

The US-UK Defence Trade Cooperation Treaty has passed its final hurdle towards ratification on both sides of the Atlantic with approval coming from the United States Senate and House of Representatives.

The Treaty was signed in June 2007 by then UK Prime Minister Tony Blair and then United States President George W Bush. It aims to streamline and improve defence export processes and allows for the export of defence articles, without a license or other written authorization, from the US to an "approved community" of recipients in the UK and US and the subsequent transfer of these articles within that community without further US authorisation. This has the potential to boost trade between both countries and benefit the economies of both nations by retaining control of such transfers but speeding up the process for sales of equipment with US-made components to the UK Ministry of Defence and UK-sourced equipment to the USA.

Ian Godden, Chairman of the defence industry body A|D|S, said: "The approval of the Treaty by the Senate is most welcome news. It has been a long journey but we sincerely hope that it will be worth the wait given the potential benefits that could now result.

"The Treaty reflects the close working relationship of our armed forces and the industrial collaboration of our two countries and it should deliver clear benefits for our troops. The UK is the largest international supplier of defence equipment to the US and is second only to the United States in the global defence export market. Therefore, the long-term significance of this new defence export control regime should not be underestimated."

Aerospace Industries of America President & CEO Marion C. Blakey said AIA that welcomes passage of the U.S.-UK and U.S.-Australia Defense Trade Cooperation Treaties by the full Senate.

"Ratifying these treaties will provide important benefits to both our national security and our economy.

"The treaties will streamline the licensing system for defense exports to our staunch allies, the UK and Australia. AIA has long advocated that we should do everything possible to ensure that their troops and our troops are able to fight shoulder-to-shoulder with the best equipment available.

"Passage of these treaties is in concert with the Obama administration's plan to modernize export controls. Our industry, with about 820,000 employees and 30,000 suppliers from all 50 states, strongly supports efforts to adjust outdated restrictions on American companies as we work to equip our closest friends and allies with the technology that allows our militaries to defend our mutual interests.

"We congratulate the Senate for passing the U.S.-UK and U.S.-Australia Defense Trade Cooperation Treaties, and thank both the House and Senate for passing the accompanying implementation legislation."

