



Taxpayers' £150m bill for axed RAF Cosford move

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Aborted plans to move defence training from RAF Cosford to a base in south Wales cost more than £150 million without actually achieving anything, it was revealed today.

Much of the £158.5 million spent on the project, which was scrapped by the Coalition Government in 2010, went on fees to the private consortium chosen to create the proposed new training school at RAF St Athan in south Wales

The move would have seen St Athan becoming the main training centre for all three Armed Forces with the creation of a Defence Technical College.

The plan would have created 2,500 jobs in south Wales, but put the future of RAF Cosford in doubt.

Although Cosford, which employs 1,700 people, put in a bid for the contract, in January 2007 it was awarded to St Athan.

However, ministers later scrapped the £14 billion project on cost grounds when the Government cut eight per cent from the defence budget. The college was already more than a year behind schedule when ministers pulled the plug.

The full costs of the project were revealed after Wrekin MP Mark Pritchard raised the matter in the House of Commons.

In response, Nick Harvey, Armed Forces Minister, said the total cost of the defence training review was £158.5m. Of that total, £95.964m was paid to the Metrix consortium, which was appointed in 2007.

Mr Pritchard said today: "Whilst this is good news that the current Government scrapped the Defence Training Review programme, the high aborted costs shows that the past Labour government should not have started the whole process to begin with.

"RAF Cosford now has a secure military future, either in its current form or in a defence military form (Army) in years to come," he added.

"I blame the last Government for squandering taxpayers' money so liberally on this project."