

Annex 3.1: DESCRIPTION OF ATE

3.1.1 About two-thirds of the Defence Estate is rural training land. This represents approximately 1% of the total land area of England, Scotland and Wales. The Army Training Estate (ATE) structure was set up from the 1st April 1999. The ATE is responsible for the management of the majority of the UK training estate and is controlled and funded directly by Director General Training Support (DGTS) who reports to Commander Field Army (Comd Fd Army) on matters concerning the ATE.

3.1.2 HQ ATE is based at Land Warfare Centre (LWC) in Warminster and consists of a mixture of Army Staff Officers and Defence Estate personnel. The ATE is commanded by a Colonel and is divided into 10 ATE regions each commanded by a Lieutenant Colonel.

3.1.3 The 10 ATE regions are:

- i) ATE Pembrokeshire (HQ at Castlemartin Training Area)
- ii) ATE East (HQ at Stanford Training Area)
- iii) ATE North (HQ at Catterick Training Area)
- iv) ATE Otterburn (HQ at Otterburn Training Area)
- v) ATE Salisbury Plain (HQ at Salisbury Plain Training Area)
- vi) ATE Scotland (HQ at HQ Army Scotland)
- vii) ATE Home Counties (HQ at Longmoor Training Area)
- viii) ATE South East (HQ at Cinque Ports Training Area)
- ix) ATE South West (HQ at Wyvern Barracks, Exeter)
- x) ATE Wales/West Midlands (HQs at Sennybridge Training Area & Swynnerton Training Camp)

3.1.4 These 10 ATEs must provide facilities for the training of all major units and formations in the UK. They must provide users with a broad range of training facilities including artillery and infantry field firing ranges and extensive dry training areas. The ATE also provides facilities for the testing of new equipment, the proofing of ammunition and use by other Government Departments.

Booking of Training Resources

3.1.5 The MoD has developed a robust management tool to enable the close matching of the training resources required with the training resources available. This

management process has been critical to ensuring that training objectives are met and therefore the delivery of military capability maintained.

3.1.6 Bids for units (apart from urgent operational training) are submitted in three stages:

- i) Stage 1 Priority bidders are required to submit their bids 14 months in advance; these bids are screened by Land Command.
- ii) Stage 2 Units are required to submit their bids 9 months in advance.
- iii) Stage 3 Stage 3 bids are required up to 6 months before the training is required but will not be confirmed until 4 weeks before the training is due to take place.

3.1.7 Time and space on training areas is allocated by the individual ATEs, according to a set of priorities laid down by LWC. The overall priorities for each ATE are shown below:

Stage 1

1. Mission specific operational training directed by LWC.
2. Field training exercises (FTX) at formation level, directed by LWC.
3. Arms School individual training authorised for each ATE by LWC.
4. LWC authorised combined arms collective training.

Stage 2

5. Major unit/unit-level FTXs/practice camps
6. Other individual training, including training by the RAF, Royal Navy/Royal Marines
7. Annual (2 week) training camps by TA units

Stage 3

8. Foreign forces, as directed by LWC
9. Local major units training
10. Other major units training
11. Trials establishments with agreed access
12. All sub-units
13. Weekend TA training
14. Other training

3.1.8 Other training areas, ranges and establishments, not part of the ATE, but nonetheless with some opportunities for providing training resources include:

- i) Army Training and Recruiting Agency (ATRA) Training Facilities are used primarily for providing the specialist needs of a particular Arm but with, in some cases, the capacity to accommodate other users. ATRA training facilities are controlled by the relevant Arms Directorate, under the direction of HQ ATRA, based in Upavon.
- ii) Other Services Training Facilities, Facilities controlled by the Royal Navy (RN), Royal Marines (RM) or Royal Air Force (RAF).
- iii) Training Facilities owned by the Territorial Army Volunteer Reserve Association (TAVRA).
- iv) Training Facilities controlled by Quinetic, the Defence Experimental Research Agency.
- v) Areas of private land (e.g. Forestry Commission land) leased for dry training (training with no live rounds) by agreement with the landowner. In most cases, these training opportunities have restrictions in terms of the type or level of training which may be undertaken (e.g. no more than 250 men and/or no vehicles) and/or the maximum length of time which may be used (e.g. no more than 28 days per annum). Very limited live firing takes place on private land, mostly comprising sniper training in Scotland.

Local Training Areas

3.1.9 In addition to those training opportunities identified above there are a number of individual unit bases which also have their own so-called 'Backdoor Training Area' or 'Local Training Areas', used similarly for low-level training. For example the AS90 regiment based at Topcliffe Airfield uses the airfield as a backdoor training area for undertaking individual and crew skills.

3.1.10 The term 'backdoor training' is also used generically to refer to a variety of low-level field training within, adjacent or near to a unit's barracks and a number of Training Areas are used by local units for this purpose. Some Training Areas have particular areas designated as 'backdoor' training areas for local units, e.g. Salisbury Plain.

The Principal Training Areas

3.1.11 A short overview of each of the principal training areas is given below or in accompanying annexes where indicated. In general they are used for a broad range of training functions, with the majority able to accommodate both live firing and dry training.

i) **Aldershot Training Area (6570 hectares)** provides both live firing and dry training facilities at Ash Ranges, Pirbright Ranges and the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (RMAS) and low level company dry training on the Minley & Aldershot Dry Training Area. Part of the Pirbright Ranges is so used for vehicle testing. There are a variety of fixed ranges but only limited field firing facilities due to the small size of each component area. The Training Area is covered by a number of nature conservation designations and is used extensively for public access.

Priority: Arms Schools and local units

ii) **Bovington/Lulworth Training Area (1062 hectares / 3057 hectares)** is managed and controlled by ATRA to provide facilities for Royal Armoured Corps and Phase 2 driving and maintenance training run by the RAC Centre at Bovington Camp. The training area is also used by the Armoured Trials and Development Unit (ATDU), the Army Base Repair Organisation (ABRO), the Royal School of Signals Blandford (Phase 2 training) and some Field Army units. Lulworth Ranges are also controlled by ATRA. Lulworth is used by the AFV Gunnery School at Bovington Camp for training gunnery instructors and for Phase 3 gunnery courses. The ranges are also used by ATDU and by some Field Army units.

Priority: Driver training and Gunnery Courses

iii) **Castlemartin Range (2390 hectares)** is one of the two principal armoured fighting vehicle (AFV) gunnery ranges in the UK (the other being Lulworth Ranges). Its facilities are used by armoured (Challenger), armoured infantry (Warrior) and reconnaissance (CVRT) units to undertake annual, mandatory, Gunnery Standard Test Exercises (GSTEs) and Live Firing Exercises (LFXs). It also provides facilities for infantry live firing on fixed ranges, dry training and helicopter firing. Castlemartin Range lies within the Pembrokeshire Coast national park and some 25% is designated as a SSSI, including the entire coastline comprising some 16 kilometres of mostly limestone cliffs. The cliffs provide nesting habitat for sea birds, peregrine falcons and choughs and the

Castlemartin Coast is accordingly designated as an SPA. The Castlemartin section of the south-west Wales limestone sea-cliffs is also a candidate SAC.

Priority: Gunnery Standard Test Exercise (GSTE) for Challenger and Warrior Units

- iv) **Catterick Training Area (8215 hectares)** provides all weather driving and low-level tactical manoeuvre facilities on purpose-built roads and tracks, for armoured and mechanised units. It also provides limited infantry field firing and dry training facilities for the Infantry Training Centre at Catterick (Phase 2 training) and other users up to section level live firing. The training area also includes dedicated bridging sites for Royal Engineers training and facilities for Operations in Built Up Areas (OBUA). Some 25% of Catterick Training Area is designated as part of a SSSI covering the heather moorlands of the North Pennines and there are other sites of local nature conservation interest. The moorlands are used by several notable bird species including goshawk, merlin and black grouse. In particular, Catterick Training Area is an important participant in the North Pennines Black Grouse Recovery Project.

Priority: 19 Mechanised Brigade and ITC

- v) **Cinque Ports Training Area (5045 hectares)** (1310 hectares of ranges and 3735 hectares of dry training) provides specialist facilities for practising urban operations/war fighting, including OBUA facilities. The training area includes a number of small arms range complexes plus facilities for anti-tank firing, helicopter live firing and dry training and is used particularly by those units based in the South East of England. The whole of the Lydd Ranges at Cinque Ports Training Area, together with the Pippingford Park dry training area lie within SSSIs. Six other SSSIs extend over parts of the estate. Features of conservation interest include chalk grassland and associated fauna and flora. Cinque Ports Training Area has fixed ranges but no Field Firing facilities.

Priority: Urban Operations

- vi) **Dartmoor Training Area** : see Annex 3.3

- vii) **Kirkcudbright Training Area** : see Annex 3.4

- viii) **Otterburn Training Area** : see Annex 3.5

- ix) **Salisbury Plain Training Area** : see Annex 3.6

- x) **Sennybridge Training Area : see Annex 3.7**

- xi) **Stanford Training Area : see Annex 3.8**

- xii) **Warcop Training Area (9675 hectares)** The priority role of Warcop is to provide infantry field firing for recruits from the Infantry Training Centre at Catterick (Phase 2 training). It also provides facilities for units equipped with armoured fighting vehicles to undertake low-level/basic live firing exercises. It is also extensively used by the TA. Warcop Training Area has a number of Field Firing ranges but does not have the capacity for Battalion Level Dry Training Exercises nor Company Level Field Firing. The upland fells of Warcop Training Area fall within the Appleby Fells SSSI which forms part of the North Pennine Moors proposed SPA and the Moor House-Upper Teesdale candidate SAC. The training area also supports a population of red squirrel, over 60 badger setts and breeding oystercatcher, curlew and other upland birds.
Priority: Infantry Training Centre (ITC)