UK Strategic Defence Review bets on AI, autonomy and a 'digital targeting web'

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Source: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-strategic-defence-review-2025-making-britain-safer-secure-at-home-strong-abroad

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Policy paper

The Strategic Defence Review 2025 - Making Britain Safer: secure at home, strong abroad

A root-and-branch review of UK Defence.

Updates to this page

From:

Ministry of Defence

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8 July 2025

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8 July 2025 Added: 'Adolygiad Amddiffyn Strategol - Gwneud Prydain yn Fwy Diogel: yn gadarn gartref, yn gydnerth dramor'.

11 June 2025 Added Welsh language two-pager: 'Adolygiad Amddiffyn Strategol 2025 - two-pager'.

5 June 2025 Added HTML version of 'The Strategic Defence Review 2025 - Making Britain Safer: secure at home, strong abroad'.

2 June 2025 First published.

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Documents

The Strategic Defence Review 2025 - Making Britain Safer: secure at home, strong abroad

PDF , 5.44 MB , 144 pages

The Strategic Defence Review 2025 - Making Britain Safer: secure at home, strong abroad

HTML

The Strategic Defence Review 2025 - two-pager

PDF , 627 KB , 2 pages

Adolygiad Amddiffyn Strategol 2025 - Gwneud Prydain yn Fwy Diogel: yn gadarn gartref, yn gydnerth dramor

PDF , 8.48 MB , 148 pages

Adolygiad Amddiffyn Strategol 2025 - two-pager

PDF , 597 KB , 2 pages

Details

The world has changed. The threat we now face is more serious and less predictable than at any time since the Cold War. The UK faces war in Europe, growing Russian aggression, new nuclear risks, and daily cyber-attacks at home. Our adversaries are working more in alliance with one another, while technology is changing how war is fought. Drones now kill more people than traditional artillery in the war in Ukraine, and whoever gets new technology into the hands of their Armed Forces the quickest will have the advantage.

We are in a new era of threat, which demands a new era for UK Defence. The Strategic Defence Review will make Britain safer—secure at home and strong abroad. It signifies a landmark shift in our deterrence and defence: moving to warfighting readiness to deter threats and strengthen security in the Euro-Atlantic. As the UK steps up to take on more responsibility for European security, we must have a 'NATO first' defence policy and lead within the Alliance. The UK will become the leading edge of innovation in NATO.

The SDR sets a path for the next decade and beyond to transform Defence. It will end the hollowing out of the UK's Armed Forces and lead in a stronger, more lethal NATO. As we reform Defence and increase defence spending to 2.5% of GDP by 2027 and 3% in the next Parliament when fiscal and economic conditions allow, the SDR will help make defence an engine for growth—boosting prosperity, jobs and security for working people across the UK.

The SDR's vision for UK Defence:

Move to warfighting readiness —establishing a more lethal 'integrated force' equipped for the future, and strengthened homeland defence.

Engine for growth —driving jobs and prosperity through a new partnership with industry, radical procurement reforms and backing UK businesses.

'NATO first' —stepping up on European security by leading in NATO, with strengthened nuclear, new tech and updated conventional capabilities.

UK innovation driven by lessons from Ukraine —harnessing drones, data and digital warfare to make our Armed Forces stronger and safer.

Whole-of-society approach —widening participation in national resilience, and renewing the Nation's contract with those who serve.

This is a new vision for how the UK's Armed Forces should be conceived: a combination of conventional and digital warfighters; the power of drones, AI and autonomy complementing the 'heavy metal' of tanks and artillery; innovation and procurement measured in months, not years; and the breaking down of barriers between individual Services, between the military and the private sector, and between the Armed Forces and wider society.

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