

DEFENCE ENERGY CONFERENCE 2025: “ENERGY TRANSITION BY DESIGN”

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS AND NEXT PLANNED STEPS

Thank you for your interest in the Defence Energy Conference 2025, held at MoD Abbey Wood 27-28 January.

Below is a summary of the key points or “take-aways” from the event and our planned next steps. Above all, if you want to remain involved or feel that you can help, please reach out to us. It is now time to start acting and everyone is welcome on this journey, for it is only by working together that we will truly be able to rise to the challenges and make the most of the opportunities that the Energy Transition presents.

Context

Energy security is critical to national security and the scale of the Energy Transition challenge is significant and complex. To meet it, a multitude of players need aligned thinking and we must recognise that none of us can do this alone. Moreover, there is now an increasing urgency to act, with clear sight of the goals:

Preserve and maximise operational advantage
Maintain and deepen supply chain resilience
Preserve and enhance interoperability
Increase battlefield energy self-sufficiency
Contribute to economic growth and productivity

Collectively, these make a substantial contribution to tangible deterrence

Priorities

Collaboration and sharing: a holistic approach that exploits the power of the whole team across Allies, Industry, Academia and Other Government Departments

Change behaviour and culture: in UK MoD, exploit the opportunity presented by the Strategic Defence Review and Defence Reform to establish:

Clear ownership of energy in Defence

Embed energy into force design processes

Think of energy as a critical capability enabler, not as a commodity

Standardisation: of language, technology, specification & design

Why we are approaching Energy Security *through an operational advantage lens*

Without stifling innovation

Develop a Defence Energy Security transition plan:

Translate the Operational Energy Strategy and Estates Energy Strategy into deliverables, guided by NATO Energy Security By Design and building on common ground between Operational and Infrastructure Energy

Use data to map goals, identify opportunities and inform risk tolerance

Drive *pace*, identifying and acting where we can do things now

¹ Note: Since the Conference on 27-28 January, Energy Transition By Design is being re-branded Energy Security By Design.

Day 2 Breakout Session Headlines

Group 1: CADMID to CADMIR

We need to lead on signalling to industry the importance of implementing circular economy to national security. Defence is the sum of all its industries, it must leverage learning from across other sectors to aid in the creation of a framework that underpins decision making.

Group 2: Enabling Energy Resilience through Innovation and Interoperability

We need to work more closely with Industry to pool ideas around promoting and implementing Private Finance Initiatives. We also need to work to secure up-front spend to implement ideas that will support and deliver support long term savings.

Group 3: Harnessing the Defence Estate for Green Growth

The Estate has the potential to be an energy asset; to realise this we need to change mindsets and behaviours and use Industry expertise. This includes: shifting to a “yes” culture; learning from Industry and others in relation to what we might be able to do with buildings and land; thinking about vacancy as opposed to occupancy; proving concepts on a site then scaling up; and being creative with Private Finance Initiatives (PFI).

Group 4: How can we work with NATO to maximise shared Energy and Climate Change Insights moving forward?

Insights have a long value chain. We should work primarily *within* existing NATO structures and to-be-issued guidelines, which provide the framework for determining which direction and choices to take. We should focus on where we can deliver advantage (which will always be a “moving target”), particularly in relation to standardization for interoperability, and take advantage of scenario-based testing and exercises. We should share data and develop insight-sharing tools and mechanisms.

Next Steps: How well is the UK supporting Energy Security By Design? What more could we do? What more would NATO like us to do?

Ensure making the right decisions for energy as a source of operational advantage remains at the centre of all our thinking. Demand for it is only going to increase.

Use our Energy Insights Function outputs and proactively input to the revision and development of policies, strategies and plans, including through the UK Delegation to NATO HQ.

Bring our technical knowledge to NATO expert groups (including the new Alternative Energy group)

Actively support the development of new standards with allies.

Deepen our working relationship with/support to the NATO Energy Security Centre of Excellence.

Get the basics right (in particular, use our information correctly).

Make the most of the opportunities (technology, suppliers, assets) that we already have.

Be innovative wherever we can be, but also scale up and commercialise.

Communication: anchor our shared language around energy security and operational advantage

Where presenters are happy to have their slides shared, these are attached as a .pdf document.

Thank you and we look forward to seeing you at the Defence Energy Conference 2026.