



## British military aircraft rapidly supplying weapons to Ukraine

By **George Allison** - January 17, 2022

British C-17 transport aircraft are currently moving “light anti-armour” weapons into Ukraine in light of “increasingly threatening” behaviour from Russia.

The C-17 transport aircraft are in flight as we speak, Germany has apparently denied overflight rights judging by the path taken.

According to a statement given by the Defence Secretary in the House of Commons today, the 17th of January 2022.

*“As of today, tens of thousands of Russian troops are positioned close to the Ukrainian border. Their deployment is not routine, and they are equipped with tanks, armoured fighting vehicles, rocket artillery, and short-range ballistic missiles.*

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*I can today confirm to the House that, in light of the increasingly threatening behaviour from Russia, and in addition to our current support, the UK is providing a new security assistance package to increase Ukraine's defensive capabilities.*

*We have taken the decision to supply Ukraine with light, anti-armour, defensive weapon systems. A small number of UK personnel will also provide early-stage training for a short period of time, within the framework of Operation ORBITAL, before then returning to the United Kingdom.*



*This security assistance package complements the training and capabilities that Ukraine already has, and those that are also being provided by the UK and other Allies in Europe and the United States. Ukraine has every right to defend its borders, and this new package of aid further enhances its ability to do so.*

*Let me be clear: this support is for short-range, and clearly defensive weapons capabilities; they are not strategic weapons and pose no threat to Russia. They are to use in self-defence and the UK personnel providing the early-stage training will return to the United Kingdom after completing it.”*

[You can read the full statement here.](#)

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## British Military Assistance to Ukraine – what’s involved?

British military assistance to Ukraine was increased significantly after 2014 and the Russian annexation of Crimea, [a Parliamentary Research Briefing](#) paper has taken a look at just what that involves.

In 2015 the UK launched Operation Orbital, a non-lethal training and capacity building operation that provides guidance and training to the Ukrainian armed forces.

*“In August 2020 the MOD announced that the UK will lead a new multinational maritime training initiative that will boost the capacity of Ukraine’s Navy to act in the Black Sea. The UK and Ukraine have also launched the Naval Capabilities Enhancement Programme, which will develop Ukraine’s naval capabilities. To date, over 21,000 Ukrainian military personnel have been trained under these initiatives. The UK has also gifted £2.2 million of non-lethal military equipment.”*

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In June 2021 the UK, Ukraine and industry signed a Memorandum of Implementation that will push the NCEP forward. Work will now commence on:

- Ukraine's purchase of two refurbished Royal Navy Sandown-class minehunters in a government-to-government sale
- The sale and integration of missiles on new and in-service Ukrainian Navy patrol and airborne platforms, including a training and engineering support package
- Assistance in building new naval bases in the Black Sea and Azov Sea
- The development and joint production of eight fast missile warships
- Participation in the Ukrainian project to deliver a modern frigate capability.

Recently, HMS Defender ignored Russian warnings while the warship was sailing near Crimea, so Russia hit back with information warfare trying to paint a story of aggression.

Additionally, British surveillance aircraft have been keeping an eye on Russian forces. Last week, a British RC-135 'Rivet Joint' intelligence-gathering aircraft once again deployed to Crimea to keep an eye on Russian forces near the border with Ukraine.

Earlier, [we reported](#) that there has been an increase in the frequency of British RC-135 aircraft being deployed to the Black Sea region near Ukraine's border with Russia. The UK has deployed an aircraft for this task every few days over the last month or so.

British surveillance aircraft being over the Black Sea near Crimea isn't unusual but we are seeing a significant increase in the frequency of the flights over the last few weeks. American assets are also present



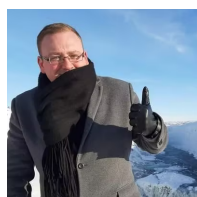
The British Foreign Secretary has stated that Britain is “*ensuring that Ukraine has the capability to defend itself*”.

Foreign Secretary Liz Truss said in Parliament:

*“In December, I visited British troops forming part of NATO’s enhanced forward presence at Tapa in Estonia, where allies are helping to protect the border with Russia. We are working with our NATO partners to ensure that that protection remains in place and is enhanced so that we can fulfil our commitments.*

*With Ukraine, we are ensuring that it has the capability to defend itself. That involves training, and the UK has trained more than 20,000 troops in Ukraine. We are also supplying extra capability for naval defences as well as support in areas such as cyber-security and other services.”*

You can [read more on the above here](#).



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