

DESIDER

AN INSIDE LOOK INTO LIFE AT DEFENCE EQUIPMENT & SUPPORT



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Foreword

BY SIR SIMON BOLLON



A year ago, we launched 'DE&S 2025': our strategic response to the Integrated Review (IR), Defence Command Paper (DCP), and the Defence and Security Industrial Strategy (DSIS).

The strategy set out our ambitions for continuous improvement and a vision to be recognised leaders in the delivery of military equipment solutions for the information age. Since then, we have made a great deal of progress: moving with pace and agility to prioritise support to operations; providing real value to the taxpayer and society by harnessing the social value model to help deliver economic, environmental, and social benefits; as well as accelerating digital solutions through our people and partners – a prime example being the Heavy Lift Challenge that our Future Capabilities Group worked on. You can read more about this on page 7.

The key to our success remains harnessing the talent and commitment of our people; the importance of recruiting, developing, and retaining skilled staff – the real subject matter experts – have

never been more important if we are to fulfil our commitments to the UK Armed Forces. This – alongside our close collaboration with industry – ensures that DE&S is still best placed to deliver the cutting-edge equipment and support that our Service personnel deserve. The drive, enthusiasm, and encyclopaedic knowledge of their products means that our industry partners are vital to the success of our delivery to the front line. Working collaboratively to get programmes over the line, putting equipment into the hands of the operators and supporting the front line is our shared motivation. But we must focus even more on driving innovation, resilience and developing skills as we come together on our ambitious plans.

The world has also changed much in 12 months and a great deal of this is impacting the global Defence environment. Tied to this, our latest focus has been DE&S' support to the Ukrainian Armed Forces. The Weapons Operation Centre, among many other areas of the business, has been challenged with

some incredibly short notice taskings. A substantial amount of work continues to be done 'Granting in Kind' and additionally procuring equipment and munitions. To give a sense of scale, in just 12 weeks we have delivered over £170-million of military capability, including large quantities of anti-tank systems, ground based air defence and small arms ammunition. The manner with which we have balanced this activity with our business-as-usual tasks and used effectively our strong international links, demonstrates the resilience and effectiveness of DE&S in responding to crises. I want to thank everyone once again for the commitment and professionalism that is demonstrated daily.

You can read more about in this in this month's edition of Desider.

SENIOR LEADER COMMENT

Andrew Forzani, DE&S Director General Commercial

Talks to Desider about DE&S' support of the Defence and Security Industrial Strategy.

March this year saw the first anniversary of the launch of the Defence Command Paper and the Defence and Security and Industrial Strategy (DSIS). In the last edition of Desider, a number of the programmes and projects DE&S has delivered and is delivering to realise their intent were highlighted. However, this update focuses on DSIS itself and the changes DE&S have started to make in the acquisition system and how we are working with industry.

As a reminder, DSIS was a review of our industrial strategy, recognising the need for a new approach to how Government and industry partner together to meet the threats we face. It took a more strategic approach to how we will work with industry, ending 'global competition by default', and specified capability or technology segments where this most needs to be applied with industry. It also set out major thematic areas where we are changing our policy, process, and practice.

Work has continued apace and recently MOD held a vibrant and engaging Industry Roundtable event in Kings College London that included attendees from the Department for International Trade, the Royal United Services Institute, a wide range of defence suppliers and Trade Associations. This was marking the progress that has been made and reflected the extraordinary opportunities that DSIS presents. It also showed the importance that Government continues to give this work with both the Minister for Defence Procurement, Jeremy Quin, and the Minister for Security and Borders, Damian Hinds, speaking on the day.

DSIS included 58 propositions with named leads across Defence. You may have seen a number of those, where DE&S can contribute to success, embedded in DE&S Strategy 2025. Significant progress has already been made including:

- The Defence Suppliers Forum (DSF) has been strengthened, it now includes an SME Working Group, Climate Change and Sustainability Steering Group and Supply Chain Resilience Working Group. New DSF workstreams - Social Value, Security, Digital Defence Industrial Strategy, Agile Operating Model and Secure by Design.

- We Initiated programmes that change how we do acquisition and increase commercial skills and we've introduced new commercial policies on Intellectual Property and commercial liability.
- We Implemented the social value model within Defence procurement processes, ensuring contracts deliver against key Defence outcomes and also support wider Government objectives.
- The New SME Action Plan was published on 27 January 2022.
- The National Security and Investment Act (2021) came into force this year, giving the government powers to scrutinise and intervene in transactions, such as takeovers, to protect national security.
- New Procurement Reform legislation is Cabinet Office led legislation with a significant defence input. It creates a simpler more flexible commercial system that better meets our country's needs. It also provides things like exemptions in the interests of national security, industrial capabilities and supply chains, and it enhances our ability to exploit new technologies. It also includes amendments to the Single Source Contract Regulations which further support the realisation of DSIS.

A key area of focus for the year ahead will be the maturing of that legislation and planning its implementation across DE&S and the Department. As well as taking up opportunities like training and using awareness material, teams will need to think through how we can all best exploit the opportunities provided by this legislation, and those other foundations for improvement laid by DSIS. Essential to the success of DSIS and our delivering the best possible service to our Command Customers, will be our professional contribution in the maturing of the capability and technology strategies as they develop. An essential part of that, in turn, is the maintenance of highly effective relationships with our industry partners who will have a central role in all of this.



This update focuses on DSIS itself and the changes DE&S have started to make in the acquisition system and how we are working with industry

FEATURE

Damian Parmenter CBE Director General Strategy and International

The Integrated Review and The Defence and Security Industrial Strategy: One Year On

At a time of growing geopolitical competition, the 2021 Integrated Review (IR) set out the vision for a Global Britain in a more competitive age, addressing the geopolitical shifts and challenges posed by rapid technological change, intensifying competition between states, and a widening range of security threats.

Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine has brought the security risks the nation faces into stark relief and shows more than ever that the UK must be ready to defend and deter threats from our adversaries. Our response has shown the UK at its best, united with our allies in support of Ukraine and to deter Russian aggression on NATO's eastern flank.

One year on, the IR, and the Defence Command Paper, reinvigorated work to modernise our Armed Forces for the threats of this competitive age. For the first time in five years, the National Audit Office said that the 2021 Equipment plan was not 'unaffordable', and we are now committed to spending £88-billion over four years on equipment and equipment support. Moreover, we have committed at least £6.6-billion to accelerated Research & Development, especially on Cyber and Space, to drive strategic advantage, outpace adversaries, and give us a decisive edge as a global science power.

It has also been just over a year since we published the Defence and Security Industrial Strategy (DSIS), which set the framework for a deeper, more sophisticated and strategic relationship with industry. Through DSIS, we are pursuing a range of initiatives to strengthen our relationship with the defence and security industries, drive innovation and competitiveness, and support responsible exports.

DSIS announced over 50 activities and it has made significant progress across the board, including the implementation of a new DE&S strategy that builds on DSIS principles. Highlights also include the Joint Economic Data Hub's first Annual Economic Report, the Shipbuilding Strategy, the Defence Space Strategy, the revised SME Action Plan, and the Land Industrial Strategy. We have also seen industry respond very positively. One metric is the welcome expansion in engagement through the Defence Suppliers Forum, from 35 companies (mainly strategic suppliers and mid-tiers) pre-pandemic to individuals from over 100

firms, including approximately 25 SMEs. I know that our considerable achievements so far would not have been possible without colleagues in DE&S taking up the challenges, and seizing the opportunities, we set out in DSIS in the way we engage with industry. I thank all those that have been involved.

Over the past year, we have started considering the way that defence industries are strategic capabilities in their own right and this is informing how programmes and competitions are structured. We are thinking strategically about the industrial impacts of our decisions through the procurement and acquisition cycle. DE&S staff have a vital role in shaping programmes at an early stage, bringing expertise to bear in helping SROs and their teams understand industry, how programmes might shape the market, and the longer-term consequences on the wider defence sector. This includes opportunities for greater industrial participation and identifying particular capabilities we want to procure onshore to sustain the UK industrial base and deliver operational independence and strategic advantage.

FEATURE

Working together to deliver at pace: Heavy Lift Challenge

Alec Sandy, Qinetiq Commercial Portfolio Lead, speaks to Desider about innovation and collaboration.



The Heavy Lift Challenge is a joint, collaborative venture between DE&S Future Capabilities Group, Navy Command Headquarters and industry partners to accelerate the development of a range of autonomous Heavy Lift Uncrewed Air Systems.

The Heavy Lift Challenge (HLC) has seen Navy Command Headquarters (NCHQ) investing in the rapid development of large drones, capable of carrying payloads of +200kg. We put out an open invitation for companies to demonstrate their Commercial Off the Shelf (COTS) Uncrewed Air Systems (UAS), on the condition that it was able to operate with a pre-defined minimum payload. The companies that successfully did this were then incentivised to work towards further targets, rapidly developing and improving their capability to better meet our needs within a short time frame.

In order to make this work, we needed to develop and employ a commercial and financial approach that enabled us to accelerate iterative development of emerging COTS technology within the commercial sector.

The HLC pilot has allowed us to test a more agile approach to obtaining technology and the primary benefit is that we now have a route to take a COTS solution, rapidly developing it with the manufacture to meet our needs and get it into the hand of the user quicker than if we were trying to develop a new capability from scratch.

The pilot demonstrates our ability to move at a pace which is attractive to the market. It also shows how we can leverage our position to facilitate and stimulate iteration and adaption of emerging, cutting-edge, dual use technology from the commercial sector, to provide technology to the war fighter, faster.

The key learnings we've taken away from the project are around prioritisation, teamwork, flexibility and being comfortable with a degree of failure.

Going quickly isn't necessarily about doing everything faster. It's working out what activities add the most direct value, how much effort they take, and making trade-offs as necessary.

As a team, frankly we're better when we work together – whether uniformed or not, Front Line Commands or delivery agent, part of the establishment or contractors, we have a shared aim across all of the extended defence enterprise. Sometimes we lose sight of that, and it's important to keep our sense of purpose at the forefront of everything we do. The cross-collaborative nature of the team, and the culture we established really was the most enjoyable aspect of the project.

Additionally, the shared attitude of embracing failure. If something goes a little wrong, as things do on occasion, it's important to take that as an opportunity to learn and do it differently next time. The important bit is the reflection that follows and applying your learning; only by doing that will we push boundaries and drive different ways of thinking. Playing safe all the time will not help us to keep ahead of our adversaries.

Our intent is to continue driving developments in these platforms and invite more companies to become involved, pushing the boundaries in terms of capability, but also within the commercial and financial framework. This is just the start, and it's exciting to see where we go from here, and where we will next employ our agile commercial and financial approach.

FEATURE

DE&S 2025 STRATEGY

Last year, the DE&S 2025 strategy was launched. Setting out DE&S' vision for 2025: to be recognised leaders in the delivery of military equipment solutions for the information age. Having provided a roadmap to deliver safe, secure and innovative solutions at greater pace, DE&S are now one year into delivering their vision.



in our quest to improve our organisational agility and planning – so that we focus on value-adding activity, working on our clients' highest priorities, across multiple assignments.

DE&S plays a vital role for Defence; there is always space for us to do this more efficiently, embracing opportunities to innovate small and scale fast and our strategy remains the course by which we will become the DE&S we need to be for the future needs of Defence. Despite the challenges the last year has thrown at us, and no doubt the next will too, our mission of equipping and supporting the UK's Armed Forces for operations now and into the future remains ever true. I feel privileged to work with you on getting us there."

Reflecting on the progress made, Krishna Dhanak, DE&S Director Strategy and Corporate Operations, said: "A year ago we launched our DE&S 2025 strategy. It built on our journey as a professional delivery organisation and set out our response to the rapidly changing world in which we operate. We've achieved much in a year, and we should be rightly proud. Of course, there is still much more we need to do if we're to be the organisation Defence needs us to be.

Delivering on the commitments made in the Integrated Review remains one of Defence's top priorities. It calls for our Armed Forces to have modernised capabilities and be globally deployed – and our ability to deliver at pace, with certainty, remains central to success. We've responded to rapid operational requirements in support of the Russia and Ukraine crisis, we've placed new contracts at speed, including the first Minerva satellite for the newly created Space Command, and we've continuously impressed our clients with our professionalism.

As the country seeks to grow the economy to address the cost of living, our ability to deliver with greater certainty will become increasingly under the spotlight. We must also be unrelenting



PACE AND AGILITY FOR OUR CLIENTS

Over the past year, DE&S has improved its ability to deliver performance and solutions at pace. A brilliant example of fast-track procurement is the Heavy Lift Challenge: an innovative approach to engaging with and stimulating the market, developed jointly between the Royal Navy and DE&S Future Capabilities Group. It encourages Uncrewed Aerial System manufacturers to showcase crewless technology which has the potential to deliver supplies and equipment to ships and personnel at sea.

Following the successful collaboration with DE&S, industry partner Jack Wakley, Malloy Aeronautics Heavy Lift Challenge Team Leader, said: "Working with DE&S & Navy Command Head Quarters as partners was easy, agile and supportive. We found a part of the government that understood the challenges we faced and moved at a pace parallel to ours. Needless to say, the challenges were equally big for both sides."

By exploring how scalable and usable the autonomous technology is – with promising results – DE&S have demonstrated how collaborating with partners can expedite the procurement process and enable delivery of cutting-edge technology at pace.



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FEATURE

VALUE TO THE TAXPAYER AND SOCIETY

Making DE&S' investments go further to support defence and national priorities, DE&S have implemented their social value policy, launched the environmental strategy and established four domain efficiency hubs. The social value model will help DE&S deliver economic, environmental and social benefits through the contracts DE&S award. By allocating a minimum of 10% of the tender evaluation weighting to social value objectives, such as tackling economic inequality, reducing waste and driving supply chain diversity, this approach has also helped DE&S incentivise industry to develop low carbon solutions that improve our defence capabilities and reduce support costs.

DELIVERY THROUGH PEOPLE

Striving to create a diverse and professional workforce that are empowered and equipped to deliver excellence, this past year has seen DE&S launch its people strategy, Equality, Diversity, Inclusivity and Wellbeing (EDIW) Roadmap and a reward and review engagement. Speaking on the progress made, Jill Hatcher, DE&S Director HR, said: "We're really investing in our people and making sure that they get the skills that they need in order to continue to improve, and also continue that work within the organisation. This past year, delivering the MyHR system: a fantastic new cloud-based system, has allowed us to continue to work out the rewards review. And the work that we've been doing on equality, diversity, inclusion and wellbeing has laid out our commitment to work together to create an inclusive environment where skilled people are engaged, empowered, and inspired to be the best they can be to deliver the DE&S vision and mission. Going forwards my main priorities are fundamentally delivering the people strategy."

ACCELERATED DIGITAL SOLUTIONS

Driving digital solutions for business and battlespace advantage has been a key focus for DE&S over the last 12-months. As part of this, three Centres of Expertise have been established. Recognising that a modernised Defence is dependent on DE&S harnessing specialist business and technical expertise, these CoE's have allowed DE&S to work alongside its partners to bring together separate capability projects and exploit benefits of key technologies.

Nigel Shaw, Chief Digital Information Officer, explained: "This year we've made some huge improvements on the applications front, with MyHR being a good example, and for people using our secret systems. We've continued to expand our data warehouse and dashboards with an increased focus on safety, delivery and customers. Our digital team have executed an impressive 1.5-million automated transactions, representing £4-million worth of value to the business. This work has been incredibly varied, from the automation of overtime approval to delivering automated solutions for the British Forces Post Office. Over the next 12-months we're going to be publishing a digital sub-strategy which will lay out in more detail some of our ambitions to support DE&S 2025."

DE&S Director Integrated Battlespace, Simon Dakin, added: "Multi-Domain Integration is key and is about how defence operates and fights, bringing together our forces from across the different domains to work together in an integrated manner. For me, the most exciting project that's been delivered in the digital space this year would be delivering an autonomous mine hunting capability - an absolutely fantastic achievement that helps minimise the risk to our operators. Over the next year, I expect us to see more robots. More robots in the air, more robots on the ground, more robots at sea and more robot dogs"

DELIVERY THROUGH PARTNERS

Attracting and working at pace with diverse, resilient and innovative suppliers and partners is key to DE&S' success. A great example of the successful delivery through partners is the Catalyst programme that relies on the successful collaboration between industry and international partners. Group Captain Mark Butterworth, Deputy Head of the Catalyst team, explained: "The vision is for Catalyst to be the focus for rapid acquisition and innovation within the Air Domain. By working alongside our international partners, we can learn from them, and identify how we can work together. Whether we use digital engineering in order to reduce the time taken on certification and to improve support ability or using agile programme management techniques to make the most out of the time available and to empower our people to do their best. By collaborating with our industry partners we're trying to do things differently to deliver the very best."



NEWS

Type 45 Ballistic Missile Defence Upgrade



The UK is set to become the first European nation to operate a Maritime Ballistic Missile Defence capability that can detect and destroy Anti-Ship Ballistic Missiles as it commits to a significant upgrade of Britain's fleet of Type 45 destroyers.

The upgraded defence system – using the ASTER 30 Block 1 missile previously used only in French and Italian land systems – will help UK forces combat the increasing threats posed by anti-ship ballistic missiles at sea by developing the missile into a maritime variant.

DE&S has placed an initial contract for this work with MBDA, which when delivered, will be worth more than £300-million and support more than 100 jobs across the UK - including highly skilled technology roles in areas such as system design and software engineering in Stevenage, Cowes, Bristol and Bolton.

The initial contract was placed by the Maritime Anti-air Weapons Systems (MAWS) team at DE&S.

MAWS team leader Captain Matt Stratton, said: "I am delighted to have concluded this key activity and we now enter the incredibly exciting challenge to deliver the capability into the hands of the Royal Navy."

Upgrading the defensive capability of the Type 45 fleet was committed to in the Defence Command Paper, as part of the Integrated Review last year. Being able to defend against anti-ship ballistic missiles will add to the current capability of the Destroyers to defeat threats from the air.

The signing of the tri-national agreement is the first formal step in the upgrade of the six vessels, which will include

converting existing missiles to the ASTER 30 Block 1 standard, as well as updates to the SAMPSON multi-function radar (MFR) and Sea Viper command and control missile system, under the full Sea Viper Evolution programme.

Sea Viper's upgrade will boost the lethality of the Type 45 vessels, helping to ensure the Royal Navy remains poised to defend the surface fleet and the Maritime Strike Group against complex air threats both now and into the future.

DE&S CEO, Sir Simon Bollom, said: "This demonstrates the UK commitment to delivering a cutting-edge maritime Air Defence Capability. Sea Viper Evolution will deliver a significant uplift in capability and brings to a close many years of detailed planning and activity by the Maritime Air and Weapons team in DE&S."

The Sea Viper Evolution programme follows the recent contract awards to introduce the Common Anti Air Modular Missile (Camm) into the Type 45, which will see the missile outload of the platform increased from 48 to 72 missiles.

The Royal Navy's Type 45 destroyers are among the most advanced in the fleet and carry out a range of activity, including defence from air attack, counter-piracy operations and providing humanitarian aid.

Defence Procurement Minister, Jeremy Quin, said: "As we face global uncertainty, alliances and greater defensive capability are more important than ever. Joining our French and Italian counterparts will see us collectively improve the cutting-edge technology our armed forces possess.

"It is another example of us delivering on the commitments from the Defence Command Paper, helping protect our service personnel when faced with the most severe threats."

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FEATURE

DE&S hosts coders for Robot Dog Olympics

Almost 40 coders from across industry and defence assembled at MOD Abbey Wood in Bristol to take part in a unique Robot Dog Olympics.

Teams worked with SPOT robotic dogs which are designed to autonomously perform non-offensive tasks to protect troops by searching/scanning or delivering medicine/food into hazardous/disaster areas.

Coders were tasked with a variety of challenges, including programming the dogs to do a 50-metre sprint, a gymnastics routine and problem solving.

Natasha Dell, an algorithm engineer from Thales, said: "I have been really surprised by how agile and responsive the robotic dogs are. They are incredibly mobile and the speed at which they move is impressive as well as the tasks they can complete."

The event was run by the Future Capabilities Group (FCG) at DE&S in conjunction with Team Defence Information, a body that helps develop innovative solutions for the front line.

Suzy Harris, Head of Expeditionary Robotics for FCG, said: "Robotics and autonomous systems are becoming increasingly important in allowing soldiers to operate faster, for longer and enabling them to step back from some of the most challenging and dangerous tasks."

Colonel Dan Anders-Brown, customer lead at DE&S, said: "The coders have confirmed what we already knew. These are highly capable systems that will significantly reduce risk to life of our soldiers by removing the requirement to carry out dangerous activity in the modern battlespace."

SPOT is manufactured by Boston Dynamics which has a well-publicised ethics policy on the use of their systems in any offensive manner. Marlborough Communications Ltd (MCL) acquire the platforms on behalf of MOD and provide through life support and training.

A spokesperson for MCL, said: "Marlborough Communications Ltd are delighted to support DE&S in its drive to exploit innovation through technology, within the Robotic and Autonomous domain."

These are highly capable systems that will significantly reduce risk to life of our soldiers by removing the requirement to carry out dangerous activity in the modern battlespace



FEATURE

FEATURE



Military first for air traffic management

Radar operators at RAF Waddington have relocated to a new, specialist hub as part of the ongoing transformation of the military's air traffic management services.

Located at RAF Coningsby, it is the first of a series of moves allowing Approach Control Room radar operatives from multiple units. This allows users to carry out their role safely and effectively at an alternative location in one centralised Terminal Air Traffic Control Centre (TATCC).

The new way of operating mirrors commercial enterprises like the civilian London Air Traffic Control Centre based at Swanwick.

This key milestone is part of the £1.5-billion Marshall programme which is upgrading Air Traffic Management for the UK Armed Forces.

DE&S awarded the Marshall contract in 2014 to Aquila Air Traffic Management Services Ltd – a joint venture between Thales UK and NATS (formerly National Air Traffic Services).

Since then, around 300 jobs have been created across the UK and the programme is expected to save the UK taxpayer up to £317-million over the next 22-years.

Ensuring safe and resilient military flying operations, the contract integrates and supports modern, innovative equipment with existing infrastructure at MOD airfields across the UK and abroad.

New Lincolnshire TATCC Commander, Squadron Leader Kirsti Fordham, said: "Programme Marshall is a game changer in the way we deliver air traffic services in the busy Lincolnshire area. The introduction of these advanced systems will provide us with increased capacity, flexibility and reliability to support military flying; now and into the future."

The move has been made possible through the installation of new Air Traffic Management equipment brought into service in March 2022 at RAF Coningsby. This allows radar, weather and other critical data to be transmitted from RAF Waddington to RAF Coningsby.

Radar operators working from the hub will have access to a high-quality, safe and reliable set of tools including state-of-the-art radar displays and sensors. These will allow operators to control with precision and effectiveness. The Visual Control Room will remain active at Waddington.

Aquila Chief Executive Officer, Michael Stoller, said: "There has never been a more important time to give the Armed Forces increased flexibility and reliability. Through Programme Marshall, Aquila is delivering hub air traffic control for some of the busiest areas in the UK for military flying. These improved systems will enable the military to get on with the job of keeping the UK and its allies safe."

Radar operators from RAF Cranwell, operating Cranwell and Barkston Heath radar services, are expected to move into the innovative RAF Coningsby TATCC later in 2022.

DE&S, CEO Sir Simon Bollom, said: "This is a key milestone on this innovative and transformational programme, in terms of safety and effectiveness, and the way in which the UK military operate air traffic management."

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NEWS

£30-million dry dock contract supports 300 Scottish jobs

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A £30-million contract to provide dry-dock maintenance for the Royal Navy's Queen Elizabeth Class (QEC) aircraft carriers has been awarded to Babcock International Group, in Scotland.

The 10-year agreement will ensure the two warships - HMS Queen Elizabeth and HMS Prince of Wales - are able to undergo dry dockings for planned maintenance and repair at Babcock's Rosyth facilities, meaning the vessels continue to operate safely and remain available for defence operations, both for the UK and its allies.

The work will help to sustain 300 jobs across the Rosyth facility and the wider supply chain, contributing to UK prosperity, strengthening the Union and supporting the government's levelling-up ambitions.

Sean Donaldson, Babcock's Managing Director of Marine Engineering and Systems and the Rosyth site, said: "We are delighted to have been awarded the contract to provide dry dockings for the aircraft carriers over the next decade. The investments in our Rosyth infrastructure and facilities over the last 10-years mean we are ideally placed to deliver projects of this size and scale. The programme will also benefit from the extensive knowledge and expertise of Babcock's skilled workforce which is steeped in carrier experience. It's a really proud moment for us."

QECs require dry-docking periodically throughout their lives to undertake maintenance and repair activities that will ensure the UK continues to have a flexible and

modern naval force that can respond to future threats.

The QECs continue to uphold security both in UK waters and overseas. HMS Prince of Wales recently supported Exercise Cold Response with her sister ship HMS Queen Elizabeth carrying out vital training and exercises in waters close to the UK to keep her ready for operations anywhere in the world.

Steve Coates, DE&S Queen Elizabeth Class Group Leader, said: "Securing this contract is another important step on the QEC journey. The agreed partnership is a real testament to the great working relationship forged between the MOD and industry. The work that will take place will help to sustain vital jobs and skills at the Rosyth shipyard where the carriers were built and, by

drawing on an extensive supply chain, will contribute to wider UK prosperity."

The contract was awarded by Defence Equipment & Support (DE&S) through a robust and transparent competition, encouraging strong bids from viable dockyards with the requisite facilities and experience of docking large vessels, whether military or civilian.

Defence Procurement Minister Jeremy Quin said: "The Queen Elizabeth Class Carriers are the flagships of our Royal Navy and it's crucial they remain ready to protect and defend the UK and our allies.

"Both carriers had their final construction in Rosyth, and I'm pleased they will return for their dry-dock maintenance, supporting vital jobs and skills in Scotland."

NEWS

New patrol boat HMS Cutlass delivered to Royal Navy



NEWS

HMS Cutlass, the first of two new high-speed patrol boats, has been commissioned into the Gibraltar Fast Patrol Squadron in a ceremony at Her Majesty's Naval Base Gibraltar.

Forming part of the Gibraltar Squadron Fast Patrol Craft, HMS Cutlass – and her sister Dagger, due to be delivered later in 2022 – are the permanent replacements for the Gibraltar Squadron Fast Patrol Craft – HMS Sabre and HMS Scimitar – that have safeguarded Gibraltar's waters for the past two decades.

Built by Merseyside-based Marine Specialised Technology (MST), the patrol craft are twice as fast as Dasher and Pursuer with a top speed of 40 knots. Both craft have modern optical and infra-red systems, enabling users to identify and track potential threats at range and the craft are also equipped with three machine-guns. The updated systems help the crew in operations, maintenance and response to any unforeseen incidents.

DE&S Boats Team Project Manager, James Melia, said: "For hundreds of years there has been a British Armed Forces presence in Gibraltar.

HMS Cutlass and Dagger will provide security in British Territorial Waters and provide protection to visiting warships, submarines and support vessels. DE&S are extremely proud to work in partnership with MST to provide the Royal Navy Gibraltar Squadron with a modern, fast and effective capability for fulfilling their important role."

Both vessels will provide force protection to designated visiting UK and Allied military vessels. Primarily used to patrol HMNB Gibraltar and British Gibraltar Territorial Waters, the vessels will also be supporting British exercises and operations in the area while keeping a close watch over Gibraltar's shores.

The Royal Navy Gibraltar Squadron are completing a series of trials, exercises and training supported by Flag Officer Sea Training to prepare the vessel and her crew for full operational capability later in the year.

The remainder of the contract will provide an additional four years of local In-Service Support to the patrol craft.

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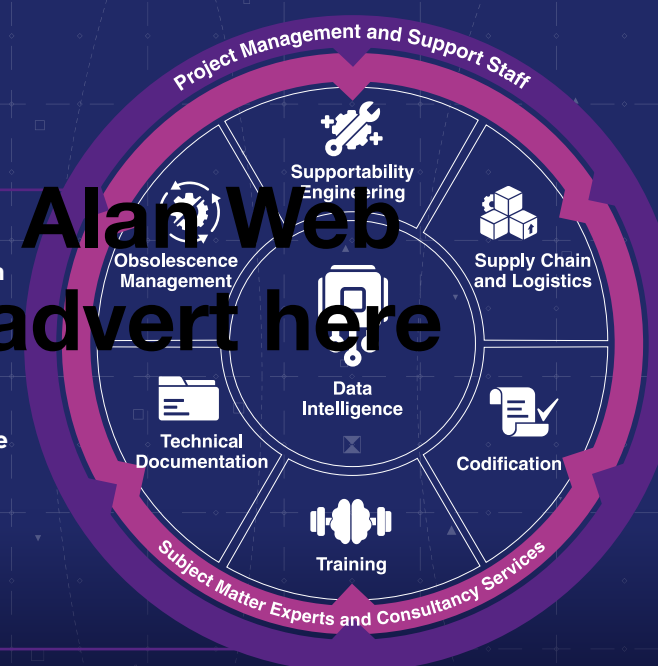
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NEWS

News in Brief

Argon awarded UK MoD Chemical Sense Training Equipment Support Contract

DE&S has awarded Argon Electronics (UK) Ltd. a two-year contract to provide in service support for a wide range of Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) training equipment.

The equipment that will be supported includes Chemical Agent Monitor Simulators, Lightweight Chemical Agent Detectors, radiation detector simulators, training equipment and the associated accessories including antennas and battery holders.

Encompassing a wide range of activities including repairs, equipment-use training, spares provision and obsolescence management; Argon will play a vital role in ensuring the in service CBRN training equipment provides the training capability desired by the end users.

Steven Pike, Argon's Managing Director, said: "This is the second time Argon has been awarded a support contract for training equipment we have previously provided to the UK MoD and we are delighted to be able to play our part to help ensure that their CBRN training capability remains as effective as possible."



British Army swoops on manoeuvres in North Macedonia

More than 2,000 members of the British Army's Global Response Force have recently demonstrated their ability to react to global crises during an exercise with NATO allies.

Some 3,000 personnel from eight NATO countries are training together in North Macedonia on Exercise Swift Response, under the command of 16 Air Assault Brigade Combat Team (BCT).

The UK contingent is made up of the 2 PARA Battlegroup, built around the airborne infantry of 2nd Battalion The Parachute Regiment. They have been supported by artillery, engineers, logisticians, medics, and signallers from 16 Air Assault BCT; and Aviation Task Force 1 with Apache attack helicopters and Chinook support helicopters.

Minister for the Armed Forces, James Heappey, MP said: "Exercise Swift Response shows how the British Army is transforming to become more lethal, agile, and expeditionary. Exercises alongside our partners and Allies are necessary to maintain our advantage in a complex and ever-changing world.

"I remain proud of our Armed Forces who continue to serve their country on postings around the world, providing leadership in uncertain times."

Travelling by road, rail, sea and air to North Macedonia – NATO's newest member since joining in 2020 – troops carried out joint training to build their capabilities and relationships. The soldiers then deployed onto the rugged Krivolak training range by parachute and helicopter to secure and defend a foothold in simulated hostile territory, and then take the offensive.

DE&S Apache Team Leader, Colonel Craig Sweeting, said: "The Apache continues to make an outstanding contribution to Defence. It's one of the most advanced attack helicopters anywhere in the world and whenever I see the Apache being used by the armed forces it makes me extremely proud to be part of the team supporting this iconic aircraft."

The manoeuvres in North Macedonia are one element of Exercise Swift Response, which will see multinational forces under the direction of US Army Europe and Africa conducting simultaneous training across Europe – from the High North to the Balkans – to practice how airborne units can rapidly project force in response to developing crises.



Progress for Boxer

The DE&S Mechanised Infantry Vehicle Boxer team recently played host to Industry partners – comprising of delegates from ARTEC, KMW, Rheinmetall and OCCAR – at Allenby Barracks in Bovington. The 3-day event included visits to some of the proposed UK trial sites for Boxer and assisted Industry with a first-hand look at the infrastructure available when prototype Boxer's arrive for trials activities in the UK later this year.

Julian Bryan, Head of Special Projects and Vehicle Groups at Millbrook, said: "Overall the visit was a real reminder of the importance of boots on the ground and the overwhelming benefits of face-to-face meetings, this UK recce has been the first opportunity for UK MIV to engage with Industry without the need for a camera or a headset! The 3 days were summed up really well by one of Industry's lead engineers saying that, although we had only spent 3 days together – it felt like we had moved the programme forward 3 months."

Later this year Boxer, and the DE&S team that have managed its procurement and development, will be at DVD. For those involved in Land Equipment for Army Headquarters, DE&S and Front-Line Commands, DVD2022 provides an ideal opportunity to identify innovation, develop ideas and generate a greater understanding of technologies, capabilities and requirements. For further information visit <https://www.theevent.co.uk/visitor/>



A400M Atlas Spring Rider trials

The DE&S A400M team have recently concluded a series of parachute trials in the US to support users.

Continuing the work of Exercise Winter Rider, Exercise Spring Rider saw Atlas aircraft conduct a series of test and evaluation trials on multiple parachute systems and mission systems.

Supported by the US Army and US Marine Corps, DE&S worked alongside specialist American aircraft handling services, Airbus, QinetiQ, 206 Squadron RAF, and Air Command. The trials provided the team the evidence they need to deliver a threshold high-altitude specialist personnel parachuting capability before the out of service date for C130-J, meeting requirements outlined in the Integrated Review.

Further trials will take place in the coming months prior to the final major certification standard being achieved for the platform. This will include work to expand the aircraft's paradrop capability as well as further expanding the utility of the Atlas fleet. A400M Atlas already provides the RAF with a platform that has greater range and payload than the C-130J, and each new trial only enhances the advantage this aircraft can provide.



NEWS

Industry Callout: Surface Finish for the Royal Air Force

Surface Finish is defined as the preparation of – and subsequent paint finish of – aerial platforms and support equipment used by the UK Armed Forces.

This includes whole aircraft refinishing and aircraft component refinishing for aircraft, support equipment and other station-related tasks at RAF sites across the UK and overseas locations.

DE&S are looking to work collaboratively with industry to update, improve, innovate, and modernise the current delivery mechanisms and processes. The Surface Finish contract is currently expected to have a duration of eight years and will support multiple platforms and equipment – including Typhoon jets and the Hawk T1 jets used by the Red Arrows.

DE&S must ensure that the required number of serviceable aircraft, air systems and support equipment are available to support the operational output of the RAF. They must also be able to deliver safe and airworthy air systems for training and operations - both in the UK and overseas.

Surface Finish supports this requirement by reducing maintenance turn-round times. An efficient, effective, and reliable SF capability can reduce the likelihood of early equipment and component failure. This in turn improves mission survivability.

Additionally, the provision of an effective Surface Finish supports operational deployment through effective camouflage and markings. The surface finish of an aircraft must be maintained to a standard which ensures both high conspicuity (camouflage) for training aircraft – and low conspicuity for aircraft and equipment on operations. SF can also support airworthiness through the application of adequate corrosion protection.

DE&S are keen to hold a market day with industry to better understand the capability of supplies to meet this requirement and the current market interest for this defence support activity.

The aim of the market day is for the attendees to develop an understanding of DE&S' requirements, how DE&S currently supply the SF capability (including a walkaround of a current facility at RAF Coningsby) and a presentation of several proposed contracting methods.

Following the presentation, there will be breakout sessions for industry to have a one-on-one with Ministry of Defence personnel for further discussion.

Register your **interest for the market day and the competition** on the DE&S website.



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PEOPLE

Georgina Rogers

Job title

I am a CSG Graduate in my first placement within the Strategy Team.

What does your role involve?

In my current role I work as a strategy lead on the DE&S Strategy Team, supporting the delivery of DE&S 2025 and strategic events. I am involved with things such as improving engagement with the strategy, progress reporting as well as organising away days for the Senior Leadership Team.

What do you most enjoy about your job?

The most enjoyable part of my job is seeing how the strategy is informing changes throughout the organisation and the impacts these are having. It's also been a great way to be introduced to the organisation and I hope I can carry my knowledge of the strategy into my future roles in DE&S.

What is your greatest accomplishment (in your role) to date?

When I joined the team, I highlighted that there should be more information about the strategy in the induction process. I'm currently working with the Learning & Development team to change this. Soon there will be a presentation available for newcomers to help them understand the strategy and what it means for them and hopefully in the future this will also be integrated into the face-to-face induction process.

What keeps you energised about working at DE&S?

A large part of my role is forward-looking as our strategy is essentially a plan of what we want to achieve in the next five years. I find it really energising to see how much we have achieved so far in just one year but also how much more change is on the way.

Who or what has shaped who you are?

My parents, most definitely. Growing up they supported me in everything I wanted to do and taught me the importance of hard work. They also strongly encouraged me to get a Saturday job at 16 which I carried on with until I finished my degree – it was great experience for me and I learned so much from it.

What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

I have a golden retriever called Maple who I like to take on long walks and if we end up in a beer garden then even better.

What might surprise people about you?

I have a blue belt in Judo. I am also a qualified referee and coach both adults and children at my local club.

What's the best advice you've ever been given?

How you do things is just as important as what you do.



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