

## UK Strategic Defense Review Sets Course for Warfighting Readiness with Submarines, Drones, and Industrial Expansion

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The UK government has unveiled a wide-ranging Strategic Defense Review aimed at strengthening the country's military readiness in an increasingly uncertain global landscape. The review lays out a detailed plan to prepare Britain for high-intensity warfare, with a focus on technological modernization, expanded industrial capacity, and deeper

international defense cooperation. The government's goal is clear: build a force capable of deterring and, if necessary, confronting major state-based threats.

A central feature of the review is the expansion of the AUKUS alliance, which includes the UK, the United States, and Australia. As part of this partnership, the UK will begin work on up to 12 new nuclear-powered attack submarines, scheduled to replace the Astute-class fleet beginning in the late 2030s. This long-term investment is intended to maintain undersea deterrence and enhance interoperability with allies in the Indo-Pacific.

Alongside submarine development, the review outlines a shift toward a modernized force structure using a 20-40-40 model: 20 percent traditional crewed platforms, 40 percent reusable drones, and 40 percent single-use munitions like loitering drones and artillery rounds. This approach, heavily influenced by lessons from the conflict in Ukraine, is designed to make the UK armed forces more agile, lethal, and resilient on future battlefields.

To support this transformation, the Ministry of Defense plans to build at least six new munitions factories to secure domestic weapons production and reduce reliance on foreign suppliers. These facilities are expected to improve supply chain resilience and support jobs across the defense industry. The Royal Air Force will also benefit from expanded procurement of F-35 fighter jets and participation in the Global Combat Air Program with Italy and Japan.

The review includes significant upgrades to the UK's nuclear capabilities. A £15 billion investment will support a sovereign warhead program and

sustain the country's continuous at-sea nuclear deterrent. New cyber and electromagnetic defense initiatives will also be launched, including a dedicated command center to address threats ranging from digital warfare to infrastructure sabotage.

This defense overhaul is estimated to cost £68 billion throughout this Parliament. The government plans to raise defense spending to 2.5 percent of GDP by 2027, with ambitions to increase that further to 3 percent in the next term. While the financial pathway remains under discussion, the review signals a decisive shift toward preparing the UK military for complex, high-risk conflicts in an increasingly contested global environment.