

News story: Defence Secretary announces new UK deployments

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson has announced new UK deployments as he acknowledges the Alliance's importance to Europe's defence, stability and security.

Speaking at the NATO Defence Ministerial in Brussels, the last ahead of the Summit in July, Mr Williamson committed UK jets to policing over Estonia and Iceland for 2019. He went on to announce that the UK would send 40 more UK troops to Bosnia & Herzegovina in demonstration of the Britain's role at the forefront of European security.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

Whilst the UK's relationship with the EU is changing, our unconditional commitment to European security remains resolute.

Be it our continued involvement in NATO's Air Policing or additional UK troops assisting EU-led operations in Bosnia & Herzegovina, our actions send a clear message – we are committed to tackling new challenges and conventional threats alongside our longstanding allies and partners.

As part of NATO's Air Policing measures, which see NATO fighter jets ready to react 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, the UK currently has four RAF Typhoons deployed to Mihail Kogălniceanu Airbase in Romania supporting security in the South and the Black Sea region.

In 2019, four RAF Typhoons will return to Estonia, where they conducted Air Policing in 2016, and, for the first time, will patrol Icelandic skies later in the year. This will allow the UK to work closely with allies to deter aerial threats to Euro Atlantic security. The mission will also provide the RAF with unique opportunities to test its skills in different environments.

On the second day, Mr Williamson announced that the UK will send 40 extra personnel to the EUFOR operation in Bosnia & Herzegovina, Operation Althea. They will join a specialist surveillance and intelligence taskforce for six months.

The UK played a key role in the Western Balkans in the 1990s, and we have continued to help keep the region on the road to reform and stability. As well as our commitment to Operation Althea in Bosnia & Herzegovina, the UK also has approximately 30 troops as part of the NATO Kosovo Force, working with allies Germany, Italy, Turkey, Poland and the US providing intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities.

Both efforts underline the importance of NATO and the EU working alongside

each other to promote security and stability in Europe, with the UK playing a key part.

Prior to the NATO Defence Ministerial, Mr Williamson attended a meeting in The Hague with his counterparts from the ten Northern Group member nations, including Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Norway, Poland, Sweden and The Netherlands.

They discussed relations with Russia, particularly how the Group can work together to counter Russian strategic communications, as well as reiterating support for Britain following the Salisbury incident.

News story: Grave of D-Day army medic rededicated 74 years after his death

The rededication service for Pte Lacey Anthony Tingle took place today (Thursday 7 June 2018) at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) Ranville War Cemetery in Normandy, France.

The service, organised by the MOD's Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC), part of Defence Business Services was attended by Pte Tingle's 96 year old sister Margaret who was accompanied by her son Paul and daughter Zoe Smith. It was conducted by the Reverend Doctor Brutus Green, Chaplain to 2nd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment.



Private Tingle with his sister Margaret (Copyright Tingle family) All rights reserved

Pte Tingle's sister, Margaret Keighley of Leamington Spa said:

It was a total surprise to me when I received the letter from the JCCC advising me that Lacey's final resting place had been found. I couldn't believe that this could be possible after 74 years.

It was only after meeting members of the JCCC team that I realised I had never properly grieved for my brother as he was declared 'missing in action' with no known grave. So, it brings great comfort to be able to visit his grave for this rededication and finally say goodbye. I am extremely grateful to everyone for making it possible.



Military Attaché Col Chris Borneman and Margaret Keighley meet members of the bearer party after the service, Crown Copyright, All rights reserved

Rosie Barron, JCCC said:

It has been an absolute privilege to organise this rededication service for Private Lacey Tingle and share this experience with his sister and her family. Lacey followed his conscience and refused to fight, but he was still willing to pay the ultimate sacrifice in the service of others. His courage and devotion to duty are an example to us all.

On 6 June 1944 Pte Tingle parachuted into Normandy with the 6th Airborne Division in support of Operation Tonga, part of Operation Overlord. He was later reported as missing and was commemorated on the Bayeux Memorial in Bayeux, France.

Pte Tingle's final resting place came to light after 2 researchers submitted evidence regarding his whereabouts to the CWGC. Further research by the JCCC and the National Army Museum was undertaken to corroborate the evidence and the identification of the 'unknown soldier' grave being that of Private Lacey Tingle was confirmed by the JCCC.

The researchers' evidence revealed that on the afternoon of 7 June 1944 in the village of Douville-en-Auge, 16 miles east of Caen, a group of British and Canadian Paratroopers were surrounded by the enemy. 9 of the group lost their lives during the ensuing battle. These paratroopers were buried in the

village by locals, before being moved to Ranville War Cemetery after the war. Lacey was amongst those who lost their lives that afternoon.



Rededication service for the crew of Lancaster W4849 of 156 Squadron, Crown Copyright, All rights reserved

The Reverend Doctor Brutus Green said:

The story of Private Tingle, a Methodist, a teacher, but most extraordinarily a non-combatant willing to put himself in the van of the battle, once again brings home the bravery of the ordinary British soldier. Taking the service honouring a man of such faith and principle, in the presence of his family, who only now have learned the full story, is an honour and a truly humbling privilege. We will remember them.

Members of the Parachute Regiment and 160 Medical Regiment RAMC were also in attendance.

David Avery, CWGC said:

After the war, Private Tingle was brought in to rest with his comrades in the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's Ranville War Cemetery as an unidentified soldier. Thanks to the efforts of many and in the presence of his family, we are honoured to mark his grave with a new headstone bearing his name.



Margaret Keighley is joined by Reverend Doctor Brutus Green, Military Attaché, regimental representatives and dignitaries, Crown Copyright, All rights reserved

A new headstone bearing Private Lacey Tingle's name has been provided by the CWGC, who will now care for his final resting place in perpetuity.

[News story: Defence Medical Services \(Whittington\) Field Gun Crew battles it out at HMS Collingwood](#)

The crew of 18 highly disciplined, motivated, and physically fit field gunners, battled it out against teams from across the UK and as far afield as Gibraltar, Cyprus and Naples for the coveted Brickwoods Trophy.

The competition is fast and furious and requires 18 man crews to run, dismantle, carry, reassemble and fire the gun in the shortest possible time. Strength, stamina and team work are essential. Sustained by a dedicated support team, time keepers, track judges and managers, the crew comprised of both permanent staff and trainees, and attracted much praise from more experienced crews.



The Defence Medical Services Field Gun Crew battles it out at HMS Collingwood. Photo: Crown copyright.

The DMS (Whittington) Field Gun Crew competed in the Plate 1 final with an impressive time of 1:24:09 and a 3 second penalty and were ultimately positioned 10th out of 23 crews. The converted Brickwoods Trophy was eventually won by HMS Heron from Yeovilton who were ultimately crowned the winners.

Major Richard Yardley, the Field Gun Officer told us,

it has been an absolute honour to work with such a dedicated and talented crew. I have observed teamwork, discipline and courageous acts throughout this season and along with the No1 Trainer Lt Hallam and the Skipper SSgt Gregory, we are immensely proud of the achievement.



The 18 man team finished 10th out of 23 crews. Photo: Crown copyright.

The origins of the Royal Navy Field Gun competition grew out of an event in 1899, when British troops were besieged by Boer fighters in the garrison town of Ladysmith in modern-day South Africa. The Brickwoods Trophy was the idea of Sir John Brickenwood, Chairman of the Brickwood Brewery.

[Press release: Veterans to retain military ID, allowing easier access to services](#)

The move will allow veterans to maintain their emotional connection with the armed forces, allowing them to keep the card they have carried on them throughout their career. Retaining their ID card, known as the MOD Form 90, will also allow service leavers to be identified as veterans quickly and easily, aiding their transition into civilian life.

Charities, Veterans UK, which manages armed forces pensions and compensation payments, local authorities and GPs will all benefit from the change, as they will not have to conduct time-consuming checks to identify individual veterans.

The Prime Minister last year also announced plans to provide the 2.5 million former armed forces personnel cards which identify them as veterans, in recognition of their service to the nation.

Minister for Defence People and Veterans Tobias Ellwood said:

Our armed forces give their all to keep this country safe and leaving the military can be an emotional time.

That's why I'm delighted that people leaving the armed forces will be able to retain that emotional connection with their service by keeping their ID card. Retaining their ID card will also make it easier for veterans to access the many public services which prioritise veterans under the Armed Forces Covenant.

So this is a small change that I know will make a big difference.

Handing back the Service ID card has regularly been identified as something that members of the armed forces would like to change.

Instead of handing back their card to be destroyed on the day of discharge, the corners will now be cut off to show the card is no longer valid. This will ensure that security is maintained at bases and other sensitive sites.

Chief of Defence People Lieutenant General Richard Nugee said:

Time and time again, I have heard from service leavers that handing back their ID card is one of the hardest things to do as they leave the forces.

Leaving the military is an emotionally charged moment and I hope that this change will ease some of those feelings by reinforcing the message to our veterans that they remain a valued member of the armed forces community.

The MOD is conducting a major cross-government review of veterans policy and provision, which will inform a new veterans strategy and will be released in the autumn.

Part of this involves ensuring greater recognition of veterans so they can efficiently access government and third sector support and allowing retention of the MOD Form 90 ID is the beginning of this. The Ministry of Defence is reviewing a range of other identification options and will make a further announcement later this year.

Service leaver Col David Madden said:

My ID card is more than just a piece of plastic with my photo on, it signifies my service and marks my time in the Armed Forces. Whilst it might seem like something small, keeping my card will make a practical difference by allowing me to verify my service to my GP surgery and local authority.

News story: Britain's most advanced jets touch down on home soil

The first four of Britain's new cutting-edge aircraft arrived into RAF Marham their new home in Norfolk. They touched down at 20.15 after a trans-Atlantic flight from the United States, where Britain has more of the jets and 150 personnel in training.

The F-35s took off from Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort earlier today and were flown by British pilots of the newly-reformed 617 Squadron, which was immortalised by the famous Dambusters' raid of World War II.



Welcoming the news, Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

These formidable fighters are a national statement of our intent to protect ourselves and our allies from intensifying threats across the world. With a game-changing ability to collect crucial intelligence, fight wars and tackle terrorism, these are the most advanced jets in British history. The work that's gone into their early arrival shows they have the people to match. Our defence industry and military have always been at the very forefront of technology, and today's momentous arrival of these incredible jets shows we are upholding our proud tradition of innovation while keeping Britain safe from the gravest of dangers.

Defence Minister Guto Bebb said:

The F-35 will form the backbone of our air power for decades to come, and its arrival in the UK during the 100th anniversary of the RAF marks a truly historic moment.

In the face of growing threats, these fighter jets demonstrate our commitment to provide our Armed Forces with the cutting-edge technology they need to keep our people safe at home and abroad.

The F-35s' arrival in the UK two months ahead of schedule provides an opportunity for support staff to get a head-start in getting the aircraft ready for operational service at the end of this year.

Around £550m has been invested in RAF Marham as part of a major change programme to get the base ready to house the new jets. The base has seen an upgrade in facilities, resurfaced runways and the addition of new landing pads to accommodate the jet's ability to land vertically.



Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Hillier said:

In the RAF's centenary year, it's great to see the most advanced and dynamic fighter jet in our history arrive today at RAF Marham – and with the modern Dambusters in the cockpit, this homecoming truly feels like an historic moment in British airpower. If you can't see us coming, you won't be able to stop us, so with its stealth and other world-beating technologies the F35 Lightning takes the Royal Air Force and Royal Navy to a whole a new level of capability.

This autumn, the first landing of the F-35 will take place on HMS Queen Elizabeth in the next phase of trials. Having both ship and aircraft operating together for the first time will be another significant moment for the Armed Forces.

The First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Philip Jones said:

Ever since aircraft first operated to and from ships, the Royal Navy has been at the forefront of maritime aviation and the arrival of our first F35Bs in the UK today, flown by both RAF and Fleet Air Arm pilots, is another important milestone on the way to restoring our place as leaders in the field of aircraft carrier operations. Once combined with our new aircraft carriers, HMS Queen Elizabeth and her sister ship HMS Prince of Wales, these extraordinary jets

will sit at the heart of our country's globally deployable expeditionary forces and provide the potent conventional deterrent we need to ensure our national security.



The Lightning, as the aircraft will be known in the UK, is the first to combine radar-evading stealth technology with supersonic speeds and the ability to conduct short take-offs and vertical landings. It will be jointly operated by the Royal Air Force and the Royal Navy and can operate from land and sea, forming a vital part of 'carrier strike', the use of the aircraft from Britain's new Queen Elizabeth Class aircraft carriers.

This is the first tranche of F-35s to arrive, with RAF Voyager aircraft providing air-to-air refuels on their trans-Atlantic journey. More jets are due in Britain later this year, and there is an overall plan to procure 138.

The F-35 is the world's largest defence programme at over \$1.3 trillion, and UK industry is providing 15% of every one of over 3,000 jets set for the global order book. That makes the economic impact greater than if we were building 100% of all 138 aircraft which we intend to buy.

The programme has already generated \$12.9Bn worth of orders and at peak production will support thousands of British manufacturing and engineering jobs. Just last week, the F-35 programme awarded a contract worth over \$2bn for aircraft propulsion systems, which will have significant benefits for Rolls-Royce and their supply chain.