

# KEEP THE RAF IN MORAY

Bulletin 13

15th December 2010

## Moray Task Force...

has come together to address the impact on Moray of the UK Government's Strategic Defence and Security Review, published in October 2010.

Made up of private business, the public sector and community groups, the task force is campaigning to keep the Tornados at RAF Lossiemouth and to support the businesses and communities affected by the cancellation of the Nimrod contract at RAF Kinloss.

## Read All About It

The main story in the past week has been media coverage claiming that senior figures in the MoD are supporting the retention of RAF Lossiemouth, but that RAF Leuchars could be under threat.

The Scottish Secretary Michael Moore has confirmed that no decisions have been taken about further closures of RAF bases in Scotland. He said an announcement to remove the uncertainty would be made as soon as possible.

In response to the speculation Moray Task Force has again highlighted that it has not set its campaign against any other community hoping to save its RAF base.

We know the Ministry of Defence will be looking closely at a range of options. Our job is to present the strongest defence arguments to the MoD and clear information to the UK Treasury on how decisions about RAF Kinloss and RAF Lossiemouth will impact on our communities.

Businesses, community groups, voluntary organisations and the public agencies have all provided key evidence to create a strong case. The Moray community will continue to work together to promote the benefits of living and working in the area long after the MoD's final decision on the bases is made.

For now it is important that the strong arguments we have gathered to keep the RAF in Moray are in the forefront of the minds of those involved in making the decision.

## Impact on Moray

Members of the Moray Task Force held a second meeting with officials from the Ministry of Defence and Treasury on Friday 10th December to discuss the case for retaining RAF Lossiemouth and to put in place effective measures to mitigate against the closure of RAF Kinloss.

The focus of the meeting was to demonstrate how the threat of bases closing and the uncertainty about the future is affecting the Moray community now.

The Task Force has been working with local community and voluntary groups, businesses, public agencies and others to obtain detailed information showing how the review of RAF bases is impacting the region.

Another meeting between the Task Force and officials from the Treasury and Ministry of Defence will take place on Friday 17th December.

## Local businesses offer their views on future

Eighty percent of Moray businesses taking part in a Chamber of Commerce survey said performance in the last year had been better than anticipated.

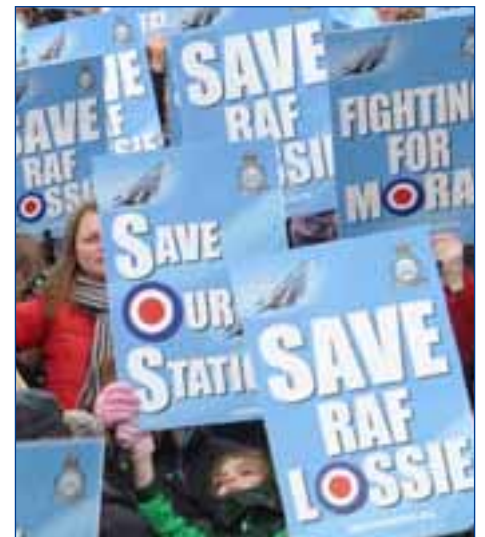
Moray Chamber of Commerce surveyed companies across the region in a bid to gauge business confidence. The results, revealed at a business summit in Forres, painted a mixed picture of the Moray economy.

Lesley Ann Parker, chief executive of Moray Chamber of Commerce, said: "Despite the official end of the recession, business confidence in Moray remains fragile and while there is much to celebrate about our economy, we cannot afford to be complacent. Small and medium sized businesses are the lifeblood of our economy, and it is vital that Government creates the conditions that allow businesses to flourish. Clearly, there is still work to do, judging by the results of this survey."

## Coming Up

**Friday 17th December** - meeting between the Task Force and officials from the Treasury and Ministry of Defence

**Friday 17th December** - task force and Lössie Action Group discuss tactics for the weeks ahead



She added: "As well as highlighting concerns around skills, transport and communications, this business summit has also underlined the strength of the Moray economy. We are privileged to have many world-class brands in our midst, a strong export market and a fantastic way of life. Whatever the outcome of the current UK Government Defence Review, we intend to capitalise on these strengths to enhance the business potential of our region. Our message is very much that Moray is open for business, and ambitious for the future."

The task force has also surveyed over one hundred businesses so far in a bid to gauge the impact on the local community of the announcement made in October. This is being fed into a report for the UK Treasury.

**Moray is and will remain an amazing place to live and work, but we need the community and businesses to make their voices heard.**