

Shaping a new Defence –

Engagement exercise with the Armed Forces and Defence Civilians

Taken from the Defence Internal Brief – July 2010

- The Prime Minister and Secretary of State have stressed that members of the Armed Forces and their families, and the MOD's civilian staff, have an important contribution to make to the Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR).

- Chief of the Defence Staff, Air Chief Marshal Sir Jock Stirrup and Permanent Secretary, Sir Bill Jeffrey have launched an engagement exercise inviting members of the Armed Forces and Defence civilians to feed in their ideas to the SDSR.

- Up until 31st July 2010 all members of the Armed Forces, their families, volunteer reserves and civilians in Defence are invited to submit their ideas on what we can do to make Defence better.

- This is your opportunity to contribute as individuals who know Defence from the inside. To get involved visit the Defence SDSR online engagement tool at: www.sdsr.defenceconsultations.org.uk.

- All contributions will be anonymous. They will be reviewed by the MOD Strategy Unit team and passed out across the Department to inform and include in plans as appropriate. Ministers will receive an initial summary in August of emerging themes and of any particularly promising ideas, and a more detailed analysis in September. A report on what we received and what we did with it will be published later in the autumn.

- Understanding why the Review is being conducted is an essential precursor to participation.

- The Government is conducting an SDSR which will be based on a new National Security Strategy (NSS) currently being developed by the new

National Security Council. The review will consider Defence capabilities and resources alongside all other national security capabilities contributing to security across government.

- The NSS and SDSR will ensure that the resources for our Armed Forces match the UK's foreign and defence policy goals that flow from the National Security Strategy, that the Armed Forces have what they need to do what is asked of them, and that the Defence Budget is spent as efficiently, effectively and economically as possible.

- Defence is not immune from the UK's general financial situation and options for the future will be constrained by the need to reduce public expenditure. The current Defence Programme is unaffordable. Bringing policy, plans, commitments and resources into balance will require structural transformative change. The SDSR therefore requires radical thinking. Its conclusions will have wide-reaching implications for people in Defence.

- The Secretary of State launched the Department's work on this on taking office on 12 May. Since then intensive work has been underway led by DG Strategy. The review is looking at everything the

MOD does, including the organisation and structure of the Department, each of the Services and the support area.

- At the heart of this work is a thorough examination of the force structure, looking at overall shape, size and role of the Services, including the Reserves and of MOD Civilians. How we adapt these to meet the evolving security environment and the UK's foreign policy goals, fulfil our duty to support members of the Armed Forces and their families in return for their service within a constrained financial envelope are all key issues

- The Secretary of State has said that the Review must provide a step change:

- o The Armed Forces must be reconfigured to meet the needs of the evolving security environment and satisfy the expectations of the country;

- o The Ministry of Defence must face wide-ranging reform;

- o There must be major reform to our procurement practices;

- o Defence must be affordable.

- The SDSR will report in the autumn, coordinated with the Government's 2010 Spending Review led by the Treasury. Its conclusions will be published in the form of a Government white paper, led by the Cabinet Office with significant input from the MOD. It will provide a clear way ahead for Defence, shaped in accordance with national security priorities.