

As commissioned by



The Midlands Defence Industry

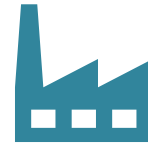
JEDHub 2025 Regional Case Study

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Executive Summary

— Highlights from the 2025 JEDHub Midlands Case Study —



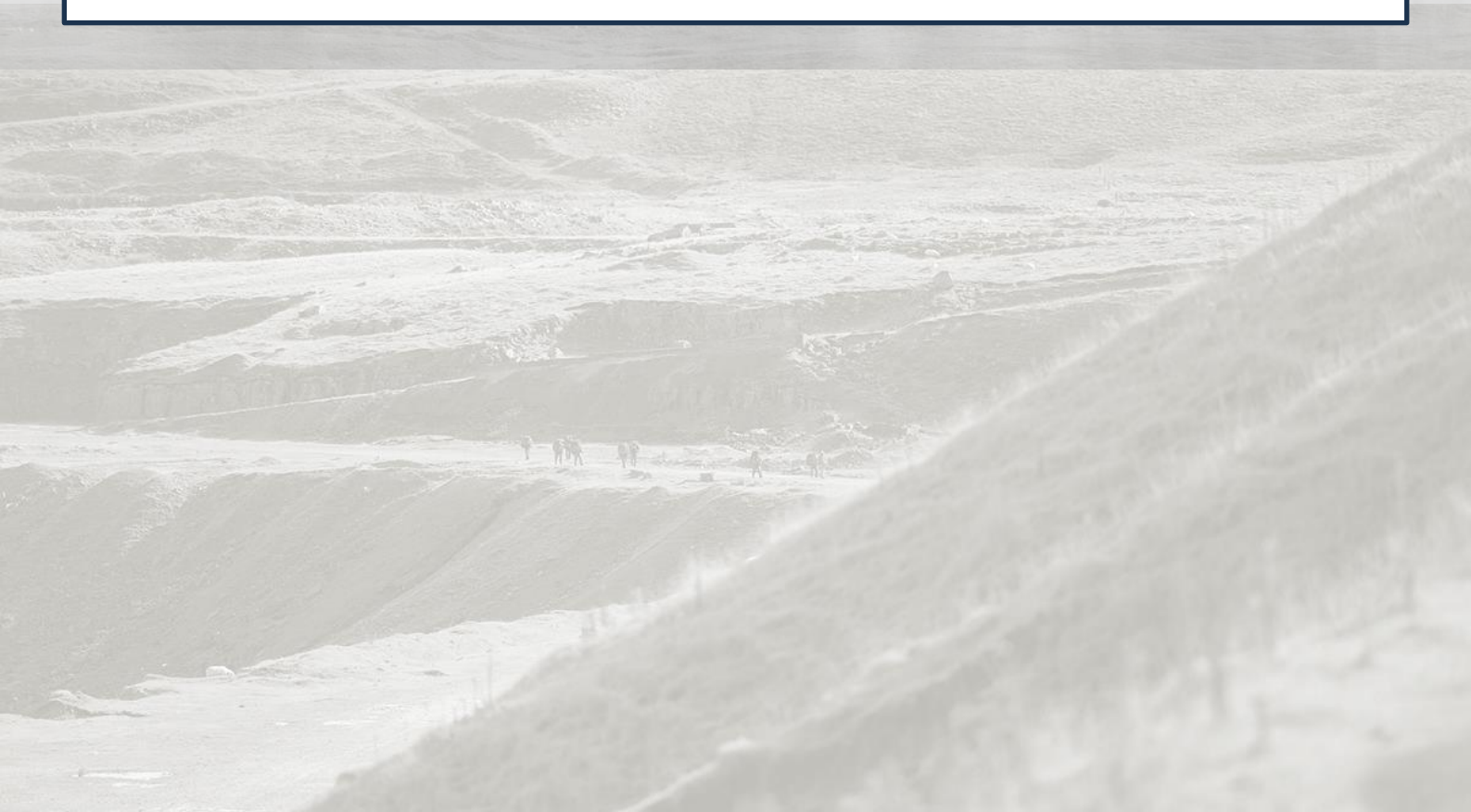
Introduction

The Midlands plays a pivotal role in the United Kingdom's defence industry, serving as a hub for innovation, advanced manufacturing, and strategic development. With a rich industrial heritage and a strong network of defence contractors, suppliers, and research institutions, the region contributes significantly to national security and economic growth. It also houses a significant army presence and infrastructure, with a growing talent pipeline seeing investment and development efforts increasing in recent years.

This report explores these notions through three separate chapters:

1. Industrial Base
2. Trade
3. Talent Pipeline

Through these chapters a holistic overview of both the midlands defence industry and army talent pipeline is presented, with data driven insights and objective analysis being integral to this report.



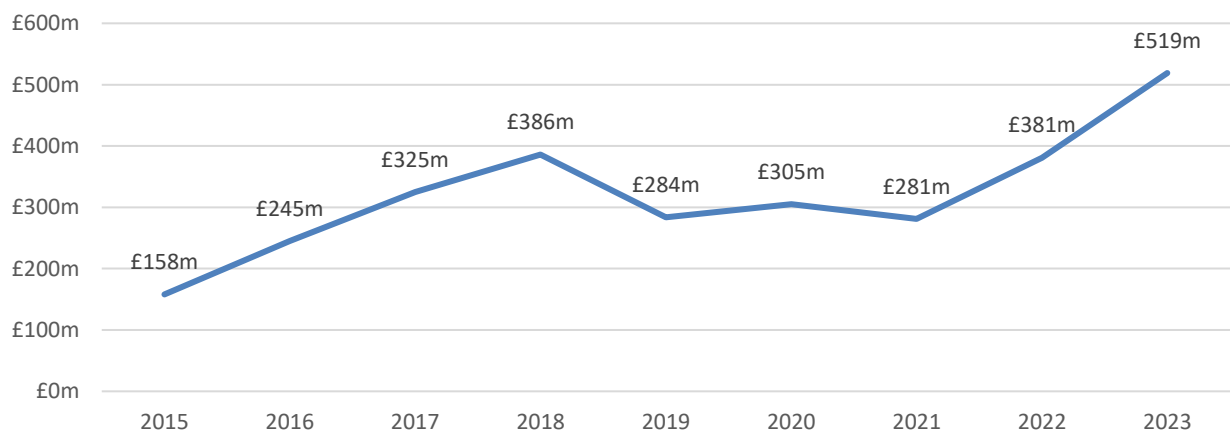
1. Industrial Base



Value & Investment



Annual Revenues of Midlands Defence Firms (£m) ¹



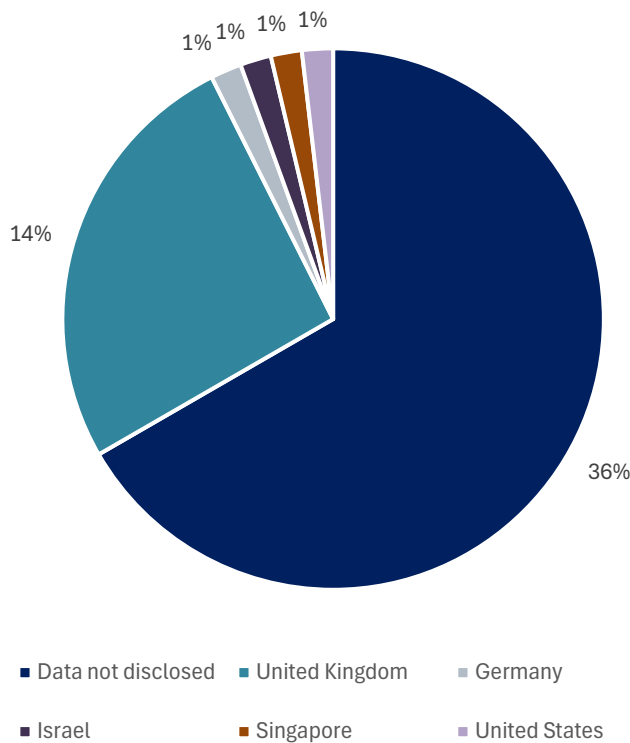
£519m

Total revenue reaped by Midlands defence firms in **2023**

£361m

Total increase in yearly revenues from **2015** to **2023**

Total Investment Deals and Associated Countries 2003-2025²



20

Receiving companies of investments in the Midlands since 2003.



58

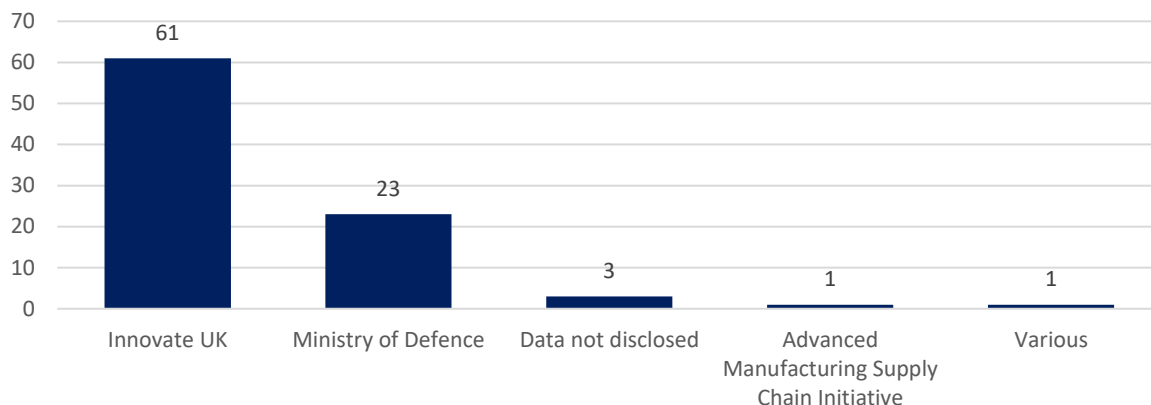
Total deals made to defence firms in the Midlands since 2003.



Industry Grants



Number of Grants and Sources Since 2012¹



68.5%

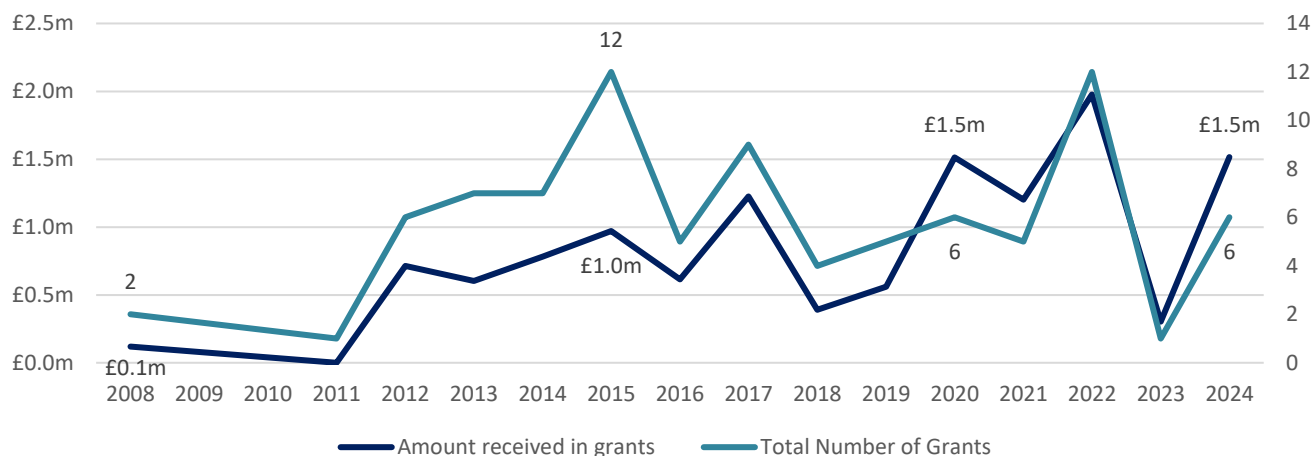
Of all **grants** given to the Midlands defence industry come from **Innovate UK**

25.8%

Of all **grants** given to the Midlands defence industry come from the **MOD**



Number of Grants and Amount¹



£1.98m

The **highest** amount received in **grants** to the Midlands defence industry, realized in **2023** through **12 grants**.

£1.51m

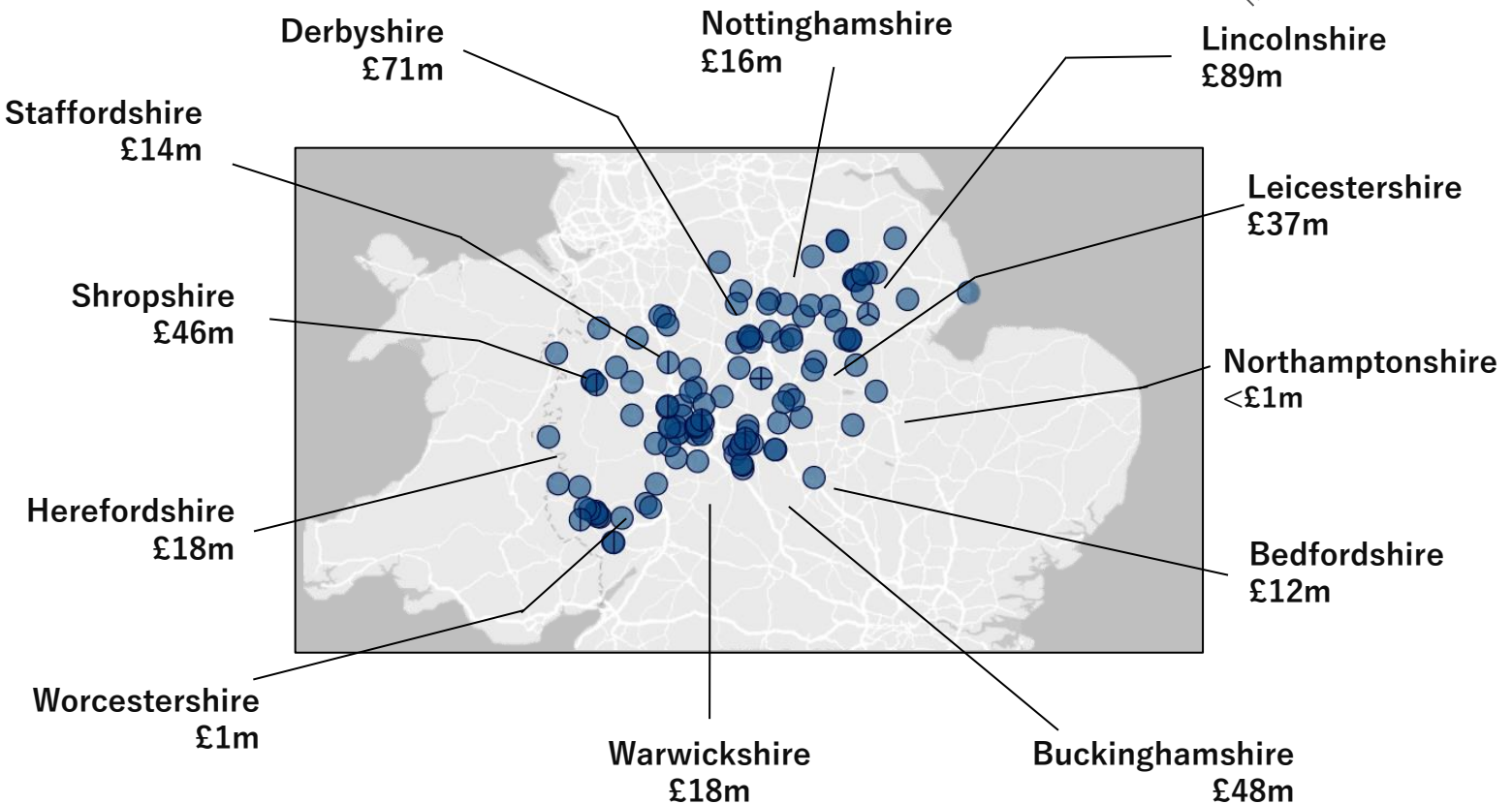
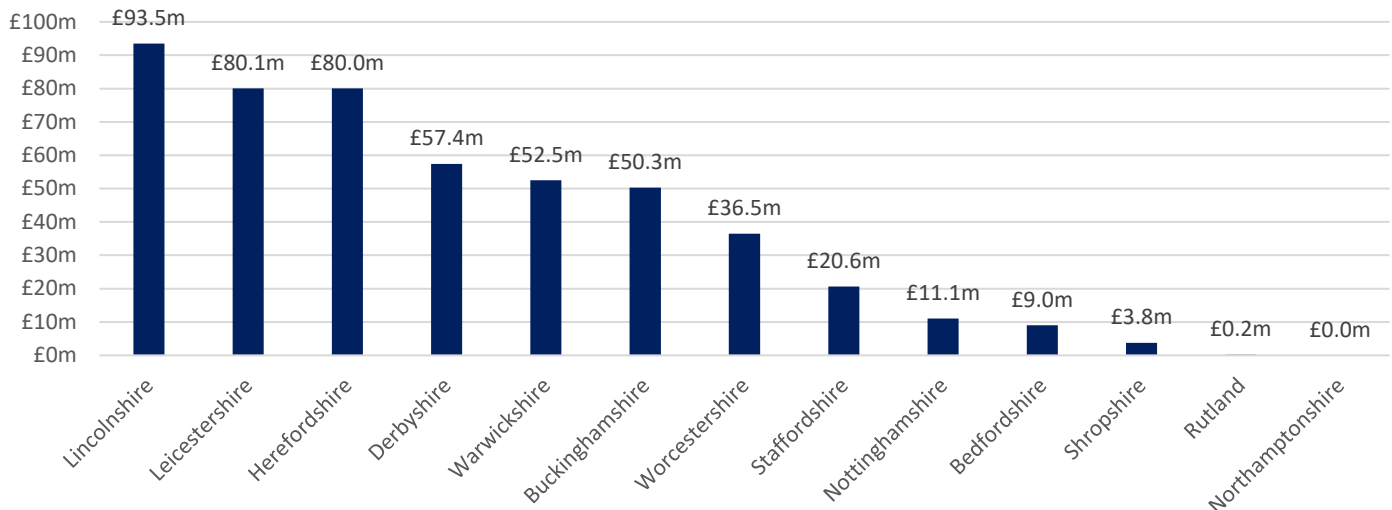
Total amount received in grants to the Midlands defence industry in **2024**, through **6 total grants**.

£1.40m

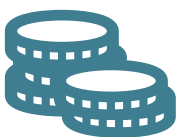
The **increase** in the value of **yearly grants** to the Midlands defence industry from **2008** to **2024**.



Defence Firm Locations and Total Asset Values by County¹



Statistics²



£571m

Total **sum of assets** of defence firms in the Midlands.

347





Total **number of firms** in the Midlands with defence activities.



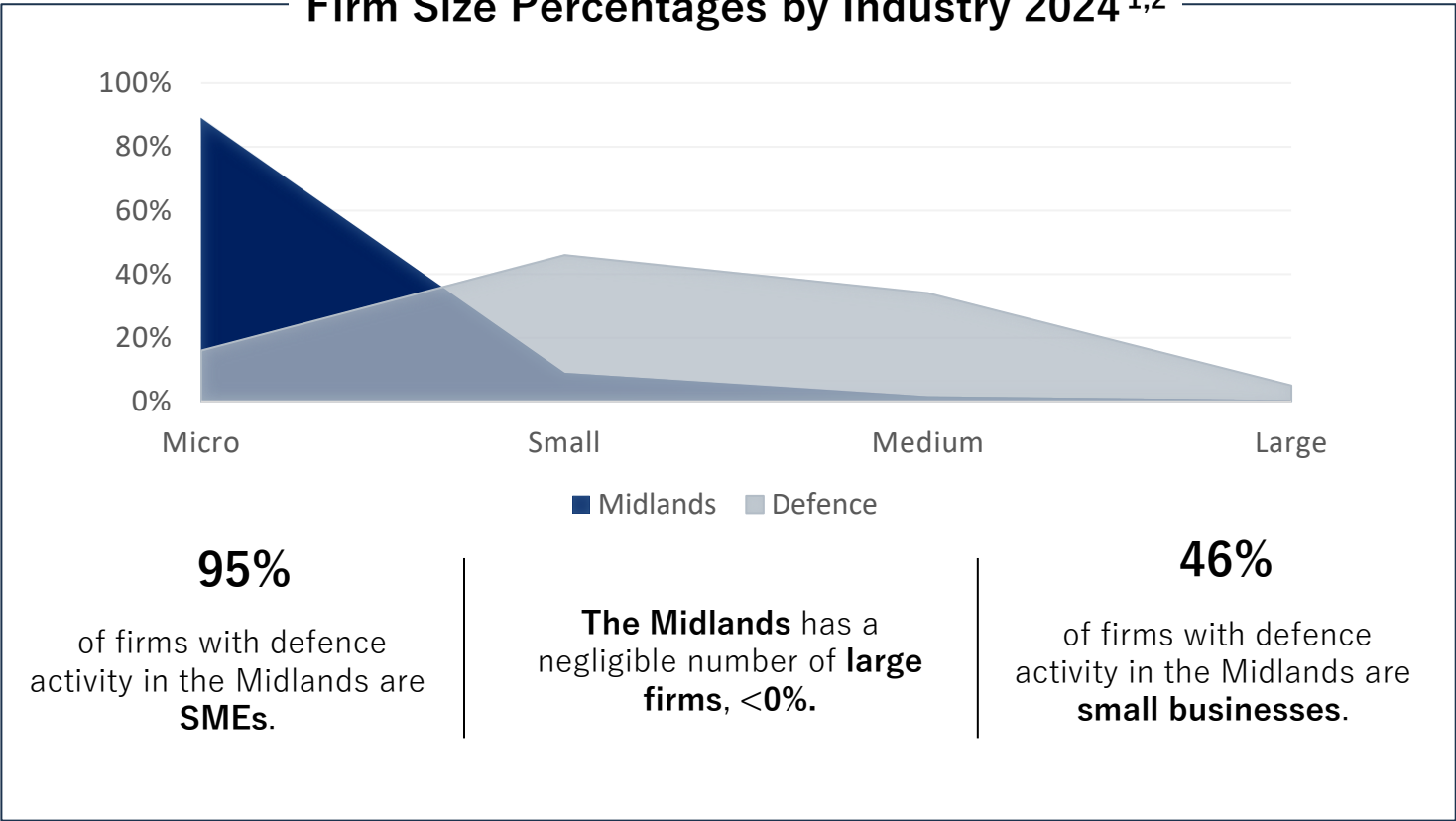
Firm Sizes



Defence Firm Sizes 2024¹

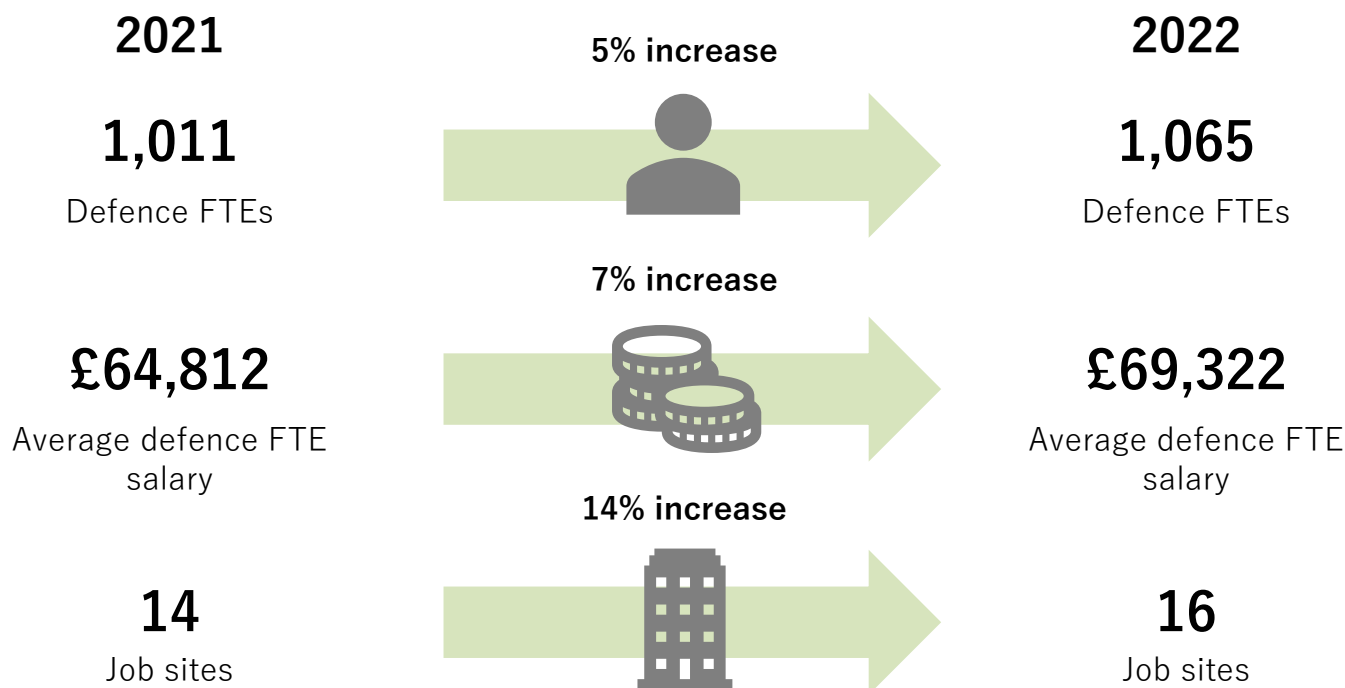
	 Micro	 Small	 Medium	 Large
% Total firms	16%	46%	34%	5%
% Total employees	1%	11%	45%	41%

Firm Size Percentages by Industry 2024^{1,2}

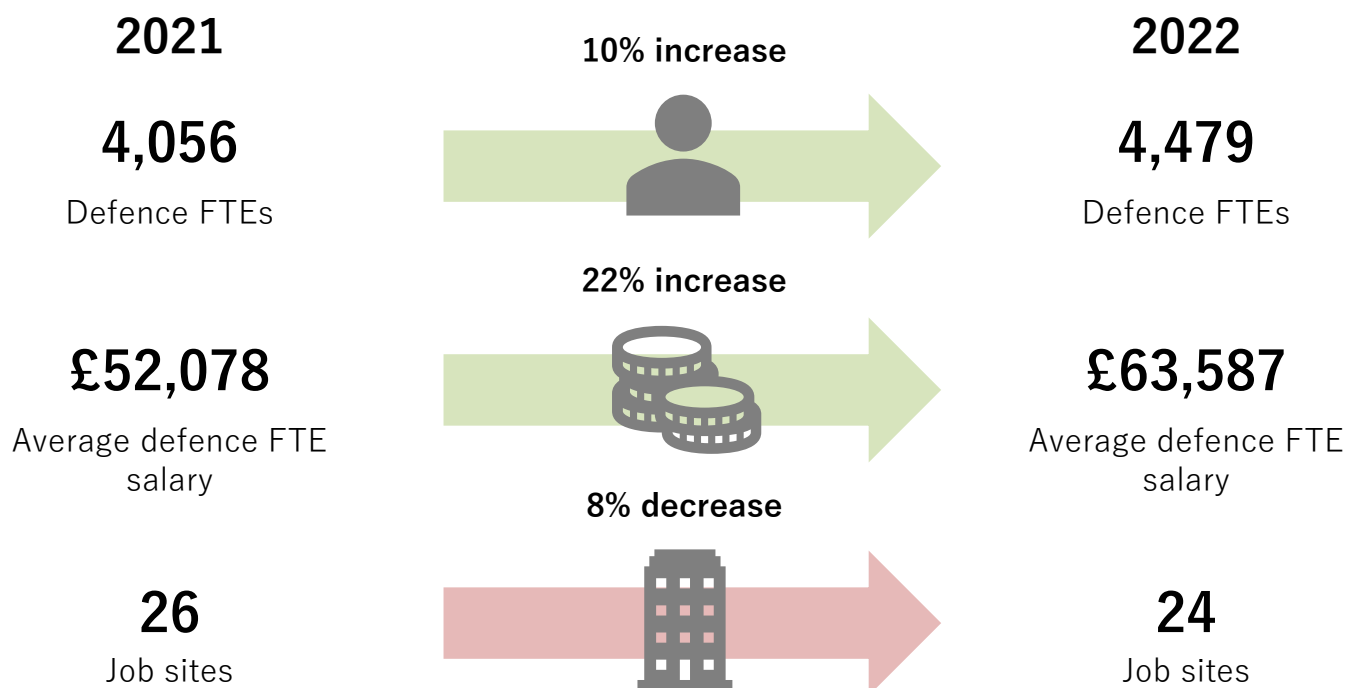




West Midlands Breakdown ¹



East Midlands Breakdown ²

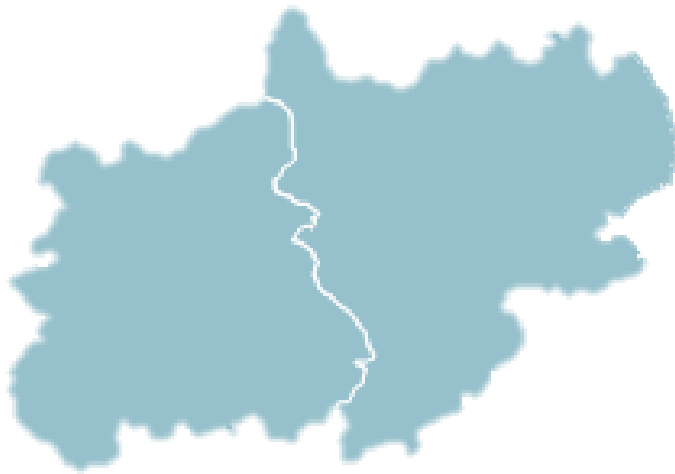




The Midlands is home to a major aerospace cluster which is of significant importance to the economic health of the region. The cluster itself includes many firms which maintain a strong defence side to their business, underscoring the overlapping nature of these industries.

2024 Aerospace Breakdown ¹

Midlands (whole):



36,500

Aerospace jobs



524

Aerospace companies



100,000

Total jobs sustained by the industry



Key Statistics ²

£5.3bn

The **total** generated **GVA** of the industry for the Midlands economy.

£763m

Awarded in **aerospace R&D grants** between **2013/14** and **2021/22**.

20%

Of all **UK** aerospace sites are found in the **Midlands**, with **595** in total.

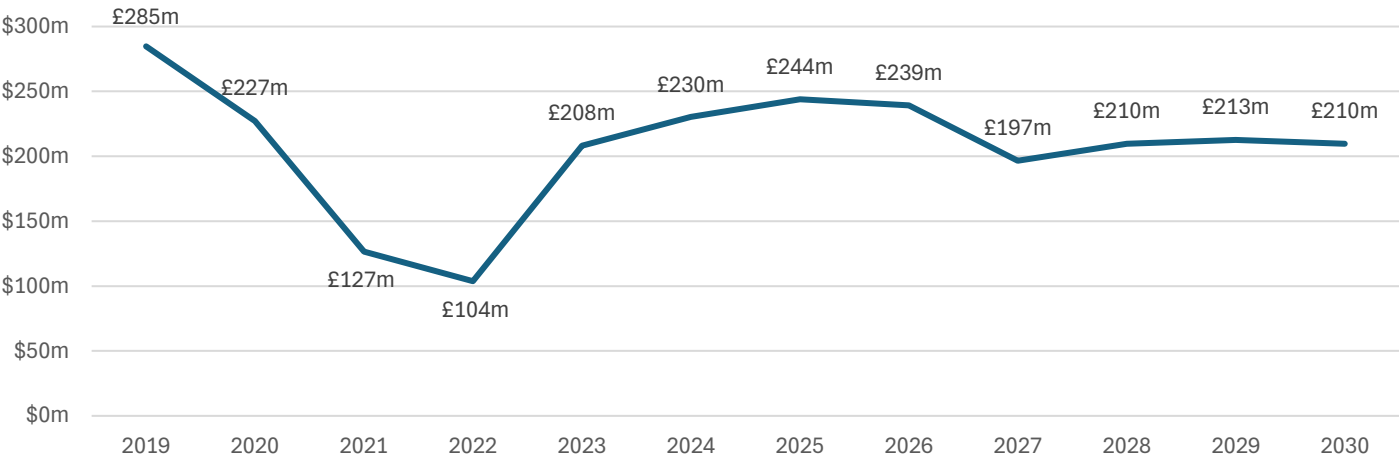


2. Trade





Value of Total Export Orders For Midlands¹



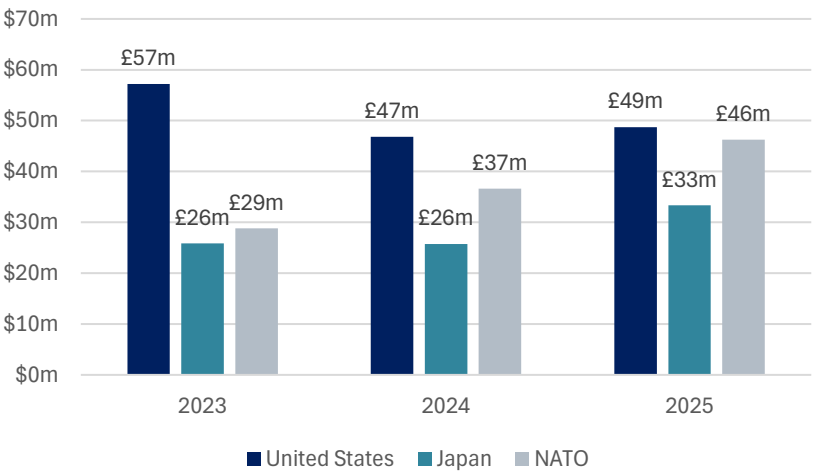
\$104m

The **lowest** export order revenue gained in **one year** over this period, in 2022.

\$285m

The **highest** export order revenue gained in **one year** over this period, in 2019.

Top 3 Order Locations for Midlands Defence Exports 2023 to 2025²



20.4%

The **percentage** of **exports** from the Midlands going to the **United States** in 2024.



\$26m

The **value** of **exports** from the Midlands going to the **Japan** in 2023.



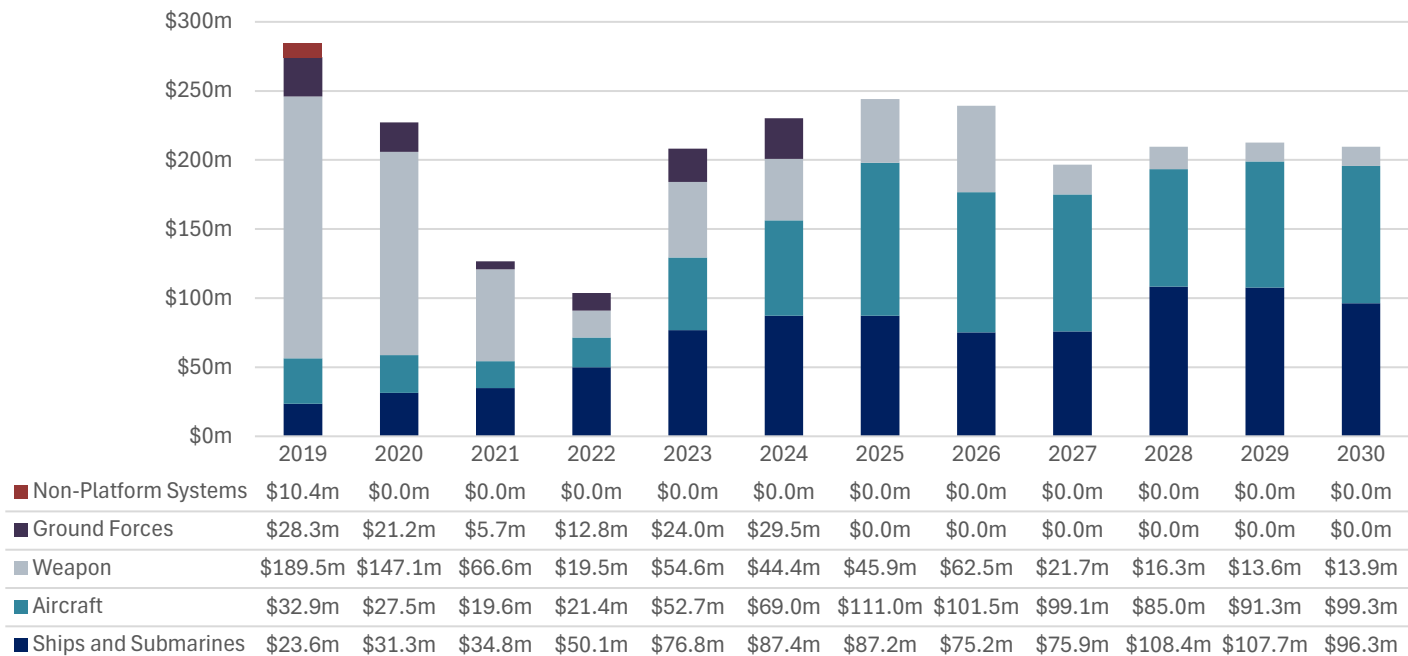
60.6%

The **increase** in **value** of exports to the **NATO** organisation from **2023** to **2025**

Exports by Capability



Value of Midlands Defence Export Orders by Capability ¹



Statistics ²



\$108m

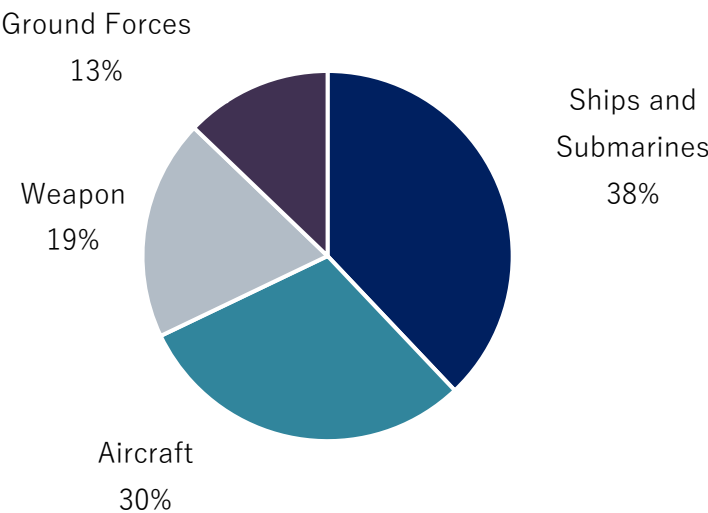
Is set to be reaped from **maritime exports** in **2028**, the **most significant** export for the Midlands defence industry.



\$111m

Is set to be **reaped** from **air** exports in **2025**, with air exports being a consistently vital capability for the industry.

Value of Midlands Defence Export Orders by Capability in 2024 ³



Notes and Sources: ^{1,2,3} All statistics are based on UKDSC analysis of GPS data which assesses markets on a deliveries basis in USD, using system level data. This data captures sub-tier activity and business-to-business activity (e.g. the Eurofighter Typhoon, aspects of which account for both imports and exports), rather than solely end-product level data. Space, Services and Infrastructure-related data are limited in the database.

Trade With UK



Value of Trade From Midlands to the Rest of UK by Capability ¹



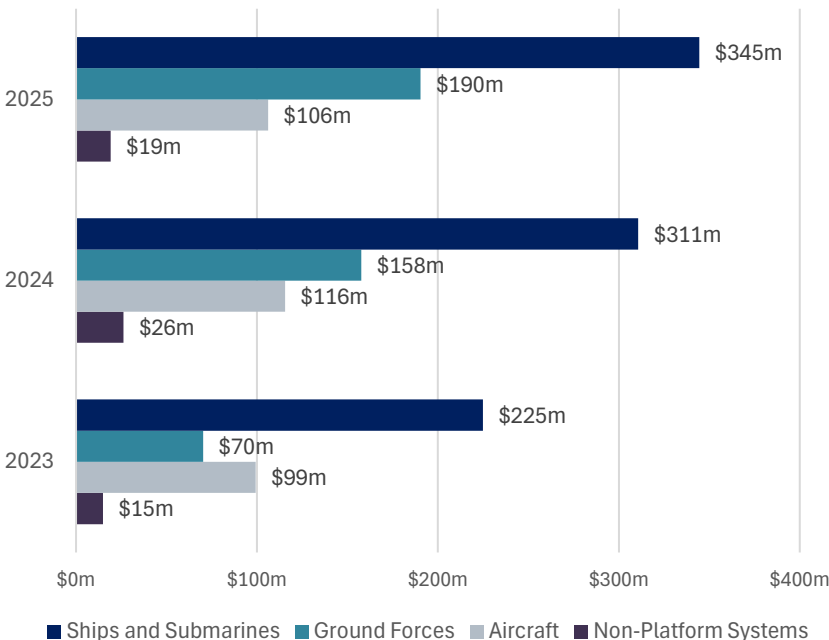
\$335m

The total amount set to be reaped from **maritime trade** from the Midlands to the rest of the UK in **2025**.

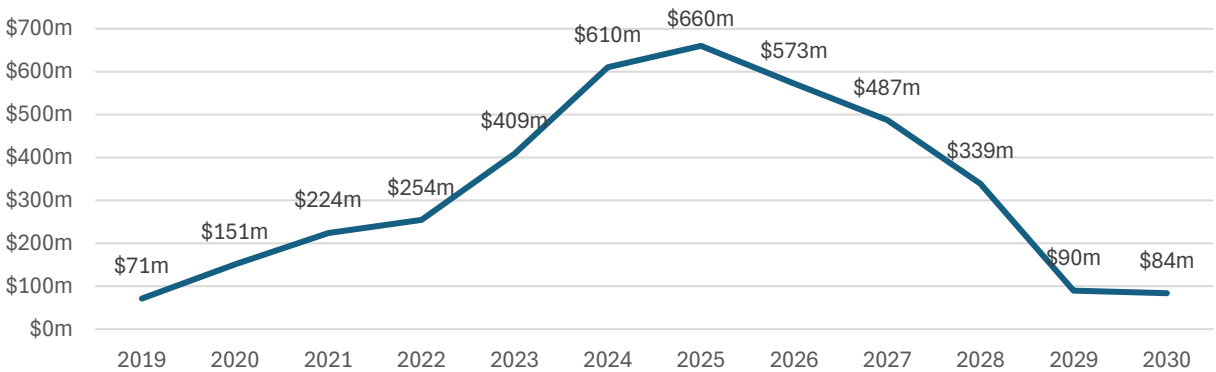


\$190m

The total amount set to be reaped from **land trade** from the Midlands to the rest of the UK in **2025**.



Total Value of Trade From Midlands to the Rest of UK ²



\$201m

The **highest** year-on-year **increase** in total orders, from **2023** to **2024**.

73%

Of all defence orders from the Midlands were **made** from the **rest of the UK** in **2025**.

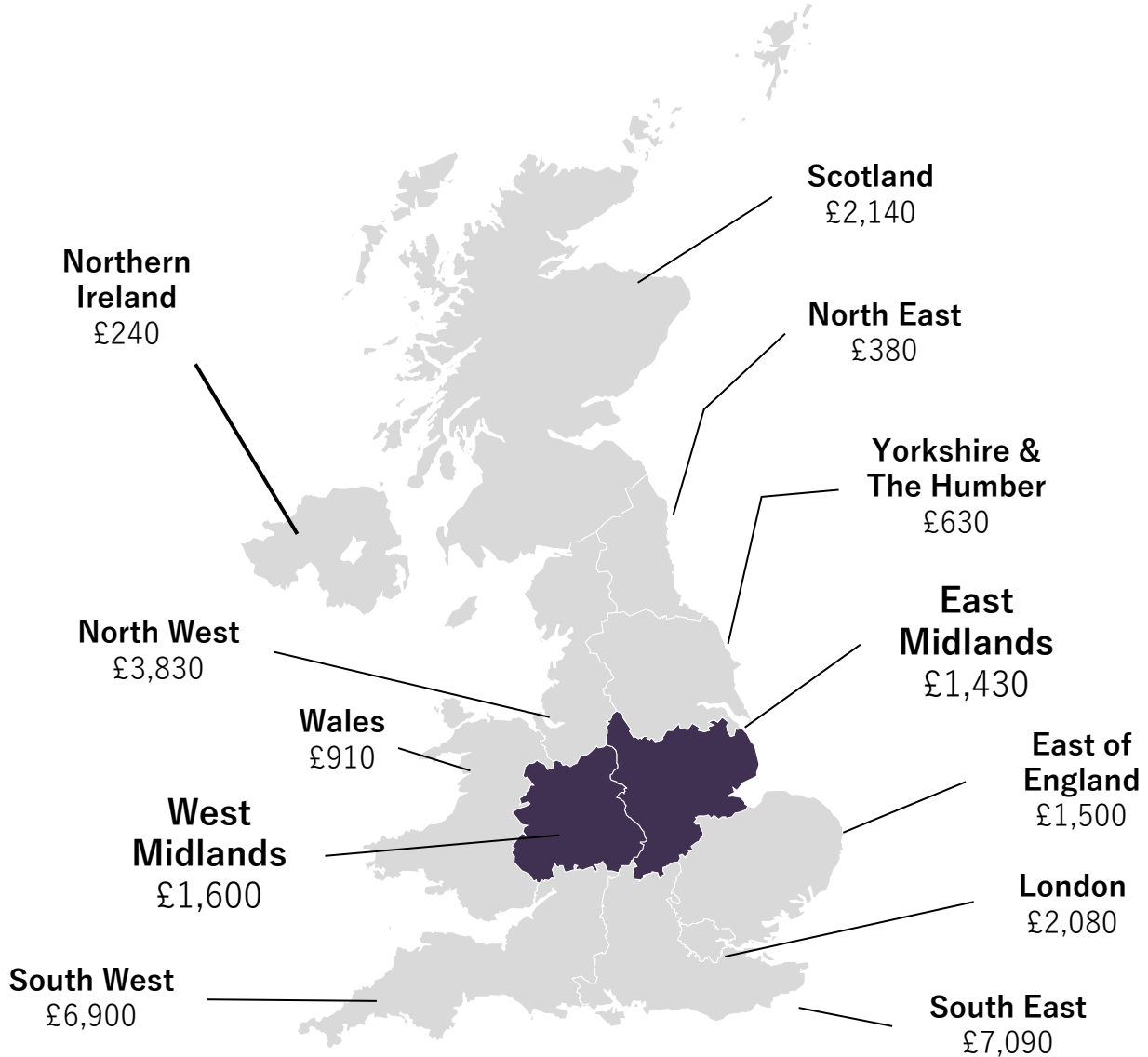
\$660m

The **highest** yearly **value** of orders over this period, realised in **2025**.

Notes and Sources: ^{1,2} All statistics are based on UKDSC analysis of GPS data which assesses markets on a deliveries basis in USD, using system level data. This data captures sub-tier activity and business-to-business activity (e.g. the Eurofighter Typhoon, aspects of which account for both imports and exports), rather than solely end-product level data. Space, Services and Infrastructure-related data are limited in the database.



MOD Expenditure with UK Industry by Region 2023/24 (£m) ¹



MOD Spending per Person with UK Industry 2024 ²



£260

Is spent **per person** on UK industry in the **West Midlands** by MOD.

£290

Is spent **per person** on UK industry in the **East Midlands** by MOD.



2. Talent Pipeline



Regular Service Personnel



Distribution of UK Regular Service Personnel by Region 2024¹



West Midlands

4,380

Total army regular forces

670 of these are officers

3,710 belong to other ranks



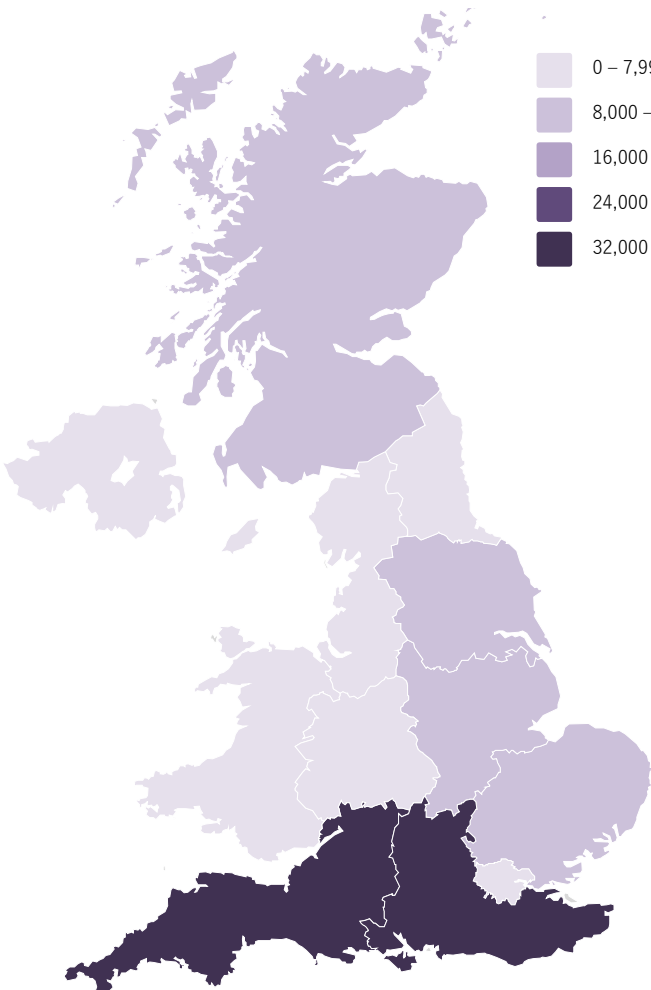
East Midlands

2,370

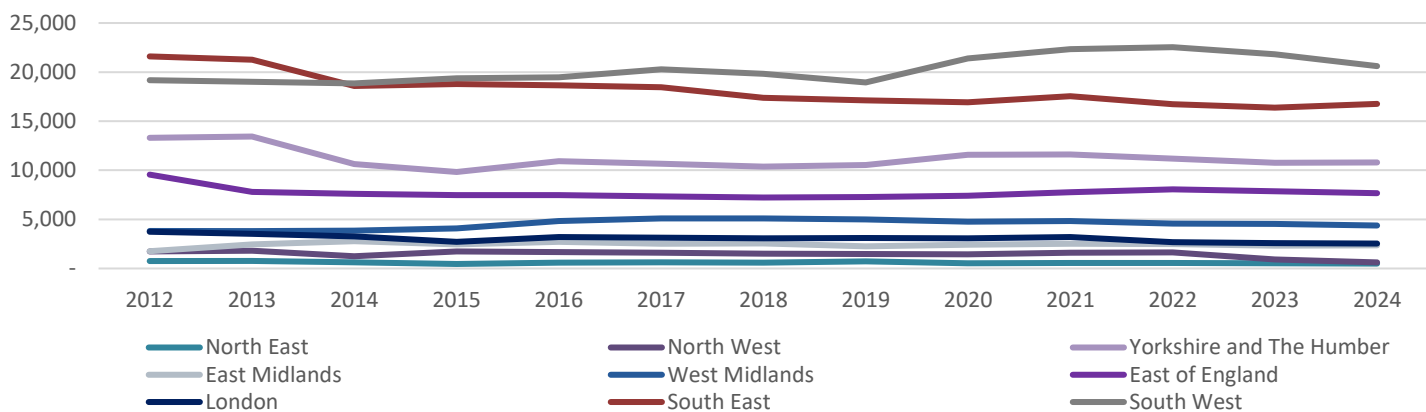
Total army regular forces

300 of these are officers

2,070 belong to other ranks



UK Regular Forces Personnel by Region ²



39%

The percentage increase of army regular service personnel in the West Midlands from 2012 to 2023, from 3,830 to 4,540, respectively.

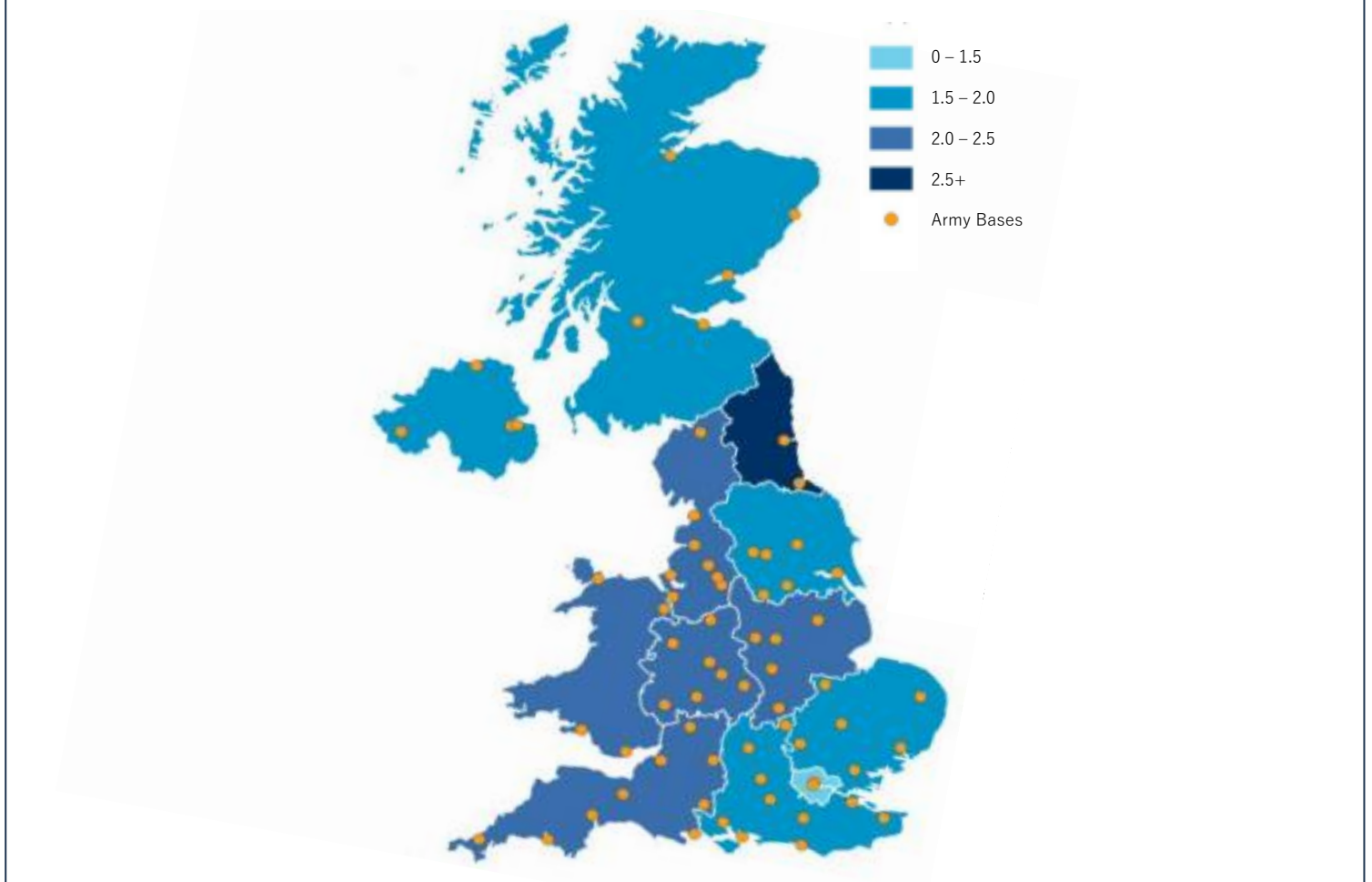
31%

The percentage increase of army regular service personnel in the East Midlands from 2012 to 2023, from 1,760 to 2,310 respectively.

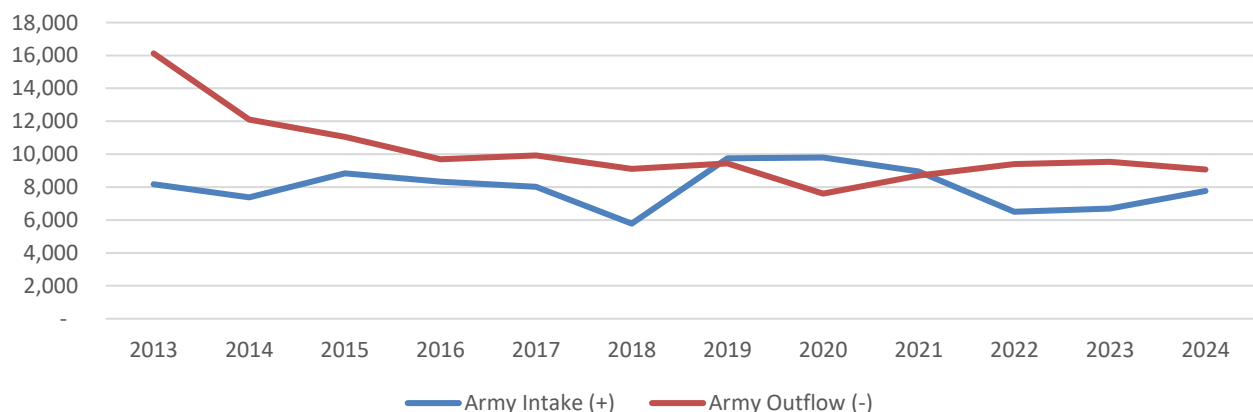
Applications & Outflows



Distribution of Army Applications per 1,000 Residents & Army Bases ¹



Intake to and Outflow from British Army²



-2.8%

The percentage decrease of the Full-Time Trained Strength and Full-Time Trade Trained Strength of the Army between 2024 and 2025.

9,078

The total number of outflowing personnel from the British Army in 2024, with 7,770 as the total intake for that same year.

East Midlands RFCA



The East Midlands Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association (EM RFCA) addresses talent challenges through the maintenance of facilities, engagement with local employers, and promotion and celebration of excellence within its organization. These efforts aim to enhance the reservist and cadet experience and improve retention rates.

Statistics¹

3,410

Army cadets paraded the East Midlands region in 2024, increasing from the 3,037 total cadets in 2020.



35

Total army reserve units, Prince William of Gloucester Barracks and Sobraon Barracks emerge as two key hubs.



In 2024, 1,424 Cadets attended their annual ACF camps with their adult volunteer instructors and support staff.

Derbyshire trained at Castlemartin, Pembrokeshire, Wales; Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland were located at Sennybridge, Powys, Wales; Lincolnshire travelled to Altcar, Merseyside; whilst Nottinghamshire stayed at Nesscliffe, Shropshire.

Recognition Efforts²

Duke of Edinburgh Award



140 full passes have been registered to date for 2024 for cadets participating in the award

Lincolnshire ACF received more Duke of Edinburgh Award passes than any other ACF county in England to date for 2024.

Lord-Lieutenant Cadet Awards



The Lord-Lieutenant Cadet Investitures and Meritorious Service Awards were reimagined to celebrate exemplary efforts of participants.

24 Reservists, Cadet Force Adult Volunteers and civilian employers were celebrated through the award for their support to the Reserve and Cadet Forces.

Gold Defence Employer Recognition Awards



In 2023 the East Midlands ACF employer engagement team delivered its first solo-organised Gold ERS ceremony since the pandemic.

14 businesses received the award and were celebrated as gold defence employers at the ceremony.

East Midlands RFCA



214 centres for Cadets and Army Reserves are maintained across the East Midlands.

The maintenance and continued investment into these sites is integral to the East Midlands RFCA's approach to talent retention and development.

Infrastructure Developments 2024¹

Kingsway Army Reserve Centre



New vehicle workshop and training facilities completed in Summer 2023; formally opened March 2024; received a commendation award.

Beckingham Camp



The building of a new Cadet Training Centre underway (a net-zero build); construction started April 2024, completion due Spring 2025.

Renovation and Infrastructure Investments 2024²

Eckington

Extensive cadet centre refurbishments

Market Rasen

Extensive cadet centre refurbishments

Ripley

Extensive cadet centre refurbishments

Skegness

New army and air cadet centre

Glenfield

Cadet centre renovations

Boston

Extensive cadet centre refurbishments

Market Harborough

Cadet centre renovations

Stamford

Creation of a new JCC



The West Midlands Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association (WM RFCA) adopts a similar approach to the EM RFCA in its recognition and celebration efforts, with the following insights attempting to assist in the development and retention of the talent pipeline.

2,900

Army cadets paraded the West Midlands region in 2024, spanning across 110 detachments.

Statistics¹



35

Total army reserve units across the West Midlands region in 2024,



The West Midlands Reserve Forces & Cadets Associations Association provides funds in support of adventure training for Reserve and Cadet units.

In 2025, one such trip was the 37 Signal Regiment's annual skiing expedition. The financial support of the West Midland RFCA and The Royal Corps of Signals fund was integral to making the tour possible.

Recognition Efforts²

Gold Defence Employer Recognition Awards



14 organisations in the West Midlands received Gold ERS Awards in October of 2024 at Lilleshall House and Gardens.

Gold winners include Marston's PLC, NP Aerospace, Worcestershire County Council and Coventry & Warwickshire NHS Trust

Company Cadet of the Year Awards



The Friends of Staffordshire and West Midlands (North Sector) ACF Trust annually recognizes outstanding cadets from each company.

Four cadets from the West Midlands region were presented with the award in 2024.

Lord-Lieutenant Cadet Awards



Facilitated by the West Midland RFCA, these awards include the Lord-Lieutenants' Award for Meritorious Service and the appointment of Lord-Lieutenants' Cadets.

In 2024, the Lord-Lieutenant appointed four cadets from Worcestershire, with four appointed from Shropshire also.



There are four ACF Sectors in the West Midlands with over 115 detachments.

These detachments are looked after by more than 30 Permanent Support Staff and dozens of Adult Instructors.

Infrastructure Developments 2024¹

Stafford Joint Cadet Centre



Ground has been broken and work started on a new Joint Cadet Centre in Stafford, with the project due for completion in summer 2025

Chelmsley Wood Cadet Centre



Works to upgrade the cadet centre in Chelmsley Wood, Birmingham, were completed in 2024 by the West Midlands RFCA Estates Team.

Reserve Centre EV Charger Installations



New vehicle workshop and training facilities completed in Summer 2023; formally opened March 2024; received a commendation award.

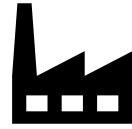
Key Takeaways

1. Industrial Base

Defence firms in the Midlands saw **significant year-on-year increases** in **revenue** from 2021 to 2023

9% total growth in **Midlands defence FTEs** was seen from 2021 to 2022

Average defence FTE salaries rose in both the East and West Midlands from 2021 to 2022



2. Trade

Maritime exports are the **most significant** capability export for the Midlands defence industry.

Trade with the **rest of the UK** is a vital element of the Midlands defence industry, with **73% of all orders** from the Midlands being **made** from the **rest of the UK** in 2025.



3. Talent Pipeline

Both the **East and West Midlands Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Associations** sport significant numbers of cadets, **3,410** and **2,900** in 2024, respectively.

The **infrastructure projects** detailed in slides 21 and 23 outline ongoing **investment** into **training** and **development initiatives** in these regions.



Acknowledgements

The JEDHub team would like to thank the Army's Land Industrial Strategy team for requesting and commissioning the analysis contained within this report.



Glossary

Term	Meaning
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
Micro Business	A business with 0-9 employees
GVA	Gross Value Added
MOD	Ministry of Defence
Small Business	A business with 10-49 employees
Medium-sized Business	A business with 50-249 employees
Large Business	A business with 250 or more employees
SME	Small to medium size enterprises
Strength	Number of personnel
RFCA	Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association

Sources

Source

- *UKDSC Midlands Defence Industry I2D Dashboard*
- *Pitchbrook Defence Data*
- *Beauhurst Defence Data*
- [HI05 Regional labour market: headline indicators for the West Midlands - Office for National Statistics](#)
- [HI04 Regional labour market: headline indicators for the East Midlands - Office for National Statistics](#)
- **[JEDHub 2023 Survey Data](#)**
- [MOD regional expenditure with industry 2023/24 - GOV.UK](#)
- *Janes GPS*
- [ME-Factsheet-Aerospace.pdf](#)
- [Annual location statistics: 1 April 2023 - GOV.UK](#)
- [The Economic Impact of the British Army | Oxford Economics](#)
- [Annual location statistics: 1 April 2023 - GOV.UK](#)
- [J54091 EMRFCA Annual Report 2023-2024.pdf](#)
- [News - West Midland Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association](#)