# Taskforce Kindred faces scrutiny as UK military priorities come under fire



Lodged within the walls of the Ministry of Defence's Main Building in Whitehall, Taskforce Kindred, a compact yet significant unit, sits at the forefront of the UK's response to ongoing defence challenges, particularly concerning Ukraine's military needs. Despite allocating over £2 billion to arm Ukraine over the past three years, critics argue that this emphasis on rapid deployment is overshadowing the pressing need for a coherent domestic defence strategy, especially as the UK navigates the aftermath of July’s general election, where a new Labour government faces significant scrutiny.

Air Marshal Edward Stringer, a former head of the UK Defence Academy, has praised the taskforce's adaptability, noting, “There are some bright individuals moving at the speed the Ukrainians need.” However, this sentiment raises eyebrows as the question remains: why is the UK unable to respond with similar urgency to bolster its own beleaguered military capabilities? The recent innovations, such as the Gravehawk system, highlight the creativity within military projects but also expose an alarming trend of prioritising foreign aid over domestic preparedness.

General Sir Patrick Sanders has warned of a "generation that suffers from strategic amnesia," underscoring a collective societal ignorance about warfare. This lack of awareness could prove detrimental as Taskforce Kindred pivots to support Ukraine while the UK itself grapples with a defence budget projected to reach £57 billion this year, yet still fails to adequately equip its own forces.

Moreover, the UK's security posture is undeniably precarious, exacerbated by diminishing American security guarantees and growing calls for increased military expenditure. While Peter Quentin notes a “revolution taking place because of Ukraine,” it seems the taskforce's rapid efforts are more a band-aid than a structural solution to the systemic failures of traditional military strategies that have long been deemed obsolete.

In contrast to proactive stances abroad, recent UK actions reveal a shocking depletion of military resources. With the British Army having relinquished all 60 of its 155mm self-propelled guns, only 14 remain operational. This alarming reduction limits the UK's readiness to engage in any post-conflict stabilisation, revealing the dire consequences of misplaced priorities.

The government’s commitment to replenish its stocks with an additional £2 billion in munitions might appear commendable, but with a projected £3.9 billion deficit looming for the equipment budget in the 2025-2026 fiscal year, it raises questions about the viability of long-term defence initiatives. There is an urgent need for real reform in military budgeting that aligns with the more effective policies that prioritise national security over international commitments.

Meanwhile, the geopolitical landscape grows increasingly complex with awaited talks between Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer and former US President Donald Trump. However, the potential fallout from these discussions could further strain the UK's military strategy, especially when Trump criticises the government’s efforts regarding Ukraine.

As negotiations unfold in London, the necessity for a crucial reassessment of military spending grows ever clearer—balancing immediate defence needs with future technological investments. With the weight of current and emerging threats bearing down, it's time for the government to prioritize a robust and forward-thinking defence strategy that truly addresses the needs of the UK rather than simply responding to foreign obligations.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://ukdefencejournal.org.uk/a-look-at-exactly-what-britain-has-given-to-ukraine/> - This article supports the claim that the UK has provided substantial military aid to Ukraine through Taskforce Kindred, highlighting the role of the taskforce in identifying and donating equipment from UK stockpiles.
* <https://www.find-tender.service.gov.uk/Notice/038401-2024/PDF> - This tender notice from the Ministry of Defence corroborates the ongoing efforts of Taskforce Kindred in supporting Ukraine, specifically mentioning the need for a secure supply of energetic materials.
* <https://mod.gov.ua/en/news/lieutenant-general-ivan-havryliuk-expanding-military-technical-cooperation-between-ukraine-and-the-united-kingdom-will-enhance-defence-industry-output-in-both-countries> - This news article highlights the military-technical cooperation between Ukraine and the UK, emphasizing the role of Taskforce Kindred in assessing weapons for allocation to Ukraine.
* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-64516438> - This BBC article could provide context on the UK's defence budget and military readiness, although it is not directly linked in the search results.
* <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-defence-budget> - This government webpage could offer insights into the UK's defence budget and spending priorities, although it is not directly linked in the search results.
* <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/jul/26/uk-defence-budget-labour-government> - This Guardian article might discuss the UK's defence budget under a new government, though it is not directly linked in the search results.