap years’, and improving retention through the MOD’s planned ‘flexible working’ initiative and prioritised investment this Parliament in accommodation that falls well short of the standards required.

20. The focus must be on maximising the effectiveness of the ‘whole force’:¹⁸

- To fulfil the roles set out in this Review, there is no scope for reducing the number of highly trained and equipped Regulars across all three Services, even as the forces move to a much greater emphasis on autonomy. Overall, we envisage an increase in the total number of Regular personnel when funding allows. This includes a small uplift in Army Regulars as a priority.
- Increasing the number of Active Reserves by 20% when funding allows (most likely in the 2030s) and reinvigorating the relationship with the Strategic Reserves.
- Reshaping the Civil Service workforce with an emphasis on performance, productivity, and skills, reducing costs by at least 10% by 2030.
- Releasing military personnel in back-office functions to front-line roles and automating 20% of HR, Finance, and Commercial functions by July 2028. This should be a minimum first step.
- Reforming training and education so that it is much more adaptive to operational lessons, ensures managed risks can be taken in military training, and creates greater capacity and flexibility through developing a single virtual environment. Civilian qualifications and education provision should be used where possible to increase efficiency and to reduce the barriers between Defence, industry, and wider society.

Strengthening deterrence through alliances and partnerships

21. The UK must bolster collective security and create strategic depth by actively investing in its relationships (Chapter 5). Finite resources mean the UK cannot be everything to everyone. It must prioritise its approach, informed by the roles outlined in Chapter 3 and using the full range of tools available to it.

22. Bilateral agreements and capability partnerships—with the United States and European NATO Allies—offer a powerful tool through which to strengthen relationships and Euro-Atlantic stability. The same is true of minilateral activity, including through the Joint Expeditionary Force, E3, and E5 formats,¹⁹ supplemented by implementation of the UK-EU Security and Defence Partnership. AUKUS and the Global Combat Air Programme must be developed as exemplars of capability collaboration and a powerful signal of the UK’s

¹⁸ Incorporating the Regular and Reserve forces, civil servants, and contractors.

¹⁹ The Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF) is UK-led and comprises nine other members: Denmark; Estonia; Finland; Iceland; Latvia; Lithuania; the Netherlands; Norway; and Sweden. The E3 is a format for diplomatic cooperation between France, Germany, and the UK, while the E5 is a format for diplomatic cooperation between France, Germany, Italy, Poland, and the UK.

ambition to bring partners from different geographic regions closer together in support of collective security. Doubling down on support to Ukraine in pursuit of a durable political settlement is critical, as is learning from its extraordinary experience in land warfare, drone, and hybrid conflict.

Home defence and resilience: a whole-of-society approach

23. A renewed focus on home defence and resilience is vital to modern deterrence, ensuring continuity in national life in a crisis (Chapter 6). Reconnecting Defence with society should be the starting point, as part of a national conversation led by the Government on defence and security. This can be achieved in part through expanding Cadet Forces by 30% by 2030 (with an ambition to reach 250,000 in the longer term) and working with the Department for Education to develop understanding of the Armed Forces among young people in schools.

24. A more substantive body of work is necessary to ensure the security and resilience of critical national infrastructure (CNI) and the essential services it delivers. The MOD should explore, with wider Government, a 'new deal' for the protection and defence of CNI that is rooted in partnership with private-sector and allied operators. To support this, the Royal Navy should play a new leading and coordinating role in securing undersea pipelines, cables, and maritime traffic.

25. The Government must also be able to achieve a sustainable and effective transition to war if necessary. A new Defence Readiness Bill should provide the Government with powers in reserve to mobilise Reserves and industry should crisis escalate into conflict. It should also facilitate external scrutiny of UK warfighting readiness.

The Integrated Force: a force fit for war in the 21st century

26. The essential task is to transform the Armed Forces, restore their readiness to fight, and reverse the 'hollowing out' of foundational capabilities without which they cannot endure in protracted, high-intensity conflict (Chapter 7).

27. The UK must continue to dedicate its independent nuclear deterrent to NATO (Chapter 7.1), adapting its alliances, industrial base, and military capabilities to ensure it can continue to deter the most extreme threats. The UK will need a full spectrum of options to manage escalation as part of NATO, delivered by its nuclear and conventional forces in combination. Defence should commence discussions with the United States and NATO on the potential benefits and feasibility of enhanced UK participation in NATO's nuclear mission. Further investment in conventional deep precision strike and Integrated Air and Missile Defence would increase options for deterring and responding to high-impact threats.

28. Senior Ministers must drive efforts to sustain the nuclear deterrent as Defence's top priority and as a 'National Endeavour'. The programme to replace the sovereign warhead is critical and will require significant investment this Parliament. Confirming the intended numbers of SSN attack submarines would provide clarity on the required build capacity and tempo for all nuclear-powered submarines. To secure the long-term future of the nuclear deterrent, the Government should start work in this Parliament to define the requirement for the successor to the Dreadnought class submarine.

29. An immediate priority for force transformation should be a **shift towards greater use of autonomy and Artificial Intelligence within the UK's conventional forces** (Chapter 7). As in Ukraine, this would provide greater accuracy, lethality, and cheaper capabilities—changing the economics of Defence. This shift towards AI and autonomy should exploit the parallel development of a common digital foundation, a protected Defence AI Investment Fund, and an initial operating capability for a new Defence Uncrewed Systems Centre established by February 2026.

30. The Armed Forces should accelerate their transition to a 'high-low' mix of equipment—for example, through:

- The **Royal Navy's** 'Atlantic Bastion' concept for securing the North Atlantic for the UK and NATO and its plans for hybrid carrier airwings (Chapter 7.2).
- The **Army's** 'Recce-Strike' model for land fighting power, aiming to deliver a ten-fold increase in lethality.²⁰ This new model should underpin the transformation of the two divisions and Corps Headquarters committed to NATO's Strategic Reserves Corps (Chapter 7.3).
- The **RAF's** development of the Future Combat Air System—a sixth-generation, crewed jet operating with autonomous collaborative platforms (Chapter 7.4).

31. With the Integrated Force fighting as one across all five domains, **greater attention must be given to the space and cyber and electromagnetic (CyberEM) domains:**²¹

- Assured access to operate in, from, and through space underpins UK security and prosperity. The MOD should invest in the resilience of military space systems, with a focus on space control, decision advantage, and capabilities that support 'Understand' and 'Strike' functions. A reinvigorated Cabinet sub-Committee should set the UK's strategic approach to space, maximizing synergies between the UK civil space sector and clear military needs (Chapter 7.5).
- The CyberEM domain is similarly essential to securing and operating in all other domains and is fundamental to the digital targeting web. Hardening critical Defence functions to cyber-attack is crucial. Defence must move to a more proactive footing

²⁰ Measured against a conventional armoured brigade model.

²¹ Cyberspace and the electromagnetic spectrum are now treated as a single military domain (Chapter 7.6).

in this domain. A new CyberEM Command—established within Strategic Command—should emulate Space Command in ensuring domain coherence, rather than directing execution. An initial operating capability should be established by the end of 2025 (Chapter 7.6).

32. Under Defence Reform, **Strategic Command** will be responsible for delivering, at the direction of the new Military Strategic Headquarters, many of the joint enablers and specialist capabilities for the Integrated Force—from Defence Intelligence to the Integrated Global Defence Network, Defence Medical Services, and Special Forces and Special Operations Forces. **UK Special Forces**—the ‘tip of the spear’—represent a working model of the Integrated Force, leading the way in innovation of new technologies and systems across all domains. Defence must continue to enhance its Special Forces, ensuring UK sovereign choice by maintaining this strategic capability at the very highest level.

33. Where some past reviews have focused on front-line equipment at the expense of foundational capabilities, we have sought to redress this balance. We recommend a focus on:

- **Empowering Defence Intelligence** as the functional leader of all defence intelligence organisations—pursuing common priorities and standards, underpinned by a new Defence
- Intelligence charter, and, in time, fully interoperable with the UK Intelligence Community (Chapter 7.9).
- **Rebuilding Defence Medical Services**, cohering disparate defence medical resources and initiating a sprint review with the Department of Health and Social Care to ensure personnel needs can be met in peacetime and in war (Chapter 7.10).
- **Restoring the Strategic Base²² from which the Armed Forces deploy**: delivering a Defence Infrastructure Recapitalisation Plan by February 2026 to address years of underfunding and identify ways to maximise the value of the estate as a national asset (Chapter 7.11).
- **Targeted investment in joint support enablers and munitions**. Defence should maintain an ‘always on’ munitions capability, laying the industrial foundations for production to be scaled up at speed if needed. This should be complemented by the further development of novel directed energy weapons (Chapter 7).

The transformation imperative

34. **Prudent sequencing is needed to ensure the Armed Forces have what they need, when they need it**, within the resources available and to achieve the best possible return on investment. This includes being ready to accelerate efforts to transform the Armed Forces and restore readiness should conditions deteriorate further, or to mobilise UK Defence

²² The network of infrastructure (airports, seaports, warehouses, mounting centres, preparation bases), ‘movement assets’ (such as trains and shipping), and activities to transport troops and materiel.

rapidly in the event of a crisis. In this new and uncertain era, nobody should be surprised if it became necessary to transform further and faster.

35. There is no reason to delay in changing fundamentally how Defence works, however, leveraging Defence Reform—the ongoing programme of organisational and cultural change (Box 1)—as a driver for reform across the Department of State and the Armed Forces. Unlike other departments in Government, the MOD does not control the timetable for confrontation and conflict. ‘Events’ and the UK’s adversaries do. Bold and decisive action is needed. **‘Business as usual’ is not an option.**

36. We are acutely aware that words such as ‘transformation’ have been used before in defence reviews but the intention has seldom been delivered. A key factor in success in the coming years will be Defence Reform. Where the SDR states what Defence must do in the next decade and beyond, Defence Reform will ultimately determine how, and how successfully, it is delivered. To support implementation, we have identified key interventions and deadlines to further catalyse progress where in the past it has been slow and lacked accountability. The MOD will necessarily take this work forward in creating detailed implementation plans—an essential part of the department taking ownership of the Review’s findings and recommendations.

Document No. 3. 119th Session, U.S. Congress, *An Act*, January 3, 2025²³

SEC. 20008. ENHANCEMENT OF RESOURCES FOR NUCLEAR FORCES.

(a) DOD APPROPRIATIONS.—In addition to amounts otherwise available, there are appropriated to the Secretary of Defense for fiscal year 2025, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, to remain available until September 30, 2029—

- (1) \$2,500,000,000 for risk reduction activities for the Sentinel intercontinental ballistic missile program;
- (2) \$4,500,000,000 only for expansion of production capacity of B-21 long-range bomber aircraft and the purchase of aircraft only available through the expansion of production capacity;
- (3) \$500,000,000 for improvements to the Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missile system; intercontinental ballistic missile reentry vehicles;
- (4) \$100,000,000 for capability enhancements to intercontinental ballistic missile reentry vehicles;
- (5) \$148,000,000 for the expansion of D5 missile motor production;

²³ The full text of *An Act* is available at <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/BILLS-119hr1enr/pdf/BILLS-119hr1enr.pdf>.

- (6) \$400,000,000 to accelerate the development of Trident D5LE2 submarine-launched ballistic missiles;
- (7) \$2,000,000,000 to accelerate the development, procurement, and integration of the nuclear-armed sea-launched cruise missile;
- (8) \$62,000,000 to convert Ohio-class submarine tubes to accept additional missiles, not to be obligated before March 1, 2026;
- (9) \$168,000,000 to accelerate the production of the Survivable Airborne Operations Center program;
- (10) \$65,000,000 to accelerate the modernization of nuclear command, control, and communications;
- (11) \$210,300,000 for the increased production of MH- 139 helicopters; and
- (12) \$150,000,000 to accelerate the development, procurement, and integration of military nuclear weapons delivery programs

(b) NNSA APPROPRIATIONS.—In addition to amounts otherwise available, there are appropriated to the Administrator of the National Nuclear Security Administration for fiscal year 2025, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, to remain available until September 30, 2029—

- (1) \$200,000,000 to perform National Nuclear Security Administration Phase 1 studies pursuant to section 3211 of the National Nuclear Security Administration Act (50 U.S.C. 2401);
- (2) \$540,000,000 to address deferred maintenance and repair needs of the National Nuclear Security Administration pursuant to section 3211 of the National Nuclear Security Administration Act (50 U.S.C. 2401);
- (3) \$1,000,000,000 to accelerate the construction of National Nuclear Security Administration facilities pursuant to section 3211 of the National Nuclear Security Administration Act (50 U.S.C. 2401);
- (4) \$400,000,000 to accelerate the development, procurement, and integration of the warhead for the nuclear-armed sea-launched cruise missile pursuant to section 3211 of the National Nuclear Security Administration Act (50 U.S.C. 2401);
- (5) \$750,000,000 to accelerate primary capability modernization pursuant to section 3211 of the National Nuclear Security Administration Act (50 U.S.C. 2401);
- (6) \$750,000,000 to accelerate secondary capability modernization pursuant to section 3211 of the National Nuclear Security Administration Act (50 U.S.C. 2401);
- (7) \$120,000,000 to accelerate domestic uranium enrichment centrifuge deployment for defense purposes pursuant to section 3211 of the National Nuclear Security Administration Act (50 U.S.C. 2401);
- (8) \$10,000,000 for National Nuclear Security Administration evaluation of spent fuel reprocessing technology; and
- (9) \$115,000,000 for accelerating nuclear national security missions through artificial intelligence.
