Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total Strength</th>
<th>Army</th>
<th>Air Force</th>
<th>Navy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Active Personnel</strong></td>
<td>139,000¹</td>
<td>68,000</td>
<td>43,100</td>
<td>14,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reserves</strong></td>
<td>940,000</td>
<td>590,000</td>
<td>249,000</td>
<td>101,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note:
There are an additional 32,000 interior troops, 42,000 border troops, 9,000 civil defence troops and 45,000 civilian personnel and approximately 13,000 other military personnel working for the Ministry of Defence.

Assessment

The Ukrainian military is essentially a defence force, with a marginal capacity to deploy in peacekeeping and similar projection missions. As relations with Russia became more fractious during the presidency of Viktor Yushchenko and particularly after the invasion of Georgia in 2008, Kiev sought to strengthen its military capabilities despite its financial problems. However, while Yushchenko made much of the need to spend more on the armed forces, his successor, Viktor Yanukovych, has adopted a more conciliatory policy towards Moscow and thus has placed less emphasis on rearmament. However, an ability to carry out limited deployments abroad in the context of multinational exercises and missions is regarded as an important foreign policy objective.

The Ukrainian armed forces were formed in 1992-93 on the basis of units and staff structures of the Soviet Kiev Military District. Ukraine inherited a Soviet-built force designed for conducting combined-arms offensive operations against NATO in Europe. Its deployment patterns did not match Ukraine's own defence requirements and there was no integrated command and control (C2) centre. In terms of defence organisation, Ukraine has decisively opted for the Soviet/Russian model and presidential control is exercised through the Ministry of Defence (MoD). The ministry was originally dominated by army officers, but Yehven Marchuk's 2003 appointment to the ministerial post set a precedent and the post is now held by civilians.

The MoD is responsible for finance, personnel, logistical and international co-operation matters, as well as setting the broader outlines of policy and doctrine. The defence intelligence agency (the Main Intelligence Directorate) is also subordinated to the defence minister, rather than the General Staff as in Soviet times. In line with the Soviet/Russian military tradition, the General Staff is the
principal organ of C2 over the armed forces with a very wide remit. The military's three arms of service - the army, the navy and the air force - are directly subordinated to the Chief of General Staff. With the abolition of the Joint Operational Command in 2010, control over the forces is exercised by two regional commands, the Western and Southern, with a lesser Northern territorial directorate.

The Ukrainian armed forces are predominantly a conscript force although there is an effort to professionalise the force, especially with the recruitment and retention of an non-commissioned officer (NCO) cadre.

[Continued in full version...]

Military Reform

The Ukrainian government has several plans in place aimed at transforming the army into a more capable and professional force. The state programme for transition of the armed forces of Ukraine to personnel manning on a contract basis envisages balancing phased force reductions against the transition to an all-volunteer force by 2015, although this date seems ambitious as Ukraine is also seeking to move away from a divisional structure to a less expensive and more flexible one based on brigades, as Russia has recently done. These smaller, self-contained units can maintain a higher state of readiness and can be deployed more quickly.

The then defence minister Mykhailo Yezhel also indicated in April 2011 that Ukraine was interested in Belarus's experience in armed forces reform. "We should take all the best ... Russia and Belarus have to offer and use it at home," he said. However, this was probably more of a political than a practical suggestion and while military co-operation is expanding, there is little basis to believe that Ukraine regards either as a model, although there is a certain similarity between Ukraine’s reforms and those piloted by former Russian defence minister Anatoly Serdyukov. Nevertheless, the decision to abandon the draft goes beyond anything planned in Russia.

In 2003-04, the armed forces benefited from the leadership of Marchuk, the former intelligence chief and the secretary of the Security and Defence Council. His intelligence background, civil service experience and firm support base in the West, all seemed to make him capable of bringing about a qualitative change to the state of the armed forces. Marchuk was a staunch supporter of NATO-Ukrainian co-operation, and was the driving force behind Kiev's decision to deploy its troops in Kuwait and Iraq.

During his tenure as defence minister, Marchuk delivered better funding and more radical changes to the force structure. In addition to overseeing a comprehensive defence review, Marchuk decisively pushed for deeper force reductions and more spending on procurement and military research and development (R&D). Marchuk was also instrumental in bringing in more civilian expertise to the MoD, and securing NATO support for training Ukrainian officers at Western staff colleges.

Despite Marchuk's legacy of developing co-operation with the West, in May 2010 Ukraine's newly elected government under the presidency of Yanukovych rejected any possibility of joining NATO for the conceivable future. The Yanukovych government has advocated a more gradualist approach to
military reform, one concentrating on training, equipment and developing the NCO cadre rather than fundamental change.

Reform of military education is currently underway with a focus on developing a joint-service training programme and revising the curriculum. Greater emphasis is being placed on training NCOs - a weak spot in all post-Soviet militaries. Unfortunately, low levels of defence spending have severely constrained modernisation efforts. The military is acutely aware of the fact that the economic situation is too precarious for the government to embark on a defence-spending spree. As a result, despite the progress made by Marchuk in many areas, defence reform efforts so far have produced only moderate results.

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**Joint Forces Interoperability**

**Tri-Service Interoperability**

Not only is Ukraine an inheritor of the Soviet commitment to all-arms operations, it also appreciates the importance of tri-service interoperability, which is a feature of many of its larger exercises. This was also in part a product of early hopes, when Ukraine was ruled by a pro-Western government, of demonstrating a capacity to meet NATO standards and thus join the alliance. Ukrainian forces thus demonstrate a reasonable ability to operate on a joint basis, limited mainly by a lack of resources for extensive training and communications difficulties. Nonetheless, this is being addressed.

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**Multinational Interoperability**

Ukrainian forces have taken part with reasonable success in joint deployments to Bosnia-Herzegovina (1995-99), Kosovo (1999-present) and Iraq (2003-8) as well as a number of UN peacekeeping and monitoring missions. Along with a number of joint exercises with Western militaries, as well as work within the Partnership for Peace programme, this has provided a good basis for the development of further multinational interoperability, especially through its 95th Independent Airmobile Brigade. Ukraine also participates in the 'Ocean Shield' anti-piracy operation.

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**Force Projection**

Although the bulk of the armed forces are neither trained nor equipped for deployment away from the country, Ukraine has an effective airlift capacity, which has been demonstrated in Iraq and Afghanistan. It also a number of force projection elements, including the 95th Independent Airmobile Brigade, the 25th Airborne Brigade and the Naval Infantry Brigade, as well as naval forces. They could not be deployed for long or far from home without third-party assistance, but they do represent a genuine operational power projection capability.
Force Readiness

Although committed to establishing a joint RRF, the Ukrainian military does not yet have such a structure operational. Several power projection units can be mobilised rapidly - the 95th Independent Airmobile Brigade, the 25th Airborne Brigade and the Naval Infantry Brigade, associated airlift- and possibly sea-lift forces, as well as air defence units - but they would have to move 'light', without their full equipment.

In January 2010, Ukraine became the first non-NATO member state to join the NATO Response Force (NRF), although any deeper co-operation is unlikely until Ukraine's political situation is clarified. The announcement was made during a meeting of military chiefs from NATO and other states contributing to the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan. According to the chairman of NATO's Military Committee, Ukraine will provide "useful niche capabilities" to the NRF. This is likely to include specialist chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) units and strategic transport assets.

Force Sustainment

Ukraine's reserve structure is based on Soviet practices and is largely untested, but would provide additional manpower in time of general mobilisation.

There are notionally 575,000 army reservists, but it is very doubtful how many of these could actually be mobilised, much less armed and used in combat. Reserve refresher training is rare, the administration of the system has all but disappeared and arsenals are both poorly maintained and prone to pilfering.

Adaptability

Although the bulk of Ukraine's forces are still heavily based on Soviet patterns, deployments abroad and a cycling of combat-tested commanders out of deployment units and into others has ensured that there has been some transfer of experience in different theatres and types of conflicts. Ukraine does train for asymmetric conflicts, peacekeeping and similar missions and although it is still limited by the training, equipment and quality of the majority of its soldiers, it would be more capable of adapting to alternative scenarios than most post-Soviet militaries.

Doctrine and strategy

Current Doctrine

In 2002, Ukraine adopted a new military doctrine replacing the one that had been in effect since 1993. The new doctrine appears to be a result of a compromise between proponents of traditional thinking about warfare in the General Staff and more forward-looking civilian experts in the National Security and Defence Council (SNBO), established in 1992 as the National Security Council.

As a result, both new and old doctrines present threat assessments based on old Soviet dogma, namely that the principal task of the armed forces is to deter other states from aggression and repel armed attacks. Consequently, the armed forces are to prepare for full-scale combined arms...
operations. However, there were key changes in the political section of the new doctrine, with a far greater emphasis on Ukraine's peacekeeping role and co-operation with the West. Indeed, the 2002 doctrine, created after the Orange Revolution, stated that Ukraine would seek integration into the Euro-Atlantic area with the final aim of joining NATO. Russia was described as a partner, but it was made clear that Kiev should not seek closer military ties with Moscow.

However, the doctrine is likely to be substantially reassessed under Ukraine's new political leadership, with Yanukovych directing the country closer to Russia following his election as president in February 2010. His government subsequently rejected any possibility of joining NATO for the conceivable future, with Foreign Minister Kostyantyn Gryshchenko announcing in May 2010 that "Ukraine will continue developing its relations with the alliance, but the question of membership is now removed from the agenda".

**Evaluation**

The threat assessment section of the doctrine has been criticised for failing to concentrate on the proliferation of soft security threats in and around Ukraine. Instead of addressing the issue of building a professional contract force, the new doctrine reiterates a traditional Soviet commitment to mass mobilisation and preparing youth for military service. However, given the end of conscription in 2013, Ukraine will need to reassess the utility of its doctrine, and the role of its armed forces in general. The threat of a large-scale conventional campaign has steadily been decreasing since the end of the Cold War with Ukraine's role in international security infrastructure also significantly altered since the early 1990s. Emerging threats such as international terrorism and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction are yet to be widely recognised as threats to Ukraine's national security.

On the other hand, the government's focus on limited international peacekeeping deployments accurately reflects Ukraine's current needs and capacities.

**Defence structure**

**Ukraine and NATO**

While Yushchenko favoured joining NATO as soon as possible, there was a clear appreciation of the need to proceed carefully as there is still considerable opposition and suspicion towards the alliance among large parts of the Ukrainian population. When the subject became a key political topic in Kiev at the end of 2007, Moscow began making heavy-handed threats that it might then target nuclear weapons on Ukraine. Subsequently, NATO has backtracked from early hints of membership and the 2010 Ukrainian presidential elections brought to power Yanukovych, a long-time sceptic of integration into the alliance.

**Chain of command**
The president of Ukraine is the supreme commander-in-chief of the armed forces who appoints and dismisses all senior commanders. The president is also chairman of the SNBO.

In August 1997, the provisions concerning the Ukrainian MoD and the General Staff were adopted by presidential decree. This document for the first time separated the functions of the MoD and the General Staff into two separate branches of the armed forces of Ukraine. The General Staff is defined as a key planning body for the armed forces and other military formations.

The Defence Board was formed by presidential decree in February 1993. The minister of defence, acting as the president of the Defence Board, sits with the deputy defence minister and the heads of the structural divisions of the MoD.

The head of the Army Council is the commander of the Ukrainian armed forces. The remainder of the council is made up of the governor of each administrative region, the chairmen of the regional (oblast) councils, deputy armed forces commanders and other officials from Armed Forces Headquarters, operational commands and unions.

Logistics

Communications

Ukraine maintains an extensive but still in places antiquated military communications network, which is in the process of modernisation. In 2005, the Ukrainian MoD decided to upgrade its analogue communication systems to digital systems of NATO standard as it modernised its NTP-16 unified automated control system and NTP-17 unified automated communications system. Furthermore, the United States is helping supply Ukraine with the Promina multifunctional telecommunications system to establish an integrated military digital communications network. The system was due to be fully operational by the end of 2011, but this had not been confirmed as at early 2014.

Military Transport

Ukraine has an extensive military transport infrastructure, including a dedicated heavy-lift component within its air force, as well as naval transport ships and hovercraft.
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