

By Dr. Jeffrey Bradford, Director of Research, UK Defence Forum

UK Ministry of Defence: Defence Equipment Acquisition Announcement

March 22, 2010

Kicking a number of issues into the long-grass by reference to the imminent UK General Election, Secretary of State for Defence made a brief and likely final statement for this parliament regarding certain programs;

1. CVR (T) (Replacement for the Scimitar armed reconnaissance vehicle) reaches Preferred Bidder (PB) stage. This programme dates back to original TRACER/FSCS joint program with the US Army in the late 1990s which has progressed on a low level basis for sometime as a technology development program. The new vehicle will be produced by General Dynamics of the USA leveraging their acquisition of Austrian company SDP and the ASCOD design.
2. UOR (Urgent Operational Requirement) for 200 Light Protected Patrol Vehicles (LPPV) to address the political fallout around the vulnerability of 'snatch' vehicles to roadside bombs and IED devices.
3. Warrior Capability Sustainment Programme decision deferred. Timelines would suggest this will not reach a Ministerial Red Box before early 2011 in the next government.
4. Three Rivet Joint aircraft procured to replace Nimrod R1 capability for ELINT. Whilst it could be suggested that the IAB apparatus was swayed by electronic surveillance fit, inter-operability in-theatre with the USAF and so forth it seems somewhat odd to replace a 1960s British built airframe which is being retired with an airframe from overseas - which dates back to the 1960s and the Vietnam era. These types of decision seem to explain the complexity of maintaining old equipment and the burden of in-service support costs. It seems surprising though probably time driven, that solution around the ASTOR or a UAV platform was not given greater weight.

UK Ministry of Defence: Spring 2010 Supplementary Estimates (replacement)

March 23, 2010

Secretary of State for Defence announced in Parliament revised data previous submitted in a written answer on February 23, 2010.

The Resource DEL numbers increased by near 2% with a number of alterations to RfR1 (Provision of Defence Capability) and RfR2 (Operations and Peacekeeping) numbers.

The key changes include a 100GBP Million injection from the Treasury against a 178 million

charge caused by the impact of accounting for PFI (Private Finance Initiative) programs and a 160 million request for funds in support of on-going operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.