



Ministry  
of Defence

SECRETARY OF STATE  
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE



4.3.2

30th June 2016

Dear Meg,

I would like to inform you that I am placing a Departmental Minute in Parliament on 30 June 2016, seeking Parliamentary approval to gift additional ammunition to the Kurdistan Regional Government of Iraq to equip the Peshmerga. Our gift will include ammunition for the Heavy Machine Guns we gifted in 2014 and some sniper rifle ammunition.

As you are aware, the department should refrain from making the gift until fourteen parliamentary sitting days after the issue of the Minute, except in cases of special urgency. In this case I outlined plans to make the gift, subject to the approval of Parliament, in the House of Commons on 24 May 2016. Given the requirement to provide support to ongoing operations in northern Iraq, an urgent response is necessary. Consequently, this Minute will lay for five sitting days.

Yours,

Michael

THE RT HON MICHAEL FALLON MP

Ms Meg Hillier MP  
Chair of the Public Accounts Committee  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

### Operation SHADER - Update

**The Secretary of State of Defence (Mr Michael Fallon):** In the Counter-Daesh Quarterly Update to Parliament on 24 May 2016, I said that following the meeting of Counter-Daesh Coalition Defence Ministers in Stuttgart on 4 May, we were considering what further support the UK might offer to reinforce the Global Coalition.

I can confirm today that we will be sending around 50 additional trainers to the Al Asad Airbase in Western Iraq to provide instruction on countering improvised explosive devices (c-IED), infantry skills and combat first aid. As well as the extra training personnel, the UK will also provide around 90 personnel to assist with guarding the airbase, and around 30 personnel to form a Head Quarter staff to help command the mission. In addition an engineering squadron will deploy for around six months to build necessary infrastructure to support the deployment.

This deployment will add to the significant contribution the UK is already making to the campaign, with over 1,100 personnel deployed to the region. Our strike aircraft have now conducted around 900 air strikes against Daesh targets in Iraq and Syria and our Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance aircraft provide niche and highly valued capabilities. On the ground, as part of the Coalition's Building Partner Capacity (BPC) programme our forces have helped to train more than 18,000 members of the Iraqi security forces (ISF), including Kurdish forces, in Besmaya, Erbil and Taji. With Coalition support, Iraqi forces are pushing Daesh back and reoccupying territory. Fallujah has now been liberated after suffering at the hands of Daesh since early 2014. As Iraqi forces continue to regain territory and begin preparatory operations to retake Mosul, it is important that the Coalition continues to provide the support needed to allow them to make further progress.

The extra trainers will be working closely with US and Danish forces, who lead the BPC programme at Al Asad, providing training to the Iraqi Army 7th Division, Border Guards and Federal Police from behind the wire in c-IED and basic infantry skills, and combat first aid. This will in turn help Iraqi Forces consolidate recent military gains in Anbar province and the building of forces for operations around Mosul.

On 24 May 2016 I also set out our intention to provide the Kurdistan Regional Government of Iraq with a supply of ammunition to equip the Peshmerga. I am today laying a Departmental Minute



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Meg Hillier  
Chair of the Public Accounts Committee  
House of Commons  
LONDON  
SW1A 0AA

Reference GF/1459/16  
Date 7 July 2016

*Dear Mrs Hillier*

### GIFT OF AMMUNITION TO THE KURDISTAN REGIONAL GOVERNMENT

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) wrote to the Committee on 30 June 2016 concerning a proposed gifting of ammunition to the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). The proposal comprises 480,000 rounds of 12.7mm Heavy Machine Gun ammunition and 250,000 rounds of 7.62 sniper ammunition with a total sales foregone value of £1,397,400 (including VAT). The MoD will bear the transportation and delivery costs.

It is normal practice, when a government department proposes to make a gift valued at over £300,000, for the department concerned to present a Minute to the House of Commons giving details of the gift and to refrain from making the gift until 14 sitting days after this to allow for objections to be made. In urgent cases, all or part of the notice period may fall in a period of recess or a shorter period may be given. Due to the urgency of this request the Minute will sit for 5 days.

This gift meets a specific request from the KRG for ammunition to aid in their fight against Daesh, and follows on from an earlier gifting of 40 Heavy Machine Guns to the KRG by MoD in September 2014. Without a further gift of ammunition, the MoD consider the previous gift will be rendered redundant as the KRG is unable to afford a resupply. The MoD considers that the ammunition is excess to its current requirements.

The MoD has notified Parliament of the gifting and has sent a copy of the Minute to the Committee for information. We are content that the MoD has complied with the rules laid down in Managing Public Money for notifying Parliament and that HM Treasury has approved the gifting.

Our advice is that there is no reason for the Chair to object to the proposal. There is, therefore, no particular need for her to write to the Secretary of State. We have, however, prepared a short draft letter should the Chair decide she would like to write.

**ALI MORGAN**  
Private Secretary to the Comptroller and Auditor General





## Committee of Public Accounts

House of Commons London SW1A 0AA

Tel 020 7219 4099 Email [pubaccomm@parliament.uk](mailto:pubaccomm@parliament.uk) Website [www.parliament.uk/pac](http://www.parliament.uk/pac)

Michael Fallon MP  
Ministry of Defence



14.07.16

*Dear Secretary of State*

### **GIFT OF AMMUNITION TO THE KURDISTAN REGIONAL GOVERNMENT**

Thank you for providing me with a copy of your Departmental Minute of 30 June 2016 concerning the gift ammunition to the Kurdistan Regional Government.

I will publish this on the Committee website to facilitate its consideration by Parliamentarians.

Please note that a copy of this letter goes to the Chair of the House of Commons Defence Select Committee.

**Meg Hillier MP**  
**Chair of the Committee of Public Accounts**