

UK's Barrow Facility Tapped for Ukraine Howitzer Deal

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In a boost to Britain's defence manufacturing sector, BAE Systems' facility in Barrow-in-Furness has been named the lead contractor in a \$104 million (approx. £82 million) U.S.-approved deal to support Ukraine's M777 howitzers, a critical artillery system that has helped resist Russian aggression.

The Foreign Military Sale, approved by the United States on 5 August, will channel significant work to the UK, reinforcing Barrow's reputation as a cornerstone of British defence manufacturing. Traditionally known for submarine construction, the site is now expanding its role in supporting NATO-aligned land warfare efforts.

The package includes spare parts, repair services, training, technical documents, and logistical support to keep the M777 fleet operational. The artillery system, developed by BAE Systems in the UK, has been a central feature of Ukraine's defensive arsenal since being transferred through Western military aid programmes.

Crucially, this contract ensures long-term support for Ukraine without the need to deploy U.S. personnel, and with potential future partnerships to be arranged directly between BAE and Ukrainian counterparts, keeping British industry at the centre of Europe's defence response.

Defence analysts note that while the Biden administration continues to pour billions into Ukraine, this deal reflects a growing reliance on Britain's defence expertise and industrial base, a vote of confidence in UK capabilities during a time of global instability.

The U.S. Defence Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) insists the agreement "will improve Ukraine's ability to meet current and future threats" and does not shift the military balance in the region. For the UK, however, it underscores the importance of sustaining sovereign manufacturing power and maintaining close defence ties with key allies beyond the EU.