

# INTERNAL DEPENDENCIES: THE DIVISION IN 2025

When considering the warfighting division, it generally conjures images of 3 (UK) Division. The reality is that while 3 (UK) Division is indeed the core capability, it is significantly reinforced by Force Troops Command, 1 (UK) Division headquarters staff and units. Force generating the warfighting division is a considerable undertaking and is reliant upon a whole-of-Army effort. Honesty, realism and rigour are essential throughout all aspects of the design, development and delivery. A credible and capable testing mechanism for all elements of the division, not just the combat element, is essential as is the capture, recognition and ownership of the associated internal dependency risks.

## Generating the force

Setting the demand for generating the force is challenging and an honest representation of the stresses and friction is essential. The last time a division deployed was to Iraq in 2003. Prior to Op Telic 1, the Division had relatively recent experience of deploying through Exercise Saif Sareea 2, and the brigades had routinely deployed to Poland and BATUS [British Army Training Unit Suffield]. Such activity grew experience in operational movement control and staff tables.

Through downsizing and Op Herrick we have lost that experience and need to reset a realistic force generation demand for a division. In this era of persistent engagement, some force elements will need to be generated from their 'in use' configuration and geographic location. Modelling and exercising the mechanics of mounting will help, as will drawing on any residual knowledge and experience from within the Army and the Regular Reserves. The demand should pay particular attention to areas of potential concern such as roles, numbers and 'readiness' of Reserves, contractor reliance, storage arrangements and strategic assets.

## Training the division

Training the division is more complex now than previously, due in large part to the size of the Army, available resource and the evolution of the character of warfare. The training systems should be designed to meet the demand signal, and must reflect the realities of 2025 in terms of realistic adversarial capabilities, replication of real-world frictions,

and cater for the whole force, not just the combat element.

Determining the key building blocks of task-organised capability will help to identify the investment balance between scales of effort. An exercise that pits a modern Russian 'full spectrum' force with multiple mortars, rockets and tactical ballistic missiles, UAVs, insurgents, special forces, militias, local governance, capacity building and air parity against a ground manoeuvre brigade with aviation and information manoeuvre capabilities will enable lessons to be learned on how to manoeuvre in such a context. Putting F35/Air (pictured left), Reaper, attack helicopters, Wildcat, Watchkeeper (pictured below), GMLRS, electronic warfare, cyber and Ajax in the same battlespace will improve understanding of the new divisional deep battle – a modern day version of Exercise Flying Rhino. Training should also incorporate the staff officers who will reinforce the headquarters on activation, the whole support element including Reserves and contractors.

Differentiating between which elements are essential for live training, which are desirable and which can be trained in other ways will be important and must enable the core building blocks to operate together. As a central element of integrated action and combined arms manoeuvre, information manoeuvre will be an 'essential' area for live training, necessitating a system that emulates the richness of real-world datasets and interactive agents to allow 'learn by doing' in a modelled environment. Incorporate the requirement to design a single open architecture network for voice and data from operational to tactical levels into training.

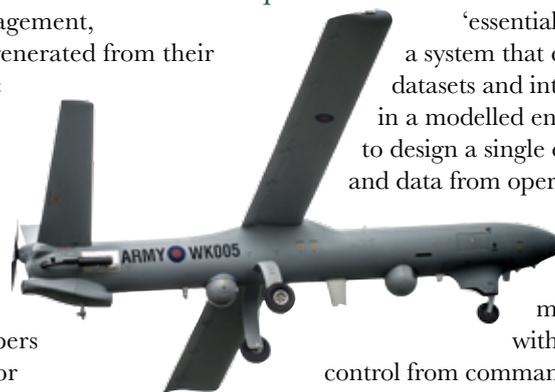
Incorporate connectivity for sustainability functions as well as combat elements, and practice how to minimise identifiable emissions and hide within the background noise. Separate out control from command if necessary, and place an emphasis on operating solutions rather than technological solutions. All of this will inform the development of new operational staff work processes and procedures.

In terms of equipment, ensuring simplicity in the operator interface, regardless of the complexity of the equipment, will make training easier, faster and more accessible for Regulars and Reserves alike. Where recognised risk is held in the force structure in particular capabilities, experimentation in training with how to mitigate or minimise them through adaptation is an important early activity.



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## Sustaining the force

Sustainment demands require realistic modelling and associated assumptions, rigorous testing and revision. The sustainability friction is often lost in the noise and sustainment requires equal levels of investment in testing, exercising and training this element of the warfighting division. Explore alternative ways of delivering sustainment capability by, for example, contracting delivery of the Vanguard Support Brigade at Readiness. Force projection, stockpiles and interoperability opportunities in sustainment are all areas that warrant exploration as a matter of urgency. More broadly, priorities for interoperability across the warfighting division need to be defined and realistic levels of interoperability requirements at each level set.

## Risk

The totality of the above leads to four key Army Board-level risks for action:

● **Generating risk. The complexity in effectively and efficiently reorganising a force which is engaged in operations and ‘in use’ to a warfighting division, and the necessary assurance mechanisms.**

● **Readiness risk.** Balancing the risk across manpower, equipment, training, sustainability, interoperability and information manoeuvre ability to offset vulnerabilities and reinforce strengths.

● **Whole force risk. Primarily the understanding of the compound risk of dependency on contractors and Reserves.**

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● **Joint enablers risk.** Whilst an external dependency, the availability (or not) of joint enablers and estimated time to switch prioritisation will impact on the other three internal dependency risks.

These risks and the consequent balance of investment decisions must be underpinned by up-to-date, honest, realistic and rigorous data and assessments. We must be alive to the tendency to ‘wish away’ the difficult and more complex elements and avoid focusing on the more comfortable and tangible traditional combat elements that we are currently most familiar with.

The warfighting division is a collective capability that all contribute to in some form. Although unlike the other Services it is not a single platform, the warfighting division becomes the Army’s version of an ‘exquisite’ capability.

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*Full-spectrum training: Divisional exercises should feature as much of the Army’s arsenal as possible – including assets such as the Guided Multiple Launch Rocket System (GMLRS), argues the author. Nicknamed the ‘70km Sniper’, GMLRS delivers a 200lb high-explosive warhead to its target, with twice the range of other artillery systems used by the British Army. Deployed during Op Herrick, it can fire up to 12 rockets in under 60 seconds*

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