

# PUBLIC INFORMATION LEAFLET



**DEFENCE ESTATES**  
*Delivering Estate Solutions to Defence Needs*



## DTE Scotland

**FACILITATING TRAINING AND PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT**



## WHY THE ARMY NEEDS TO TRAIN

The British Army is held in the highest regard around the world. This respect has been hard-won over recent years in Northern Ireland, the Falkland Islands, the Gulf, Bosnia, Kosovo – and countless peacekeeping operations. But such professionalism does not just happen by chance. It is attained by constant, thorough and tough training, in realistic conditions.

## ORGANISATION

The DTE in mainland UK is controlled by Headquarters DTE, within Headquarters Defence Training Estate based in Warminster, near Salisbury. The DTE is sub-divided into 10 regionally-based areas, some of which have been used for training by the military for well over 100 years. Each DTE region has its own headquarters and staff, including DTE Scotland, which provides cost-effective and safe training facilities in Scotland for the three armed services and the cadet organisations. It also takes very seriously its responsibility for the protection, conservation and enhancement of a large variety of fauna and flora, much of it on areas which are themselves of great beauty and environmental value. In many cases this duty of care also embraces historic buildings, which are an intrinsic part of Scotland's proud heritage.

## TRAINING IN SCOTLAND

DTE Scotland's training areas are used for a full range of mostly non-mechanised training, from so-called 'low-level' (up to platoon-size) exercises through to large-scale ones, many in arduous conditions – either because of the terrain itself, or through the sometimes-mercurial weather patterns in some parts of the country. Activities throughout this training spectrum may include live firing, and there is a variety of ranges to accommodate this aspect of skill-at-arms in preparation for higher-level field firing on the principal training areas. Of necessity, some of the impact areas are large to safeguard both the public and the exercising troops. Many of the training facilities also provide the ideal environment for cadet and recruit training, and still others offer the vital adventurous training for instilling the physical, mental self-reliance and leadership so important to today's armed forces.

Currently some 300,000 man training days are achieved annually throughout DTE Scotland.



# Public Access

There is a presumption in favour of public access to the Defence Training Estate, on Public Rights of Way, balanced against the over-riding national requirement for safe and sustainable military training and conservation. Access is permitted to many of DTE Scotland's training areas. As with all UK training regions it is sometimes necessarily restricted because of their primary purpose; but it is also the case that where public access restrictions have been imposed, wildlife has found sanctuary – many rare or uncommon species of plants, insects and birds manage to co-exist with the 'bangs and flashes' associated with military training activity.

When on a public footpath that crosses a training area or where public access is permitted, great care should be exercised. Health and safety legislation places a burden on the individual not to do anything that might result in injury or death.

## Follow the Country Code

- Enjoy the countryside and respect its life and work
- Guard against all risk of fire
- Use gates and stiles to cross fences, hedges and walls
- Leave livestock, crops and machinery alone
- Take your litter home
- Take special care on country roads
- Make no unnecessary noise
- Keep to the public paths across moor and farmland
- Fasten all gates
- Keep dogs under close control
- Protect wildlife, plants and trees
- Help to keep all water clean

Great care is taken to ensure the safety of these walks, although areas used by the armed forces for training can obviously be dangerous – and this applies throughout DTE Scotland. Anyone walking on MoD land must obey all signs and byelaws relevant to the area being visited.

***Remember! Unexploded Ordnance: do not touch any unidentified object.***

Always comply with the following:

## Safety

***Do not enter areas where there is an obvious military presence:***

- Do not approach, touch, or pick up any objects lying on the ground
- Keep to the footpaths and do not deviate from them
- The use of metal detectors is prohibited
- Keep away from all buildings, bunkers and military installations except where it is clearly shown that public access is permitted
- No camping or fires are permitted

## Part of our local communities

Each of the major training areas is run by a Commandant, based on-site, with a small clerical and administrative staff for support. Every effort is made by DTE Scotland to minimise the impact of military training on people's lives. Commandants regularly attend local council meetings and are the point of contact should a dispute arise. There are local conservation groups within DTE Scotland, joined by local experts and people with a genuine interest in environmental matters. This ensures the MoD has the very best knowledge at its disposal when making decisions that may affect the local area.

A brief description of each main training area, together with its typical usage, follows.

# Training Areas

## BARRY BUDDON TRAINING CENTRE

### History

The Tay has formed Barry Buddon over the centuries into a knot of dunes where the fresh water meets the sea. Always a safe sanctuary for wildlife, Barry Buddon has not always been so for humans: in the 11th century the Danes defeated King Malcolm's men near the northern corner of the present ranges. In the 15th century, Henry VI dispatched a fleet to capture the King of Scotland – which returned homeward after unsuccessfully engaging the Scottish Ships in a fierce battle off Barry Buddon. Then, in the 17th century, Cromwell's fleet anchored off Barry Links while laying siege to Dundee and were bombarded by the local militia who sited their cannons on Barry Buddon. In the 19th century the area played a rather more peaceful host to a number of less bellicose ventures, including a salmon fishing enterprise, a horse racecourse and a lifeboat station.

The history of its present function dates back to the mid-19th century when the area was used for at least 30 years by the Forfarshire Rifle Volunteers, the Panmure Battery of the Forfarshire Artillery Brigade, and a Royal Naval Reserve Battery. In 1897 the land was sold by Lord Panmure to the War Office for use as a military training area, for which it has been used ever since..

### Training facilities and activities

Barry Buddon covers 2,600 acres (950 hectares), of which 600 acres (240 hectares) is foreshore, with at least an equal amount of sea danger area. The camp itself is quite new, with accommodation for 507. Typically, with all camps and facilities in use, about 80,000 personnel are accommodated and fed but, with day only use the total figure rises to 130,000 annually from all three services, cadets and some civilian organisations. There are 21 different ranges, although not all can be used simultaneously.

It is primarily an infantry training area, and small arms, light and medium mortars.

### Public access

Because of the unexploded ordnance from years of military use the public is restricted to the metalled roads and is free to walk to, and along, the beaches when the flags are down and red lights extinguished.

### Conservation

Most of the training area is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and an EU Special Area of Conservation (SAC), as well as a Special Protection Area (SPA) for birds under the European Birds Directive. Shore nesting birds include terns on the beaches, and shell duck in old rabbit burrows. In summer months, abundant skylarks, meadow pipits, linnets and stonechats use the dunes as shelter or nest sites. In winter, passage birds like fieldfares and redwings feed on the plentiful sea buckthorn berries. Mammals are restricted by the lack of cover, although the terrain is suited to rabbits which play an important role in maintaining the short turf and thereby the diverse range of plant species. Maintaining naturally-balanced numbers, not just of rabbits but of voles, mice and even the occasional brown hare, is down to predators like foxes, weasels, stoats and birds of prey. Amphibians, reptiles and invertebrates are also present in many different species, on the warm, dry habitat and around the area's pools and marshes. Over the past 20 years there has been considerable erosion of the east coast which until recently threatened a number of the ranges: in places up to 150 metres have been lost. However, in April 1993 a major project to construct a rock-armoured wall was completed. The long-term effects of changes in beach sediment supply caused by this are awaited. The control of scrub development is important to maintain current areas of acidic dune, and dry and wet heath.

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## CASTLELAW TRAINING AREA AND RANGES

### History

Castlelaw range complex is on the site of much older war-time ranges, which were the main training area for the Royal Scots based at Glencorse Barracks, Penicuik. Field firing and heavy weapon training were conducted where the current ranges stand. Small arms training took place to the north of the area, near Dreghorn. This complex was closed in 1985, and all firing now takes place at Castlelaw.

### Training facilities and activities

Castlelaw Training Area and Ranges is overlapped by a part of the Pentland Hills Regional Park, including the three highest peaks in the Pentland Hills: Allermuir, Capelaw and Castlelaw, which rise to heights of 493m, 454m and 488m respectively. The area is used for dry training (i.e. not involving live firing) in sometimes challenging conditions, and has a small-arms range complex. Further training facilities are used within both Dreghorn and Redford Cavalry Barracks. Accommodation for troops using the Castlelaw training areas is in the latter, which some cynics say were really designed for India and because of a mix-up with the plans they were built in Scotland instead. Certainly, the high ceilings and airy rooms are more suited to a hot climate – indeed they say there is probably a barracks somewhere in India with low ceilings which is stiflingly hot in summer!

The dry training area extends from the City Bypass at Dreghorn Mains, to Flotterstone (three miles/five kilometres) and from Bonaly Reservoir to Fulford (two miles/three kilometres). Apart from the three hills, the terrain includes two woodland areas and some scrub, but otherwise the cover consists of bracken and heather. Grazing rights have been granted to local farmers.

### Public access

The public has access to the area along a north-south bridle path, to which it is restricted, and which may be used for walking and/or cycling. Pyrotechnics are used by exercising troops. There are also other bridle ways and paths which are on the map at the entrances to the training area.s

### Conservation

Part of the Pentland Hills Regional Park overlaps the training area, which includes juniper trees, some of them 150 to 200 years old – the last of their kind in the



area. There is considerable interest and concern in their well-being, so they are out of bounds. Similarly restricted is a number of still-immature forest blocks which have been planted on the training area over the last five to ten years. During the past year or so a number of black grouse have been seen on the area and surrounding estates. These birds are rare, especially in the Pentlands, and should they be spotted the Pentland Ranger Service would appreciate being given a report of numbers and location.

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## CULTYBRAGGAN AND TIGNABLAIR

### History

Cultybraggan Camp has been in existence since 1939, when it was much larger and during the war housed some 4,000 Category A Nazis, as the so-called "No 21, War Working Camp". It is listed, and perhaps the most famous – maybe infamous – wartime camp in Scotland, smelling of years of polish on linoleum floors, and of history. It had its unpleasant moments as a result of prisoners' own very misguided views on dealing with fellow-prisoners – including an execution – whose zeal for the Nazi cause had, in their opinion, waned unacceptably during captivity.



### Training facilities and activities

Cultybraggan Training Camp and Tighnabhair Training Area are located in a beautiful part of Perthshire. The camp itself can accommodate up to 600 in both huts and tents on its eight acres or so (three hectares). The combined dry training and field firing ranges on Tighnabhair are leased from Drummond Estates and cover somewhere in the region of 12,000 acres (4,900 hectares), on which many forms of training take place, with the exception of heavy armour. Troops carry out live firing, dry training, helicopter operations, cross-country driving training and adventurous training. The latter takes place at Bennybeg Crags, Lednock Dam and on Loch Earn. The Cross Country Driving Circuit at Cambusbarron is used heavily by the Scottish Transport Regiment, with 8-tonners and Drops vehicles, Royal Marines with over-snow track vehicles and the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards with their light tracked armoured reconnaissance vehicles. In a normal year the camp will host in excess of 80,000 man training days involving all 3 services and cadet organisations – even fund-raising events. There is also an associated watermanship and bridging camp near Stirling.

### Public access

While access to the camp itself is restricted, with the permission of the Drummond Estates the public may enjoy hill walking on the training area when no live firing is taking place.

### Conservation

There is a small conservation group headed by the Commandant but its responsibility is limited to the 30 acres of military-owned land. The balance of land is owned and managed by Drummond Estates.

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## GARELOCHHEAD TRAINING AREA

### History

The camp was constructed in 1940 for the Second World War. There was a mix of British and Polish units based there, and many of its original nissen huts remain and are still in daily use. The surrounding area was used extensively as a training area, and just prior to D-Day 22,000 American servicemen were accommodated and trained prior to the operation. Surrounding the camp were anti-aircraft batteries defending the Clyde shipbuilding facilities, and the naval base. The latter survives and is home to the British nuclear submarine fleet.

### Training facilities and activities

Garelochhead Training Area offers units a unique mix of live firing up to platoon level on ranges which include grenade and mortar facilities, a field firing area, 'dismounted' (i.e. on foot) infantry dry training to battalion level and adventurous training. The camp itself accommodates over 500, and the area is particularly suited to 'Balkans-style' training, covering approximately 8,200 acres (3,320 hectares) of moorland, forest and mountain rising from sea level to over 700m. It is used by infantry and transport units, including off-road, and amphibious training. The adjoining mountain, forest and moorland of the Ardgartan Forest is also used for much of the year. An associated camp at Strone can accommodate 130, and is used for FIBUA (Fighting In Built-Up Areas) training.

### Conservation

The area is one of great natural beauty and rich diversity, although it contains only one SSSI (in Ardgartan Forest). There are rare varieties of flora found in both Garelochhead Training Area and the Ardgartan Forest. Three types of deer roam the area and there have been sightings of wildcat. For ornithologists the sight of Black Grouse displaying, and the possibility of spotting the pair of hen harriers which breed on the area, are rewarding.



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## INVERNESS TRAINING CENTRE



### History

For historical as well as practical reasons, the policy of the Regiment of the Queen's Own Highlanders is to maintain both Fort George and Cameron Barracks as twin focal points within the regimental area, which includes Orkney, Caithness, Sutherland, Ross and Cromarty, Inverness, Nairn and Moray. Fort George is now the home of a regular army infantry battalion, as well as being a major tourist attraction in the Highlands, and is arguably the finest jewel in the DTE Scotland crown. Building of "The Fort", as it is affectionately known by locals, began in 1747 and pre-dates the first national barrack building programme by over 40 years. Completion took 21 years and cost £92,673 – something like £1billion in today's terms. After the Napoleonic War, Fort George fell into some disrepair but was refitted during the Crimean War, and since 1857 it has enjoyed military presence within its considerable walls. The Fort's original capacity was for 2,000 soldiers; but in 1915, as reinforcements for the First World War were mobilised, trained and sent to the front, numbers within the walls swelled to 9,000. A further 20,000 were encamped outside. From 1881 Fort George re-rôled as the depot of the Seaforth Highlanders until the amalgamation with the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders in 1961. Construction of Cameron Barracks in Inverness began in 1877 and took nine years. They have since been part of, and responded to, many Army reforms and reorganisations, processed many thousands of volunteer recruits throughout the First World War, and managed returning wounded and

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demobilising soldiers, both during its latter stages and in the aftermath. It also processed conscientious objectors – and even the entire crew of a captured German submarine.

The Second World War also saw frenetic activity – but not all of it purely Army. From 1943 to 1944 the White Ensign flew in front of a combined Naval and Military headquarters.

## Training facilities and activities

Fort George ranges and training area are ideal venues for battalion-level training, and are used in conjunction with training exercises elsewhere in the Highlands. The complex and its surrounding area are a mix of flat links land, gentle hills and metalled roads, and offer much by way of 'march-and-shoot' training. The partly-wooded dry training area covers over 600 acres (250 hectares) and is an excellent 'hide' for echelon training offering various entry and exit points, and cover from the air.

## Conservation

Although the Fort George Training Area hosts a small fox population and provides temporary respite for a few deer migrating from Cawdor Estate's Carse Woods, it is really the area of Whiteness Head that is the conservation jewel in Fort George's crown. Situated on the north-eastern boundary of the training area, it comprises mainly mudflats, and smaller areas of salt marsh, dune and shingle. Whilst not very appealing to us humans, it holds immense fascination for migrant and resident bird species. Whiteness Head is frequented by common tern and breeding osprey, and the area also supports some 14,000 wildfowl and 11,000 waders.

Visitors include red-breasted merganser, bar-tailed godwit, and redshank. Wintering populations include cormorant, widgeon teal, goldeneye goosander and curlew.

Whiteness Head is presently a SSSI and has been designated as internationally important for wild birds and wetland habitats meriting reclassification as an SPA and RAMSAR site.

## Public access

The range and training area is in constant use but the public has access to the area when the flags are down and the lights extinguished. Visitors should be aware that a large part of the beach is within the danger area of the Small Arms and Grenade ranges..



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## KIRK CUDBRIGHT TRAINING AREA

### History

The Army acquired the area in 1942 as a range for training the Second World War invasion of Europe forces. Many of the families who sold their properties on the range at that time are tenants on the area today as part of their farming business. Grazing of the land has contributed significantly to the availability of natural and realistic training ever since. For over 50 years, use of the range has been divided between military training and tank/anti-tank weapon development.

### Facilities

Kirkcudbright Training Area provides opportunities for a wide variety of tactical field firing and dry training exercises across 4,700 acres (1,900 hectares) of typical farming countryside, and can accommodate all approved weapon systems, as a result of which there is an extensive sea danger area (15x19 miles / 24x30 kilometres).

Training on Kirkcudbright involves both fire-and-movement and dry training exercises in realistic and testing conditions across the whole area. Since April 1997 the area has been under further development as an infantry field fire range.



### Public access

There is a danger from unexploded ordnance lying close to the surface of the ground across the range. Therefore, a coastal path has been provided for public use when the access barriers are unlocked. The the tenant farmers are allowed access when firing is not in progress.

### Conservation

Perhaps more than most, the Army's presence on Kirkcudbright illustrates the circumstantial connection between a necessary lack of public access and the coincidental benefits to conservation. In 1984 two flint flakes, one trimmed, were found on the 25-metre-high beach at Abbey Burnfoot indicating the presence of man when the sea level was higher in about 4000 BC. Bronze Age second and first millennia occupation is confirmed by over 30 separate rock-outcrop carvings. There is plenty of evidence of activity during the early Iron Age, mid-first millennium BC to about 400 AD, in the remains of four fortified enclosures and an inhabited cave. The forts are pre-Roman in design, of which Glennap is the most impressive.

The range has 17 of the rarer plants in the county, notably large populations of Narrow-leaved Everlasting Pea and Cowslips. The only known county records of six plants including Yellow Horned Poppy, Yellow Vetch and Pyramidal Orchids are from the range. Most of the rare plants flourish on the untrodden coastline and cliff face but two uncommon plants in the county, Greater Butterfly orchids and Greater Spearwort, are not coastal and also have survived due to the protection of the range.

The whole of the coastline is an SSSI for geological reasons. There is a MoD ILMP (integrated land management plan) which co-ordinates the needs of training with the overall ecology of the area. All users must abide by the requirements of the plan, which details certain measures to protect the area.

# Training Areas

## TAIN CUDBRIGHT TRAINING AREA

### History

Tain TC covers 2,500 acres, of which there are 8 kilometres of beach, some of which has relatively shallow water and others, which have a steep drop-off. The Surface Danger Area comprises of land and sea areas, which are subject to byelaws. There is a larger Air Danger Area, which is used primarily for military aircraft but also offers protection for users employing Clear Range Procedures out to sea.

The site has been under military use since WWII and although it has been used mainly by the RAF is also used by ground forces for Close Air Support training. The Range is bounded on the north and south-east sides by water and is mainly low lying. The land is made up of dunes, saltmarsh, heathland, gorse and a small area of woodland. The site is designated for many aspects of its biodiversity, which means that many parts of it are only available for foot-soldiers with the tracks available only for light-vehicles (no armour).

### Location

The Range is situated on the southern shore of the Dornoch Firth (NH 835835 OS Sheet 21), between Tain town and Inver village, some 40 miles by road north of Inverness.

### Public access

The public is welcome to walk on the area when the red flags / lights are not displayed. Although clearance is carried out, there may be unexploded ordnance on the surface and the public is warned not to touch anything.

### Conservation

The Morrich More is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest, a Ramsar site and a Special Area of Conservation. Consequently, the site is considered one of the most important in the UK for matters such as saltmarsh, accretion and juniper. The site has the largest expanse of coastal juniper in the UK. Furthermore, the wildlife on the Range includes a thriving Scottish Wildcat population. Somewhat incongruously, although the military activity directly affects a small part of the Morrich More, it has preserved the biodiversity, which may otherwise have been lost as has in the surrounding land.

# Training Areas

## CAPE WRATH TRAINING CENTRE

### Introduction

Cape Wrath Training Centre covers an area of 25000 acres. The area is coastal with sea cliffs and a tidal loch (Kyle) acting as three of its boundaries. The terrain within the training area is extremely arduous and subject to extreme weather conditions. The area is subject to bylaws when military activity is in progress.

The area has been in use since the early 1930's predominantly as a naval bombardment range and an air bombing range. Its use as a tri service facility has become more popular in recent years and it is an ideal range for the practice of littoral warfare.

### Location

The range is situated in the far northwest corner of the UK mainland near the village of Durness in the county of Sutherland and approximately 120 miles north of Inverness. Range control is located at Faraid Head.

Access onto the area is difficult and is achieved by a pedestrian ferry or on foot.

### History

Military activity has been recorded at Cape Wrath since the beginning of the last century. Mostly at that time being used by the Royal Navy to practice Gunnery under a leasing agreement with the local landowner. Use became more frequent and in 1933 Bye – Laws were published to facilitate range activity. These Bye – Laws were written on behalf of the Lord High Admiral of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and are still in force to this day!

At the beginning of 1999 the landowner, for various reasons decided to sell the land giving the MoD the option to purchase outright. Due to funding problems the area was purchased in a 50/50 split between the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force who by this time had been using the area for its own bombing practices. In April 2006 ownership was passed to the newly formed Defence Training Estate (DTE) an organisation formed to rationalise and standardise training areas and ranges and it now forms part of the multi faceted DTE Scotland whose headquarters are in Stirling..

### Public access

Access is via the ferry on the eastern side which connects with the road to the lighthouse and by a coastal footpath on the western side which also ends at the lighthouse. The public is welcome to walk on the area when the red flags / lights are not displayed. Although clearance is carried out, there may be unexploded ordnance on the surface and the public is warned not to touch anything.

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## OTHER RANGES AND FACILITIES

This is not an exhaustive list of other training facilities within DTE Scotland, since some of these are in remote locations (for example, Ramsdale on the Isle of Orkney). However, below is a list of those nearer to (or in one case within) population centres:

### Binhill Range

On the south coast of the Moray Firth, east of RAF Lossiemouth, this ten-lane range, leased from Forest Enterprise, is used as an alternative to some of the Fort George training area facilities. There is also a small training area nearby that is limited to low-level dry training. The site is part of a SSSI.

### Black Dog Range

Near Aberdeen, this complex on the east coast has three live firing areas, and a dry training area which may be in use by night or day for up to platoon level tactical training, blanks and pyrotechnics will normally only be used during the day.

### Scotstownmoor

This is a small (25 acres/ten hectares) off-road driver training area on predominately scrub land largely covered in gorse, and is attached to Aberdeen University OTC. The area is bordered to the south by Perwinnes Moss/Dubford Moor which are designated SSSIs, and frequented by the public and schools which also visit to enjoy the fauna and flora.

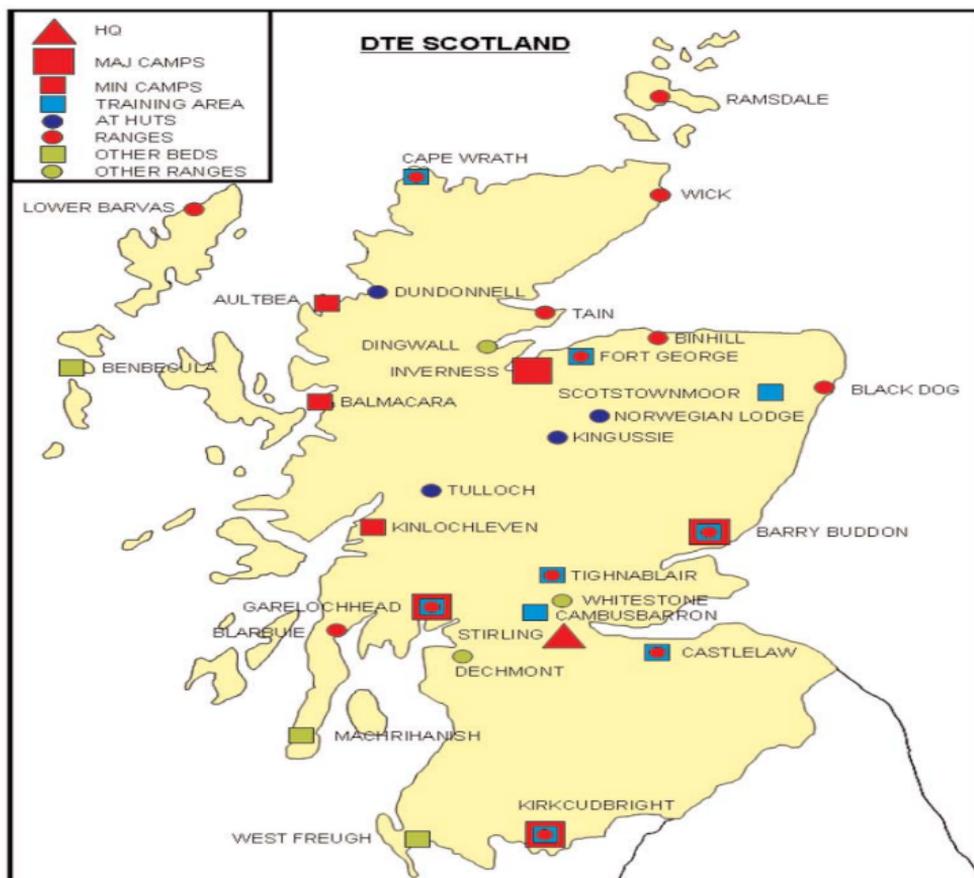
### Wick

This range is located just south of Wick, and is used mostly by TA and cadets from the area.

The next-nearest range for TA and cadets (at Fort George) is some 130 miles (210 kilometres) distant. There is a public footpath that crosses between the range and the sea danger area.







## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In addition to this Public Information Leaflet for DTE Scotland, the DTE and its sister land agency organisation, Defence Estates (DE), each produce other literature. The DTE Annual Report summarises yearly progress by the DTE organisation; DE's Walks on MoD Land details a number of walks on 10 DTE estates including Salisbury Plain, Castlemartin, Catterick, Dartmoor and Otterburn. DTE also produces In The Field magazine, published each autumn, which also contains news from some of the smaller training areas around the country. Finally, DE's annual publication Sanctuary contains articles about the Defence Estate across the whole country. All these publications are free and may be obtained from the relevant addresses below.

## USEFUL ADDRESSES

Headquarters DTE Scotland  
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