

US Restructures Military to Prepare for Cheaper Wars



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2025-05-24

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Rising debt and military overstretch have forced the US to restructure its army to 'improve efficiency' and 'build a leaner, more lethal force'.

Details. Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth has announced what he calls a “transformation” of the US Army, including a 20% reduction in top-ranking officers and the possible elimination of 40 generals, aimed at streamlining operations and cutting costs.

- ▶ The Army is centralising its command structure by merging offices responsible for training troops, developing new military doctrine, planning for future warfare, and overseeing operations in the Americas.
- ▶ In parallel, the Pentagon is advancing modernisation efforts, including a \$20 billion programme to develop next-generation fighter jets, expanding AI tools for battlefield logistics and threat detection, and integrating cheap autonomous drone systems into combat operations.
- ▶ According to Army spokesman Col. Dave Butler, the changes are expected to save nearly \$40 billion over five years. Defence Secretary Hegseth stated the goal of the changes is to “build a leaner, more lethal force” and strengthen US military readiness, particularly in detering China in the Indo-Pacific region.

Context. Mounting fiscal pressure and shifting global priorities are forcing the US military to adapt. As of May 5th, 2025, the national debt stood at \$36.21 trillion and is projected to reach 138% of GDP by 2035, pushing the Defence Department toward cost-saving reforms.

- ▶ The US has recently discussed and begun the withdrawal of troops from allied nations. As the Pentagon shifts towards “great power competition”, the deployment of over 200,000 US troops across Europe, the Middle East, and the Asia-Pacific has become an increasing burden and has shown the limits of traditional US imperialist force projection.
- ▶ The “Force Design 2030” programme, launched by the Marine Corps in 2020 as a bipartisan initiative, marked the beginning of a broader shift in US military planning: reducing heavy formations, cutting personnel, and prioritising long-range weapons and unmanned systems. Hegseth’s current reforms apply to the Army and are not formally part of that plan, however, they reflect the same cost-cutting trajectory.

Important to know. What appears as reform is, in reality, compelled by the crisis of capitalism. Declining profits force the ruling class to cut even its own instruments of domination—seen in both these military reductions and the recent “DOGE” cuts—to maintain profitability despite the likelihood of future war.

- ▶ The illusion of an invincible US military—sustained by superprofits—is further collapsing. The US is now openly imposing austerity on itself, and in cutting deep into its military, it undermines the very capacity needed to enforce global dominance.
- ▶ Whilst a weakening of the US military force, this is not a retreat from its militarism. These cuts—slashing generals and combining commands — being used to fund drones, AI, and remote warfare technologies, are all aimed at lowering the cost of

imperialist war.

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