



Cyber & Specialist  
Operations Command



# Barriers to Wargaming

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Women in Wargaming



Ministry  
of Defence

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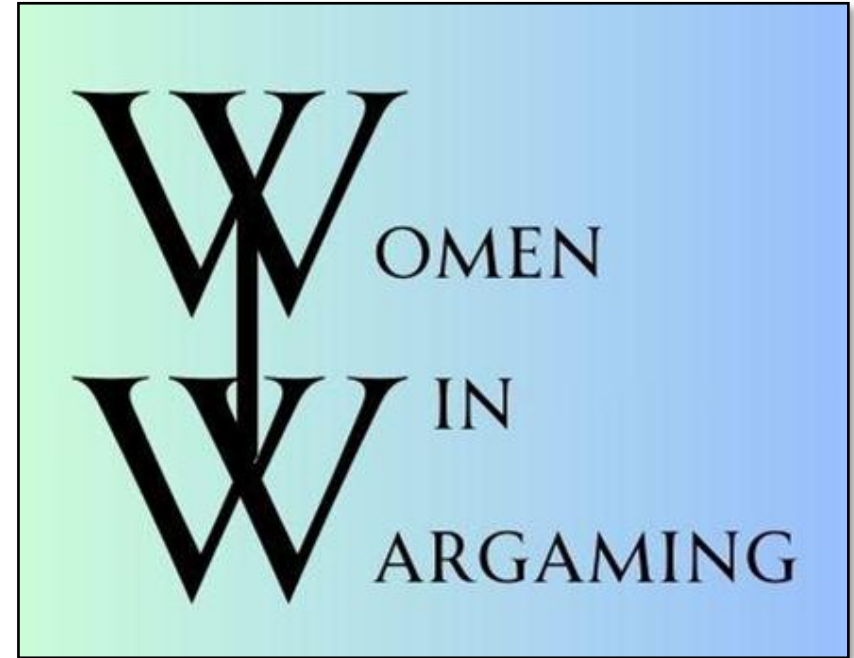
# Who are we?



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- Women in Wargaming
- Wargame analysts at Dstl
  - Strategic cross government wargaming
  - Defence Experimentation and Wargaming Hub (DEWH)
- Not hobby wargamers



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# Why do we need diversity?



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- Diversity of thought
- Gender wargaming study
  - “Women considered and chose from a wider range of options”
  - “Women adopted a more collaborative approach and built more consensus in group decisions”



AI generated using CoPilot

- Lack of representation:
  - Players
  - Designers
  - Facilitators/adjudicators
- Stereotyped representation:
  - Hobby games
- Tokenism
  - “Prove you belong” problem
- Topics
  - Non-military themes



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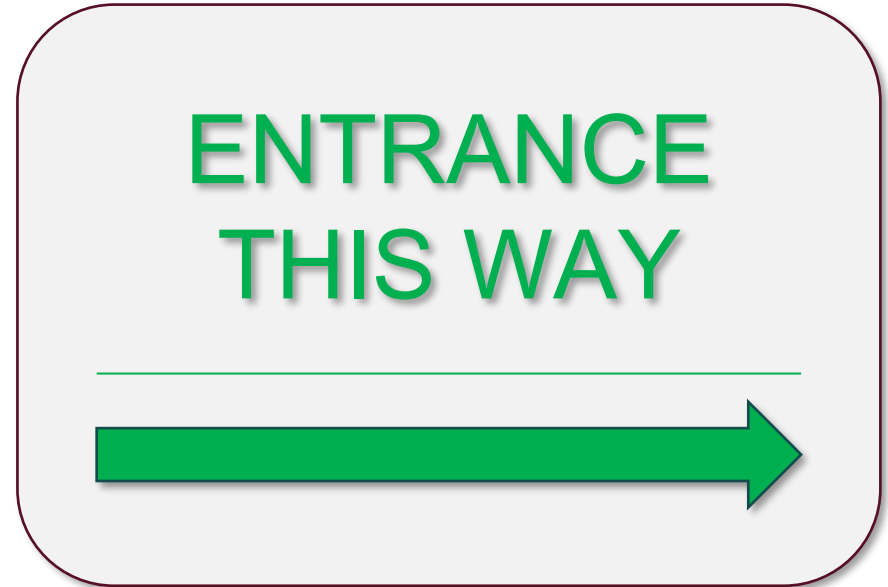
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- Professional wargames
  - Standards of behaviour
  - Higher stakes in outputs
  - Standards of dress
- Stereotyping
  - Roles
  - Knowledge
  - Experience
- Having to go above and beyond
  - Feeling the need to prove yourself in a performance based job




AI generated using CoPilot

- Funding
- D&I initiatives
- Education
  - Courses
  - Training
- Recruitment
- Accessibility
- Experience



- Inappropriate comments
- Being talked over or ignored
- Minimising negative experiences
- D&I Wargame: Fight, flight, freeze, or friend


**Scenario** **9**



You are at a manual wargame and you have dexterity complications. You struggle to move the counters precisely, which is required for this game design. Someone around the table tut's you as you knock over some blocks during your turn.

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**Scenario** **18**



You're attending a regular team meeting where minutes are recorded. Every week, you are asked to take down notes as it's decided that "you have the nicest handwriting".

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**Scenario** **26**




Your team is planning on a post-wargame social. They arrange to go to the pub, but you don't drink alcohol.

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- Gendered language
- Missing expertise
- Physical spaces
  - Access
  - Toilets
- “Games built with blind spots”



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- Codes of conduct
  - Derby House Principles 
- Women-led panels and events
- Gender wargaming study
- Mentoring groups



1. Promoting inclusion and diversity in professional Wargaming, through the standards we set, the opportunities we offer, and access to activities we organise.
2. Making clear our opposition to sexism, racism, homophobia, and other forms of discrimination across the board, as well as in Wargaming.
3. Encouraging a greater role and higher profile for colleagues from underrepresented groups in our professional activities.

- **For designers:**
  - Inclusive content
  - Create space for more voices
  - Ensure access
  - Build in safety tools
- **For players:**
  - Allyship,
  - Call out toxic behaviour
  - Encourage new wargamers
    - Encourage questions
    - Explain new language



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- **For facilitators:**
  - Call out inappropriate behaviour
  - Explain new language
  - Encourage all voices
- **For organisers:**
  - Safe events
  - Better representation
  - Ensure access
  - Build in safety mechanisms
  - Provide top cover



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## ■ For organisations:

- Create and enforce codes of conduct
- Representation at all levels
- Enable a safe culture
- Provide options for potential actions being taken

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# What to do during games?



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- If you **face** inappropriate behaviour
  - Call out the inappropriate behaviour
  - Go to a friend or colleague
  - Tell your line manager
  - Go to facilitator
  - Tell game control
- If you **see** inappropriate behaviour
  - Call out the inappropriate behaviour
  - Distract from the situation by starting a conversation
  - Speak to your facilitator
  - Check with those affected by the behaviour afterwards



To finish:



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- Think about what you can do?
  - Flight, Fight, Freeze or Friend (4Fs game)
- Come speak to the Women’s Wargaming Network or the Women in Wargaming team
- Quotes from the Strategic Defence Review:
  - “Success relies on creating an environment in which **all people** can develop and deliver”
  - “Defence will not get to the heart of the problem unless the workforce becomes **more representative of society**, harnessing all talents to deliver the strongest possible workforce”



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Discover more



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