



House of Commons
Defence Committee

The work of the Committee 2008–09

First Report of Session 2009–10



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Report, together with formal minutes

*Ordered by the House of Commons
to be printed 1 December 2009*

HC 119

Published on 6 January 2010
by authority of the House of Commons
London: The Stationery Office Limited
£0.00

The Defence Committee

The Defence Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration, and policy of the Ministry of Defence and its associated public bodies.

Current membership

Rt Hon James Arbuthnot MP (*Conservative, North East Hampshire*) (Chairman)
Mr David S Borrow MP (*Labour, South Ribble*)
Mr David Crausby MP (*Labour, Bolton North East*)
Linda Gilroy MP (*Labour, Plymouth Sutton*)
Mr David Hamilton MP (*Labour, Midlothian*)
Mr Mike Hancock MP (*Liberal Democrat, Portsmouth South*)
Mr Dai Havard MP (*Labour, Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney*)
Mr Adam Holloway MP (*Conservative, Gravesham*)
Mr Bernard Jenkin MP (*Conservative, North Essex*)
Mr Brian Jenkins MP (*Labour, Tamworth*)
Robert Key MP (*Conservative, Salisbury*)
Mrs Madeleine Moon (*Labour, Bridgend*)
John Smith MP (*Labour, Vale of Glamorgan*)
Richard Younger-Ross MP (*Liberal Democrat, Teignbridge*)

The following Members were also Members of the Committee during the Parliament.

Mr Colin Breed MP (*Liberal Democrat, South East Cornwall*)
Derek Conway MP (*Conservative, Old Bexley and Sidcup*)
Mr Kevan Jones MP (*Labour, Durham North*)
Mr Mark Lancaster MP (*Conservative, North East Milton Keynes*)
Willie Rennie MP (*Liberal Democrat, Dunfermline and West Fife*)
Mr Desmond Swayne MP (*Conservative, New Forest West*)

Powers

The Committee is one of the departmental select committees, the powers of which are set out in House of Commons Standing Orders, principally in SO No 152. These are available on the Internet via www.parliament.uk.

Publications

The Reports and evidence of the Committee are published by The Stationery Office by Order of the House. All publications of the Committee (including press notices) are on the Internet at: www.parliament.uk/defcom

Committee staff

The current staff of the Committee are Mike Hennessy (Clerk), Richard Ward (Second Clerk), Karen Jackson (Audit Adviser), Judy Goodall (Inquiry Manager), Richard Dawson (Senior Committee Assistant), Christine McGrane (Committee Assistant) and Miguel Boo Fraga (Committee Support Assistant).

Contacts

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Summary

This Report describes the work of the Defence Committee in the 2008–09 Session.

In 2008–09, we continued our scrutiny of the expenditure of the Department by, once again, publishing a Report on defence equipment and focusing on expenditure on operational deployments in our Reports on the Winter Supplementary, Spring Supplementary and Main Estimates. In addition, we reacted to recent events in the Caucasus by producing a Report on the Russia—Georgia conflict of summer 2008 and the developing strategic situation between Russia and her ‘near-abroad’. We also published a Report supporting the conclusions and recommendations made by the new Service Complaints Commissioner for the Armed Forces in her first annual report to Parliament.

Our Report on Helicopter Capability focused on the utilisation of helicopter capability in operational theatre. This, together with our financial Reports, has maintained an operational focus to our work which will continue as long as is necessary. We were disappointed that we had to postpone our plans to visit British troops in Afghanistan, but we hope to undertake the visit before the General Election.

