

Defence Forces Review 2025 – Call for Papers

This year's edition of the Defence Forces Review examines the theme of Military Leadership Challenges in the Contemporary Operating Environment— a global issue but one important for Ireland and the Irish Defence Forces. Whilst the nature of armed conflict is enduring, it has a changing character, shaped by technological, economic, cultural and societal changes. Ireland's security environment is characterised by increased contestation and volatility. The return of war to Europe, in addition to shifting global and political alignments are challenging the Rules Based International Order. Malign actors will continue to threaten our way of life using a variety of sophisticated means employed below the threshold of armed conflict.

Hybrid threats are harmful activities, which are planned and carried out with malign intent. They encompass a wide array of harmful actions with different goals, ranging from influence operations and interference all the way to hybrid warfare. These activities can undermine political systems, spread discontent and damage the reputation of a state. What are the leadership challenges inherent in countering Hybrid activities? How do we equip our leaders to deal with these challenges? Can leaders exploit hybrid warfare to their advantage? Is authentic, values based leadership possible in the greyzone?

Cyberspace is a global domain consisting of interdependent networks of information technology infrastructures and data such as the internet, telecommunications networks and embedded processors and controllers. Technology is evolving at an exponential rate. Processing power, the volume and variety of data and connectivity will continue to grow exponentially. Artificial Intelligence (AI) will increase our ability to solve problems of increasing complexity and difficulty. Ireland as an outward facing country based on international trade and the Information Technology and pharmaceutical industry may be vulnerable to emerging threats of AI. What are the challenges and opportunities of AI in the development of capability of Ireland and the DF? How can leaders harness AI to develop their organisations and subordinates? How will AI influence the contemporary security environment? How will authentic, values based leadership be successful in harnessing AI?

Across the globe, the Rules Based International Order is under pressure and we are witnessing a return of great power politics in an increasingly contested and multipolar world. Inherent in the transition to great power competition is the emergence of the post truth movement. Post truth refers to the situation where facts have lost their currency in contemporary debate. The concept suggests that facts have now become secondary to our political point of view. Jointness and the comprehensive approach seeks to ensure cooperation and coordination across the political, diplomatic, security and economic instruments to optimise the synchronisation of capabilities. Is the Post Truth movement degrading our ability to function jointly? Are capabilities degraded because of the new normal? What are the challenges to leaders given the polarised information domain? How can leaders engage and lead subordinates from Gen Z and Generation A? How can values based, authentic leadership overcome these issues? Is mission command possible for leaders in this new normal?

Submissions are invited that address these issues through a strategic, operational or tactical lens. They may take as their focus any one, or a combination of the issues and questions noted above. However, in all cases topics should be relevant to our theme and must be of interest to the audience for the Defence Forces Review.

The 2025 Defence Forces Review will be published in collaboration with Dublin City University and we are delighted to have as part of the joint editorial team: Prof. John McMackin, Dr Eleanor Leah Williams and Dr Ken McDonagh from DCU with Comdt Gavin Egerton and Comdt James O'Hara from the Command and Staff School. The Defence Forces Review will be launched in November/December 2025.

Based on the above, the editorial team are inviting contributions to the Defence Forces Review 2025. In the first instance, 300 word abstracts and a brief biographical note (no more than 200 words), should be submitted no later than 16 May 2025. Based on the review of abstracts, the editorial team will invite final contributions. Final submissions should not exceed 3,000 words, should be referenced in accordance with the Chicago Referencing Style (using foot notes in notes style, not bibliography), be in Word (.docx) or equivalent format, and are due no later than 01 August 2025. Final contributions will

be subject to a full peer review process and the editorial team will make all final editorial decisions. All abstracts and subsequent final submissions should be directed to dfreview@military.ie and by the deadlines stated above.