NATO Armaments Cooperation, Defence Manufacturing and Alliance Defence Industry Course

16 November – 11 December 2026
London (UK)



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Introduction:

NATO armaments cooperation, defence manufacturing and Alliance defence industry are the arrangements through which Allies plan capabilities together, buy them jointly, apply common standards and keep a defence industrial base able to produce and sustain them. This 45-day course, delivered over eight weeks, is for defence ministry and armed forces acquisition staff, defence industry engineers, quality and contract specialists, standardisation and policy officers and their managers, and each delegate leaves with a multinational acquisition and industrial resilience plan. It is taught at advanced practitioner level through case study work built on the NATO Defence Planning Process, the Alliance cycle that sets capability targets.

Course Objectives:

- Distinguish the roles of CNAD, NSPA, the NATO Standardization Office, NIAG, DIANA and the NATO Innovation Fund when routing an armaments decision
- Interpret NATO Defence Planning Process capability targets and translate them into demand signals that industry can plan production against
- Compare lead nation, NSPA support partnership and framework call-off routes and select one for a multinational acquisition
- Apply STANAG, AQAP-2110, AQAP-2070 and NATO Codification System requirements in supplier contracts and quality arrangements
- Distinguish security of supply from supply chain resilience and apply mitigation for critical raw materials, export controls and industrial security
- Justify cost estimates, contract types and project governance arrangements for cooperative defence acquisition before a steering committee

Target Audience:

- Defence ministry and armed forces acquisition staff who prepare cooperative acquisitions and decide which route, partner and contract form to use
- Defence industry engineers and quality staff who implement AQAP and STANAG requirements and judge whether a design or process conforms
- Procurement and contract specialists who draft and manage defence contracts and decide how risk, escalation and codification duties are allocated
- Standardisation and policy officers who follow NATO planning and standards work and judge which commitments their organisation must act on
- Defence industry and acquisition managers who lead production ramp-up and supply chain work and decide where to invest in capacity and resilience



Course Outline:

Week 1: NATO Structures and Armaments Governance

- Armaments Cooperation vs Defence Industrial Cooperation: Scope, Actors and Decision Rights
- Conference of National Armaments Directors CNAD: Steering Cooperative Armaments Decisions
- NATO Support and Procurement Agency NSPA vs National Procurement Agencies: Roles and Mandates
- NATO Standardization Office and NATO Industrial Advisory Group NIAG: Standards and Industry Advice
- DIANA vs NATO Innovation Fund: Accelerator Model and Venture Investment Compared
- Current-State Assessment: Mapping an Organisation's Role in Alliance Defence Supply

Week 2: Defence Planning and Capability Development

- NATO Defence Planning Process: Four-Year Cycle From Requirements to Capability Review
- Capability Targets vs National Capability Plans: Apportionment, Acceptance and Delivery Tracking
- Minimum Capability Requirements: Translating Political Guidance Into Shortfall Analysis
- Five Per Cent of GDP Commitment: Core Defence and Resilience Spending Shares
- Demand Signal Management: Turning Capability Targets Into Production Planning Information

Week 3: Armaments Cooperation and Multinational Acquisition

- Multinational Project vs Single-Nation Acquisition: Cost Sharing, Control and Interoperability
- Lead Nation Framework and Memorandum of Understanding: Authority, Cost Shares and Withdrawal Clauses
- Joint Procurement as Default: Aggregating Allied Demand Through Multiyear Contracts
- NSPA Support Partnerships, Acquisition Procedures and Source File Registration
- Framework Contracts Opened to Allies: Call-Off Mechanisms for Aggregated Demand
- Work Share Arrangements: Balancing Industrial Return Against Cost and Schedule

Week 4: Standardisation, Interoperability, Quality Assurance and Codification

- Interoperability vs Interchangeability vs Commonality: Levels of Materiel Standardisation
- STANAG Ratification and Implementation: Reservations, Promulgation and National Tracking
- AQAP-2110 Quality Assurance Requirements: Supplier Duties for Design, Development and Production
- AQAP-2070 Government Quality Assurance: Mutual Assurance Between Allied National Authorities
- NATO Codification System: NATO Stock Numbers, Item Identification and Supplier Data Duties
- NATO Standards in Industry Contracts: Flowing Quality and Interface Requirements Down Supplier Tiers



Week 5: Defence Industrial Base, Production Capacity and Supply Chains

- Defence Production Action Plan and Its Updated Version: Lines of Effort Compared
- Defence Industrial Capacity Expansion Pledge: Demand Signals, National Plans and Supply Chain Protection
- Production Capacity Mapping: Current Output, Surge Capacity and Bottlenecks
- Supplier Tier Mapping: Sub-Tier Dependencies and Single Points of Failure
- Critical Raw Materials: Dependency Exposure, Dual Sourcing and Strategic Stockpiles
- Mid-Course Case Study: Testing a Capability Target Against Mapped Industrial Capacity

Week 6: Security of Supply, Industrial Security, Export Controls and Offsets

- Security of Supply vs Supply Chain Resilience: Assurance Objectives and Instruments
- Security of Supply Arrangements: Priority Ratings, Assurances and Government-to-Government Commitments
- Facility Security Clearance and Hostile Influence Screening Across Supplier Sites
- Export Licensing vs Technology Transfer Agreements: Dual-Use Classification and End-User Certificates
- Offsets vs Industrial Participation: Direct, Indirect and Work Share Arrangements
- Internal Export Compliance System: Screening, Record Keeping and Audit Controls

Week 7: Innovation, Dual-Use Technology and Life-Cycle Management

- DIANA Challenges and NATO Innovation Fund Investments: Engaging Start-Ups and Deep Technology
- Rapid Adoption Action Plan: Speeding Uptake of Dual-Use and Emerging Technologies
- Commercial Off-the-Shelf vs Developmental Acquisition: Speed, Risk and Adaptation
- Life-Cycle Management vs Acquisition Management: From Concept to Disposal
- Through-Life Support and Integrated Logistic Support: Spares, Maintenance and Obsolescence
- SME Integration Pathways: Bringing Small Suppliers Into Alliance Supply Chains

Week 8: Cost, Contracts and Governance, With Capstone Case Study

- Parametric vs Bottom-Up Cost Estimating and Life-Cycle Cost Estimate Structure
- Fixed-Price vs Cost-Reimbursement Contracts, Price Escalation and Should-Cost Analysis
- Project vs Portfolio Governance: Steering Committee Charter, Stage-Gate Reviews and Change Control
- Performance Measurement: Capability Delivery KPIs, Supplier Scorecards and Earned Value
- Stakeholder Engagement: Demand Signalling, NIAG Dialogue and Standards Change Communication
- Capstone: Completing and Presenting the Multinational Acquisition and Industrial Resilience Plan



Skills You Will Gain:

- Capability Target Interpretation
- Armaments Cooperation Route Selection
- NATO Quality Assurance Requirements
- NATO Codification Data Management
- Industrial Capacity Mapping
- Critical Material Risk Mitigation
- Defence Export Control Screening
- Life-Cycle Cost Estimating

Why Attend This Course:

- From treating NATO structures as distant bodies to knowing which committee, agency or office shapes a given armaments decision
- From reading capability targets as political text to converting them into production and supply planning information
- From managing suppliers one tier deep to mapping sub-tier dependencies, critical materials and security of supply exposure
- From handling acquisition, quality and export issues separately to producing a multinational acquisition and industrial resilience plan ready for review

Conclusion:

Advanced work on Alliance defence industry means connecting what Allies agree to need with what suppliers can actually build, certify, codify, protect and support over a capability's life. The course makes clear how armaments cooperation differs from simple joint buying, how security of supply differs from supply chain resilience, and how a demand signal differs from a contract commitment. It suits acquisition, engineering, quality, contract, standardisation and policy professionals, and the managers who lead them, who already know national procurement and now work across Allied structures and industry.

Frequently Asked Questions FAQ:

What should delegates know before a NATO armaments cooperation and defence industry course?

Delegates should already understand national defence procurement or defence industry work: requirements, contracts, quality or supply management. No prior NATO posting is needed; the course explains Alliance structures from the start, but it moves quickly to advanced case work.



How does a NATO armaments cooperation and defence industry course differ from a general defence procurement course?

A general procurement course covers buying within one organisation. This course covers how Allies plan, standardise, buy and produce together: capability targets, multinational acquisition routes, NATO quality and codification requirements, industrial capacity, security of supply and export controls across partners.

Why does NATO armaments cooperation matter for the Alliance defence industrial base?

Cooperation turns scattered national demand into larger, longer and more predictable orders, which lets industry invest in capacity. Common standards then allow Allies to use and support each other's materiel, and shared planning exposes supply chain dependencies earlier.

What do delegates take back from NATO armaments cooperation and defence industry training?

Each delegate takes back a multinational acquisition and industrial resilience plan: a selected acquisition route and governance design, quality and codification requirements for suppliers, a supply chain and critical material risk register, and security of supply and export control measures.

