

# Buying Guns and Butter

## Comparing public procurement in military and non-military contexts

### INTRODUCTION

- Public procurement has become a popular topic in innovation policy research in the last decade.
- However, defence procurement is often excluded on the grounds that “defence is different”.
- Along with the lack of empirical research on military procurement, this untested assumption has limited the possibilities of shared learning in science policy about procurement.

### RESEARCH QUESTION

How does military procurement differ from non-military public procurement?

### METHODOLOGY

- Comparative case study with four UK government procurement projects.
- Documents & texts analysed qualitatively using NVivo.

### RESULTS

<div><div>Yes</div><div>No</div></div>		Queen Elizabeth programme	Armoured Cavalry 2025	Thameslink programme	Intercity Express Programme
Item being procured		aircraft carriers	armoured vehicles	commuter trains	inter-city trains
Public policy		foreign	foreign	domestic	domestic
Regional politics					
Techno-logical risks	Systemic				
	Techno-philia				
Limited capacity of proc. organisation					
Difficult to trace accountability					
Satisfactory levels of competition					
Complex contracts					

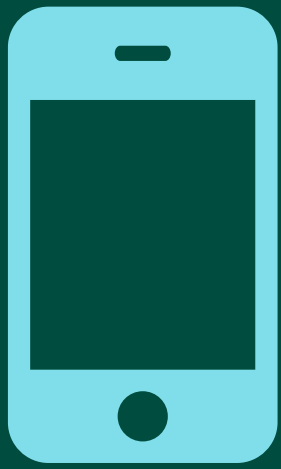
### CONCLUSION

- Military procurement focusses on foreign policy but includes political and regional issues of jobs and industry like non-military public procurement.
- Technological challenges are not unique to the military.
- Procurement organisations were under-resourced but tracing decision-making was more difficult in defence.
- Limited competition necessitating complex contractual negotiations and risk-sharing can be found in both contexts.

Military procurement has more similarities than differences with non-military public procurement.



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Source of data	QEC	Armoured vehicles	Thames link	IEP
Department (MoD/DfT)	5	9	4	6
National Audit Office	20	15	6	2
Govt. Major Projects Portfolio	7	7	7	7
Parliamentary select committee	8	6	4	4
Hansard (parliament debates, written responses)	12	40	6	21
Newspaper	2688	*	*	*
Trade press	*	*	*	*
Interviews	*	*	*	*

\* Data not yet collected

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