

CONFERENCE REPORT**Committee: Economic Development****Subject:** The Role of Local Authorities in Defence Adjustment - Seminar run by the Arms Conversion Project on the role of local authorities in providing practical support during defence readjustment**Conference Organiser:** Arms Conversion Project**Venue:** Preston**Conference Fee:** £39**Date(s):** 16 May 1996**Recommendation:** Vice Chair, one other member and one official

Seminar delegates will be afforded the opportunity to learn from the experience of UK, European and International initiatives. The event will assist local authorities and agencies in the process of developing relevant strategies appropriate for their specific circumstances.

The Seminar is being held in Preston on May 16th and is open to all representatives of local authorities and agencies interested in the challenges presented by defence readjustment.

The Role of Local Authorities in Defence Readjustment

Welcome

Cllr Don Yates, Lancashire CC

Chair:

Cllr Martin Hemingway, Leeds CC

Speakers:

- **Dr David Clark MP (Invited)**
Shadow Defence Spokesperson
- **Ian S Goudie,**
Arms Conversion Project
- **Mike Dowden,**
Lancashire Enterprises

Prof. John Lovering Professor of
Urban and Regional Governance,
University of Wales

Costs: £39 per delegate. (Reduced rate of £29 for delegates from Local Authorities sponsoring the Arms Conversion Project.) Cost inclusive of all papers, full Seminar Report and Afternoon Tea.

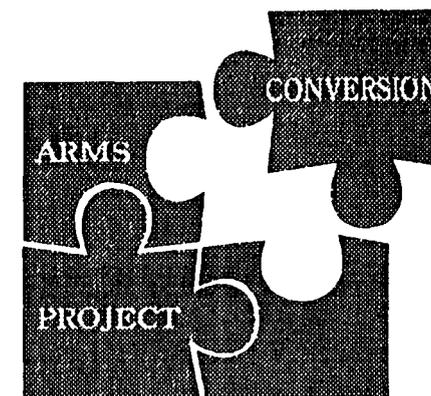
County Hall, Preston
2.00 - 4.30 pm, Thursday 16 May 1996

Arms Conversion Project

The Arms Conversion Project was established by Nuclear Free Local Authorities in 1988 to help develop relevant and practical responses to the adverse effects on national and local economies resulting from the changing defence requirements. The Project has been fully operational since August 1993 and is funded entirely from local authorities. The ACP has gained cross party support and has received sponsorship from a wide range of local authorities throughout Britain.

Further information from:

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The Role of Local Authorities in Defence Readjustment.

A Seminar
arranged by the
Arms Conversion Project

County Hall, Preston, Thursday 16 May 1996

Introduction

During the last 20 years there has been a considerable growth in local authority economic activity. However, very little of this has addressed the increasing difficulties addressing the defence sector, explicitly or practically

The Defence Sector

The defence sector can be seen to consist of four main elements:-

1. Direct activities and employment in the Ministry of Defence, (MoD), in the armed services, bases and depots and in MoD research establishments;
2. The main defence equipment suppliers, (the defence industry);
3. Main non-MoD research organisations and service activities and;

A large number of sub-contractors and secondary suppliers, some of which might be unaware of the defence end-use of their products.

The sector has been experiencing massive cuts since the late '80s. Since 1990-91 the Defence Budget has been reduced in real terms by 12% to £23,220m. These cuts are set to continue into the next century.

Between 1990-97 the number of UK Service Personnel is planned to fall by 29% and UK based Ministry of Defence Civilian Staff numbers by 14%.

As far as industrial jobs are concerned the Government has estimated that in 1992-93 some 425,000 UK jobs depended on MoD expenditure on equipment and other goods and services and on defence exports - a reduction of 150,000 since 1990.

In total some 237,000 or 25% of UK defence jobs have been lost since 1990.

Further job losses are predicted as defence expenditure reduces to around 2.9% of the UK's Gross Domestic Product by 1996-97.

These cuts are having a severe impact on many local economies and are devastating much of the nation's wealth creating, high-tech manufacturing and R&D base.

The Role of Local Authorities

Despite the apparent enormity of the task, Local Authorities can still play a part in

providing practical support during defence readjustment.

- **experience** of steel, coal mining and textiles have illustrated the important role that locality-based initiatives and strategies can play;
- **Economic Development** strategies can provide a catalyst and focus for other agencies and interests. This function also bestows a key access route to European funding programmes such as KONVER;
- **Local Planning Authorities** have a statutory obligation to consider major changes in land use, such as those likely to result from base closures and consequent land releases;
- **Policy and Institutional Innovation** The Local Authority is often the only institution which has responsibility to the community in a locality likely to be affected by the changes, be they social, environmental or economic.

This Seminar will allow representatives of local authorities and agencies the opportunity to discuss appropriate strategies relevant to their communities.