



House of Commons
Defence Committee

The work of the Committee in 2007

Sixth Report of Session 2007–08

Report, together with formal minutes

*Ordered by The House of Commons
to be printed 22 January*

HC 274

Published on 31 January
by authority of the House of Commons
London: The Stationery Office Limited
£0.00

The Defence Committee

The Defence Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration, and policy of the Ministry of Defence and its associated public bodies.

Current membership

Rt Hon James Arbuthnot MP (*Conservative, North East Hampshire*) (Chairman)
Mr David S Borrow MP (*Labour, South Ribble*)
Mr David Crausby MP (*Labour, Bolton North East*)
Linda Gilroy MP (*Labour, Plymouth Sutton*)
Mr David Hamilton MP (*Labour, Midlothian*)
Mr Mike Hancock MP (*Liberal Democrat, Portsmouth South*)
Mr Dai Havard MP (*Labour, Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney*)
Mr Adam Holloway MP (*Conservative, Gravesham*)
Mr Bernard Jenkin MP (*Conservative, North Essex*)
Mr Brian Jenkins MP (*Labour, Tamworth*)
Mr Kevan Jones MP (*Labour, Durham North*)
Robert Key MP (*Conservative, Salisbury*)
Richard Younger-Ross MP (*Liberal Democrat, Teignbridge*)
John Smith MP (*Labour, Vale of Glamorgan*)

The following Members were also Members of the Committee during the Parliament.

Mr Colin Breed MP (*Liberal Democrat, South East Cornwall*)
Derek Conway MP (*Conservative, Old Bexley and Sidcup*)
Mr Mark Lancaster MP (*Conservative, North East Milton Keynes*)
Willie Rennie MP (*Liberal Democrat, Dunfermline and West Fife*)
Mr Desmond Swayne MP (*Conservative, New Forest West*)

Powers

The Committee is one of the departmental select committees, the powers of which are set out in House of Commons Standing Orders, principally in SO No 152. These are available on the Internet via www.parliament.uk.

Publications

The Reports and evidence of the Committee are published by The Stationery Office by Order of the House. All publications of the Committee (including press notices) are on the Internet at: www.parliament.uk/defcom.

Committee staff

The current staff of the Committee are Mike Hennessy (Clerk), Eliot Wilson (Second Clerk), Ian Rogers (Audit Adviser), Stephen Jones (Committee Specialist), Richard Dawson (Committee Assistant), Christine McGrane (Secretary) and Stewart McIlvenna (Senior Office Clerk).

Contacts

All correspondence should be addressed to the Clerk of the Defence Committee, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA. The telephone number for general enquiries is 020 7219 5745; the Committee's email address is defcom@parliament.uk. Media inquiries should be addressed to Alex Paterson on 020 7219 1589.

Contents

Report	<i>Page</i>
Summary	3
1 Introduction	5
2 Core Tasks and Inquiries	6
Examination of Government and European Commission policy proposals	6
The Future of the UK's Strategic Nuclear Deterrent: the White Paper	6
The Defence Industrial Strategy: update	7
UK/US Defence Trade Cooperation Treaty	8
Strategic Export Controls	8
European proposals	9
Examination of emerging and deficient policy	9
The Future of NATO and European Defence	9
UK Defence: commitments and resources	9
Defence equipment and military capabilities	10
Welfare of the Armed Forces	11
Current operations	11
The Iran hostages incident: the lessons learned	12
Examination of legislation and of specific output from the Department	13
Examination of Departmental expenditure	13
Examination of Public Service Agreements and targets	14
Scrutiny of Agencies and other associated public bodies	14
Scrutiny of major appointments	15
Examination of implementation of legislation and policy initiatives	15
Production of reports for debate	16
3 Working Practices and Innovation	17
Evidence away from Westminster	17
Extending our range of witnesses	17
Webforum	18
Publication of evidence on the internet	18
Seminars	19
Inward visits	19
Outward visits	19
Political engagement within Europe	21
Petitions	21
Specialist advisers	22
4 Departmental Responses	23
5 Looking Ahead	24
Conclusions and Recommendations	25

Annex 1: Core Tasks Fulfilled	26
Annex 2: Committee Visits	27
Annex 3: Oral Evidence Sessions	30
Annex 4: Informal Meetings	34
Formal Minutes	36
List of Reports from the Committee during the current Parliament	37

Summary

This report describes the work of the Defence Committee in 2007. It illustrates how—in carrying out its work of scrutinising the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and associated public bodies—it has met the core tasks recommended to Select Committees by the Liaison Committee.

The report highlights aspects of the Committee's working practices which depart from previous practice or which may otherwise be of interest. In particular it draws attention to the webforum held during its inquiry into *Medical Care for the Armed Forces*; its taking of evidence outside Westminster, in Birmingham and Edinburgh; and the growing amount of informal activities of the Committee, including inward visits. It also underlines the importance of visits to the Armed Forces on operational deployments.

The report commends the MoD for its timeliness in responding to our published reports, and acknowledges that the content of the Government's responses are reasonable. However, it notes that on one of our inquiries, *UK Defence: commitments and resources* the MoD responded to our request for written evidence seven months late, which has had a knock-on effect on the progress of the inquiry.

1 Introduction

1. This report describes the work of the Defence Committee in 2007. Our report follows the format suggested by the Liaison Committee in order to ease comparison with other Committees.

2. In 2007, we continued to seek a balance in our inquiries between those dealing with the policy outputs of the Department in the form of White Papers, the expenditure of the Ministry of Defence (MoD), including on defence equipment, operational deployments, and scrutiny of Defence Agencies. Our report highlights our contribution to the debate on the floor of the House of Commons on the future of the UK's nuclear deterrent through our inquiry into the Government's deterrent White Paper, the progress of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, including the costs of those operations, and our ongoing inquiries into the welfare of the UK's Armed Forces.

2 Core Tasks and Inquiries

3. This part of our report describes how we sought to cover each of the core tasks recommended by the Liaison Committee.¹ A table summarising this can be found at Annex 1.

Examination of Government and European Commission policy proposals

4. The Liaison Committee's Core Task 1 encourages us to scrutinise policy proposals from the UK Government and the European Commission in Green Papers, White Papers, draft Guidance etc, and to inquire further where we consider appropriate.

The Future of the UK's Strategic Nuclear Deterrent: the White Paper

5. In December 2006, the Government published a White Paper setting out its proposals for the future of the UK's nuclear deterrent.² It announced that there would be a three-month consultation on the proposals contained in the White Paper and that these proposals would be debated on the floor of the House of Commons in March 2007.³ Following the publication of the White Paper, we announced that we would conduct an inquiry examining the arguments put forward by the Government for the retention and renewal of Trident, the timing of decisions, the role of nuclear deterrence, the international legal and treaty aspects of the decision, and alternative deterrent options and costs.

6. Our inquiry into the deterrent White Paper was the focus of our work in the early part of 2007. We took evidence from campaigning organisations, academics and commentators, think tanks, legal experts, and the MoD. Our report was published in early March 2007, a week before the House debated the White Paper.⁴ In our report, we did not express a view on the merits of retaining or renewing the UK's nuclear deterrent. Rather we sought to inform the public and Parliamentary debate by exploring the key issues and questions which needed to be addressed in that debate. We commended the Government for exposing its proposals for renewing Trident to public and Parliamentary debate, which previous Governments had not done, but we also highlighted a number of areas in the White Paper where we believed further information was required before MPs considered the issue in the House of Commons. In particular, we called upon the Government to explain: why decisions were required at that time on the future of the Trident D5 missile; the operational significance of the reduction in warhead numbers proposed in the White Paper; how it determined what constituted a 'minimum' deterrent; how it would ensure

1 In June 2002, the Liaison Committee issued guidance to Select Committees, setting a number of objectives and core tasks, following the Resolution of the House of 14 May 2002 inviting the Liaison Committee to establish common objectives for Select Committees. See Liaison Committee, First Report of Session 2002–03, *Annual Report for 2002*, Appendix 3, HC 558

2 Ministry of Defence and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, *The Future of the United Kingdom's Nuclear Deterrent*, Cm 6994, December 2006

3 The debate on the Government's nuclear deterrent White Paper was held on 14 March 2007.

4 Defence Committee, Ninth Report of Session 2006-07, *The Future of the UK's Strategic Nuclear Deterrent: the White Paper*, HC 225

that the renewal of the deterrent would not come at the expense of the conventional capabilities required by the UK's Armed Forces; the anticipated procurement and through-life costs of a Trident successor; the costs of any life-extension of the current Vanguard submarines, as well as the costs of decommissioning the existing nuclear submarine fleet. We said it was important that the Government responded to these issues before the debate in the House of Commons. The MoD provided an interim response to our report by means of a Written Ministerial Statement two days after the publication of our report and before the debate⁵; its full response was provided in the usual fashion.⁶

7. Our report on the deterrent White Paper was the culmination of our series of inquiries into the future of the UK's strategic nuclear deterrent, which we had launched following the establishment of the Committee in July 2005. Our first report, dealing with the strategic context within which decisions on the future of the deterrent would be taken was published in June 2006.⁷ Our second report, exploring the UK manufacturing and skills base issues relevant to the decision on whether to retain, renew or abandon the deterrent, was published in December 2006.⁸ We intend to monitor closely the implementation of the proposals contained in the White Paper over the coming years.

The Defence Industrial Strategy: update

8. In our report on *The Work of the Committee in 2005 and 2006*, we stated that we had conducted an inquiry into the Government's Defence Industrial Strategy (DIS) White Paper, which had been published in December 2005 and had set out the Government's vision for the future of the UK's defence industry.⁹ The then Minister for Defence Procurement, Lord Drayson, stated that 2006 would be the year the Strategy was implemented. In our report, we said we would conduct a short, follow-up report to assess the MoD's performance and progress in implementing the Defence Industrial Strategy. We took oral evidence from the MoD in December 2006 and published our update report in February 2007.¹⁰ We concluded that, overall, good progress had been made in the implementation of the DIS, but we also highlighted certain areas of concern, and commented on slow progress in reshaping the maritime sector, and we argued that the MoD's new long-term partnering arrangements—intended as an alternative to competitive procurement—needed to be incentivised.

9. The MoD had been expected to publish a revised version of the Defence Industrial Strategy in December 2007 and we had planned to take evidence on this at that time. We

5 Letter from the Secretary of State for Defence to the Chairman of the Defence Committee, 9 March 2007, including Annex: Initial Response to the Defence Select Committee's Report: "The Future of the UK's Strategic Nuclear Deterrent: the White Paper", HC Deb, 12 March 2007, col 1WS

6 Defence Committee, Eleventh Special Report of Session 2006-07, *The Future of the UK's Strategic Nuclear Deterrent: the White Paper: Government Response to the Committee's Ninth Report of Session 2006-07*, HC 551

7 Defence Committee, Eighth Report of Session 2005-06, *The Future of the UK's Strategic Nuclear Deterrent: the Strategic Context*, HC 986

8 Defence Committee, Fourth Report of Session 2006-07, *The Future of the UK's Strategic Nuclear Deterrent: the Manufacturing and Skills Base*, HC 59

9 Ministry of Defence and Department of Trade and Industry, *The Defence Industrial Strategy*, Cm 6697; for our report on the Defence Industrial Strategy, see Defence Committee, Seventh Report of Session 2005-06, *The Defence Industrial Strategy*, HC 824

10 Defence Committee, Sixth Report of Session 2006-07, *The Defence Industrial Strategy: update*, HC 177

now expect the revised Strategy to be published by Spring 2008. We intend to monitor the revised Strategy closely.

UK/US Defence Trade Cooperation Treaty

10. As a Committee, we have a longstanding interest in defence co-operation with our allies. In June 2007, the UK Prime Minister and the US President signed the UK/US Defence Trade Cooperation Treaty. Published in September 2007, the Treaty established a framework for defence trade cooperation between the United Kingdom and the United States of America.¹¹ Although treaties are ratified by the Government under the Royal Prerogative, rather than by Parliament, by Government undertaking (the ‘Ponsonby rule’) treaties are laid before Parliament for 21 sitting days before ratification to enable Parliament to consider and comment on them. **At our request, the Government extended the period of time available to Parliament to scrutinise the UK/US Defence Trade Cooperation Treaty. This allowed us to conduct an inquiry into the Treaty. In November 2007 we took evidence from defence companies as well as the MoD and the Cabinet Office and published our report in December 2007 which recommended early ratification of the Treaty.**¹²

Strategic Export Controls

11. In 2007, we continued our contribution to the ‘Quadripartite’ Committee on Strategic Export Controls, together with the Members of the Foreign Affairs, Trade and Industry (now Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform), and International Development Committees. The Quadripartite Committee carries out detailed scrutiny of the Government’s controls on exports of equipment and technology with a military application. In August 2007 it produced a report on the operation of the Export Control Act 2002.¹³

12. The Quadripartite Committee’s 2007 report provided a comprehensive assessment of the Government’s review of export controls. It assessed the Export Control Act 2002, its enforcement, the economic impact of the legislation and its effects on the business community, and identified gaps in the legislation. It also considered the Government’s Annual and Quarterly Reports on Strategic Export Controls. It concluded that the Government’s review had been a largely constructive process but it also called upon the Government to use the review to plug holes in the controls on arms exported from the UK to prevent them falling into the wrong hands.¹⁴

11 Treaty between the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of the United States of America concerning defence trade cooperation: London and Washington, 21 and 26 June 2007, Cm 7213, September 2007

12 Defence Committee, Third report of Session 2007-08, *UK/US Defence Trade Cooperation Treaty*, HC 107

13 Defence Committee, Fourteenth Report (First Joint Report of the Quadripartite Committee) of Session 2006-07, *Strategic Export Controls: 2007 Review*, HC 117

14 Ibid.

European proposals

13. We have maintained a watching brief on defence-related developments in Europe, by way of a European Bulletin circulated to the Members of the Committee. This has focused, in particular, on issues surrounding the European Defence Agency (EDA) and the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), which are also being considered in our inquiry into *The Future of NATO and European Defence*. We wrote to the MoD requesting advance briefing and subsequent de-briefing on ministerial meetings with other European governments; we understand that there can be time constraints in advance of such meetings, but we welcome the efforts of the MoD to keep us informed of their outcome and look forward to developing this arrangement constructively.

Examination of emerging and deficient policy

14. Core Task 2 encourages us to scrutinise Government policy and to identify where a Committee inquiry would be worthwhile.

The Future of NATO and European Defence

15. In 2002, our predecessor Committee conducted an inquiry into the future of NATO.¹⁵ In light of subsequent developments—the NATO deployment to Afghanistan, the developing agenda of NATO transformation, the further geographic expansion of the Alliance to include additional former Warsaw Pact countries, and the changes in the strategic context within which the Alliance operates—we believed it was important to revisit the issue and to reconsider NATO's future in light of these developments. We decided it was also important to do this in the context of the changing role of the European Union in defence matters. In December 2006, we began our inquiry, *The Future of NATO and European Defence*. Our inquiry, which was launched following the NATO Summit at Riga, has sought to provide a comprehensive analysis of the Atlantic Alliance, its role, purpose and prospects. It has been considering what role NATO should play in the future of UK and European defence, whether NATO has a viable, long-term future, and what the relationship should be between NATO and the European Security and Defence Policy. In 2007, we conducted an extensive programme of oral evidence, taking evidence from academics and expert commentators, journalists, retired UK military commanders, and, in January 2008, from the Secretary of State for Defence. We also undertook a series of visits to European NATO capitals, to the United States and Canada, and to Georgia, an aspiring member of the Alliance. We have now completed our visits and our programme of oral evidence and intend to publish our report in early March 2008 ahead of the NATO Summit at Bucharest.

UK Defence: commitments and resources

16. In February 2007, we began an inquiry into the future mission and make-up of Britain's Armed Forces and the resources needed to sustain those Forces. Our inquiry, *UK Defence: commitments and resources*, has been looking at whether the assumptions made in the Government's Strategic Defence Review in 1998 and the Future Capabilities White Paper

15 Defence Committee, Seventh Report of Session 2001-02, *The Future of NATO*, HC 914

in 2005 still hold good when looking at Britain's place in the world in ten or twenty years time. It has been examining how the demands on, and the structures of, the Armed Forces have changed over the past ten years, and whether they are best configured to meet these new demands. It has also considered whether current commitments are sustainable without an increase in resources. As part of this inquiry, we held an evidence session with the Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS) in early March 2007, and with expert commentators, defence economists and retired military officers later that month. This inquiry is ongoing and will take into consideration the implications of the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review, published in October 2007.

17. Our inquiry has been held up by the substantial delay encountered in receiving written evidence from the MoD. In February 2007, we wrote to the MoD with a series of questions, for which we requested a response by 20 March 2007. Following our evidence session with CDS in early March, we wrote to the MoD with a further set of questions and asked for responses to these by 26 March. The MoD submitted responses to our questions on 14 May 2007, substantially after the deadline. But after analysing the responses, we felt that some of the answers were inadequate and asked for further clarification of these on 23 May 2007 and requested responses by 7 June. The MoD submitted its answers to these questions on 3 January 2008, some seven months after the deadline. **The MoD was extremely slow in responding to our request for written evidence on our inquiry into UK Defence: commitments and resources and this significantly delayed our inquiry.**

Defence equipment and military capabilities

18. We also examined Government policy in a range of specific areas dealing with military capability. In 2007, we held an inquiry into the Future Rapid Effects System (FRES), the MoD's programme to meet the Army's requirement for a new generation of armoured vehicles—a requirement identified in the 1998 Strategic Defence Review. We concluded that the programme was a sorry story of indecision, changing requirements and delay and that, after nine years in development, the FRES programme remained nothing more tangible than a concept. We called on the MoD to decide where its priorities lay. We raised concerns that interim purchases of Mastiff and Vector armoured vehicles were welcome but warned that if the in-Service date for FRES slipped any further, additional interim purchases might be required at significant cost, with knock-on effects on the rest of the MoD's procurement programme. Our report was published in February 2007.¹⁶

19. We also held an inquiry into the Government's progress in developing the UK's strategic lift capability—the capability to transport personnel, equipment and stores from the UK to operational theatres across the globe which, in turn, underpins the UK's expeditionary policy. Our inquiry assessed the Government's performance in meeting the requirements for strategic lift which it outlined in the 1998 Strategic Defence Review. We concluded that that MoD had made good progress in improving its strategic sea-lift but that progress in improving strategic air-lift had been less good. Our report was published in July 2007.¹⁷

16 Defence Committee, Seventh Report of Session 2006-07, *The Army's requirement for armoured vehicles: the FRES Programme*, HC 159

17 Defence Committee, Eleventh Report of Session 2006-07, *Strategic Lift*, HC 462

Welfare of the Armed Forces

20. In 2007, we held two inquiries into the welfare provisions for the UK's Armed Forces. Our first inquiry, into *The work of Defence Estates*, considered the performance of Defence Estates, until April 2007 an agency of the MoD, and highlighted a number of concerns. We concluded that some of the living accommodation for Service personnel was "in extremely poor condition" and that while Defence Estates had made considerable progress in recent years, the scale of the challenge of improving accommodation facilities remained enormous. We said the MoD had to do more if Service personnel were not to be left in sub-standard accommodation for many years to come. We argued that a substantial increase in investment in the defence estate was required and that the MoD should resist the temptation to take back from the estates budget when the defence budget is stretched. Our report was published in September 2007.¹⁸ This report began as part of our ongoing scrutiny of Defence Agencies, further details of which are provided in paragraphs 37 to 39.

21. Our second welfare inquiry has examined the provision of medical care for the UK's Armed Forces. The purpose of our inquiry has been to examine the medical care provided to the Armed Forces, focusing on three main issues: healthcare for Service personnel, both at home and overseas, and the arrangements for those returning from overseas postings; medical support for operations, including the treatment of injured personnel—from immediate treatment in the theatre of operations to after-care in the UK—and the facilities provided for them; and how medical services for the Armed Forces are delivered, in particular how the MoD engages with the NHS to provide healthcare. We intend to publish our report in February 2008.

Current operations

22. Our inquiries into military operations may also be said to fall into this category. We published a report on *UK operations in Afghanistan* in July 2007 and on *UK land operations in Iraq 2007* in December 2007.

23. On Afghanistan, we concluded that despite the outstanding commitment of UK Armed Forces in Helmand Province, NATO as a whole had not provided the required numbers of troops agreed under the Combined Joint Statement of Requirements and we expressed our deep concern at the apparent reluctance of some NATO allies to provide troops to NATO's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) which we believed was undermining both NATO's credibility and ISAF's operations. We also called upon the Government to press the United Nations to appoint a high-profile individual responsible for coordinating the international effort. In addition, we highlighted our concerns with the development of the Afghan police force, with the slow pace of reconstruction and development, and with the communication of the counter-narcotics policy in Afghanistan.¹⁹

24. On Iraq, we welcomed the apparent improvement in the security situation following the surge of US Forces and we noted the dramatic reduction of violence in the UK area of operations in South Eastern Iraq. But we warned that there had been no corresponding

18 Defence Committee, Fifteenth Report of Session 2007-08, *The work of Defence Estates*, HC 535

19 Defence Committee, Thirteenth Report of Session 2006-07, *UK operations in Afghanistan*, HC 408

reduction in the number of attacks on the civilian population and that, though improved, the security situation continued to cause concern. We said that the development of the Iraqi Security Forces was fundamental to the long-term security of Iraq and to the drawdown and eventual withdrawal of UK Forces. While there had been progress in improving the performance of the Iraqi Army, the police remained a source of deep and continuing concern. We noted the Prime Minister's announcement that the Government planned, from the Spring of 2008, to reduce UK Forces in Iraq to 2,500. But we said important questions remained about the sustainability of a force of this size. And we said that unless UK Forces in Iraq were capable of doing more than simply protecting themselves at Basra Air Station, the entire UK presence in South Eastern Iraq would be open to question.²⁰

The Iran hostages incident: the lessons learned

25. In March 2007, 15 Royal Navy personnel from HMS Cornwall—a Royal Navy Frigate, deployed with the Coalition Task Force in the Northern Gulf—were captured by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard while conducting a boarding operation on a merchant vessel in shallow waters near the mouth of the Shatt al-Arab waterway, between Iraq and Iran. They were taken to Iran and detained until early April 2007. In mid-April the Secretary of State for Defence announced that he had appointed Lieutenant General Sir Rob Fulton RM (retired) to inquire into the operational circumstances and factors leading to the capture of the Royal Navy personnel. He said that, because the inquiry would consider operationally sensitive material, it would not be possible to publish all the conclusions, but that they would be presented to the Defence Committee in full.

26. We undertook an inquiry into the incident, *The Iran hostages incident: the lessons learned*. **Unusually, because of the classified nature of the material presented to us, we had to conduct our evidence sessions for our inquiry into *The Iran hostages incident* in private. We had some reservations about conducting scrutiny on terms of the Government's choosing.**

27. Our inquiry sought to: scrutinise the Fulton Report on behalf of the House of Commons and to establish whether it was comprehensive and its recommendations sufficient; ensure that the MoD's related action plan was adequate and properly implemented and resourced; scrutinise the Hall report into the sale of the stories of the Royal Navy personnel to the press upon their release; and ensure that the lessons of the HMS Cornwall incident had been fully learned and disseminated. Our report was published in December 2007.²¹

28. We found the MoD's initial response to our inquiry to be inadequate, and sensed that the Department had not anticipated that we would pursue an inquiry in depth. Noting our persistence, the MoD responded positively to our continuing inquiries and was helpful in providing full answers to our questions in writing and in offering high level briefing. **We concluded that the Fulton Report, and the evidence provided to us in support of it, contained a depth of operational detail which it would have been damaging to have**

20 Defence Committee, Thirteenth Report of Session 2006-07, *UK land operations in Iraq 2007*, HC 110

21 Defence Committee, Fourth report of Session 2007-08, *The Iran hostages incident: the lessons learned*, HC 181

made public. This made it difficult for us to demonstrate openly the grounds on which we reached our conclusions. In our report, we assured the House of Commons that we had scrutinised the report thoroughly and we wrote to the Secretary of State for Defence with a number of classified conclusions and recommendations.

Examination of legislation and of specific output from the Department

29. Core Task 3 calls for Committees to conduct scrutiny on any published draft bill within our responsibilities. The Liaison Committee's Core Task 4 calls for us to develop a framework for being informed of secondary legislation, circulars and guidance, treaties and previously identified casework decisions, so that they can be drawn to our attention where necessary. The MoD has presented no draft legislation to Parliament since July 2005. The MoD has provided us with copies of all secondary legislation laid. We have developed a system of scrutiny, by which occasional bulletins are put before the Committee summarizing the secondary legislation laid and alerting us to matters of significance. We have taken a particular interest in secondary legislation implementing the provisions of the Armed Forces Act 2006.

Examination of Departmental expenditure

30. Core Task 5 calls for Committees to develop a systematic framework for committee scrutiny of the Department's Main and Supplementary Estimates, its expenditure plans and its annual accounts.

31. Following the practice we established last year, we reported on the Spring Supplementary Estimate 2006–07, the Main Estimates 2007–08, and the Winter Supplementary Estimate 2007–08, in each case before the House of Commons was asked to agree the Estimates.²² In this task, we have been assisted by the Committee Office Scrutiny Unit. As we noted last year, the MoD's Supplementary Estimates are of particular interest since they reveal the cost of military operations, which have traditionally not been covered in the Main Estimates.

32. In addition to our scrutiny of the Estimates, we have held an annual inquiry into the MoD's Resource Accounts, as set out in the Departmental Report and Accounts. In this task we were assisted by the National Audit Office (NAO), which produced an analysis of the MoD's Annual Report and Accounts for our inquiry.²³ In November 2007 we took evidence from the Permanent Under Secretary of State and the Finance Director at the MoD and we published our report on the MoD's Annual Report and Accounts in January 2008.

22 Defence Committee, Tenth Report of Session 2006-07, *Costs of operations: Spring Supplementary Estimate 2006-07*, HC 379; Defence Committee, Twelfth Report of Session 2006-07, *Ministry of Defence Main Estimates 2007-08*, HC 835; Defence Committee, Second Report of Session 2006-07, *Costs of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan: Spring Supplementary Estimate 2007-08*, HC 138

23 National Audit Office, *Performance of the Ministry of Defence 2006-07*, Briefing for the Defence Committee, November 2007. We did not publish this evidence in our report, but it is available on our website at: <http://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmdefence/memo/ara/ucmara02.pdf>

33. Approximately one fifth (£6 billion) of the MoD's budget is spent on the procurement of defence equipment. We are committed to holding an annual defence procurement inquiry, but—in line with the MoD's new focus on through-life equipment costs and the merger of the Defence Procurement Agency and the Defence Logistics Organisation into the Defence Equipment and Support organisation—we are focusing on defence equipment through-life rather than on acquisition alone. In addition, we have inquired into a number of individual procurement programmes: the Future Rapid Effects System and, as part of our inquiry into strategic lift, the Airbus A400M.

34. As part of our examination of expenditure, we have monitored the Departmental Minutes which the MoD has laid before the House of Commons in line with the requirement on Departments to inform the House when they propose to make a gift of a value exceeding £250,000.

Examination of Public Service Agreements and targets

35. Core Task 6 calls on Committees to scrutinise Departments' Public Service Agreements and associated targets.

36. We have held annual inquiries on the MoD's Annual Report and Accounts—the Department's report to Parliament on its performance in each financial year. These inquiries have examined the MoD's performance against its Public Service Agreement (PSA) targets. This has involved taking oral evidence from the Permanent Under Secretary of State (PUS) and the Finance Director at the MoD. We had hoped to publish our report into the *Ministry of Defence Annual Report and Accounts 2006–07* before Christmas 2007. However, the MoD revised its assessment of its performance against its PSA targets on the eve of our evidence session with the PUS on 13 November 2007, meaning we had to postpone our evidence session until 28 November 2007. We found the MoD's late submission of such a significant piece of evidence, which went to the heart of our inquiry, frustrating. We published our report into the *Ministry of Defence Annual Report and Accounts 2006–07* in January 2008.

Scrutiny of Agencies and other associated public bodies

37. Core Task 7 encourages Committees to monitor the work of the Department's Executive Agencies, Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs) and other associated public bodies.

38. Over the past year, the MoD has substantially reduced the number of Defence Agencies and taken many of the tasks of those Agencies back into the Department as a whole. Until April 2007, the MoD had seventeen Defence Agencies and five Trading Funds. This has been reduced to eight Defence Agencies and five Trading Funds. **We have expressed concern that the reduction in the number of Defence Agencies may lead to a loss of transparency and Parliamentary accountability.**

39. At the beginning of the current Parliament, we agreed to adopt a rolling programme of short inquiries scrutinizing the work of individual Defence Agencies. In 2005 and 2006 we held inquiries into the work of the Defence Procurement Agency, the Met Office, Service Children's Education, and the Defence Aviation and Repair Agency. In 2007, we

completed our inquiry into *The work of the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory and the funding of defence research*²⁴ and held an inquiry into *The work of Defence Estates*.²⁵ As agency status is withdrawn, our scrutiny may need to focus on elements within the MoD and the Defence Equipment and Support organisation. We will continue our practice of scrutinizing the work of the remaining Defence Agencies and Trading Funds. The MoD also has a number of other associated bodies. We have not scrutinized the work of the MoD's Non-Departmental Public Bodies so far this Parliament: this is a matter which we will consider in future.

Scrutiny of major appointments

40. Core Task 8 calls for scrutiny of all major appointments by the Department, envisaging that Departments would notify committees in advance of these appointments.

41. In our previous report on *The work of the Committee in 2005 and 2006*, we noted that the MoD did not inform us of major appointments and recommended that it should do so in future. In his response to our report, the Secretary of State for Defence accepted our recommendation and undertook to inform us of key civilian and Service appointments once they had been made. In 2007, the MoD provided us with notification of senior appointments. We monitored all significant appointments to the MoD, its associated agencies and public bodies, as well as to the Armed Forces. To date, we have seen no reason to act upon them. However, we endeavour to hold evidence sessions with new Ministers, senior officials and Service personnel at an early opportunity.

42. Following the departure of Lord Drayson, the Minister for Defence Equipment and Support, in November 2007, we held an evidence session with his successor, the Rt Hon Baroness Taylor of Bolton, on 21 November 2007 as part of our inquiry into the *UK/US Defence Trade Cooperation Treaty*.

43. In January 2008, as part of our annual inquiry into *Defence Equipment* we will take evidence from General Sir Kevin O'Donoghue, the first Chief of Defence Materiel who took up his post as head of the new Defence Equipment and Support organisation (DE&S) on 1 April 2007. DE&S was formed from the merger of the Defence Procurement Agency and the Defence Logistics Organisation. We have monitored the merger closely in 2007 and intend to question Sir Kevin about the progress made when he appears before us.

44. We have taken a particular interest in the appointment of a new Service Complaints Commissioner, a position we encouraged the MoD to create in our two reports on the Armed Forces Bill. We have decided to wait until the Commissioner has been in post for a year before taking evidence.

Examination of implementation of legislation and policy initiatives

45. Core Task 9 encourages Committees to examine the implementation of legislation and major policy initiatives, calling on us to develop a framework of progress reports from

24 Defence Committee, Eighth Report of Session of Session 2006-07, *The work of the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory and the funding of defence research*, HC 84

25 Defence Committee, Fifteenth Report of Session 2006-07, *The work of Defence Estates*, HC 535

Departments. We have followed this practice in respect of the Government's 2005 Defence Industrial Strategy, publishing an update report on the implementation of the strategy in February 2007. It is our intention to follow up our predecessor Committee's report on Duty of Care in the coming year. We will also continue to scrutinise the UK's export control arrangements as part of our involvement in the work of the Quadripartite Committee.

Production of reports for debate

46. Core Task 10 calls for Committees to produce reports which are suitable for debate in the House, including Westminster Hall and debating Committees.

47. When we launched our inquiry into the Government's White Paper on the future of the UK's nuclear deterrent, we resolved to publish our report before the House of Commons debate the retention and renewal of Trident in March 2007. In so doing, our intention was to inform that debate by highlighting the key issues at stake in the White Paper and by identifying areas in which we believed the Government should provide additional information. Although the debate in the House was on the Government's White Paper, our report, *the Future of the UK's Strategic Nuclear Deterrent: the White Paper*, was 'tagged' as relevant to that debate as were our earlier deterrent reports on the strategic context and the manufacturing and skills base.

48. While the various defence debates regularly held on the floor of the House of Commons present an opportunity for discussion of issues dealt with in our inquiries and reports, we remain interested in seeking a more dedicated slot in the Chamber, or in Westminster Hall, for the debate of one of our reports and the Government's response thereto when it seems particularly appropriate.

3 Working Practices and Innovation

49. This part of our report highlights aspects of our working practices which depart from previous practice or which may otherwise be of interest.

Evidence away from Westminster

50. When the current Committee was formed in July 2005, we resolved to take evidence away from Westminster on a regular basis, in order to engage more effectively with the public around the country. In 2007, we have continued our practice of taking evidence away from Westminster, although we have not managed to do so as much as we had hoped. In June 2007, we took evidence in Birmingham as part of our inquiry into *Medical Care for the Armed Forces*. There we took evidence from the NHS trust which hosted the Royal Centre for Defence Medicine, from other NHS trusts which work with the MoD and from the British Medical Association (BMA). In October 2007, also as part of our Medical Care inquiry, we took evidence in Edinburgh to examine the cooperation between the MoD and the NHS in delivering healthcare to Service personnel and veterans, especially (though not exclusively) in Scotland. We took evidence from the Royal College of Psychiatrists to find out about how effectively the NHS looked after ex-Service personnel with mental health needs, and from a panel of representatives of the Scottish Executive.

51. Planning evidence sessions away from Westminster involves considerable logistical difficulties, but we believe the practice is worthwhile. Our inquiry into *Medical Care for the Armed Forces* has undoubtedly benefited from taking evidence from officials and medical care professionals in Edinburgh and Birmingham who might otherwise have been unable to give evidence to us. As we note below, we believe this practice has also helped us to extend the range of witnesses from whom we take evidence.

52. We are pleased to note that in 2007 the Whips have been understanding in accommodating both our desire to take evidence away from Westminster and our programme of Committee visits.

Extending our range of witnesses

53. Last year, we noted that in the field of defence there is a risk that the MoD is a monopoly supplier of information and we made clear our commitment to extending the range of witnesses from whom we take evidence. In 2007, we sought to continue this practice. In our inquiries into *Strategic Lift*, *The Army's requirement for armoured vehicles: the FRES programme*, and the *UK/US Defence Trade Cooperation Treaty*, we took evidence from large multinational defence companies, small and medium sized enterprises, and manufacturers' associations. We have also taken evidence from trade unions representing civilian staff in the defence sector, and from leading defence academics.

54. In early 2007, as part of our inquiry into *the Future of the UK's Strategic Nuclear Deterrent: the White Paper*, we took evidence from campaigning organisations and from legal experts on the international legal and treaty implications of the Government's proposals to retain and renew Trident. In our inquiries into *UK operations in Afghanistan* and *UK land operations in Iraq 2007* we again sought a broader range of witnesses. Rather

than simply depend on the MoD for information and updates on the situation in both theatres of operation, we have taken evidence from academics, think tanks, journalists, aid organisations and from London-based Iraqi and Afghan nationals. We believe that this has given us a much richer picture of the situation in Iraq and Afghanistan and we intend to continue to seek advice from these sources as well as from the MoD.

55. Although we have taken evidence from Ministers and officials at the MoD as part of all of our inquiries, our evidence-taking from Government was not limited to the Ministry of Defence. As part of our inquiry into *Medical Care for the Armed Forces* we took evidence from the Minister of State for Health Services at the Department of Health; from representatives of the Scottish Executive; and from NHS Trusts. We have also taken evidence from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in our inquiries into the *Future of NATO and European Defence*, the *Future of the UK's Strategic Nuclear Deterrent: the White Paper*, and on our single evidence session on Iraq, held jointly with the Foreign Affairs Committee, with the Defence and Foreign Secretaries in January 2007. As part of our inquiry into the *UK/US Defence Trade Cooperation Treaty*, we took oral evidence from the Cabinet Office as well as from the MoD. A complete list of witnesses and oral evidence sessions is provided in Annex 3.

Webforum

56. In 2006, we held a webforum as part of our inquiry into Educating Service Children in which we encouraged Service children, parents and teachers to tell us about their experiences. In 2007, we have held a further webforum, this time as part of our inquiry into *Medical Care for the Armed Forces*. This was the first Committee webforum hosted internally by the House of Commons.²⁶ This was intended to obtain the personal views of Service personnel and others who may not wish to contribute formal evidence to our inquiries. We ran this webforum in two stages either side of the Parliamentary summer recess. We received in excess of 150 postings from people who had registered. It provided us with an opportunity to respond to comments posted on the forum and for contributors in turn to respond to our comments. We believe it was a useful way of engaging public interest in our inquiries and of furthering well-informed debate on defence matters. It also allowed us to hear the views of those who might not otherwise have made representations to a Select Committee inquiry.

Publication of evidence on the internet

57. In our last report on *The work of the Committee in 2005 and 2006* we highlighted our newly-adopted practice of publishing the memoranda received on our website during the course of our inquiries rather than waiting until the report was published. In 2007, we continued this practice and believe it to be important in encouraging debate and stimulating a greater response to our calls for evidence.

26 Our 2006 webforum was hosted by The Hansard Society, as had been the practice with previous such operations.

Seminars

58. As we explained in our previous report on the work of the Committee, the list of the formal activities of the Committee gives only a partial picture of the work that we do. Formal evidence naturally forms the backbone of our work and underpins our inquiries. However, we have also held a number of informal seminars in addition to a large number of informal meetings with visiting delegations.

59. In 2007, we held two seminars and we plan to hold a further, horizon-scanning seminar early in 2008. At the beginning of 2007, we held an internal seminar with our specialist advisors, including our newly-appointed Service advisors, to consider our working practices and the issues we address. We held a second informal seminar before our visit to the United States and Canada during which we were given a briefing by MoD officials on key developments and issues in bilateral UK-US and UK-Canadian relations, including relevant operational and defence industry issues as well as an overall political and foreign policy briefing. We also received informal, confidential briefings from the MoD on the UK/US Defence Trade Co-operation Treaty and on the Fulton Report into the Iran hostages incident. In our forthcoming seminar, which we hope to hold at the Defence Academy at Shrivenham, we plan to reflect critically on our performance to date, identify areas where we can further improve our working practices, and establish our priorities for the year ahead. A list of our seminars and informal briefings is listed in Annex 4.

Inward visits

60. As we noted in our previous report, this Parliament has seen a growing number of visitors from overseas. This trend continued in 2007. During the course of the year we met a large number of foreign delegations. We hosted meetings with delegations of MPs from the Canadian, Hungarian, South Korean and Indonesian parliaments. We also met government ministers from, or ambassadors of, Georgia, Albania, Norway, Macedonia, Poland, Romania, and Colombia. In addition, we held informal meeting with Sir Emyr Jones Parry, the then UK Ambassador to the United Nations, and with Ambassador Francesc Vendrell, the EU Special Representative to Afghanistan. A list of our meetings with inward visitors is listed in Annex 4.

Outward visits

61. **In 2007, as in 2006, we visited UK Forces on deployment in both Afghanistan and Iraq. Visiting our troops wherever they are deployed is crucial to our understanding of the conditions in which our Armed Forces operate.** We visited Afghanistan in April 2007 as part of our inquiry into *UK operations in Afghanistan*. In Afghanistan, we met UK officials and Afghan politicians in Kabul, and UK Forces, local politicians, and local representatives of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in Kandahar and Lashkar Gah, in Helmand Province, Southern Afghanistan. Having travelled to Afghanistan via Pakistan in 2006, we decided in 2007 to travel to Afghanistan via India, where we held discussions with senior Indian government and military representatives in New Delhi. We travelled to Iraq in July 2007 as part of our inquiry into *UK land operations in Iraq 2007*. In Basra, we met UK Forces and local politicians at the Contingency Operating Base at Basra Air Station and Royal Naval commanders at the port of Um Qasr. In Baghdad, we met the

UK and US Ambassadors to Iraq, UK and US military commanders, and senior Iraqi politicians including the Prime Minister and the Defence Minister.

62. We undertook an extensive programme of visits to European NATO capitals and to NATO Headquarters in Brussels as part of our inquiry into *The Future of NATO and European Defence*. The Committee travelled, in small groups of up to four Members, to Berlin, Copenhagen, The Hague, Madrid, Paris, Prague, Rome, and Warsaw. In each of these capitals, we held discussions with the UK Ambassador and Embassy team as well as ministers and officials of the foreign and defence ministries, members of parliament, and local think tanks to hear their views on the future role of the Alliance, its deployment to Afghanistan, and the NATO's relationship with the European Union.

63. As part of this inquiry we travelled to the United States and Canada in June 2007. In Washington DC, we met senior Pentagon, State Department and National Security Council officials, Members of the House of Representatives and Senate Armed Services Committees, the House Foreign Affairs Committee and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. We also held a roundtable discussion with prominent members of the Washington think tank community at the Atlantic Council. In Ottawa, we met the Defence Minister, and his opposition shadow, the Committee of National Defence of the Canadian Parliament, and other senior Canadian politicians and think tank representatives.

64. In October 2007 we concluded our programme of NATO visits with visits to Georgia and Turkey. In Tbilisi, we met the Georgian Minister of State for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration, the Defence Minister and his deputy, the Speaker of the Georgian Parliament and Members of the Foreign Affairs and Defence and Security Committees. We also had a briefing from the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) on its work in Abkhazia and South Ossetia—areas of unresolved conflicts in Georgia—and we met representatives of opposition parties. In Ankara, we met the Defence Minister, the Turkish General Staff, the Foreign Affairs Commission of the Turkish Grand National Assembly, the Chairman of Turkey's delegation to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, and the Permanent Secretary of the Foreign Affairs Ministry. We also saw the Turkish Armed Forces in training at their base on the outskirts of Ankara.

65. In 2007, we have also continued our visits to defence establishments in the UK. As part of our inquiry into *The work of Defence Estates*, we visited Hounslow Barracks and Pirbright in Surrey in May 2007 to see for ourselves the accommodation available to UK Service personnel. We visited the Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre at Headley Court, Combat Stress, and Selly Oak Hospital in Birmingham in June 2007, and RFA Argus in Portsmouth, and Strensall Barracks in Yorkshire and Redford Barracks in Edinburgh as part of our inquiry into *Medical Care for the Armed Forces*.

66. We have also continued our programme of industry visits. In January 2007, we visited SELEX SA&S in Edinburgh. As part of our inquiry into *The Army's requirement for armoured vehicles: the FRES programme*, we attended the FRES trials at Bovington in Dorset in July 2007. We hope to conduct more visits to defence industries within the UK in 2008. A complete list of visits undertaken in 2007 is set out in Annex 2.

Political engagement within Europe

67. In 2007, the Chairman of the Committee attended several meetings of Chairmen of Defence Committees of EU Member States: in Berlin in April 2007; in Lisbon in September 2007; and in Naples in December 2007. Our Chairman also represented the Committee at the French Summer Defence Conference in September 2007. Individual Members of the Committee also represented the Committee at similar defence conferences in Europe.

Petitions

68. On 25 October 2007, the House of Commons approved the proposals set out in the Government's response to the Procedure Committee's report on petitions and Early Day Motions. Committees are now required to keep records of the petitions to the House which they receive and formally place them on their agendas. This followed the Modernisation Committee's recommendation, in November 2003, that "there is a case for the House to do more with public petitions which, if handled correctly, represent a potentially significant avenue for communication between the public and Parliament".²⁷

69. In 2007, we received copies of several petitions:

- from residents of the Isle of Arran asking the House to urge the Government to scrap the Trident nuclear missile system and abandon plans for its update or replacement (laid before the House by Katy Clark MP on 13 March 2007);
- from residents of Essex, Dorset and others "imploping the Government" to adopt a policy of free postage of parcels and letters to members of HM Armed Forces serving in Iraq and Afghanistan (laid before the House by Bob Spink MP on 29 March);
- from Sussex Action for Peace calling for British troops to be removed from Iraq immediately (laid before the House by Celia Barlow MP on 1 May 2007);
- from Councillor Jon Freeman regarding the policy of the Ministry of Defence on the upkeep of Drill Halls (laid before the House by Norman Baker MP on 18 May 2007);
- from David Cain, Philip Redl and others calling for free postage to HM Armed Forces serving in Iraq and Afghanistan (laid before the House by Bob Spink MP on 3 July 2007);
- from residents of Castle Point and others calling for more generous policies, and priority in housing, to serving and returning members of the Armed Forces, in recognition of their contribution in Iraq and Afghanistan (laid before the House by Bob Spink MP on 21 November).

²⁷ Select Committee on the Modernisation of the House of Commons, First Report, Session 2003–04, *Connecting Parliament with the Public*, HC 368, para 99

We have written to the MoD seeking their observations on the Drill Halls petition and on the cost of posting parcels to Iraq and Afghanistan and have published the responses on our website.

Specialist advisers

70. Our work has been greatly assisted by our team of specialist advisers: Paul Beaver, Rear Admiral Richard Cheadle, Professor Michael Clarke, Major General Timothy Cross, Professor David Kirkpatrick, Dr Andrew Rathmell, Rear Admiral David Snelson, and Air Marshal Philip Sturley. Dr Sibylle Bauer, Dr Paul Cornish and Joanna Kidd ably advised the Quadripartite Committee. Their advice, both directly to the Members of the Committee and through our staff, was invaluable.

4 Departmental Responses

71. The MoD is to be commended for responding to all our reports, within or shortly after the agreed two month deadline. It cannot be said that the Government has always responded to our recommendations as positively as we would wish, but on the whole the responses have been reasonable in quality. However, there does appear to be a tendency for the Government not to take account of the evidence base for our conclusions and recommendations. **For the future, we would hope that the Government's responses will deal more fully with the whole argument contained in the report, and not restrict themselves to the bold recommendations and conclusions; and it would be pleasing if they could be more generous in acknowledging where our inquiries have contributed to changes in Government policy.**

5 Looking Ahead

72. In 2008 we will continue to scrutinize the policies, activities and expenditure of the Ministry of Defence. Our programme for 2008 starts with the culmination of our inquiry into *The Future of NATO and European Defence*, on which we plan to report before the NATO Summit at Bucharest in early April 2008, and our inquiry into *Medical Care for the Armed Forces*. In the course of 2008, we also plan to conduct follow-up inquiries into UK operations in Afghanistan and in Iraq; to continue to scrutinise the MoD's Annual Report and Accounts, and its progress towards its Public Service Agreement (PSA) targets; to monitor the Department's equipment programme; and to scrutinize its Agencies and Trading Funds. We intend to examine the policy output of the Department; to inquire into the update of the Government's Defence Industrial Strategy, expected by the Spring and the anticipated White Paper on support for Service personnel.

Conclusions and Recommendations

1. At our request, the Government extended the period of time available to Parliament to scrutinise the UK/US Defence Trade Co-operation Treaty. This allowed us to conduct an inquiry into the Treaty. In November 2007 we took evidence from defence companies as well as the MoD and the Cabinet Office and published our report in December 2007 which recommended early ratification of the Treaty. (Paragraph 10)
2. The MoD was extremely slow in responding to our request for written evidence on our inquiry into UK Defence: commitments and resources and this significantly delayed our inquiry. (Paragraph 17)
3. Unusually, because of the classified nature of the material presented to us, we had to conduct our evidence sessions for our inquiry into The Iran hostages incident in private. We had some reservations about conducting scrutiny on terms of the Government's choosing. (Paragraph 26)
4. We concluded that the Fulton Report, and the evidence provided to us in support of it, contained a depth of operational detail which it would have been damaging to have made public. This made it difficult for us to demonstrate openly the grounds on which we reached our conclusions. In our report, we assured the House of Commons that we had scrutinised the report thoroughly and we wrote to the Secretary of State for Defence with a number of classified conclusions and recommendations. (Paragraph 28)
5. We have expressed concern that the reduction in the number of Defence Agencies may lead to a loss of transparency and Parliamentary accountability. (Paragraph 38)
6. In 2007, as in 2006, we visited UK Forces on deployment in both Afghanistan and Iraq. Visiting our troops wherever they are deployed is crucial to our understanding of the conditions in which our Armed Forces operate. (Paragraph 61)
7. For the future, we would hope that the Government's responses will deal more fully with the whole argument contained in the report, and not restrict themselves to the bold recommendations and conclusions; and it would be pleasing if they could be more generous in acknowledging where our inquiries have contributed to changes in Government policy. (Paragraph 71)

Annex 2: Committee Visits

Overseas visits

Date	Location	Members participating	Purpose
20–21 February 2007	Paris, France	Robert Key	Inquiry into the Future of NATO and European Defence
21–22 February 2007	Madrid, Spain	Mr Jenkin, Mr Jenkins	Inquiry into the Future of NATO and European Defence
27 February 2007	Rome, Italy	Mr Borrow, Mr Holloway	Inquiry into the Future of NATO and European Defence
27–28 February 2007	Berlin, Germany	Mr Arbuthnot, Mr Crausby	Inquiry into the Future of NATO and European Defence
12 March 2007	Prague, Czech Republic	Mr Hamilton, Mr Hancock, Mr Jenkins, Willie Rennie	Inquiry into the Future of NATO and European Defence
21 March 2007	Copenhagen, Denmark	Linda Gilroy, Mr Key, John Smith	Inquiry into the Future of NATO and European Defence
21 March 2007	The Hague, The Netherlands	Mr Arbuthnot, Mr Borrow, Mr Havard	Inquiry into the Future of NATO and European Defence
28–29 March 2007	Brussels, Belgium	Mr Arbuthnot, Mr Borrow, Mr Havard, Mr Jenkin, Mr Jones, Robert Key	Inquiry into the Future of NATO and European Defence
14–19 April 2007	India and Afghanistan	Mr Arbuthnot, Mr Borrow, Mr Crausby, Mr Hamilton, Mr Havard, Mr Holloway, Mr Jenkins, Mr Jones, John Smith	Inquiry into UK operations in Afghanistan
21 May 2007	Warsaw, Poland	Mr Hancock, Mr Holloway, Mr Jenkin	Inquiry into the Future of NATO and European Defence
3–7 June 2007	Washington DC, USA and Ottawa, Canada	Mr Arbuthnot, Mr Borrow, Mr Crausby, Linda Gilroy, Mr Hamilton, Mr Hancock, Mr Havard, Mr Holloway, Mr Jenkin, Mr Jenkins, Willie Rennie, John Smith	Inquiry into the Future of NATO and European Defence
9–10 September 2007	Iraq and Kuwait	Mr Arbuthnot, Mr Havard, Mr Jenkin, Mr Jones, Willie Rennie, John Smith	Inquiry into UK land operations in Iraq 2007
14–18 October 2007	Tbilisi, Georgia and Ankara, Turkey	Mr Arbuthnot, Mr Borrow, Mr Crausby, Linda Gilroy, Mr Havard, Mr Holloway, Mr Jenkins, Robert Key, Willie Rennie, John Smith	Inquiry into the Future of NATO and European Defence

Overseas visits in a Representative Capacity

Date	Location	Members participating	Purpose
23 April 2007	Berlin, Germany	Mr Arbuthnot	Conference of the Chairmen of Defence Committees of the Member States of the European Union
30 September–1 October 2007	Lisbon, Portugal	Mr Havard	Conference of the Chairmen of Defence Committees of the Member States of the European Union
9–10 October 2007	Paris and Toulouse, France	Mr Arbuthnot	5 th Summer Defence Conference
15 November 2007	Paris, France	Mr Holloway	Naval Defence Seminar
16–17 December 2007	Naples, Italy	Mr Arbuthnot, Mr Crausby	Conference of the Chairmen of Defence Committees of the Member States of the European Union

UK visits

Date	Location	Members participating	Purpose
29 January 2007	SELEX SA&S, Edinburgh	Mr Arbuthnot, Mr Borrow, Mr Crausby, Mr Hamilton, Mr Holloway, Mr Jones, Willie Rennie, John Smith	Industry familiarisation visit
8 March 2007	Export Control Organisation, Department of Trade and Industry, London	Mr Borrow, Linda Gilroy	Inquiry into Strategic Export Controls by the Quadripartite Committee
26 April 2007	Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London	Mr Borrow	Inquiry into Strategic Export Controls by the Quadripartite Committee
24 May 2007	Hounslow and Pirbright, Surrey	Mr Arbuthnot, Mr Jones, Robert Key	Inquiry into the work of Defence Estates
14 June 2007	Headley Court and Combat Stress, Leatherhead, Surrey	Mr Arbuthnot, Mr Borrow, Linda Gilroy, Mr Jenkin, Mr Jenkins, Robert Key, Willie Rennie, John Smith	Inquiry into Medical Care for the Armed Forces
21 June 2007	Selly Oak Hospital, Birmingham	Mr Arbuthnot, Mr Crausby, Linda Gilroy, Mr Havard, Mr Jenkins, Mr Jones	Inquiry into Medical Care for the Armed Forces: Oral Evidence

Date	Location	Members participating	Purpose
25 June 2007	MBDA, London	Mr Arbuthnot, Mr Borrow, Mr Crausby, Linda Gilroy, Mr Jenkins, Mr Jones	Inquiry into the Defence Industrial Strategy: update
31 July 2007	FRES Trials, Bovington, Dorset	Mr Arbuthnot, Mr Jones	Inquiry into the Army's requirement for armoured vehicles: the FRES programme
11 September 2007	Defence Systems & Equipment International Exhibition 2007, London	Linda Gilroy	Inquiry into Strategic Export Controls by the Quadripartite Committee
4 October 2007	RFA Argus, Portsmouth	Mr Arbuthnot, Mr Jones, Robert Key, John Smith	Inquiry into Medical Care for the Armed Forces
10–11 October 2007	Strensall Barracks, Yorkshire and Redford Barracks, Edinburgh	Mr Arbuthnot, Mr Borrow, Mr Hamilton, Mr Jenkins, Mr Jones, Robert Key, Willie Rennie	Inquiry into Medical Care for the Armed Forces: Oral Evidence

Annex 3: Oral Evidence Sessions

From the start of the current Parliament, the Committee has held a total of 30 oral evidence sessions. Transcript of each of these evidence sessions is available on the Committee's website, www.parliament.uk/defcom.

Session 2006–07

Date	Evidence session
11 January 2007	<i>Iraq</i> Rt Hon Margaret Beckett MP, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Rt Hon Des Browne MP, Secretary of State for Defence, Air Chief Marshal Sir Jock Stirrup, Chief of the Defence Staff, Ministry of Defence, and Mr Nigel Casey, Deputy Head of Iraq Policy Unit, Foreign and Commonwealth Office
16 January 2007	<i>The Future of the UK's Strategic Nuclear Deterrent: the White Paper</i> Mr John Ainslie, Co-ordinator, Scottish Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, Sian Jones, Aldermaston Women's Peace Campaign, Mr Bruce Kent, Vice-President, Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, and Ms Di McDonald, Executive Director, Nuclear Information Service
23 January 2007	<i>The Future of the UK's Strategic Nuclear Deterrent: the White Paper</i> Professor Richard L. Garwin, US National Academy of Sciences, Mr Paul Ingram, British American Security Information Council, Dr Stephen Pullinger, International Security Information Services Europe, Dr Jeremy Stocker, International Institute for Strategic Studies, and Dr Lee Willett, Royal United Services Institute
30 January 2007	<i>The Future of the UK's Strategic Nuclear Deterrent: the White Paper</i> Professor Christopher Greenwood QC, London School of Economics, Professor Nick Grief, University of Bournemouth, Professor Steven Haines, Royal Holloway College, University of London, and Professor Philippe Sands QC, University College, London
6 February 2007	<i>The Future of the UK's Strategic Nuclear Deterrent: the White Paper</i> Rt Hon Des Browne MP, Secretary of State for Defence, Mr Desmond Bowen, Policy Director, Mr Tom McKane, Director General, Strategic Requirements, Rear Admiral Andrew Mathews RN, Director General, Nuclear, and Mr Nick Bennett, Director General, Strategic Technology, Ministry of Defence, and Ms Mariot Leslie, Director for Defence and Strategic Threats, Foreign and Commonwealth Office
1 March 2007	<i>Strategic Export Controls</i> Mr Gareth R Thomas MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Department for International Development, Mr Kenny Dick, Deputy Head (Security and Justice) of Conflict, Humanitarian and Security Department (CHASE), and Ms Kate Joseph, Security Policy Adviser, CHASE, Department for International Development; Mr Mark Fuchter, Head of Prohibitions and Restrictions Group, and Mr Guy Westhead, Deputy Director of Frontiers and International Directorate, HM Revenue and Customs, Mr David Green Q.C., Director, and Mr David Richardson, Head of Division, Revenue and Customs Prosecution Office
6 March 2007	<i>UK Defence: commitments and resources</i> Air Chief Marshal Sir Jock Stirrup GCB, Chief of the Defence Staff, Ministry of Defence
13 March 2007	<i>UK Defence: commitments and resources</i> Professor Sir Lawrence Freedman KCMG CBE; Air Chief Marshal Sir Brian Burridge KCB CBE, Vice Admiral Tim McClement KCB OBE, Major General Andrew Ritchie CBE; Mr Michael Codner and Professor Keith Hartley
15 March 2007	<i>Strategic Export Controls</i>

Date	Evidence session
	Rt Hon Margaret Beckett MP, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Paul Arkwright, Head of Counter Proliferation Department, and Mariot Leslie, Director for Defence and Strategic Threats, Foreign and Commonwealth Office
20 March 2007	<i>UK operations in Afghanistan</i> Rt Hon Des Browne MP, Secretary of State for Defence, Mr Martin Howard, Director-General of Operational Policy, and Lieutenant General Nick Houghton CBE, Chief of Joint Operations, Ministry of Defence, and Mr Peter Holland, Head of Afghan Drug Inter-Departmental Unit, Foreign and Commonwealth Office
27 March 2007	<i>UK operations in Afghanistan</i> Dr Shirin Akiner, School of Oriental and African Studies, the Hon Dr Gilbert Greenall CBE, Norine MacDonald QC, Senlis Council; Mr Robert Fox, Mr Rory Stewart OBE and Dr Michael Williams, Royal United Services Institute
24 April 2007	<i>Strategic Lift</i> Air Vice Marshal Kevin Leeson CBE, until recently Assistant Chief of the Defence Staff (Logistics Operations), Brigadier Jeff Mason MBE, Director, Defence Supply Chain Operations and Movements, and Air Commodore Anthony Gunby OBE, Air Officer Air Transport and Air-to-Air Refuelling, Headquarters 2 Group RAF, Ministry of Defence
24 April 2007	<i>UK operations in Afghanistan</i> General David Richards CBE DSO, Commander, Allied Rapid Reaction Corps
8 May 2007	<i>UK operations in Afghanistan</i> The Rt Hon Des Browne MP, Secretary of State for Defence, Mr Desmond Bowen, Policy Director, Ministry of Defence, Mr Peter Holland, Head, Afghan Drugs Inter-Departmental Unit, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and Ms Lindy Cameron OBE, Head, DfID Afghanistan, Department for International Development
15 May 2007	<i>The work of Defence Estates</i> Vice Admiral Timothy Laurence MVO ADC, Chief Executive, Mr David Olney, Director-General Operations, Mr Bill Clark OBE, Director Secretariat, and Mr Mike Martindale, Finance Director, Defence Estates
22 May 2007	<i>Strategic Lift</i> Lieutenant General Andrew Figgures CBE, Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff (Equipment Capability), and Mr Tim Rowntree, Director-General Air Support, Ministry of Defence; Mr Fabrice Brégier, Chief Operating Officer, Airbus, Mr Francisco Fernández Sáinz, Managing Director, Airbus Military Sociedad Limitada, Mr Richard Thompson, Senior Vice President, Airbus Military Sociedad Limitada, and Mr Charles Paterson, Head of A400M programme, Airbus UK
12 June 2007	<i>Medical Care for the Armed Forces</i> Ms Sammie Crane, Chief Executive, Army Families Federation, Commodore Toby Elliott RN, Chief Executive, Ex-Services Mental Welfare Society (Combat Stress), Air Commodore Edward Jarron, Secretary-General, Royal Air Forces Association, Ms Sue Freeth, Director Welfare, The Royal British Legion, and Mrs Elizabeth Sheldon, Deputy Controller, Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association
19 June 2007	<i>The Future of NATO and European Defence</i> Mr Martin Wolf, Senior Columnist, The Financial Times; Dr Rob Dover, Lecturer, King's College, London, Mr Charles Grant, Director, Centre for European Reform, and Sir Paul Lever KCMG, Chairman, RUSI Council
21 June 2007 Birmingham	<i>Medical Care for the Armed Forces</i> Ms Julie Moore, Chief Executive, University Hospital Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust, Dr David Rosser, Medical Director, University Hospital Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust; Mr Terence Lewis, Medical Director, Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust, Mr Andrew Morris, Chief Executive, Frimley Park Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, Mr

Date	Evidence session
	Neil Permain, Director of Operational Services, South Tees Hospitals NHS Trust, Ms Chris Wilkinson, Director of Nursing, Peterborough and Stamford Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust; Dr Brendan McKeating, Chairman, Armed Forces Committee, British Medical Association
26 June 2007	<i>UK land operations in Iraq 2007</i> Dr Ali Ansari, University of St Andrews, Dr Toby Dodge, Queen Mary College, University of London, Dr Eric Herring, University of Bristol, Dr Glen Rangwala, University of Cambridge, and Professor Sami Zubaida, Birkbeck College, University of London; Mr Nadhim Zahawi, Joint CEO, YouGov
17 July 2007	<i>The Iran hostages incident: the lessons learned</i> Lieutenant General Nick Houghton CBE, Chief of Joint Operations, Admiral Sir James Burnell-Nugent KCB CBE, Commander-in-Chief Fleet, and Rear Admiral Richard Ibbotson DSC, Flag Officer Sea Training, Ministry of Defence
24 July 2007	<i>UK land operations in Iraq 2007</i> UK operations in Iraq: Rt Hon Bob Ainsworth MP, Minister of State for the Armed Forces, Mr Desmond Bowen, Policy Director, and Brigadier Chris Hughes, Director of Joint Commitments (Military), Ministry of Defence
9 October 2007	<i>The Future of NATO and European Defence</i> Dr Dana Allin, International Institute of Strategic Studies (IISS), Professor Michael Cox, London School of Economics, Dr Jonathan Eyal, Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), Dr Robin Niblett, Director, Chatham House, and Dr Mark Webber, University of Loughborough
11 October 2007 Edinburgh	<i>Medical Care for the Armed Forces</i> Dr Chris Freeman, Royal College of Psychiatrists; Dr J. Gordon Paterson, Chairman, Board of the St John and Red Cross Defence Medical Welfare Service; and Mr Derek Feeley, Director of Healthcare Policy & Strategy Directorate, Mr Geoff Huggins, Head of Mental Health Division, Healthcare Policy & Strategy Directorate, and Dr Nadine Harrison, Medical Adviser, Primary & Community Care Directorate, Scottish Health and Wellbeing Directorate
23 October 2007	<i>Iraq and Afghanistan</i> Rt Hon Des Browne MP, Secretary of State for Defence, Lieutenant General Peter Wall CBE, Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff (Commitments), and Mr Jon Day CBE, Director General Operational Policy, Ministry of Defence

Session 2007–08

Date	Evidence session
13 November	<i>Ministry of Defence Annual Report and Accounts</i> Mr Bill Jeffry CB, Permanent Under Secretary of State, and Mr Trevor Wooley CB, Finance Director, Ministry of Defence
20 November	<i>The Future of NATO and European Defence</i> General Sir Jack Deverell, Lieutenant General Sir Rob Fry, Mr Daniel Keohane, and Colonel Christopher Langton
21 November	<i>UK/US Defence Trade Cooperation Treaty</i> Ian Godden, Secretary of the Defence Industries Council and Chief Executive Officer of the Society of British Aerospace Companies (SBAC), David Hayes, Chairman of Export Group for Aerospace and Defence (EGAD) and Director of Export Controls Dr Jerry McGinn, US Aerospace Industries Association (AIA) and Northrop Grumman Dr Sandy Wilson, President and Managing Director of General Dynamics UK Alison Wood, Group Strategic Development Director, BAE Systems; Rt Hon Baroness Taylor of Bolton, Minister for Defence Equipment and Support, Ministry of Defence Stephen French, Director General Acquisition Policy, Ministry of Defence, Paul Lincoln, Head of Defence and Security Policy, Cabinet Office, Tony Pawson, Head

Date	Evidence session
	Defence Export Services, Ministry of Defence, Gloria Craig, Director General International Security Policy, Ministry of Defence
27 November	<i>Medical Care for the Armed Forces</i> Derek Twigg MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Lieutenant General Robert Baxter, Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff (Health), Lieutenant General Louis Lillywhite, Surgeon-General, Ministry of Defence; Ben Bradshaw MP, Minister of State for Health Services, Department of Health, Professor Louis Appleby, Mental Health Clinical Director, Andrew Cash, Co-Chair, DH/MoD Partnership Board
28 November	<i>Ministry of Defence Annual Report and Accounts</i> Mr Bill Jeffry CB, Permanent Under Secretary of State, and Mr Trevor Wooley CB, Finance Director, Ministry of Defence
4 December	<i>The Iran Hostages Incident: the lessons learned</i> Air Chief Marshal Sir Jock Stirrup, Chief of the Defence Staff, General Sir Timothy Granville-Chapman, Vice Chief of the Defence Staff, Admiral Sir Jonathon Band, First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff, Mr Nick Gurr, Director of Communications Planning

Annex 4: Informal Meetings

Meetings with inward visitors

Meeting	Date
Parliamentary delegation from Canada	18 January 2007
Parliamentary delegation from Hungary	23 January 2007
Parliamentary delegation from the Republic of Korea	31 January 2007
Parliamentary delegation from Lebanon	28 February 2007
Georgian Deputy Prime Minister	20 March 2007
Students of the Pakistan National Defence College	24 April 2007
RAFAEL Armament Development Authority Ltd.	10 May 2007
Albanian Ambassador to the UK	10 May 2007
The Chargé d'Affaires from the Macedonian Embassy	10 May 2007
Dr Rainer Stinner, German Member of Parliament and Member of the German Defence Committee	15 May 2007
Norwegian Minister of Defence	16 May 2007
Parliamentary delegation from Indonesia	23 May 2007
Macedonian Secretary of State for Defence	12 June 2007
Ambassador of the Republic of Poland	19 June 2007
NATO Defense College Course 110	20 June 2007
Delegation from the Chilean Ministry of Defence	12 July 2007
Sir Emyr Jones Parry, UK Permanent Representative to the United Nations	16 July 2007
Romanian Under-Secretary of State	11 September 2007
Lieutenant General Karl W Eikenberry, Deputy Chairman, NATO Military Committee	28 September 2007
Macedonian Minister of Foreign Affairs	17 October 2007
US School of Advanced Military Studies	18 October 2007
Delegation from the French Centre for Advanced Armament	23 October 2007
Parliamentary delegation from Afghanistan	13 November 2007
Colombian Minister of Defence	22 November 2007
Ambassador Francesc Vendrell, EU Special Representative to Afghanistan	5 December 2007
NATO Defense College Course 111	12 December 2007

Informal activities held

Meeting	Date
Working practices seminar	9 January 2007
Pre-briefing for USA and Canada visit	22 May 2007
Briefing on the UK/US Defence Trade Cooperation Treaty	16 July 2007
Informal meeting on Coroners with Bridget Prentice MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Ministry of Justice	9 October 2007
Briefing from the MoD on the findings of the Fulton Inquiry	20 November 2007

Formal Minutes

Tuesday 22 January 2008

Members present:

Mr James Arbuthnot, in the Chair

Mr David Crausby

Linda Gilroy

Mr Dai Harvard

Mr Bernard Jenkin

Mr Kevan Jones

Robert Key

John Smith

Draft Report (*The work of the Committee in 2007*), proposed by the Chairman, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 72 read and agreed to.

Annexes and Summary agreed to.

Resolved, That the Report be the Sixth Report of the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the Chairman make the Report to the House.

[Adjourned till Tuesday 29 January at 10.00 am

List of Reports from the Committee during the current Parliament

The reference number of the Government's response to each Report is printed in brackets after the HC printing number.

Session 2005–06

First Report	Armed Forces Bill	HC 747 (HC 1021)
Second Report	Future Carrier and Joint Combat Aircraft Programmes	HC 554 (HC 926)
Third Report	Delivering Front Line Capability to the RAF	HC 557 (HC 1000)
Fourth Report	Costs of peace-keeping in Iraq and Afghanistan: Spring Supplementary Estimate 2005–06	HC 980 (HC 1136)
Fifth Report	The UK deployment to Afghanistan	HC 558 (HC 1211)
Sixth Report	Ministry of Defence Annual Report and Accounts 2004–05	HC 822 (HC 1293)
Seventh Report	The Defence Industrial Strategy	HC 824 (HC 1488)
Eighth Report	The Future of the UK's Strategic Nuclear Deterrent: the Strategic Context	HC 986 (HC 1558)
Ninth Report	Ministry of Defence Main Estimates 2006–07	HC 1366 (HC 1601)
Tenth Report	The work of the Met Office	HC 823 (HC 1602)
Eleventh Report	Educating Service Children	HC 1054 (HC 58)
Twelfth Report	Strategic Export Controls: Annual Report for 2004, Quarterly Reports for 2005, Licensing Policy and Parliamentary Scrutiny	HC 873 (Cm 6954)
Thirteenth Report	UK Operations in Iraq	HC 1241 (HC 1603)
Fourteenth Report	Armed Forces Bill: proposal for a Service Complaints Commissioner	HC 1711 (HC 180)

Session 2006–07

First Report	Defence Procurement 2006	HC 56 (HC 318)
Second Report	Ministry of Defence Annual Report and Accounts 2005–06	HC 57 (HC 376)
Third Report	Costs of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan: Winter Supplementary Estimate 2006–07	HC 129 (HC 317)
Fourth Report	The Future of the UK's Strategic Nuclear Deterrent: the Manufacturing and Skills Base	HC 59 (HC 304)
Fifth Report	The work of the Committee in 2005 and 2006	HC 233 (HC 344)
Sixth Report	The Defence Industrial Strategy: update	HC 177 (HC 481)
Seventh Report	The Army's requirement for armoured vehicles: the FRES programme	HC 159 (HC 511)
Eighth Report	The work of the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory and the funding of defence research	HC 84 (HC 512)
Ninth Report	The Future of the UK's Strategic Nuclear Deterrent: the White Paper	HC 225–I and –II (HC 551)
Tenth Report	Cost of military operations: Spring Supplementary Estimate 2006–07	HC 379 (HC 558)

Eleventh Report	Strategic Lift	HC 462 (<i>HC1025</i>)
Twelfth Report	Ministry of Defence Main Estimates 2007–08	HC 835 (<i>HC 1026</i>)
Thirteenth Report	UK operations in Afghanistan	HC 408 (<i>HC 1024</i>)
Fourteenth Report	Strategic Export Controls: 2007 Review	HC 117 (<i>Cm 7260</i>)
Fifteenth Report	The work of Defence Estates	HC 535 (<i>HC 109</i>)

Session 2007–08

First Report	UK land operations in Iraq 2007	HC 110
Second Report	Costs of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan: Winter Supplementary Estimate 2007–08	HC 138
Third Report	UK/US Defence Trade Cooperation Treaty	HC 107
Fourth Report	The Iran hostages incident: the lessons learned	HC 181
Fifth Report	Ministry of Defence Annual Report and Accounts 2006–07	HC 61