

The Secretary of State for Defence (Des Browne): The next routine roulement of UK forces in Iraq will take place in November and December 2007. The force package that we currently plan to deploy to Iraq during this roulement will see the lead formation, currently 1 Mechanised Brigade, replaced by 4 Mechanised Brigade, which will provide the majority of UK forces from 1 December 2007.

The units deploying as part of four Mechanised Brigade are as follows:

4(th) Mechanised Brigade Headquarters and 204 Signal Squadron

The Royal Dragoon Guards

1(st) Battalion Scots Guards

The Royal Scots Borders, 1(st) Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland

1(st) Battalion The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment (King's, Lancashire and Border)

1(st) Battalion The 22(nd) (Cheshire) Regiment (1st Battalion The Mercian Regiment as of 1 September 07)

21 Engineer Regiment

12 Logistic Support Regiment, The Royal Logistic Corps

1 Close Support Medical Regiment

Elements of 845 Naval Air Squadron (Sea King)

Elements of 847 Naval Air Squadron (Lynx)

D Battery, 3(rd) Regiment Royal Horse Artillery

K Battery, 5(th) Regiment Royal Artillery

Elements of 33 Engineer Regiment (Explosive Ordnance Disposal)

62 Works Group Royal Engineers, 523 Specialist Team Royal Engineers (Works)

Elements of 3(rd) (UK) Division Signal Regiment, The Royal Corps of Signals

Elements of 1(st) (UK) Armoured Division Signal Regiment, The Royal Corps of Signals

Elements of 10(th) Signal Regiment, The Royal Corps of Signals

Elements of 14(th) Signal Regiment (Electronic Warfare), The Royal Corps of Signals

Elements of 21(st) Signal Regiment (Air Support), The Royal Corps of Signals

Elements of 6 Supply Regiment, The Royal Logistic Corps

Elements of 16 Tank Transporter Squadron, 7 Transport Regiment, The Royal Logistic Corps

Elements of 11 Explosive Ordnance Disposal Regiment, The Royal Logistic Corps

Elements of 84 Medical Supply Squadron, 9 Supply Regiment, The Royal Logistic Corps

Elements of 150 Transport Regiment (Volunteers), The Royal Logistic Corps

Elements of 24 Postal, Courier and Movement Regiment, The Royal Logistic Corps

Elements of 29 Postal, Courier and Movement Regiment, The Royal Logistic Corps

Elements of 148 Expeditionary Forces Institute Squadron (Volunteers), The Royal Logistic Corps

Elements of 1 Battalion Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers

115 Provost Company, 1(st) Provost Regiment, Royal Military Police

Elements of 102 Military Working Dog Support Unit, Royal Army Veterinary Corps

Elements of 1 Military Intelligence Brigade

No 28 (AC) Squadron, Royal Air Force (Merlin)

619 Tactical Air Control Party, Royal Air Force

627 Tactical Air Control Party, Royal Air Force

Members of the reserve forces will continue to deploy to Iraq as part of this force package, and we expect to issue around 420 call-out notices to fill approximately 340 posts. Most will deploy to theatre in November and serve on operations for six to seven months, although some may have shorter tours. As part of this commitment, we expect up to 10 members of the sponsored reserves to be in theatre at any one time.

In February, the then Prime Minister set out our plans for Iraq in 2007, centring on changes to the posture of UK forces in Basra in Multi-National Division—South East (MND-SE) and consequent force level reductions. UK forces have transferred control of a number of bases in and around Basra to the 10th Division of the Iraqi army. We expect to complete the final part of these plans, involving the transfer of control of Basra palace to the Iraqi authorities, before this roulement takes place. As a result UK force levels in Iraq will fall to around 5,000 troops.