



DARTMOOR TRAINING AREA

Environmental Appraisal

Need and Alternatives

3

3. Need and Alternatives

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 The need to continue training on DTA and the analysis of potential alternatives to its use has been addressed through previous independent study.¹⁰ This Chapter draws upon information in that report and on further information provided by DTE¹¹ to summarise the most recent position.
- 3.1.2 While all three Armed Services make use of DTA, the Army and the Royal Marines are its primary customers, representing by far the greatest demand on its facilities. Therefore an overview of how the Army and Royal Marines are trained is provided first, followed by similar commentary related to other military users. The demand (now and in future) placed upon DTA is then summarised. The Chapter concludes with an appraisal of the potential alternatives to the use of DTA.

3.2 Outline of Training

Army and Royal Marines

- 3.2.1 Armed Forces are required to undertake a wide variety of tasks to underpin national security and the Government's foreign policy objectives. In addition to the broad geographic sweep of these tasks and the complicated combinations and permutations of units and soldiers needed to achieve them, they are also often dangerous and unpredictable.
- 3.2.2 Land Forces training¹² is conducted within a clear and structured framework, which ensures that soldiers at all levels are properly prepared for the potential operations that they may be required to undertake. Training Objectives are linked directly to a unit's readiness state so that training is efficient and cost effective and only concentrates on delivering those skills that are necessary to the fulfilment of the aim. The MoD has an inescapable moral and legal duty to ensure that all soldiers are properly trained to fulfil any task that they may be called upon to undertake. This obligation is fulfilled in part by training on MoD ranges and training areas.
- 3.2.3 Military training is structured and progressive and takes place at different stages in a soldier's career. Individual training¹³ takes place in three distinct phases. Initial training is delivered in two phases; Phase 1 recruit training is common to all arms and services and is conducted at Army Training Regiments, Phase 2 training is type specific specialist training and takes place at a variety of individual training establishments throughout the

¹⁰ The Continuing Need for Military Training on Dartmoor (RPS, June 2005).

¹¹ The Need for Military Training on Defence Training Estate South West (DTE SW) HQ DTE August 2007.

¹² A more detailed explanation of military training can be found in Chapter 2 of the Need for Military Training on DTE SW HQ DTE August 2007.

¹³ Individual training is the training of individual soldiers in order to equip them with the skills necessary to survive on the battlefield.

UK. Soldiers are posted to the field army on completion of Phase 2 training. Phase 3 training is undertaken throughout a soldier's career in order to refresh skills, acquire new skills and develop potential, most Phase 3 training is linked to promotion.

- 3.2.4 Collective training¹⁴ takes place at all levels from section (8 to 10 personnel) up to company (100 to 120 personnel) and battlegroup (600+ personnel); formation training involves the training of one or more battlegroups. DTA is used extensively for individual and collective training.
- 3.2.5 Pre-deployment training is undertaken by soldiers before they deploy on operations, it builds on the individual and collective training undertaken by all service personnel and is specifically designed to meet the unique demands and requirements of operational theatres. It can only be delivered to trained soldiers. DTA is used to deliver pre deployment training

3.3 Training Area Demand

3.3.1 DTE SW provides training areas and ranges for units from all over UK as well as those based locally. The major units and service establishments located within DTE SW's catchment area, all of which require access to local training facilities, include:

- Regular and Reserve Royal Navy and Royal Marine Units;
- Regular and Territorial Army Units;
- Individual Training Organisations including; Britannia Royal Naval College, Dartmouth, HMS Raleigh, Torpoint and the Commando Training Centre, Royal Marines, Lympstone;
- RNAS Culdrose and RNAS Yeovilton;
- Joint Services Survival School;
- Bristol and Exeter Universities' Officer Training Corps (OTC);
- RN, RM, Army and RAF Cadets; and
- Ministry of Defence Police (MDP)¹⁵.

3.4 Training Area Supply

3.4.1 Available training resource can be divided into the following categories:

- DTE land owned, leased or licensed to the MoD;
- Training on Private Land (TOPL);
- Overseas training facilities;

¹⁴ Collective training is training which forms trained individuals into cohesive formations and units and broadens individual experience.

¹⁵ A more detailed explanation of demand in the SW can be found at Chapter 5 of The Need for Military Training in DTE SW HQ DTE August 2007.

- Simulation or synthetic training resources; and
- New training land.

DTE Land

- 3.4.2 The suitability and availability of DTE land is constrained by a variety of key environmental, seasonal and other factors¹⁶ which impact on training activity and the delivery of military capability. These factors were identified in the Defence Estates Training Rationalisation Study¹⁷ and are summarised in Chapter 3 of The Need for Military Training on DTE SW.
- 3.4.3 In addition, the suitability and availability of training land to meet specific training requirements is also determined by location, physical features, size and shape, available facilities, training priority, disruption and other limitations arising from legal commitments, environmental management practices and constraints, public access and present use.
- 3.4.4 All of these factors will interact to determine the suitability and availability of the DTE to meet the identified training demand. Balancing the need to train in a sustainable manner against the increasing demands placed upon a finite resource is a complex matter

TOPL

- 3.4.5 The MoD makes extensive use of privately owned land to supplement its own estate. TOPL takes place across the whole of the UK through a variety of different agreements, which are characteristically short term in nature. It is used for everything from the provision of sniper ranges to Adventurous Training (AT) and on occasions the use of tracked vehicles, parachute landings and river crossings. The availability of TOPL for live firing and use by tracked vehicles is however considered exceptional and by far the greatest use of TOPL is for Tactical Exercises without Troops (TEWTs)¹⁸ and for exercising 'walkover' rights.
- 3.4.6 Significant numbers of TOPL exercises take place within National Parks and it has been concluded¹⁹ that whilst the main pressure for the removal of training from National Parks is focused on live firing and associated Range Danger Areas (RDA), (as their use precludes access by the public), the MoD does not anticipate being able to re-provide these facilities by the use of TOPL, except possibly in some remote areas of Scotland. TOPL is also further limited by uncertainty of tenure, constraints due to landowner activities, the presence of environmental restrictions similar to those applicable to MoD owned land²⁰, planning restrictions and increased cost should further demand be placed on land used for TOPL. TOPL must therefore be viewed as a limited resource.

¹⁶ Factors include; environment, legislation, size and shape, physical features, facilities, and contractual obligations.

¹⁷ Defence Estates Training Rationalisation Study, 2004.

¹⁸ TEWTs are used to practice commanders at all levels in the application of military theory to the solution of tactical problems on the ground.

¹⁹ Defence Estates Training Rationalisation Study (DETRS) 2004.

²⁰ The Need for Military Training on DTE SW HQ DTE August 2007: Paragraphs 3.2.5 to 3.2.7.

Overseas Training Facilities

3.4.7 Overseas training exercises are, in general, limited to the delivery of collective training at company and battlegroup level, they are not used for the delivery of Phase 1 and 2 training and have limited utility in the delivery of Phase 3 training. The Defence Estate Strategy states that “*Overseas training facilities are essential, particularly for joint force training, but cannot replace UK-based training and are significantly more expensive*”²¹.

Simulation or Synthetic Training Resources

3.4.8 Simulator-based training²² can make a contribution to the achievement of training objectives and the delivery of military capability and is used by the MoD to complement other forms of training.

3.4.9 The use of simulators is driven by a number of factors including the pressure on finite resources, improvements in realism, the need to enhance the quality and timelines of training and the introduction of the digital battlefield. Whilst some training using simulators can take place in barracks and specialist training facilities Tactical Engagement Simulation (TES)²³ requires the use of training areas. However, there is no substitute for live fire or dry tactical training and consequently the MoD do not foresee that simulation will have a significant impact on the requirement for training estate in the future.

3.4.10 In conclusion, whilst simulation can complement training it “*falls well short of the realisms provided by field training*”²⁴ and cannot provide a substitute for live fire or dry tactical training or produce the realistic and challenging conditions which reflect the frictions of war.

New Training Land

3.4.11 Additional training resources are theoretically available through the purchase of new training land. However, notwithstanding financial considerations, the need to satisfy the military suitability criteria (location, physical features, size and shape, facilities) and the need to overcome associated environmental, social and economic factors associated with the acquisition of a substantial new training area within the UK, MoD policy clearly states that the rural estate should be no larger than is necessary and that the MoD does “*not envisage any future major acquisition of training land*”²⁵

3.4.12 A recent desk top study undertaken by Defence Estates, using a Geographic Information System to overlay designated areas, areas susceptible to flooding, existing MoD land, urban areas and centres of habitation was unable to identify any suitable sites in mainland UK large enough to replicate the training facilities delivered by DTA²⁶.

²¹ MoD In Trust and On Trust - The Strategy for the Defence Estate, 2000, Page 11.

²² The Need for Military Training on DTE SW HQ DTE August 2007: Paragraphs 3.4.2. to 3.4.4.

²³ TES is live simulation where real people operate in a real environment but with simulated effects.

²⁴ MoD In Trust and On Trust - The Strategy for the Defence Estates, 2000, Page 12.

²⁵ MoD In Trust and On Trust - The Strategy for the Defence Estates, 2000, Page 31.

²⁶ The Need for Military Training on DTE SW HQ DTE August 2007, Paragraph 3.54

Additional Factors and Constraints Placed on the Supply of Training Facilities

3.4.13 Specific to the issues surrounding the strategic need for training facilities, it has also been concluded that:

- at a National level, Land Forces (including Royal Marines) will be of a broadly similar size (approximately 100,000 personnel) and shape until 2050 unless there is a significant change in Foreign Policy;²⁷
- the training requirement is likely to be more demanding on the training estate as the range, capabilities and reach of weapons and equipment increase;²⁸
- implementation of the 'Future Army Structure' will impact on the number of personnel based in the UK, which will increase by 20,000 as the Army withdraws from Germany by 2030;²⁹

3.4.14 Further constraints on training apply at three of the UK's eight major training areas (Dartmoor (Devon), Castlemartin (Pembrokeshire) and Otterburn (Northumberland)), which are located in National Parks. These are subject to numerous limitations on live firing and dry training. A further five sites (at Kirkcudbright (Dumfries and Galloway), Sennybridge (Powys), Stanford (Norfolk), Salisbury Plain (Wiltshire) and Lydd and Hythe (Kent)) contain large areas of designated land which limits their use³⁰. All training areas and ranges have limitations of one sort or another imposed upon their use as a consequence of legislation, planning agreements and undertakings, and environmental management agreements with national and local stakeholders.

3.4.15 Against these constraints it has been assessed that all sites are currently running at or near full capacity. The recent RPS study³¹ into the availability of light force training on Dartmoor concluded that:

"there is an increasing demand for light force training in the UK to meet MoD mandated training requirements. This will lead to a net shortfall of 138 'sub unit weeks'³² for dry tactical training and 238 sub unit weeks for live fire tactical training. In view of this shortfall it is not plausible for the MoD to release any of its existing main training areas".

²⁷ Delivering Security in a Changing World - Defence White Paper 2003.

²⁸ Defence Policy: Future Trends to 2050 - High Level Assumptions Paper HQ DTE May 2006.

²⁹ Army Board Meeting of 22 November 2001.

³⁰ The Need for Military Training on DTE SW HQ DTE August 2007, Paragraphs 3.13 - 3.41.

³¹ The Continuing Need for Military Training on Dartmoor, RPS Jun 2005.

³² A Sub unit training week = number of units (Battalions) x number of companies in a Battalion (4) x number of weeks of training.

Potential Alternatives within the South West

3.4.16 A detailed breakdown of training facilities in DTE SW can be found at Chapter 4 of The Need for Military Training In DTE SW. Ranges, Training Facilities and Designated Training Areas within the south west are summarised at **Table 3.1** below.

Table 3.1 Potential Training Area Alternatives within the South West

Name	Facilities Available
Fremington Camp and Braunton Burrows	c. 200ha. of dunes, grassland and scrub, offering low level dismounted infantry and adventurous training.
Penhale	7 miles North of Newquay; c. 383 ha. coastal site, of dunes, grassland and scrub, offering low level dismounted infantry training up to company level and also adventurous training. Includes helicopter landing site and parachute drop zone.
Bodmin Moor	Extending to 1,600 ha., offering low level dismounted infantry training up to battalion level. Includes a parachute drop zone and hard standing at Davidson Airfield for specialist air delivery training and hard standing for logistic exercises and field hospitals.
Pilner Rifle Range, Severn Estuary.	Situated on the estuary to the north of Bristol and offering an eight lane range plus basic skill at arm training.
Yoxter Training Camp and Ranges, Cheddar, Somerset	354 ha. of rolling landscape offering limited low level dismounted infantry training up to platoon level, plus an eight lane range.
Langport Range and Training Area, Somerset	240 ha. of rolling farmland offering low level dismounted infantry training up to platoon level, helicopter training, driver training, plus an eight lane range.
Straight Point Ranges, Lympstone	Gallery and electronic target range.
Antony and Tregantle Training Areas, Plymouth	315 ha. of pasture between Whitsand Bay and The River Lynher Estuary, providing military and adventurous training. Five . gallery ranges at Tregantle. Anthony Training Area provides low level dismounted infantry training up to platoon level.
Scraesdon Fort	Fort used for training for Operations in Urban Areas
Staddon Heights, Plymouth	43 ha. of beaches, cliffs and coastal defence structures, used for amphibious assault training.
Wyke Regis Training Area, Weymouth	81 ha. offering specialist training in mobility and counter mobility. Includes an eight lane electronic target range.

3.4.17 With the exception of Bodmin Moor, none of the potential training areas indicated in **Table 3.1** offers the terrain and climate required to provide arduous training in a natural environment similar to that provided by DTA. All are also far less extensive than DTA (Bodmin Moor, at 1,600 ha. being the largest is only some twelve percent of the DTA in size).

3.4.18 It has therefore been concluded that no realistic alternatives to the training available on DTA exist within the South West.