

Scottish Bases Highlighted in Simulated Russian Strike Wargame

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A Sky News-backed wargame podcast has spotlighted Scotland's strategic military installations, Faslane, Lossiemouth, and the Shetlands, as potential targets in a hypothetical Russian assault. The dramatic scenario emphasises the need for the UK to strengthen its homeland defence capabilities in response to an increasingly aggressive Russian posture.

In the scenario, former Defence Secretary Sir Ben Wallace, former Foreign Secretary Jack Straw, and ex-Scottish Secretary Jim Murphy participate in “The Wargame”, imagining how Russian forces might attack HM Naval Base Clyde (Faslane), strike RAF Lossiemouth, and even invade the Shetland Isles. Professor Michael Clarke, of King’s College London, who joined the simulation, confirmed that while staged, such exercises reflect real-life contingency planning that now happens at multiple levels.

Professor Clarke pointed out that Russia already exploits cyber operations and sabotage tactics against UK infrastructure: “What is happening right now, the Russians target Britain with more cyber-attacks, causing more disruption, more sabotage, they target us more than anyone else in Europe.” He warned that while a full-scale invasion remains unlikely, the UK must prepare for multi-domain threats that include cyber and energy infrastructure attacks.

Officials have acknowledged that wargames now play a significant role in UK defence planning. Clarke explained that ministers and junior staff engage in intensive simulations ranging from half-day scenarios to multi-week military exercises. Such preparation, he said, has ramped up over the past five years in response to deteriorating relations with Moscow.

The simulation’s emphasis on Scottish facilities is politically significant. Faslane hosts the UK’s Continuous At-Sea Deterrent (CASD), while Lossiemouth houses Typhoon jets and Poseidon P-8 patrol aircraft, key elements in air and maritime defence. Scotland’s geographical position makes these hubs likely focal points in any eastern threat scenario.

From a centre-right perspective, the podcast reinforces the need for robust defence investment, not mere words. Scotland’s bases must

remain fully operational and adequately funded to deter aggression. Furthermore, the scenario underlines the importance of a national strategy that integrates cyber resilience and physical security across sectors.

In light of these findings, the UK government should ensure regular, well-resourced exercises that reflect potential threats, not just overseas, but on home soil. Transparent funding for infrastructure upgrades and joint training across ministry levels will help maintain readiness. If the North Atlantic defence posture is to stay credible, it must be matched by strategic clarity and modern capability.