

RAF Typhoons complete NATO air policing mission in Estonia

Over the four-month deployment, known as Operation Azotize, RAF Typhoons conducted a total of 21 interceptions of 56 Russian aircraft in the skies above Estonia.

The RAF fighter jets were in Estonia as the UK took its turn in a routine NATO deployment. The deployment was at the request of the Estonian Government, to provide the country with a Quick Reaction Alert (QRA) force. This force is drawn in turn from NATO partners and is ready to respond at any time to potential threats and to intercept aircraft straying towards NATO airspace.

The deployment has been a further demonstration of the UK's enduring commitment to the security of the Baltic region and the wider NATO alliance.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:

Throughout their deployment in Estonia, the world-class pilots, engineers and support personnel of our RAF Typhoon detachment have ensured that the Baltic skies have been patrolled safely and skilfully. Our presence in the region has served to reinforce that the UK remains ready to support our allies wherever and whenever required.

The Typhoon squadron was supported throughout the deployment by 121 Expeditionary Air Wing (EAW), also based at RAF Coningsby. The EAW comprised men and women from a range of branches and trades needed to keep four state of the art aircraft operating for several months away from home.

During a busy four months for the deployed RAF Typhoon detachment, the jets intercepted a wide range of Russian aircraft from transports to Flanker fighters. On 25th June, Typhoons launched twice in a single day to intercept three Russian aircraft.

A clear demonstration of the UK's ongoing commitment to NATO enhanced air policing, this was the third time the UK has committed RAF Typhoon aircraft to Baltic Air Policing missions in Estonia, following deployments in 2015 and 2016. Later this year they will also undertake a similar NATO air policing mission in Iceland at the request of the Icelandic Government.

As part of its leading role in the transatlantic alliance, the Prime Minister will welcome NATO leaders to the UK later this year.

Elsewhere around the world RAF Typhoon jets are also deployed in the Falklands Islands on QRA missions, as well as on Operation Shader against Daesh in Syria and Iraq. They also provide the national QRA capability for

the UK, to safeguard our domestic airspace.

Higher Level Skills in Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP area (OC12S19P1507)

Call to run a project to increase the number of employed people progressing to the next level skills in the Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP area.

DE&S and British Army launch the Army Warfighting Experiment (AWE) 20 experimentation project

The Army Warfighting Experiment (AWE) series (previously URBan EXperimentation or URBEX) has been an ongoing Army experimentation programme for the last 10 years. It has consistently delivered high quality evidence for the army and invaluable military feedback to industry. It explores technology suitable for exploitation in the short-to-medium term. It pushes the boundaries of technology and military capability, testing a range of prototype systems by putting them in the hands of the user while giving invaluable military feedback to industry.

Agile C3 has been identified as one of the 9 fundamental deductions and insights judged most critical to guide strategic, joint and command force development.

AWE18, code named Autonomous Warrior, saw more than 50 companies from large primes to one-man, garden shed innovators engage with DE&S in a bid to secure an opportunity to showcase their products to the military.

AWE20 is expected to surpass that both in scale and level of industry engagement. The topic provides a broad scope, looking at all aspects of battlefield headquarters from deployable infrastructure, data aggregation and analytics to HQ resilience and decision support.

The project aims to:

- engage with industry technology providers of all sizes to explore what

innovative approaches to traditional issues can be leveraged to give the army a competitive edge

- expose capability and knowledge gaps
- explore technology ready for rapid exploitation
- create a community of industry partners that will encourage a collaborative approach to problem solving

AWE20 seeks to answer the following questions:

How can technology:

- improve data exploitation for situational awareness and understanding
- enable us to make faster and better-informed decisions
- reduce the detectability and improve the resilience and agility of HQs at all levels in order to enhance their survivability
- enable more efficient deployment and employment of our HQs on operations
- improve command on the move and facilitate dispersed HQs

For more information on the AWE20 project and the requirement to provide solutions to the AWE20 questions check the [British Army website](#).

Press release: Secretary of State Appoints NPAs and AONB Conservation Boards

Secretary of State Appointments to National Park Authorities and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Conservation Boards

Secretary of State Appoints NPAs and AONB Conservation Boards

Appointments have been made to England's National Park Authorities (NPAs) and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Conservation Boards.

The following appointments have been made for four years:

New Forest NPA

- George Meyrick

- Stephen Trow

Peak District NPA

- Janet Haddock –Fraser
- Lydia Slack
- Yvonne Witter

Broads Authority NPA

- Tristram Hilborn
- Tim Jickells

Lake District NPA

- Sabine Mosner
- Tiffany Hunt

Matthew Bradbury has been reappointed to the Broads Authority for a further four-year term. Further information on Matthew can be found [here](#).

Nick Holliday has been reappointed to the Exmoor NPA for a further 12 months. Further information on Nick can be found [here](#).

Ken Bodfish has been reappointed to the South Downs NPA for a further 12 months. Further information on Ken can be found [here](#).

Peter Murray and Mike Bell have been reappointed to the Northumberland NPA for a further 12 months. Further information on Peter and Mike can be found [here](#).

John Shaw and Paul Mains have recently been appointed to The Chilterns AONB Conservation Board for a three-year term and three Members have been reappointed for a further three years:

- Alison Doggett, Colin Courtney and John Nichols

The following four members have been appointed for three year terms to the Cotswolds AONB Conservation Board:

- Brendan Costelloe
- Graham Hopkins
- Dominic Morris
- Ed Macalister-Smith

Additional information regarding the members listed will be made available on the [Cotswolds AONB](#) and [Chilterns AONB websites](#)

There is a requirement for appointees' political activity (if significant) to be made public. The appointees have not declared any significant political activity in the past five years.