

## Our policies for defence

The SNP wants Scotland to be a normal country making its own decisions about defence and peacekeeping.

Only when priorities are set in Scotland can we prevent our brave servicemen and women being ordered into illegal conflicts.

The historic regiments of Scotland are being destroyed through amalgamation and downsizing; an independent Scotland will redress this.

The priority of the Scottish Defence Services (SDS), in partnership with Scotland's neighbours and allies, will be to safeguard our land, sea and air space.

The SDS will initially be equipped with Scotland's negotiated share of UK defence resources.

Service and pension conditions will be at least equal to those of the UK forces.

The SDS will be a professional force supported by reserve forces with employment opportunities open to everyone meeting the appropriate standard.

MoD civilian support personnel employed in Scotland at Independence will have the opportunity to remain in the Scottish MoD or Scottish civil service.

Scotland will maintain active defence commitments with its friends and allies through the United Nations, European Union and Partnership for Peace.

The SNP reaffirms that no nuclear weapons will be based on independent Scottish soil. An SNP government will not be part of a

nuclear-based commitment such as NATO.

SNP priorities in defence are that:

- Defence policy should be made in Scotland's national parliament.
- Scotland's armed services should be well-remunerated, equipped and trained
- Historic regiments will be protected and - if abolished - re-established as part of the SDS.
- Military facilities, including strategic airforce stations should not be downsized at the present time.
- Nuclear weapons will be banished from Scotland forever.
- Counter terrorism provision will be enhanced, and plans will include elements of the regular and reserve SDS as part of a co-ordinated strategy
- Military practice will be reviewed to balance the necessity of training against the disturbance to communities.

### The future of the regiments

The SNP has been at the forefront of the political campaign to retain Scotland's historic regiments.

We have not done this out of misguided sentiment, but because the regimental structure is the most effective and efficient way of organising our armed forces, as well as being part of our heritage.

In Scotland, most people who join up prefer to join a unit that has a distinct local identity. That identity is rooted not in cap badges, but in the communities that soldiers come from.

When that link is cut, the local connection is lost.

In government the SNP will protect - and if necessary restore - the regimental structure to the Scottish defence force.

The regimental tradition, with its emphasis on local connections often going back for generations is the best vehicle for that sense of community which is so vital for our troops' morale.



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