

desider

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MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

the magazine for defence equipment and support

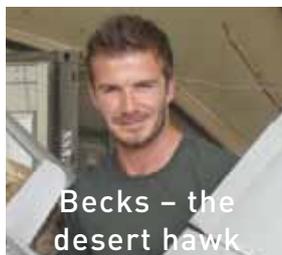


Kit stays sharp on the front line

Full coverage of DVD - DE&S' annual stakeholder event [See inside](#)



Two carriers two years on



Becks - the desert hawk



Latest Viking on the march



Home safe and sound



Enter the DE&S 'dragons'



cover image

The Royal Marines have given their seal of approval to the new infantry combat rifle being used in Afghanistan. The Sharpshooter, the first new infantry combat rifle issued to UK troops for more than 20 years, was unveiled by DE&S earlier this year and takes weaponry into the realm of sniper territory.

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The latest version of the Viking is already proving its worth on the front line of Afghanistan after the last of the vehicles was handed over to DE&S. The 24 Viking II all-terrain vehicles have better mine blast protection as part of a £31 million contract with BAE Systems placed only last September.



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DE&S has won a top regional award for organisations of more than 5,000 people for the success of its apprentice scheme.

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desider

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**General Sir Kevin O'Donoghue
Chief of Defence Materiel**



'Improving availability of equipment to troops in theatre, minimising the time it is not in use and, where appropriate, extending its life is a priority for the MOD'

Support to operations in Afghanistan remains our principal effort and much equipment in use there or due to be deployed there was on show at DE&S' annual DVD stakeholder event at Millbrook Training Ground. This important event provided an excellent opportunity for the exchange of ideas between DE&S, the Armed Forces and industry, which helps ensure we continue to provide the best possible equipment and support for our Armed Forces.

Improving availability of equipment to troops in theatre, minimising the time it is not in use and, where appropriate, extending its life is a key priority for the MOD. DE&S project teams are playing a major part supporting the most extensive repair programme conducted on operations in the Land domain fleet since the Korean War. This in turn helps reduce pressure on the airbridge into and out of theatre. We are also giving valuable support to the PJHQ team managing the Equipment Sustainability System (ESS), based in a purpose-built major infrastructure project in Camp Bastion, Afghanistan.

Away from Afghanistan, DE&S support continues in other operational theatres and notably, 1,500 miles south west of Camp Bastion, off the Horn of Africa. The NATO mission is led by the frigates *HMS Chatham* and *Northumberland* and supported by the tanker *RFA Bayleaf* and has had a number of recent successes. Piracy threatens to undermine international humanitarian efforts in Africa, as well as safety of commercial maritime routes. To counter it the ships sustain a testing patrol cycle, often in challenging weather and in a climate that is harsh on equipment. Maintaining continuity of operations hundreds of miles from a suitable forward operating base demands agility and perseverance; DE&S people will be working to keep our ships on task during their seven-month deployments.

The Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) is now well underway with more than 35 studies in progress and due to report in fairly short order during July. DE&S is making a significant contribution to many of the workstreams, particularly those related to capability, support, science and technology and industrial issues. This is our opportunity to influence the future of defence and ensure that key technical and industrial considerations around equipping and supporting our Armed Forces are properly taken into account. I know that this work comes on top of busy 'day jobs', but we are the

experts in some of these areas and it is vital that we play our full part.

I was pleased to see the encouraging news that the Government's recent review of spending priorities had permitted a number of important acquisition programmes to go forward, while remaining subject to the outcomes of the SDSR. It is also very good news that the contract for the Army's new Scout vehicle demonstration phase has been signed.

In-year manpower constraints remain a challenge. However, now that new manpower control ceilings have been agreed with individual Operating Centres, I have authorised the relaxation of some of the recruitment controls to a level which enables prioritisation, while remaining safe and professional and delivering critical outputs.

One of the tenets of our approach to Strategic Resource Rebalancing (SRR) was the need to operate as a 'safe and professional' organisation and guidance has been provided on what this means. This included the assessment as to whether to continue to deliver at all in some areas rather than trying to deliver everything at increased risk. In some areas, this helped us take difficult decisions to stop doing things and no doubt there will be more to come. With ongoing funding pressures, we must continue to use this guidance as our touchstone.

Good progress continues with the evolution of office accommodation at Abbey Wood. The new Oak building on the Abbey Wood North site was handed over to DE&S on 4 June, on time and under budget. I am optimistic that it will be handed over for our use later this year, ahead of the original schedule.

I was pleased that at the South West Skills Awards 2010 held in Exeter, DE&S won the National Apprenticeship Service Macro Employer (for organisations of 5,000-plus) award for Apprentice Employer of the Year in the South West grouping. This is a very welcome and much valued recognition of the quality and maturity of our scheme.

Finally, I would like to offer my congratulations to all in the Abbey Wood Field Gun Crew who took third place out of 23 competing teams in one of the toughest competitions run within the MOD - the annual Field Gun Run at *HMS Collingwood* in Hampshire. The Abbey Wood team is a tri-service team and improved from its sixth place in 2009. Reaching third place in such a hard-fought contest is an excellent result.

NEWSREEL

Review makes its decisions

THE Government's review of spending commitments made since 1 January saw two MOD projects suspended – Successor Deterrent Extension to Concept Phase long lead items and replacement of the current search and rescue service. The deterrent long lead items will be reviewed as part of the broader Trident value for money review which will report in the coming weeks. The search and rescue helicopters will be reviewed as a matter of urgency.

All change

THE Chief of the Defence Staff, Air Chief Marshal Sir Jock Stirrup, is to step down six months early. Sir Jock will leave his post in the autumn. Permanent under-secretary Sir Bill Jeffrey will also be leaving the MOD. "It has for some time been my wish to retire at the conclusion of the Strategic Defence and Security Review; it is an obvious point at which to make a transition," said Sir Jock.

Forces' cash

OPERATIONAL allowances for servicemen and women in the most demanding areas of conflict have been doubled. Tax-free operational allowance has increased from £14.51 per day to £29.02. A typical six-month tour payment increases from £2,640 to £5,281. Payment is in the form of a single lump sum.

Test success

FULL SCALE static testing on the Lockheed Martin F-35 Lightning II programme – the Joint Combat Aircraft – has been successfully completed with zero structural failures, five months ahead of schedule.



Above: Marine Nash's body armour saved him from a fatal bullet wound. Right: Marine Nash is back on the front line



Saved again – armour continues its top job

THE COMBINATION of body armour, a Jackal patrol vehicle, a Chinook helicopter and the skill of medics has helped save the life of a Royal Marine shot during a gun battle in Afghanistan.

Jason Nash was on duty in Helmand Province when he was shot by insurgents in April.

But thanks to body armour doing its job, the quick thinking of his fellow Marines and the excellent work of medics, he's back on the front line.

Jason of 40 Commando said: "I was working in my patrol base, building up the defences on the roof.

"Just as I was about to climb down to get some water, a single

round hit me in the left arm.

It went through and into the side plate of my body armour and knocked me clean off the roof. It felt like a car had hit me in the ribs.

"I looked down at my arm and I could see the blood, but the other lads instantly got an emergency care bandage on me to stop the bleeding."

A Jackal took Jason to a forward operating base from where a Chinook was used to take him to the field hospital in Camp Bastion.

"I was at the base within 15 minutes of getting hit and the Medical Evacuation Response Team was waiting for me," said

Jason. "Once I got to the hospital at Bastion I was straight into the operating theatre.

"The whole process from the first shot to waking up after surgery was about four hours.

"It was unbelievable – the medical chain is amazing.

"You hear stories about it but it's only when you experience it for yourself that you really see how good it is."

Jason stayed in hospital under observation for two days where the wound was packed, and five days later he went back to have 20 stitches to close the wound.

Jason has rejoined his colleagues in Sangin.

DVD visitors feel the heat

THE SUN shone and visitors sweltered at DVD – DE&S' annual stakeholder event – at Millbrook in Bedfordshire.

The event played host to two government ministers while a number of announcements about new vehicles were made.

Countering the threat from improvised explosive devices was a major theme of the event with equipment enhancing force protection high on the agenda.

For coverage of announcements made at DVD see pages 22 to 30.



Above: Springer goes off road at DVD

MOD faces up to reform

Lower costs and better efficiency will not be enough to meet current financial challenges, warns the new Defence Secretary



Above: International co-operation – Dr Fox meets US counterpart Robert Gates

THE MOD must face reform as part of how our Armed Forces face the future.

Reductions in administration costs and increases in efficiency will not be enough on their own to meet the current financial challenges.

Defence Secretary Dr Liam Fox has promised that this year's Strategic Defence and Security Review will be a clean break from the past, being 'ruthless and without sentiment'.

And there will be changes to the structure of the MOD.

"We need to deal with the fact that the cost of successive generations of equipment continues to rise above the rate of inflation," he said.

"Contractual and structural commitments on personnel and equipment mean the budget is heavily committed for each of the next four years, limiting our room for manoeuvre.

"No matter how hard we bear down on the costs of administration and drive up efficiency we cannot expect to bridge the gap by these means alone.

"The problem is structural so the response must be structural to put defence on a stable footing," he said in a 14 June speech to the Royal United Services Institute.

"The MOD itself must face reform. We intend to reorganise the whole organisation into three pillars – first Strategy and Policy, second Armed Forces and Procurement, and third Estates.

"We intend to create a more efficient and leaner centre where everyone knows what they are responsible for and who they are accountable to – with

'No matter how hard we bear down on costs of administration and drive up efficiency we cannot expect to bridge the gap by these means alone'

the deadlines and budgetary disciplines taken for granted elsewhere.

"Major reform of our procurement practices will be accompanied by a number of industrial consultations that I will outline shortly to Parliament.

"But as much as structural reform is required, I am equally determined that the Armed Forces are re-configured to meet the needs of the evolving security environment and satisfy the ambitions this country has.

"We do have to operate in the financial climate we have inherited and defence cannot be immune from that challenge.

"We will have to be tough and unsentimental to boot if we are to do what needs to be done."

Dr Fox added that the new Government's foreign policy would pursue the defence of UK interests with the recognition that prosperity and security is bound up with those of others. Responding to future security challenges would not be for Britain alone and that Britain's relationship with the United States will remain critical.

He also said Nato would remain the UK's first instrument of choice for responding to the collective security challenges and increased co-operation with other nations would be required. Therefore, there will be a Defence Diplomacy programme funded separately within the SDSR.

He added: "After 12 years without a defence review, over a period where our Forces have been at times overstretched, with some current equipment overused and out of date, with legacy programmes from the Cold War that are of less relevance today, and in a terrible economic and financial situation, we cannot afford to delay."

Possible future security threats

- State failure such as seen in Afghanistan and Somalia, creating new focal points for exportable Islamist terrorism that threatens our citizens and our allies;

- A nuclear capable or nuclear armed Iran, destabilising Shia-Sunni and Arab-Persian fault lines, as well as those with Israel and the rest of the world;

- An uncontrollable cycle of nuclear proliferation and, at worst, the erosion of the post-Hiroshima taboo against nuclear use;

- The emergence of old or new regional powers and the return of state-versus-state competition and confrontation;

- More immediately, competition for energy and other resources (including fresh water) could take on a military nature.

Army shows off a full range of kit

A VARIETY of the best equipment procured for the Army recently by DE&S went on show at a light weapons and equipment day at Pirbright and Bisley ranges last month.

Among items on show to the media were the new Sharpshooter 7.62mm rifle, the combat shotgun, the General Purpose Machine Gun, multi-terrain pattern camouflage and the new Osprey Mk4 body armour.

Below, left is Private Daniel Burgess of 2nd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment in Osprey Mk 3 body armour with, on the right, Private Marco Bruin wearing the new multi-terrain pattern uniform. Both men will deploy to Afghanistan later this year.

2 Para's Sgt Paul Scott, right, shows off the Benelli combat shotgun.



Below: In action – the Sharpshooter rifle, foreground, in the hands of a Royal Marine in Afghanistan



New rifle helps sharpen up Royal Marines' shooting

THE ROYAL Marines have given their seal of approval to the new infantry combat rifle being used in Afghanistan.

The Sharpshooter, the first new infantry combat rifle to be issued to UK troops for more than 20 years, fires a 7.62mm round and enhances accuracy of engagement during longer-range firefights.

Unveiled by DE&S earlier this year, the Sharpshooter's considerable range takes it into the realm of sniper territory.

But it requires far less training, being more similar to the standard service rifle than the highly-specialised weapons used by snipers.

Royal Marine Sergeant Baz Evans of 40 Commando said: "I have fired more

The Sharpshooter complements a potent range of weapons used by UK Forces in Afghanistan, which includes:

- SA80 A2 assault rifles, which fire 5.56mm bullets;
- Light Machine Guns, which fire 5.56mm bullets;
- General Purpose Machine Guns, which fire 7.62mm bullets;
- the Combat Shotgun, which fires 12-gauge shells;
- the Sniper System, which fires 8.59mm bullets.

than 1,000 rounds on the rifle in training; accurately hitting targets over 800 metres away. The new Sharpshooter rifle provides quick and accurate fire, with the flexibility of using it in the assault rifle role as well. It's hoofin!"

Colonel Peter Warden, Light Weapons, Photographic and Batteries leader at DE&S, said: "The Sharpshooter rifle is very capable and has been bought to fulfil a specific role on the front line in Afghanistan.

"It is a versatile weapon which will give our units a new dimension to their armoury. It will complement the SA80 A2 by adding to the weapons available to commanders on the ground. The Sharpshooter's capabilities are also complementary to the current Sniper System."

More than 400 of the semi-automatic L129A1 Sharpshooter rifles have been bought by DE&S as an Urgent Operational Requirement.



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New minister praises staff on his Abbey Wood debut

THE NEW Minister for Defence Equipment, Support and Technology is a huge admirer of the Civil Service.

And he has pledged to defend the work of civil servants in the face of public criticism.

Mid-Worcestershire Conservative MP Peter Luff made his first visit to Abbey Wood on 3 June to meet senior figures at DE&S and to be briefed on major projects.

He told staff at a town hall session that he was looking forward to the challenges of his new job.

"I have an absolutely massive respect for the Armed Forces and I also have a huge respect for the civil service," he said.

"I really do understand the important difference you make and that this organisation makes throughout its many bases to operations. I have had it drummed into me the importance of support so I want to congratulate you on the huge successes you have had in meeting operational demands.

"When I got this job I was asked whether I was worried about getting stuff out to our boys in Afghanistan and I said that was the least of my worries.

"Some people are keen to dump all the problems on civil servants and not give them the credit they deserve. I'm a fan of civil servants, particularly in the MOD. Some departments are facing very serious challenges but senior officers here are very well served. I'm a great admirer of the Civil Service, and I will defend your honour, as long as you deserve it, to the death."

Mr Luff added he was hugely impressed with what he had learned about project management in DE&S and recognised that what the organisation did was important to Britain's manufacturing base.

During his visit Mr Luff met senior figures at DE&S who gave him an overview of projects, key

I am a great defender of the Civil Service, he says

risks and performance statistics.

He was also given an introduction to the PACE programme, including manpower issues.

Mr Luff has since been back to Abbey Wood on a visit to land equipment teams where he was shown the latest technology in body armour and sampled the newest versions of ration packs.

■ Full interview: pages 18 and 19; DVD: pages 22 and 23



MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

SECRETARY OF STATE – Dr Liam Fox: strategic direction on operations; personnel; Strategic Defence and Security Review; defence planning; programme and resource allocation; policy; international relations; nuclear programme; acquisition; parliamentary business and communications.

MINISTER (ARMED FORCES) – Nick Harvey: operations and operational policy; force generation; deployed operational logistic delivery; operational training exercises.

MINISTER (DEFENCE EQUIPMENT, SUPPORT AND TECHNOLOGY) – Peter Luff: equipment cycle, including investment decisions; science and technology and industrial strategy; non-equipment investment programme and decisions, including IT and estates.

MINISTER (DEFENCE PERSONNEL, WELFARE AND VETERANS) – Andrew Robathan: approach to service personnel and civil servants; wider service family.

MINISTER (INTERNATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY) – Gerald Howarth: international defence strategy and relations; defence diplomacy; international defence institutions; defence exports.

UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE – Lord Astor: Lords spokesman on defence policy; operations; personnel; equipment and legacy issues.



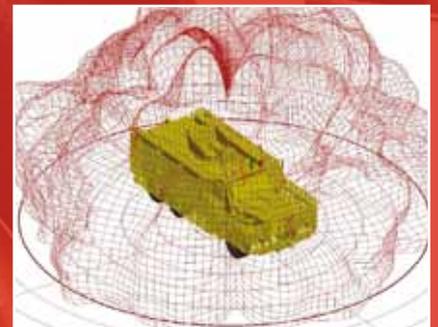
Top: Mr Luff takes part in a question and answer session with DE&S staff in the Central Facilities Building at Abbey Wood.

Left: Chief of Defence Materiel, General Sir Kevin O'Donoghue, welcomes Mr Luff to Abbey Wood

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NEWSREEL

Leuchars mission

TYPHOON is expected to take up Quick Reaction Alert duties from RAF Leuchars along with Tornado F3 later this year. The aircraft will take over complete responsibility next April when the Tornado F3 retires, Armed Forces Minister Nick Harvey has revealed. Typhoon already undertakes Quick Reaction Alert duties at RAF Coningsby.

Hours on the up

THE number of funded hours available to commanders for training and operational flying by Chinook helicopters has risen from just under 16,000 per year in 2008-9 to 18,500 in 2010-11, according to Parliamentary figures. Figures for Apache show a similar rise from 14,400 to 18,500.

Devonport gears up for Astute in-service tasks

AS THE first-of-class *Astute*, undergoes sea trials, Devonport is getting ready for the through-life support of the new submarine.

Babcock, the company responsible for supporting the Royal Navy's submarine flotilla at Clyde and Devonport, has completed a new docking cradle which will enable the *Astute* submarines to be received within Babcock's nuclear docking facilities at Devonport.

The new cradle is required as *Astute* is considerably larger in mass and geometry (about 15 per cent bigger in length and diameter) than the *Swiftsure* and *Trafalgar* class submarines.

This cradle, in 15 Dock, is in addition to the docking capability in the shiplift at Clyde.

This latest milestone at Devonport follows substantial work undertaken under the *Astute* Readiness Programme by an integrated MOD/Babcock

team at Clyde, where the new submarines will be base-ported.

Work here has included checking and modifying the infrastructure to support the new submarine class, amending the Site Safety Cases to encompass the new boat, provision and acceptance of support equipment specific to *Astute*, and training base staff to enable them to support and maintain the new vessel.

At Devonport, the existing cradle – on which the submarine is supported while in dry dock – had to be extended to accept the new larger submarine.

A further nine cradle blocks were needed, including four wing cradle blocks at the forward and aft end and an additional keel cradle at the aft end.

Each cradle block assembly weighs around 22.5 tonnes.

A full set of wooden cappers on top of the cradle blocks

have been hand cut into shape to replicate the profile of the submarine hull.

Base plates have also been designed and set into the dock floor secured by anchors – a process that involved hydro-demolition to expose the heavily reinforced dock floor.

The cradles are bolted down to the baseplates and can be removed as required, providing the flexibility to accommodate various classes of submarine.

Babcock Submarines managing director Mike Homer said: "Behind the scenes work to ensure that the infrastructure and facilities are in place for *Astute* in-service support is vital, though far less high-profile, and has been on-going for some years.

"Completion of the *Astute* cradle at Devonport is a major step in this and now both Devonport and Clyde have excellent facilities."

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Cradle block and wooden cappers are pictured ready for *Astute* at Devonport

Company brings Defender work back to the UK

NEW FACILITIES are to be opened at Lee-on-Solent which will bring production of parts for the Defender aircraft back to the UK.

Britten-Norman, building aircraft for nearly 50 years, has for many years outsourced sub-assemblies to eastern Europe.

But rising costs and the enlargement of the European Union has caused a rethink with production now coming back to the former military aerodrome known as Daedalus Airfield.

Returning Defender products and sub-assemblies back to the UK will allow for product improvements and streamlining of the manufacturing process.

Britten-Norman will also be providing an integrated depth maintenance facility for the Defender involving investment in the new site and introduction of 'lean' principles.

William Hynett, chief executive of Britten-Norman, said: "The facility at Daedalus is an exciting new development for the company in its transition from its manufacturing core into a more holistic, multi-site aerospace services-led business."

Defender is a fixed wing aircraft operated by the Army Air Corps.



NEWSREEL

Vehicles on order

THERE are 101 Warthog armoured vehicles currently on order, according to figures released to Parliament by Defence Equipment, Support and Technology Minister Peter Luff. Also on order (complete vehicle platforms) are 30 Husky, 48 Wolfhound, 32 Mastiff, 20 Ridgback, four Talisman excavators, one Talisman Buffalo and one Talisman Mastiff 2.

C-17 ready for work

THE seventh C-17 Globemaster III aircraft is expected to enter service with the RAF in January 2011 against an approved in-service date of May 2011, Minister for Defence Equipment, Support and Technology Peter Luff has revealed in a Parliamentary answer.

Clyde plans

PLANS for replacing the existing radioactive waste facilities at Clyde naval base are under development, Peter Luff, Minister for Defence Equipment, Support and Technology has told Parliament. A study of the future radioactive waste processing requirement is nearing completion, which will inform options for the new facility. It is thought the new facility will not be operational until the latter part of the decade.

A dog's life!

THERE are 399 military working dogs across the Armed Forces, according to Parliamentary figures, primarily labradors, German shepherd, mallenots and English springer spaniels. There are a further 503 dogs within guarding organisations.

Echo enters Falmouth in summer build-up

THE ROYAL Navy's advanced survey ship *HMS Echo*, right, is berthed in Falmouth Dockyard for the first time in a couple of years for a planned maintenance period to prepare the ship for her training over the summer and deployment later in the year.

The ship's commanding officer, Commander Mike O'Sullivan, said: "Falmouth Dockyard provides us with the ideal facilities and expertise to ensure that we are ready in all respects for the challenges that await us in the coming months."



Extra detectors all set to save more front line lives



Vallon at DVD: page 27

Prime Minister David Cameron is given a lesson in the use of Vallon by Lance Corporal Mick Shelley during a visit to Afghanistan. Mr Cameron spent time with troops, the Provincial Reconstruction Team, Afghan politicians and Afghan civilians during his visit. He also addressed troops at Camp Bastion and Sangin.

Picture: Corporal Gary Kendall RLC

THE FINAL tranche of new Vallon metal detectors are set to be delivered this month.

Following the successful introduction of the Vallon detector – a proven lifesaver for troops hunting roadside bombs in Afghanistan – DE&S' Manoeuvre Support team placed a new contract with Nato Maintenance and Supply Agency last January for another batch.

The first were delivered in May with the balance this month.

"This additional order will add to the protective layer against IEDs & EEDs provided to our troops on operations," said Steve Warwick of Manoeuvre Support.

"It also gives commanders greater freedom of movement in the fight against the Taliban."

Vallon was originally brought into service 12 months ahead of schedule in September 2008 and intended for specialist use only.

However, the equipment proved so successful that it was introduced more widely.

"Feedback from theatre shows that these metal detectors are undoubtedly saving lives and, while they do not prevent all incidences, they should continue to reduce the number involving our ground troops," added Mr Warwick.

Due to the normal wear and tear on equipment of this nature, during operations a contract was also let last December with Ultra Electronics for numerous repair kits.

This will enable a significant number of repairs to be carried out in theatre ensuring more detectors are maintained at the required operational level. These repair kits were delivered in May.

Present and correct: the crew of *HMS Dauntless* are ready to take over their newly-commissioned warship

Defender takes radar on board

ANOTHER TYPE 45 milestone was achieved on 2 June when the Sampson Multi Function Radar was fitted to the fifth of the Type 45s – *Defender*.

The system, designed by BAES Insyte, is the first of a new generation of multi-function radars that provide surveillance, target tracking and missile guidance information.

It can track more than 1,000 airborne objects out to 250 kilometres and can engage several targets simultaneously.

Sampson uses two rotating arrays which combine a high data rate with more pulses striking the target to provide greater accuracy and better electronic counter-countermeasures (ECCM) performance.

The 4.6 tonne masthead assembly is air cooled and each sensor face has around 2,500 gallium arsenide transceivers.

An MFR installation inspection on *Defender* is planned for mid-August.

Setting To Work will start straight after installation inspection and is to be completed by the end of October.

At the double! – Type 45s pass more milestones

HMS DAUNTLESS, the second of the six-strong Type 45 class of destroyers, has become a fully-fledged Royal Navy warship.

The vessel was commissioned last month during a ceremony in her home port of Portsmouth, joining her sister ship *HMS Daring*, commissioned last year.

At the same time, the third Type 45, *Diamond*, successfully completed her latest trials off the west coast of Scotland.

It is excellent news for DE&S. Head of the Type 45 programme at DE&S, Commodore Steve Brunton, said: "This double celebration is a very significant moment in the Type 45 programme.

"These two events signal the continuing success of the *Daring* programme and is a result of the considerable effort from DE&S staff, industry and

Navy Command operating in a new and beneficial collaborative relationship."

At the Portsmouth ceremony, Captain Richard Powell, commanding officer of *HMS Dauntless*, said: "This is a great day for the Royal Navy and particularly for the crew who are all delighted to serve in this fantastic ship.

"Sailing past the Round Tower and into the Naval Base onboard *HMS Dauntless* was one of the proudest moments of my career and I am sure that the ship will continue to bring pride to the Royal Navy."

For *Diamond*, low-flying aircraft and surface targets were used in tests to demonstrate the accuracy of her radar and sensors. Her communication systems were also pushed to the limit and were tested

in all configurations under demanding conditions.

Her Senior Naval Officer, Commander Paddy Munns, said: "I was aware of the Type 45's abilities from my colleagues in *Daring* and *Dauntless* – but having experienced sea trials in *Diamond* I now fully appreciate the power and potential of these great ships.

"*Diamond*'s impressive speed and agility, coupled with her world-class air defence system, make her a formidable asset in anti-air warfare, as well as being able to contribute to a wide range of military tasks.

"I'm proud of my ship's company and what they have achieved at this stage of trials, – working alongside the MOD and BAE Systems to achieve such outstanding results. We now can't wait to move on board and take her to the next stage."

Diamond is now back in Scotstoun shipyard and is due to sail to Portsmouth later this year.

Sir Jock takes shine to *Diamond*

DIAMOND HOSTED the Chief of the Defence Staff during her sea trials.

Air Chief Marshal Sir Jock Stirrup was joined by Admiral Mark Anderson during a tour of the ship and a series of briefings.

These emphasised the adaptability of the ship and the importance of future maritime programmes such as the *Queen Elizabeth* Class and Type 26 learning lessons from the Type 45 programme.

Sir Jock spoke to many of the ship's company and industry staff who were on board at the time, and was very interested in the Ops room, where he spent a considerable part of the visit, and in the Sea Viper missile system.

Right: Sir Jock on his tour of *Diamond*



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New techniques help cut sub maintenance costs

INNOVATIVE ENGINEERING for a costly and time-consuming issue in submarine maintenance is being applied for the first time on *HMS Trenchant*.

The new development uses leading edge non-destructive testing (NDT) technology to enable the propulsion tailshaft on the *Trafalgar* class submarine to be inspected for defects and revalidated in-situ, with significant benefits over conventional removal methods.

The submarine is currently in its Revalidation and Maintenance Period by Babcock at Devonport.

Rigorous inspection is needed on the tailshaft, particularly if seawater has seeped under its protective glass reinforced plastic layer.

Normally the tailshaft – up to 20 metres long and weighing more than 20 tonnes – would have to be removed. This involves machining off the protective layer which is costly, time-consuming and often results in no problems being found.

The new method saves time, money and avoids delays during docking periods.

The novel solution was developed by a team including DE&S' Maritime Equipment Services, Babcock, Frazer-Nash Consultancy, and NDT industry partners Imes and Sonovation.



Novel techniques are being used in rigorous inspection of submarine's tailshafts

The tailshaft is now inspected from inside the tailshaft bore, using advanced NDT technology to penetrate the wall thickness and identify defects on the external surface from within.

Sensors have to identify small defects (typically 1.5 mm) through a comparatively thick wall (50-200mm) at up to 20 metres distance, and must distinguish between corrosion pits, cracks and welded machining repairs.

Jon Nicholson of DE&S' Maritime Equipment Services said: "We now have a robust, cost-effective alternative for

the management of tailshaft safety, with the potential to save considerable time and money during docking periods.

"The ability to inspect and revalidate tailshafts in-situ now means that inspections can be carried out on a three-yearly basis, at Devonport and Faslane, with potential to provide added safety and submarine availability benefits."

Babcock's integrated technology manager Steve Cann added: "The solution our team has developed is right on the cusp of the technologically possible, to meet the considerable demands successfully."

Oak handed over to DE&S

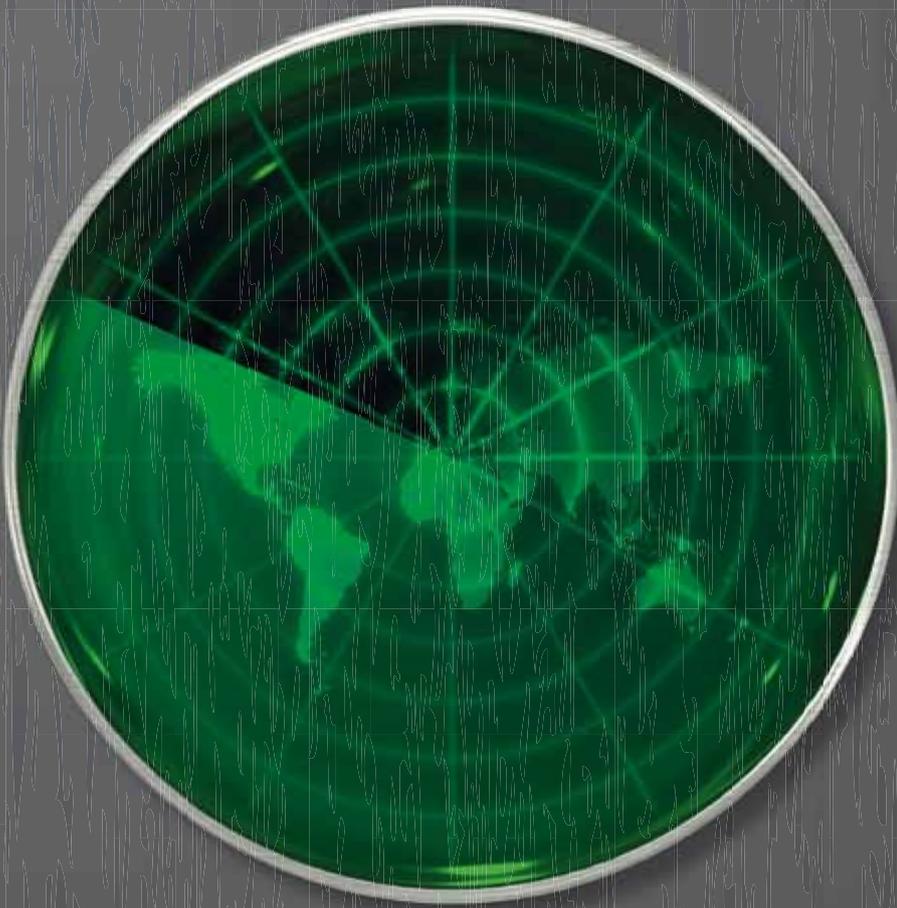


DEFENCE ESTATES handed over the newly constructed Oak Building at Abbey Wood North to DE&S on 4 June.

Built to the latest sustainability, environmental and Disability Discrimination Act standards by Debut, the MOD's regional prime contractor for the south west, the new 600 desk space office building, pictured left, was completed three months ahead of schedule and under budget.

The building also provides additional meeting rooms, a staff restaurant, gym facilities and 100 more car parking spaces at Abbey Wood North.

A period of internal fit out is now underway and will complete by next month when the first teams will take up residency.



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Lessons in Life

Millbrook's Julian Bryan looks at the development of new military vehicle systems and the even greater role that could be played by the military training community.

"The role of test engineering organisations, such as Millbrook, is to aid the development of vehicles and systems. Once new equipment is developed it is introduced to training organisations which work closely with military personnel to educate them on how best to use the vehicle system. Therefore, it is imperative that those carrying out training have the upmost understanding of the new systems, how they work and their characteristics.

"Yet, we should be involving the training community at an earlier stage than that. They've got so much to give in terms of expertise and knowledge that we could harness, further. As a supply chain, we need to be inclusive and embrace the training community – as well as user authorities such as the TDUs – in the development cycle. That way, equipment on the front line will be improved even further."

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Full dispersal of 118 flares from an Apache Longbow helicopter on low level exercise above Larkhill



Company shows flair for new production

PRODUCTION OF aerial protection flares for UK aircraft will be improved by a new manufacturing plant at Middle Wallop on Salisbury Plain.

Esterline Defense Technologies have unveiled the £10.5 million facility along with 35 new jobs.

It was officially opened by Peter Northen, DE&S' Head of Munitions International and Torpedos, on 22 June.

Once operational, the plant will be able to produce up to 400,000 aerial flares a year,

more than doubling current production capacity at the Craydown Lane site.

The decision to develop the project is in response to greater demand for flares for UK Forces. Managing director John Taylor said: "By responding to the needs of the MOD we are helping to safeguard the lives of British aircrew around the world, while providing more jobs for people in our local community."

The 118/218 IRCM flares produced at the factory will protect UK helicopters, transport and fighter aircraft around the globe.

Trafalgar submarines go on new maintenance deal

MAINTENANCE COSTS on *Trafalgar* class submarines will be reduced as part of a new contracting for availability approach to their in-service support.

The approach will improve availability and certainty of delivery from maintenance of the nuclear-powered attack boats.

It has been introduced by a joint DE&S and Babcock team, incorporated into the Warship Support Modernisation Initiative at Devonport.

Contracting for availability, which offers incentives for improved availability of the boats, is a first for the submarine community after successful introduction in other areas of defence.

With availability requirements agreed, and recognised measurement methods established, this allows the identified factors currently hindering delivery – from

emergent defects to manpower availability – to be addressed via a joint improvement programme.

Commodore Ian Jess, Devonport's commander, said: "This is a significant step in moving from contracting for submarine engineering load towards a commercial mechanism focused on the MOD's output requirements: the delivery of safe, capable and available submarines to meet the Fleet programme."

The new contracting for

availability arrangement is now in place and 'live', with performance being monitored by the joint team.

Babcock's Gavin Leckie added: "Improved availability at sea to meet Fleet's requirements is all the more vital as the *Trafalgar* class submarines get older, innovative approaches are needed to deliver that.

"The required outputs are needed at lower cost, demanding maximum efficiency within affordability constraints."

Modernisation continues to deliver

BABCOCK SAYS it has delivered nearly double the level of savings that it committed to achieving in the first year of the new Warship Support Modernisation Initiative at Devonport.

The company provides engineering support to Royal Navy ships and submarines, waterfront support services, logistics, and estates and facilities management and maintenance at Devonport. The agreement was renewed last year for another four years following a successful 18 month extension to the original agreement in place since 2002.

Babcock committed to deliver significant additional savings of more than £67 million, building on the £80 million cumulative savings achieved to date under the previous agreements.



Beckham – the new desert hawk!

DAVID BECKHAM has come face to face with Desert Hawk, the unmanned air system in Afghanistan.

The former England football captain, out of action with an Achilles tendon injury, was on a visit to Camp Bastion to raise morale of troops on operations before journeying to South Africa to support his World Cup colleagues.

And he was shown the hand-launched Desert Hawk 3, operated by 47 Regiment, Royal Artillery.

The Desert Hawk 3 was procured under an Urgent Operational Requirement from Lockheed Martin (USA), enhancing capability in Iraq and Afghanistan from 2007.

The MOD has procured 22 systems of 176 air vehicles. With an endurance of 60 minutes and a range of 15km the system provides critical day and night overwatch of ground troops on operations via its electro-optical and infra-red cameras.

David Beckham is pictured on his visit to 47 Regiment, Royal Artillery.

Scientists advance cause of DE&S 'eye in the sky'

SCIENTISTS, TECHNICIANS and engineers have completed trials at the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) which could help disrupt terrorist activities.

The experiment, the first of its kind in the UK, used cutting edge sensors that capture a range of images and data, in support of defence, security and crime prevention.

The two-week trial, at Dstl's Porton Down site near Salisbury, was designed to assess a range of emerging technologies to understand how they may be used to identify and defeat terrorist networks by tracking insurgents' movements.

The trial included:

- Airborne, ground-based and vehicle-mounted sensors, both optical and radar
- New data processing techniques
- Two airborne radar sensors that track moving targets from long range
- Electro-optical camera that can identify people in unusual poses, such as holding a weapon
- Wide-area surveillance of static and moving targets
- 3D imagery
- Colour and shape interpretation

Andrew Seedhouse, sensors and countermeasures chief technologist at Dstl, said: "Think of it as the ultimate CCTV system. An incident occurs, perhaps an IED goes off, and we can use this



Blyth next for Rosyth

SANDOWN CLASS minehunter *HMS Blyth* has started a six month Support Period Docking by Babcock at Rosyth. The programme includes two first of class fits, as well as a substantial maintenance package. She is due back at sea in the autumn

Awarded under the Surface Ship Support Alliance *HMS Blyth* will be the first single role minehunter to receive the Defence Information Infrastructure (Future) information sharing system while a further fit will provide remote isolation capability to the waste water system.

Project manager David Winstanley said: "My dedicated team and I are looking forward to maintaining the excellent partnering arrangements already established for *Sandown Class* and delivering this challenging project to time, cost and quality."

host of data to back track over time. Who was near the scene and where were they before the incident? What buildings or vehicles can we now associate with the incident?

"Could we now link people, vehicles, events, buildings and locations to the collection of equipment or the buying of materials? All the sensor data can form a complete picture.

"Looking to the future, this

research will help us to look for anomalies both in behaviour and environment, and work towards surveillance alerts to appropriate forces before an incident occurs."

Aircraft used in the trial, both fixed-wing and helicopters, flew from Boscombe Down.

Dstl works with DE&S, industry and academia to deliver battle-winning technologies supporting front line troops.

NEWSREEL

DSEi dates announced

DSEi, the international exhibition for land, sea and air applications of defence and security, will be at ExCel in London from 13-16 September next year. It will for the first time feature a dedicated international electronics pavilion providing a focus area for electronics companies to present their products and technologies to the 25,000-plus visitors expected to attend the event.

Contract award

ENGINEERING consultancy Frazer-Nash, working with Marshall Aerospace, has been awarded a contract by the European Defence Agency (EDA) to investigate potential for European-wide harmonisation of military aircraft airworthiness certification criteria.

New guidance

THE Capability Delivery Practitioners' Guidance – the defining source for how the programme approach operates – has been refreshed and contains additional chapters; Release 2 can be accessed through acquisition policy on the defenceintranet

Support to the Afghanistan theatre is still the main priority: a soldier from the Royal Engineer Search Team is pictured on a route clearance patrol with a Mastiff giving flanking protection during a security operation in Nad-e Ali



PETER LUFF, MP for Mid-Worcestershire, married into a naval family. His father-in-law is a retired naval officer who taught at Dartmouth while his brother-in-law is a serving naval officer.

His own father, a sergeant in the Berkshire Yeomanry, served during World War One and, along with two brothers, survived the horrors of Gallipoli, before joining the Imperial Camel Corps and serving with Lawrence of Arabia in Damascus.

Before becoming Minister for Defence Equipment, Support and Technology in the new Coalition government, Mr Luff, an MP for Worcester since 1992, headed the private office of Sir Edward Heath in the 1980s and became a successful businessman in the corporate communications industry. He has also been company secretary of his family's retail stationery firm.

He lives in Worcestershire with his wife Julia. They have two grown-up children.

For a minister with only a limited military background Peter Luff has developed a quick grasp of his new brief. A keen supporter of the Armed Forces Parliamentary Scheme where MPs 'join' the Forces for weeks at a time to see military life, he has built up a stock of experience. He is well qualified to talk on DE&S.

"Urgent Operational Requirements (UORs) achieved by DE&S, delivering kit to our people to make life safer, and their lives better is a fantastic success story," he said. "And we have to talk about it more. It just shows what can be done. It requires a constant blitz to get this message across."

As Minister for Defence Equipment, Support and Technology – the amended title shows the increasing importance of technology insertion into defence equipment – for only a few weeks Mr Luff has received a crash course in the work of DE&S which has given him the knowledge he will need to contribute to the forthcoming Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR).

"The range and scale of the work done by DE&S is breathtaking," he said. "Abbey Wood is a hugely impressive operation and I pay tribute to all those who brought two organisations into one. It has worked in a short timescale with very sharp reductions in staff. But the 'can do' attitude you see in the Armed Services you see at DE&S too."

Despite briefs on major projects Mr Luff is keen on second opinions. "I am told the equipment DE&S produces is very good. On my visits to see equipment I have been impressed. It does look good. But I will be going to theatre in the not-too-distant future and one of my key questions will be, is this actually true? I'm inclined to think it is but I need to hear it from the horse's mouth.

"Many of us have friends and relations in theatre who say things are coming along quite fast in the quality of kit the troops are getting. But public perceptions lag a long way behind reality. It's a problem politicians face all the time. People judge things on what they heard a year or two ago, Those memories linger on and it is very true of kit. It has got better, a lot of lessons have been learned, but that doesn't mean we can't make further improvements.

"The number one priority is to make sure the Afghanistan effort is supported" he added. "You can't fault the DE&S effort towards UORs – at what cost to the rest of the organisation, well, discuss – but that effort has been fantastic.

"The second priority has to be getting things back in balance again. The organisation is hopelessly overcommitted and cannot afford what it is committed to. But we can't rush decisions. In a sense this is an easy time for me as we wait for SDSR and we'll be much busier in the autumn when we know exactly what it is we want to achieve."

Mr Luff, with a long record of success in business, has spoken to staff about

Interview: Steve Moore

The services are always 'can do' – so is DE&S

– says the new minister in his first month in post

a new relationship with industry. “We will always be at a disadvantage against the commercial sector, their commercial skills, their legal skills, their lobbying campaigns. So we must make sure we upskill people. I know a lot of that is already happening. Project management work for example which the Chief of Defence Materiel is always telling me about, is clearly improving rapidly and we are in some cases leading the rest of the country, but that kind of skill has to be developed so we can take on industry. Industry has to recognise that they may want a long term base but they must treat us fairly too. They can't take us for granted. Rebalancing means empowering us to take on industry.

“Other priorities include treating our small and medium sized enterprises properly and trying to increase the exportability of our equipment. I'm really keen on making sure our exports in the defence world rise. We are very good already; we can do much better.”

There will be an updated version of the Defence Industrial Strategy (DIS) informed by SDSR. Again Mr Luff is forthright. “What was crucially wrong with the old DIS was that it didn't have a price tag to it. It was a wish list, and the next DIS can't be a wish list,” he said. “We haven't made formal decisions on how we go forward on that, but we want industry heavily involved. I'm clear that the defence industry is a big part of the British economy and I'm concerned to make sure that any decisions we take affecting

procurement actually enforce the success of industry to the nation.”

Parts of the Gray Report last year caused controversy. “Some of the phraseology of the Gray Report might have upset people but there was a lot of common sense in it. He proposed GOCOs (government-owned, commercially operated), which I disagree with very strongly. But there are too many types of equipment, too many tasks they have to perform, too many specifications. Bad decision making here in Whitehall is part of the problem. Abbey Wood gets dumped on very often for faults which are created elsewhere in the system. As ministers we have to make sure that we stop that, that we set achievable targets for DE&S. A lot of Gray is already there and not controversial.

“I don't see how you can remove the military from the process. We appoint a new Chief of Defence Materiel later this year and I don't want to curtail that person's freedom of manoeuvre specifically by what I think should happen at Abbey Wood. They should have the freedom of manoeuvre to make any changes they want to but I do see it as difficult to remove the military. We need the military to make sure we get the capabilities right.

Mr Luff has echoed the new Defence Secretary's warning about future economies. “We haven't got the money we need to do the things we want to do on current plans,” he said. “We face a budgetary problem as a department and a budgetary crisis as a country. We have to make savings and DE&S can't be exempt from that process. Efficiencies have to be driven into the whole process. The 25 per cent figure you have heard applies to the main running costs of the department. The department can rise to the challenge; it has to, as we can't go on as we are.”

Mr Luff's appointment surprised many, not the least his wife, who answered the early morning phone call from the Prime Minister. “I had said I would like to be a minister but only in a job I would enjoy doing,” said Mr Luff. “I wanted to do a job I would believe in. This job I hadn't considered available. It is, and I'm thrilled.”



New Minister for Defence Equipment, Support and Technology, Peter Luff, second from right, joins staff to look at rations and land equipment during one of his visits to Abbey Wood



Two carriers – two years on

From contract signature to steel cut to the start of assembly, the story of (the beginnings of) the Royal Navy's biggest ships

From the drawing board to the dock - the carrier story so far . . .

3 JULY 2008

Manufacture contract and Alliance agreement signed.

Contracts worth in the region of £3 billion were signed with the newly-formed UK Maritime Joint Venture, BVT Surface Fleet, and the Aircraft Carrier Alliance (ACA) onboard *HMS Ark Royal*, one of the Royal Navy's existing aircraft carriers and currently the Fleet Flagship.

OCTOBER 2008

Power and propulsion sub-alliance.

Thales UK, on behalf of the ACA, formed a power and propulsion sub-alliance and awarded sub-contracts to Rolls-Royce, Converteam and L3 Communications to fit the latest marine power and propulsion technology on the ships, worth around £235 million.

DECEMBER 2008

Construction begins in Appledore.

Babcock's shipyard in Appledore began with pre-fabrication of steel for the ships, securing many jobs at the North Devon shipyard.

7 JULY 2009

Ceremonial steel cutting.

A major milestone was achieved when the Princess Royal performed the first cutting of steel on *HMS Queen Elizabeth*. The ceremony took place at BAES' facility in Govan and was attended by hundreds of dignitaries from the Armed Forces, politicians from Westminster

and the Scottish Parliament, members and employees of the Aircraft Carrier Alliance, industry stakeholders as well as employees and some apprentices from BAE and Babcock.

AUGUST 2009

First shipment from Babcocks shipyard in Appledore.

The first sponson units were successfully delivered from Appledore to Rosyth, this being the first shipment for the Queen Elizabeth Class from Appledore. The sponson units make up the overhanging upper hull structure.

OCTOBER 2009

BAE take over VT.

BVT become wholly owned by BAE Systems and was renamed BAE Systems Surface Ships.

JANUARY 2010

Coronet Building opens at Cowes on the Isle of Wight.

Head of Capital Ships Tony Graham accompanied by Cdr Owen McDermott formally opened the Coronet Building at Cowes. The facility is being used for the early de-risking of the advanced communications systems. By testing the technology early in the process developers can locate problems early, find the right solutions and incorporate those answers at lower prices.

FEBRUARY 2010

Steel cutting Portsmouth.

Steel-cutting was carried out on a section of the hull for *HMS Queen Elizabeth* in Portsmouth. Portsmouth which will be the future home of both carriers.

APRIL 2010

Bow sections delivered to Rosyth.

Lower Block 01 – the bow section of *HMS Queen Elizabeth* was delivered to Rosyth; the two sections made a six day journey by barge from Appledore, North Devon to Rosyth in Scotland.

APRIL 2010

Delivery of diesel generators.

The forward diesel generators equipment package was successfully delivered to the BAE SS facility in Portsmouth in April. After a three-week voyage from Trieste, Italy, via Rotterdam, they arrived at Portsmouth Harbour on Sunday 25 April.

MAY 2010

Completion of work on No 1 Dock.

Work on No. 1 Dock at Rosyth was completed and the contractor is preparing for hand back to Babcock. All repairs are complete on the vessel support blocks and the upper skidding system is currently being installed.

JUNE 2010

The Aircraft Carrier Alliance launches its interactive website <http://www.aircraftcarrieralliance.co.uk>



It was on 3 July 2008 when pen was put to paper on contracts with industry to build the two Queen Elizabeth class aircraft carriers.

Now just two years later, manufacture is well underway with work taking place at six UK shipyards – Babcock at Appledore and Rosyth, BAES Surface Ships (BAES-SS) at Govan and Portsmouth, A&P Tyne and Cammell Laird at Birkenhead.

It is anticipated that work on the ships will create or sustain between 7,000 and 8,000 jobs at the Tier 1 shipyards in Glasgow, Rosyth, Portsmouth and Devon, with 2-3,000 jobs in the support chain.

Many major milestones have been achieved in the last two years, including start of construction at Appledore in late 2008, first cutting of steel, placement of more than 100 material and services sub-contracts worth £1.2 billion, delivery of large equipment items such as propellers, diesel

generators and anchors, construction of the dock at Rosyth where the ships will finally be assembled, and subsequent delivery of blocks as they are completed. Today, more than 1.2 million components fill the warehouse for distribution during the build phase.

One of the most significant milestones occurred one year after contract signature when the Princess Royal performed the first cutting of steel on the first carrier. The ceremony took place at BAES's facility in Govan.

The most visible landmark was achieved in April with the move of the first major block (Lower Block 01 – the bow section) of *HMS Queen Elizabeth* from Appledore to Rosyth. It was a spectacular sight to see it pass under the Forth Road Bridge.

Head of DE&S Capital Ships Tony Graham said: "It is an honour to be leading this project and I'm very proud of the team for meeting so many significant milestones over the last two years since signing the manufacture contract.

"One of the most memorable moments for me was opening the Coronet Facility as it was the first time that I could imagine the scale of the endeavours ahead of us. The project plans are now so detailed, that I know on a daily basis where I'll be travelling and what I'll be witnessing over the next two years."

His thoughts were echoed by Geoff Searle, programme director for the Aircraft Carrier Alliance which brings together the project's leading contractors with DE&S.

'I know on a daily basis where I'll be travelling and what I'll be witnessing over the next two years'

"Significant progress has been made since the manufacturing contract was signed in July 2008," he said. "We have already achieved many key milestones and I have no doubt that we will continue to do so as the programme progresses.

"The visible progress on the large hull blocks in BAE Systems shipyards in Portsmouth and Govan is very encouraging and most recently I was delighted to see the first units for *HMS Queen Elizabeth* arriving in Rosyth earlier this year, proving the clear progress that we are making.

"We will be starting work at the sixth and final shipyard in July and the Goliath crane is also due to arrive in Rosyth later this year, both of which are huge milestones on the programme.

"Industry and ministry teams from across the Alliance have been working really hard to ensure that we have arrived at this stage of the programme and I have no doubt that this level of commitment will continue over the coming years to ensure that we deliver the best ships possible to the Royal Navy."



Carrier progress: the bulbous bow arrives at Rosyth, top where it will be assembled in the completed No 1 dock, left. Above: Princess Anne performs the first steel cut at Govan, where work got under way last year, above left

Showcase for battle

Report: Steve Moore
Pictures: Andrew Linnett



Safely strapped in: Jackal again proved a popular attraction, showing agility off-road

Tests for the future kit programme

THE MINISTER made a number of pledges to the Armed Forces on equipment during his visit to DVD.

And to achieve objectives he has set down five criteria against which the future equipment programme will be tested.

"We will ensure our Forces receive the equipment they require, when they need it, at a reasonable cost to the taxpayer," he said.

"We will provide the defence industry with a firm basis for planning its work, through the Strategic Defence and Security Review, and by developing a new Defence Industrial Strategy.

"We will support defence jobs by maximising exports because exports help reduce our own acquisition costs.

"And we will ensure that our policy for the defence industry underpins Britain's strategic relationships."

Mr Luff set down the criteria for the defence equipment programme.

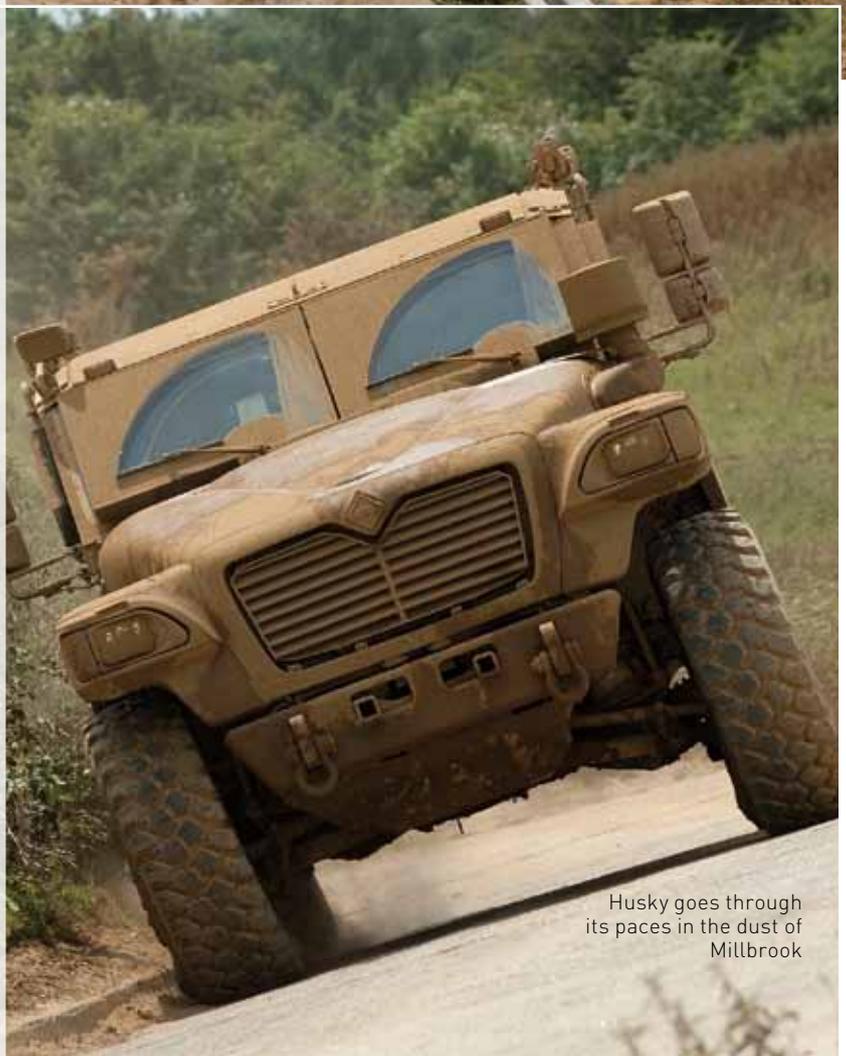
Capability: "We have a bad habit of talking about equipment programmes as if they exist in the abstract when we should be talking about capability," he said. "Does this piece of equipment enable our Forces to fight effectively and win on the modern battlefield?"

Affordability: "Can we afford not only the initial procurement costs but also the through-life costs?"

Adaptability: "How can we get the greatest flexibility in the equipment we buy while ensuring as many potential roles as possible are fulfilled?"

Interoperability: "Will this piece of equipment allow the British Forces to take part in combined and joint military operations with our allies, specifically Nato?"

Exportability: "Is this piece of equipment one that will have a high export demand which may, in the long term, reduce our own acquisition costs at home and, more broadly, help the British economy?"



Husky goes through its paces in the dust of Millbrook

against the roadside bomb

Minister announces more protection for troops is on the way

Countering the threat of the roadside bomb was a theme of DVD, DE&S' annual stakeholder event at Millbrook in Bedfordshire.

Teams from DE&S, the wider MOD and academia mingled with hundreds of companies who supply equipment to the Armed Forces in the two-day event on 23 and 24 June.

The event was opened by Peter Luff MP, the new Minister for Defence Equipment, Support and Technology, who stressed the importance of countering the threat from improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

"In simple terms Counter-IED is not just about a bomb disposal expert defusing a bomb, vital and dangerous though that role is," he said in his opening remarks.

"It's about things like protected mobility. Military commanders have repeatedly stressed the importance of having a wide range of vehicles from which they can select the most appropriate for specific tasks.

"We are running a competition to acquire the next generation of Light Protected Patrol Vehicles – LPPV – which will replace Snatch Land Rovers on operations and provide a step change in capability.

"We will agree a contract for an initial tranche of 200 vehicles under an Urgent Operational Requirement from the Treasury Reserve, later this year.

"I'm pleased to announce a contract for a further 140 Jackal 2A weapons-mounted patrol vehicles in a deal worth about £45 million. This will bring the number of Jackal vehicles delivered to more than 500.

"I can also announce an extra 28 Wolfhound heavy tactical support vehicles in a deal worth approximately £20 million.

"And DVD gives everyone the first chance to view Talisman, a route proving and clearing system, which was delivered to Afghanistan in April and has been providing vital support to operations as part of our overall response to the IED threat."

Mr Luff toured the site where he was shown a range of protected vehicles.

He was taken around the off-road course in a Panther command vehicle and met the crew of a Mastiff protected vehicle which had saved their lives when it drove over a roadside bomb.

He also visited a number of DE&S teams' exhibition stands where he was briefed on the latest equipment and small arms currently being supplied into theatre.



Protection for troops: Mr Luff emerges from a Mastiff 3, on show at DVD while, below, Warthog gets a public, and rather damp, outing. The vehicle will be a replacement for Viking in Afghanistan when it comes into service



Mastiff – 'worth its weight in gold'

**Soldiers survive two
mine blasts in two
days on patrol in
Afghanistan**



Above: happy to be home safely – Fusilier Danny Hughes shows off Mastiff to the crowds at DVD.
Right: Members of 1st Battalion, The Royal Welsh – from left: Platoon Commander Lieutenant Mark Lewis, Fusilier Danny Hughes and Lance Corporal Kristian Orton



Left: Minister for Defence Equipment, Support and Technology Peter Luff meets the survivors of IED incidents in Helmand Province, including L/Cpl Kristian Orton, who brought along his two-week-old son Finlay

DVD played host to a Mastiff crew whose armoured vehicle helped them survive two bomb blasts in successive days while on patrol in Afghanistan.

The soldiers, from 10 Platoon, D Company of 1st Battalion, The Royal Welsh, were struck by improvised explosive devices in the Babaji district of central Helmand Province. All spoke of their admiration for the robust performance of their Mastiff.

Platoon Commander Lieutenant Mark Lewis, 26 from Swansea, survived both explosions. "The first IED strike blew the Mastiff across the road," he said. "I was top cover at the time and blown out of the turret but stopped from landing in the nearby field by the cam net. Once the dust settled I could hear the lads in the cabin. I dropped down fearing the worst, not knowing what I would see next.

"Thankfully they were all OK, with only minor injuries and the next day we were all back out on patrol."

Nineteen-year-old Fusilier Danny Hughes from Ellesmere Port was driving Mastiff during the second blast. He said: "To me Mastiff is worth its weight in gold, a good bit of kit. When we hit the device we were all shocked but we soon realised that everybody was OK and we just got on with our job.

"We are confident in the protection that this vehicle gives us against IEDs and we are all living proof that it works."

Fusilier Hughes was joined at DVD by his fiancée Jenny and young son Alfie.

Lance Corporal Kristian Orton, 29 and from Barry, South Wales, brought his two-week old son Finlay to DVD. L/Cpl Orton was providing top cover for another Mastiff when he saw his

comrades caught in the first of the IED blasts.

He said: "I man the Mastiff 50 cal gun, so if anything happens you are the initial response because you will be the first to see it. It wasn't pleasant to see the lads take a hit but I knew that they would be OK.

"I feel safe in the Mastiff because I

'We are confident in the protection that this vehicle gives us against IEDs and we are all living proof that it works'

know first hand that it can withstand the impact of an IED. They are an invaluable tool to those on the front line."

Mastiff is the heavily-armoured, six-wheel protected patrol vehicle, which carries eight people, plus two crew. It is used to transport troops and protect large convoys as well as directly engaging the Taliban with its advanced weapons systems.

They were first introduced on operations in 2006. It is based on an American model with modifications in the UK.

More than 250 of these heavily armoured vehicles in a range of different versions are currently in service with a further 100 planned for delivery.

During a visit to Afghanistan last month, the Prime Minister announced £67 million of extra funding to be put towards countering the IED threat. Around £40 million of this will be spent on more protected vehicles, including Mastiffs.

Lieutenant Lewis and his men were back on duty the next day in another area of the province which was known to have IEDs.

He said: "I was more than happy to go out again in the Mastiff after the first explosion because I knew that it would keep me safe. This time I was out with my platoon which was split into two separate Mastiffs. The area we were in was known to have IEDs and as we were calling in for support we came under fire.

"As we were manoeuvring my Mastiff to get into a better position we were hit by one of the IEDs. It wasn't particularly nice getting hit but at the end of the day the Mastiff did its job and took the brunt of the explosion, which saved our lives."

Seats in a Mastiff are designed to provide blast protection to the troops inside the vehicle. They have a load limiting element, which means they absorb the effect of the blast by dropping down, partially mitigating the upward force.

This reduces the upward body force felt by the crew and significantly reduces the chance of injury.

All the men have returned from Afghanistan to their home towns in Wales after finishing their tour of duty in April.

'I feel safe in the Mastiff because I know first hand that it can withstand the impact of an IED. They are an invaluable tool to those on the front line'

Report: Hannah Swingler
Pictures: Andrew Linnett and
Richard Watt

Right:
Mastiff – a
life-saving
addition to
front line
capability



Talisman – when you need more than just luck on the battlefield

Talisman is delivered by a partnership of companies, many of them UK-based: JCB Defence UK (who subcontract some elements to the US), Thales Land and Joint (UK/FR), NP Aerospace (UK), Force Protection International (US), ALC (UK), General Dynamics UK (UK), Selex Galileo (UK/IT), Honeywell (US/UK), QinetiQ/Foster-Millar (UK/US), Kongsberg (SW). Technical support comes in contracts with BMT defence, HKB Training Solutions, PA Consulting, QinetiQ and Frazer Nash



The British military's latest weapon to help counter the threat posed by Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and mines was unveiled at DVD.

Talisman is a suite of vehicles operated by the Royal Engineers that clears routes of IEDs and mines. It was bought as an Urgent Operational Requirement (UOR) worth more than £180 million.

Each Talisman system consists of:

- A Mastiff Protected Patrol Vehicle
- A Buffalo Mine Protected Vehicle with rummaging arm (picture 1)
- A JCB High Mobility Engineer Excavator (2)
- A T-Hawk Micro Air Vehicle (3)
- Talon tracked Remote Control Vehicle (4)

Patrick Beazley, Head of Combat Wheels Group at DE&S, said: "Talisman will improve our ability to manage the IED and mine threat with the system's primary mission being to protect vehicle convoys delivering supplies to Forward Operating Bases.

"It has been designed as a flexible manoeuvre support capability that can be quickly re-tasked and rearranged to meet different mission tasks, operating independently or alongside other bomb disposal systems dependent on the threat.

"It is now part of a wide range of tools, techniques and tactics we have to help mitigate the risk to our forces from the threat of IEDs."



Contenders line up in LPPV contract race



Contenders: Ocelot, above right, and the SPV-400, above, are the options for the Snatch Land Rover replacement



BOTH CANDIDATES for replacement of the Snatch Land Rover were on show at DVD.

The Light Protected Patrol Vehicle (LPPV) will replace Snatch in theatre for a wide range of patrol tasks.

They will need to be agile to provide cross country mobility and allow engagement with the local population, often in areas inaccessible to heavier vehicles.

The two vehicles competing for the contract are the Ocelot, produced by Force Protection Europe, based in Warwickshire, working together with West Sussex company Ricardo; and the SPV-400, produced by Devon-based Supacat, working under alliance with Coventry company NP Aerospace.

Both are competing for a contract to provide an initial tranche of 200 LPPVs to meet DE&S' requirement.

General Sir Kevin O'Donoghue, Chief of Defence Materiel, said: "As well as its protection against blasts the LPPV must be able to operate in the harsh conditions of the desert and tight urban environments.

"The new LPPV will have to be technologically advanced and will need to provide the right balance between protection, weight and manoeuvrability."

Vallon shows its mettle – and earns ministerial approval

VALLON – THE new hand-held metal detector – went on show at DVD, with a demonstration carried out by the new minister.

A new batch of Vallons has arrived in Afghanistan to help British ground troops counter the threat of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs).

An additional order of the 3,600 Vallon metal detectors was placed under a new £8.8 million contract with Nato Maintenance and Supply Agency (NAMSA) earlier this year by the Manoeuvre Support team at DE&S.

The lightweight and compact nature of the equipment gives commanders greater freedom of movement in the fight against the Taliban. They are also very easy to use, and received the seal of approval from Peter Luff, Minister for Defence Equipment, Support and Technology, during his visit to DVD on 23 June.

Vallon, which weighs 9kg, was originally brought into service 12 months ahead of schedule in September 2008 intended for specialist use only.

However the equipment proved so successful that it was made available so that all troops could be trained to utilise the detectors and around 3,000 detectors have previously been brought into service.

Vallon is used by the Counter-IED Task Force of Royal Logistic Corps Explosive Ordnance Disposal teams and Royal Engineers search teams. Improved training, tactics and associated equipment lessen the risk posed by IEDs.



Peter Luff tries his hand at mine detection

Rations go lightweight on shorter patrols

Report:
Hannah Swingler

TRIALS OF innovative lightweight patrol ration packs will begin in Afghanistan this summer.

The packs have been designed to feed troops sent on shorter patrols and will reduce the amount of food they carry.

Captain Jeremy Rigby, DE&S' Defence Food Services team leader, said: "Trials are another example of how the food team is constantly looking at ways to improve the provisions sent to sustain our troops.

"Currently troops engaged on shorter patrols select items from 24-hour Multi Climate ration packs to take out with them in their webbing.

"Introduction of these bespoke ration packs will mean that they have a selection of high energy, snacking items that are convenient to carry in light webbing and can be consumed on the move."

Each ration pack weighs on average less than 1kg and will deliver more than 2.5 Kcals per day. They are designed to augment the standard 24-hour and collective feeding ten-man ration packs together with the fresh supplements pushed forward to bases as the security situation allows.

The Multi-Climate Ration Packs provide total nutrition for one soldier for 24 hours.

There are 38 different menus – 20 general, six Halal, six Sikh/Hindu, and six vegetarian, each providing at least 4,000 Kcals per pack.

Menus are designed for use in hot climates to encourage consumption and each pack provides three meals, plus snacks, energy bars, flavoured drink powders, matches and dental chewing gum.

Sign up for your uniforms at the click of a mouse

Report: Hannah Swingler

SERVICE PERSONNEL are being encouraged to sign up for an on-line mail order catalogue which will make it easier for them to obtain their uniforms.

The Interim New Clothing Solution (iNCS) allows service personnel to order their uniforms from a comprehensive on-line catalogue and have it delivered to an authorised address.

Launched by DE&S' Defence Clothing team in March 2008 as a pilot scheme, the system is being upgraded with the capacity to serve up to 50,000 users.

Colonel Stephen James, Defence Clothing team leader, said: "We are making the most of technology to improve clothing supply to all ranks.

"For two years, the pilot project has provided an online ordering system for 4,000 users. Following high satisfaction ratings, and many lessons learned, we are expanding the system."

iNCS is accessed through

System goes smarter with upgraded capacity

an internet website, where service personnel can order kit from a personalised catalogue for delivery within four days of placing an order.

Among the many useful features of iNCS are the clear display of entitlements, recording of an individual's sizing, and an expanded catalogue of items. iNCS works alongside the existing supply chain, giving personnel the flexibility to choose how they select and receive their clothing.

Access to the system will soon become much easier for the user.

The iNCS website is currently being developed to make it compatible with Smartphones (internet capable

phones) removing the need for access through a computer. Users will also be able to sign up to an SMS notification system for text updates on the progress of their order.

Colonel James added: "Depending on where soldiers are based, stores are sometimes difficult to access, and stock can be limited. Getting the kit they need, when they need it, helps personnel do their jobs and boosts morale.

"From Defence Clothing's point of view, iNCS directly improves our support to serving personnel, wherever they are in the world."

Following successful trials of the pilot across UK based units, including ATR Bassingbourn, iNCS extended the reach of the project last February by adding 7th Signal Regiment based in Germany.

iNCS is now rolling out to personnel who will benefit most, such as the Royal College of Defence Medicine, individuals posted in the UK but at a distance from home stores, and those in isolated posts overseas.



Minister for International Security Strategy Gerald Howarth visited DVD on the second day to see some of the capabilities on show. Brigadier Carew Wilks, above left, leader of DE&S' Individual Capability Group, helps the minister with body armour and helmet.



From left: a future soldier wearing clothing for the 21st century, current operational clothing including multi-terrain pattern uniform and Mk 7 helmet, and the past wearing the uniform from five years ago including the Mk 6 helmet

Portrait of a future soldier

Lightening the load

DE&S IS reducing the weight troops on the front line carry with improvements to current and future infantry combat and support kit.

Currently, the average weight of equipment carried by an infantryman is around 66kg – but innovative weight-saving schemes have shaved more than 4.5kg from this. New kit being delivered in October could reduce this by a further 8kg.

Measures implemented include: trials of new lightweight patrol rations that weigh less than 1kg (see page 28); new longer-life batteries to power radios and other equipment; and a new battery recharging system which reduces the number of spare batteries required.

Minister for International Security Strategy, Gerald Howarth, said: “While the modern combat soldier is better equipped than ever before, this has brought

about its own challenges – mainly an increase in the weight being carried.

“The welfare of our troops is paramount and so the work being carried out to reduce this burden is essential to the physical and mental well-being of our troops in what can be 50°C temperatures.

“The other improvements announced are a further demonstration of our determination to equip our forces on the front line with the kit they need.”

DE&S’ Integrated Soldier System Executive has been leading the work to reduce the weight carried on the front line.

Chief of Defence Materiel General Sir Kevin O’Donoghue said: “We have looked at this kit and by simply replacing one item with something that is slightly lighter – but with the same capability – and by improving integration, we have managed to significantly reduce

the burden of what the troops are carrying.

“When you add up all of the grammes and kilograms saved across the kit then you will find that we shed around 12.5 kilos in weight which will make a noticeable difference, both physically and mentally, to these troops who often work in very hot and austere conditions.”

A vision of the future infantry soldier was unveiled at DVD, a long term strategy of a fully integrated lightweight state-of-the-art system with the soldier at its heart. New equipment on show as a possible step towards that goal included the Pecoc helmet, being shown to Chief of Defence Materiel, General Sir Kevin O’Donoghue, below, left.

Pictures: Andrew Linnett



TROOPS OPERATING in hot and gruelling conditions in Afghanistan will continue to receive a high quality supply of water thanks to a new delivery of purification units.

The equipment is designed to produce 5,000 litres a day of drinking water from any fresh water source such as rivers or lakes.

Each Water Purification Unit (WPU) can provide drinking water for up to 200 personnel a day. They will

Water purifiers will quench troops' thirst

be used within Forward Operating Bases to source water as far forward as possible helping to reduce the burden on troops.

Water contamination is a major issue in Afghanistan with many water sources contaminated with harmful bacteria.

The £336,000 contract is with Hampshire-based company Stella Meta.

Martyn Ellis, Water Output Manager in DE&S' Battlefield Utilities team, said: "Supplying troops with drinking water in Afghanistan is a top requirement.

"At home we take free flowing water for granted but on the front line in Afghanistan it is very difficult to come by.

"The units allow

personnel to operate with a greater degree of flexibility in theatre."

Seventeen units have been bought which brings the total number in Afghanistan to 37.

The unit – total weight 220kg – comes complete with a storage tank, distribution pump and supply hoses and operates from an 110v supply.

An optional diesel generator can be supplied.

New trucks will keep engineers safer

A NEW multi-tasking machine that offers added protection against explosions will help carry out essential engineering tasks on the front line in Afghanistan.

A total of 12 Self Loading Dump Trucks (Protected) (SLDT) (P)s have been purchased under an £6.5 million Urgent Operational Requirement contract with Iveco.

The SLDT (P) will provide Royal Engineers with the same level of engineering capability as the current in-service equipment but with the addition of blast and ballistic protection and electronic countermeasures to counter Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs).

The SLDT (P) is expected in service this summer.

David Killock from DE&S' Service Provision Project team, said: "This is a versatile piece of equipment, essential to front line operations in Afghanistan.

"It will be one of the workhorses of the military out in theatre capable of undertaking a wide variety of engineering and construction tasks in airfield damage repair, force protection, general construction and route maintenance.

"The improved level of protection is crucial due to the threat posed by IEDs and means that the vehicle's operators will be safer doing their job."

The SLDT (P) can handle and dump excavated materials, loose construction materials, general engineer cargo, palletised stores, building rubble and

safer

Reports: Tim Foreman and Hannah Swingler

quarried rock. It is fitted with a 360 degree rotating truck crane capable of lifting 2.6 tonnes at a reach of 4.1 metres and 1.7 tonnes at a reach of 6.09 metres.

In addition to the SLDT (P), an unprotected version will be replacing the Volvo FL12, currently used on operations through the C-Vehicle PFI which is provided by Amey Lex Consortium. There will be 71 unprotected versions of the vehicle procured.

SLDT(P) is produced by Iveco (Germany) who supplied cab and chassis, Terex Atlas who supplied crane arm and Thompsons (Croydon) who supplied skip and storage.



While the focus was on DVD, the rest of the Government defence team visited troops on Salisbury Plain to understand the complexities of land warfare. Among those watching a demonstration of IED clearance are Andrew Robathan, Minister for Defence Personnel; Armed Forces Minister Nick Harvey, and Lord Astor, Lords spokesman for Defence.

Boosting front line living standards

TROOPS IN Afghanistan will receive a boost to their living standards thanks to a new contract to supply specially made ablution units.

Fifty-two Tactical Base Ablution Units have been bought under a £10 million Urgent Operational Requirement.

Each unit costs £160,000 and contains three showers, three vacuum-operated W/Cs, one urinal and three washbasin facilities suitable for daily use by 30 to 50 people.

Improved hygiene will help reduce cases of gastro-intestinal disease, the single greatest contributor to disease and non-battle injury on operations in Afghanistan.

The units will be procured through KBR (UK) and manufactured by Acclimatise based in Stoke. Dylan Morris from DE&S' Expeditionary

Campaign Infrastructure team said: "These units will improve the living standards of troops operating in an increasing number of remotely positioned tactical bases, which are often situated in harsh environments.

"The welfare of military personnel operating in Afghanistan is of paramount importance to the MOD and the signing of this contract reflects that."

Andrew Pringle, President KBR International Government and Defence, added: "We are delighted to provide what will be a real boost to living conditions provided by these ablution units – designed to be heliportable as underslung loads and therefore deployable to the most remote locations.

"KBR is pleased to have been selected as prime contractor on this important project."



Last of the Viking raiders

DE&S takes delivery of the final upgraded all-terrain vehicle for force protection in Afghanistan
Pages 32 and 33



March of the Vikings



Last of the latest upgraded vehicles is handed over to DE&S to perform vital force protection duty in Afghanistan

Above: Major General Ian Dale and Jan Soderstroem of BAES Global Combat Systems Vehicles are joined by representatives of DE&S, DSDA and the front line as the last of the 24 upgraded Vikings is handed over to DE&S

Right: Maj-Gen Dale and Mr Soderstroem demonstrate the teamwork needed to complete a rapid UOR programme

Pictures: Andrew Linnett





The latest version of the Viking is already proving its worth on the front line of Afghanistan after the last of the vehicles was handed over to DE&S in a ceremony at Ashchurch.

The 24 Viking II all-terrain vehicles have better mine blast protection than their predecessors as part of a £31 million contract with BAE Systems placed only last September. The vehicles will work in Afghanistan until Warthog, the new armoured vehicle, is available for operational work.

“Viking II employs different materials and configuration in the basic vehicle design as well as being able to carry more substantial mine blast protection plates,” said Lt Col Andy Teare, Viking platform manager in DE&S’ Combat Tracks Group platform team.

“The vehicle remains up to 90 per cent compatible with Viking I and has been delivered at a lower cost than Viking I while offering substantially improved mine blast protection.

“On completion of the order only six months after it was placed and after Urgent Operational Requirement integration Viking II has been deployed to Afghanistan where the benefits of the better protection provided have already been proved.”

Viking came into into service in 2005 with 3 Commando Brigade to provide an amphibious protected mobility capability for the Lead Commando Group.

In October 2006, due to its superior tactical mobility and high levels of ballistic protection, Viking was committed to operations in Afghanistan.

Since then a number of Vikings have been continuously employed to access parts of Helmand Province where other vehicles could not go.

Its ability to function in the extreme terrain of the Green Zone has allowed greater tactical manoeuvre, providing opportunities to vary operations and improve force protection. Its excellent terrain accessibility has enabled forces to operate away from roads, tracks and vulnerable areas where troop movement is predictable and easier for the enemy to target.

Since the initial deployment the entire fleet of 108 Vikings has undergone a number of modifications which has included upgrades in mine blast protection.

“Viking has traded protection for mobility, seeking to avoid the threat as well as to survive attack,” said Lt Col Teare. “Initially successful, this trade became increasingly less effective on Operation Herrick due to the increasing number and size of Improvised Explosive Device attacks.

“The Viking stakeholders could see the ability to continually improve the vehicle beyond that achieved

by retrofitting the Viking I with additional mine blast protection, by integrating improved protection into the fundamental build of the vehicle and thus created Viking II, which has met the need for attrition replacements in theatre and at a lower cost. This approach was endorsed by Platforms team leader Tim Barnard and the Capability Branch Cap GM Col Mark Goldsack.”

The last Viking II was handed over to Maj Gen Ian Dale, DE&S’ Director Land Equipment, by Mr Jan Soderstrom, Managing Director BAES Global Combat Systems Vehicles at the Defence Storage and Distribution Agency’s (DSDA) Ashchurch depot.

Mr Soderstrom said: “The speed and success of this programme showed what close co-operation between determined partners can achieve – DE&S, Dstl (Defence Science and Technology Laboratory), DSDA, Navy Command and BAE Systems with their suppliers working together as one team pooling complementary skills.”



HMS Sceptre glides into Devonport from a worldwide deployment for the final time



Sceptre home for the last time

HMS SCEPTRE has entered port to the sound of the pipes for the final time after an eight-month worldwide deployment and a 32-year career at the end of May.

Since sailing from Faslane in October 2009 she has been conducting training and exercises in the Indian Ocean and Atlantic and has now returned to Devonport naval base before decommissioning later this year.

This final deployment was typical of her role over the last decade, having also been around the

world in 2003, 2004 and 2007.

Sceptre's commanding officer, Commander Steve Waller, said: "This is a sad day for the submarine community as *HMS Sceptre*, the last *Swiftsure* Class submarine still at sea, returns home for the last time.

He added: "My crew have lived up to the hard-working reputation of the *Swiftsure* Class, while *Sceptre* herself has proved how well submarines that began life as archetypal Cold War warriors have adapted to today's needs."

NEWSREEL

New vehicle on the market

A NEW modular reconnaissance and surveillance unmanned ground vehicle, Questar, has been launched by Marshall SDG. Questar is an agile vehicle which can be remotely, semi or fully autonomously controlled. It has been developed from the MOD Grand Challenge-winning Saturn system, part of Team Stellar which won the RJ Mitchell Trophy in 2008. Questar was developed to address the need for a fully autonomous reconnaissance and surveillance UGV.

ITEC success

MORE than 2,900 people from 50 countries attended May's ITEC London conference and exhibition of military training, education and technology simulation, an increase of 20 per cent on last year. More than 150 companies displayed equipment in the show.

Now more e-blueys wing their way into theatre

Report: Hannah Swingler

COMMUNICATION FROM the front line has just become easier with the installation of 13 new e-bluey terminals in Afghanistan.

These latest additions mean that even more troops serving the most remote areas will be able to send and receive messages to and from loved ones.

Servicemen and women deployed all over the world already have access to traditional postal mail service as well as fax bluey and 30 free telephone minutes per week when on operations.

However, this is not always practical when troops are based in more remote bases.

Provided by British Forces Post Office (BFPO) the e-bluey system allows friends and family at home to compose a message online which is then downloaded, printed and sealed

13 new terminals help services keep in touch with home

at the bases in Afghanistan ready for delivery to the addressee often within hours of being sent. Troops can use the same system to send a handwritten reply.

Major Paul Young from BFPO's Technical Support Systems was part of a two-man team who set up the new kit in theatre.

He said: "Since they were first introduced in 2000 the number of e-bluey terminals in Afghanistan has more than doubled and we now have 23 locations across the region where troops can use this facility to send messages to loved ones

back home.

"The service is particularly popular with those troops who are temporarily based in the more remote areas where the traditional mails service may not be as convenient.

"These machines mean that they can always stay in touch and keep up-to-date with life at home which undoubtedly has a positive affect on morale."

The e-bluey service has been further improved by the introduction of the photo e-bluey, which allows the sender to attach a photograph, which is printed in colour, and enclosed within the message.

In the first four weeks after the 13 new locations received their e-bluey kit 6,922 e-blueys were sent to those places.

More than three million e-blueys having been sent over the past three years, 50 per cent delivered to troops on Op Herrick.

DE&S gets to the bottom of equipment failures

Vital engineering safety is built into land equipment

INVESTIGATION OF equipment failures has moved up a gear with DE&S staff deployed to support training for operations on the Canadian prairies.

Warrant Officers Ian Baldock and Stuart Hughes are at British Army Training Unit Suffield (BATUS) making sure that such investigations on land equipment

are as timely as they would be in the UK, Germany or on operations.

Around 7,000 soldiers train at BATUS every year, with exercises reflecting stabilisation operations in Afghanistan involving insurgents, Afghan actors, forward operating bases,

roadside bombs and new Afghan villages.

BATUS has had an influx of new equipment to make training as realistic as possible. And the training season from April to October is supported by DE&S Land Systems Safety and Engineering's Serious Equipment Failure Investigation Team (SEFIT).

The training environment in BATUS is harsh with around 2,690 square kilometres of uninhabited, semi-arid rolling prairie which pushes personnel, equipment and vehicles to the limit.

DE&S staff are experiencing first hand an



Top: WO1 Ian Baldock investigating a CR2 power pack compartment fire

Above: Investigating equipment failures will prevent accidents, like the above collision which happened thanks to a communications failure

array of equipment failures with many causes. The DE&S team has investigated failures on vehicles such as Challenger 2, Warrior, CVR(T), Panther and MAN support vehicles as well as a Bowman communications failure that resulted in a road accident. Failures due to wear and tear are common, despite comprehensive inspection.

The team's reports provide recommendations to various stakeholders in DE&S and the field force, helping to mitigate against future failures in an effort to build engineering safety into Land Systems equipment.



'Talk to the Board'
at any time



Now you can email your questions or comments to the DE&S Board whenever you like. Board members will aim to respond within a week. Questions and answers will be posted on the Talk to the Board page on the defence intranet.

Email: dessec-talktotheboard@mod.uk
Phone: 0117 9130414
Write to: 'Talk to the Board', Maple 0A, #2032, MOD Abbey Wood, Bristol, BS34 8JH

New centre will give equipment testing a lift at Clyde

A PROJECT at Clyde naval base is helping to keep workers safe and saving the taxpayer thousands of pounds.

The LEAF Project – Lifting Equipment Accessories Facility – has seen the base create a central point for managing lifting equipment across the Faslane site.

Being a working base, Faslane has its share of lifting equipment, used from loading and unloading small stores to lifting tonnes worth of submarine spare parts. Safety is, of course, paramount at the site and keeping track of all the equipment and making sure it is up to standard is a huge logistical challenge.

The answer is a single location for all lifting equipment across the base – the LEAF.

“The benefits of having a designated building to handle lifting equipment are enormous,” said Ian Stevenson, LEAF project manager.

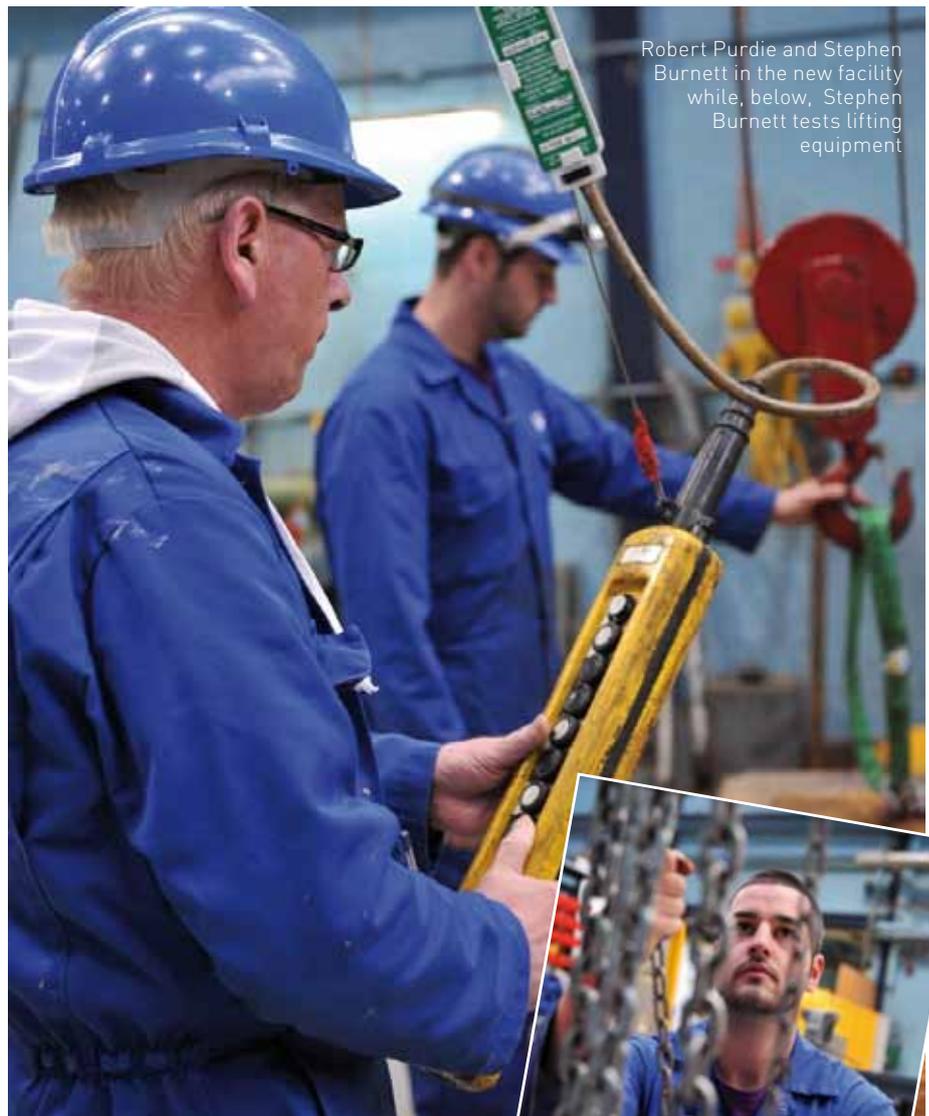
“We can ensure that all equipment is properly tested and that there are procedures and processes in place so that everyone knows when an item needs re-testing.

“Another major advantage of having the facility up and running is that it saves money. Previously departments who needed lifting equipment would have gone ahead themselves and ordered it.

“Now they can contact us first and we can check if appropriate equipment already exists on-site. This decreases unnecessary orders and has the potential to save the taxpayer thousands of pounds.”

The LEAF Project has been ongoing since 2007, when an internal audit identified the need to control and manage lifting equipment better.

“Eyebolts, shackles, chain blocks and hoists, cranes, overhead travelling cranes,



Robert Purdie and Stephen Burnett in the new facility while, below, Stephen Burnett tests lifting equipment

slings, pull lifts and anchor gear are just some of the equipment inspected,” said Mr Stevenson.

“The LEAF Project is here to help make HM Naval Base Clyde a safer place in which to work.”

□ In April 2008 the Clyde base officially launched its Incident and Injury Free (IIF) campaign, putting people’s well-being first and sending them home safely each day.

Within the first year of IIF being adopted, there was a 256 per cent increase in near miss reporting, coupled with a 48 per cent decrease in reportable accidents.

The base opened its IIF Venue last January, providing a centre where workers can regularly receive safety orientations and training. So far around 4,000 personnel have attended.

New programme marks step in the right direction

THE SUBMARINE Training and Education Programme (STEP) team has been formed within the Submarine Operating Centre at Abbey Wood.

The STEP team, led by Commodore Mark Beverstock, will deliver a change programme to provide a coherent and cost effective Defence Nuclear Enterprise Training and Education solution to generate

and sustain sufficient Nuclear Enterprise Suitably Qualified and Experienced Personnel (NESQEP).

Cdre Beverstock said: “This is a challenging programme of activities and further demonstrates the MOD’s commitment to the Defence Nuclear Programme.”

The STEP team will comprise Royal Navy personnel, civil

servants and industry partners Rolls-Royce, Babcock, BAES Submarine Solutions and AWE who will develop a federated and geographically diverse Defence Nuclear enterprise programme of training, looking forward at least 20 years.

The team will also be working with the DE&S civilian NSQEP career management team responsible for planning

and managing recruitment, development, retention and deployment of the NSQEP cadre.

Cdre Beverstock added: “The STEP team will act as a focus to co-ordinate and influence the best interests of the Defence Nuclear Enterprise in delivery of an effective solution to current nuclear training.”

Further information: Duncan Westlake, Abbey Wood 37325

Pictures: Geoff Lee
www.planefocus.com



Tucano joins 'the battle'

AN RAF Tucano is pictured, above foreground, painted in camouflage markings for the 70th anniversary of the Battle of Britain.

The Tucano, normally sporting a black livery, helps train RAF fast-jet pilots at RAF Linton-on-Ouse. The aircraft is supported by a contractor logistic support arrangement with VT Aerospace and Spanish company ITP.

The aircraft is pictured with a Spitfire of the RAF's Battle of Britain Memorial Flight, which is supported by DE&S' Nimrod team.

Right: two Tucanos are pictured over the Humber Bridge with a Spitfire and Hurricane of the Battle of Britain flight.



Abbey Wood saddles up

Staff find a better way to get to work

NATIONAL BIKE Week saw events at Abbey Wood to promote cycling to work and its social, health and environmental benefits.

A 'Chain Gang' group ride on 16 June set out from Bath to Abbey Wood using the traffic free Railway and Avon Cycleway paths and local paths from Emersons Green, with free Bike Breakfast by South Gloucestershire Council

Twenty-six riders took part including Rear Admiral Andrew Mathews, Chief of Materiel (Fleet) who regularly rides to work. It was organised by bike commuters Garry Whelan, Stuart Kaye and Andy Stewart.



Chain gang:
ABW cyclists

Andy said: "It was the most popular 'Chain Gang' ride we've held. It was especially great to have some first timers join us. There is a great network of traffic free paths to Abbey Wood, traffic congestion is increasing as is the immense pressure on car parking on site. Cycling to work is a great way to keep fit, save money and do your bit for the environment."

The Cycle City Road Show and Dr Bike set up in the central piazza to give out maps of the new network of routes across Bristol.

Abbey Wood has a Bicycle Users Group (a Bike BUG) to organise events, share tips, offer advice on equipment, clothing, routes and all things bike related. Details from Sue Hordle, email DES Infra-SHEP ABW 2a(Hordle, Sue Mrs).

Joint working teams handed a course boost

A FREE two-day interactive course has been launched for joint MOD/industry teams to improve project performance.

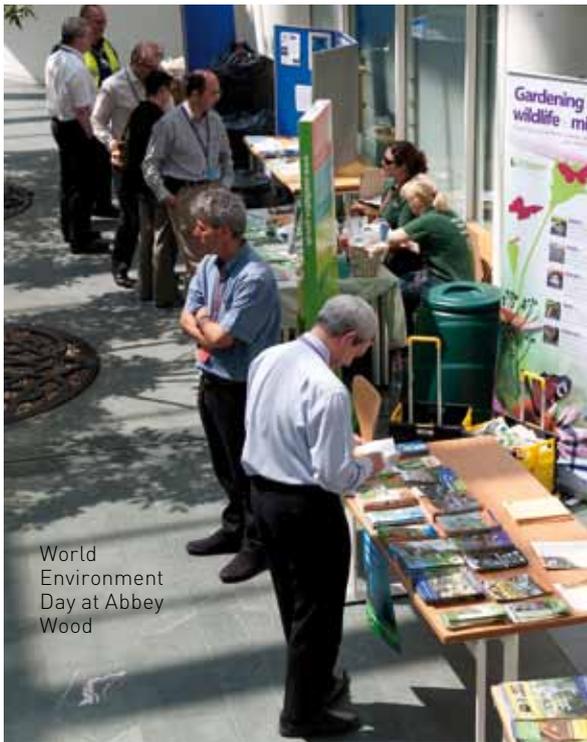
The course, the Joint Working Workshop, is aimed at teams in the early stages of joint working.

It has been devised by the MOD Partnering Support Group with support from the Defence Academy and industry.

The Academy has completed two successful pilots enabling attendees to enhance their understanding of joint working, its tools and techniques in an environment remote from day to day work.

Following Partnering Support Group evaluation of the pilots the revised course will be available to joint teams this summer.

More information from Tamara Richards on 9355 67987.



World Environment Day at Abbey Wood

Teams sign up to the sustainable message

STAFF VISITING Abbey Wood on 3 June were encouraged to take part in World Environment Day.

The event provided an opportunity for DE&S teams to talk about the work they are doing in support of environmental protection and sustainable development.

Visitors were given the chance to examine a new portable solar battery charger designed to reduce the number of batteries carried around in the field.

There were also stands and displays from South Gloucestershire Council, the waste management company Sita UK and other local organisations highlighting initiatives and activities to support conservation, travelling to work and promoting healthy lifestyles.

Also taking part was Steve Chilcott from the Debut waste management team who took along a giant box of compacted cardboard to demonstrate the steps being made to increase recycling at the Abbey Wood site.

The Cycle City Road Show was on hand to offer advice and tips on developing healthier travel habits together with Atmosphere electric bikes who were demonstrating their latest models.

Steve Croome environmental advisor at Abbey Wood, said: "There are lots of small things that people can try that will have a positive impact on the environment.

"World Environment Day offers us a good opportunity to discuss first hand with people ways in which they can be more sustainable."

Calling all project managers

THE PROJECT Management Development Programme (PMDP) is an MOD-wide development programme to provide professionally qualified project managers throughout the MOD with the skills, knowledge and education to achieve the department's goals.

The PMDP team will be advertising soon for the 2010 intake of new members.

Becoming a member has benefits, such as tailored project management training events. Other benefits include access to an on-line knowledge assessment tool, visits to external successful projects, networking with other skilled project managers, membership of the APM, and the opportunity to gain MOD project management licences.

Look out for DIN 2010DIN07-070 advertising the 2010 intake or visit PMDP website on the Defence Intranet. Closing date for applications is 31 August.

DE&S walks away with apprentice scheme prize

DE&S HAS won a top regional award for its apprenticeship scheme.

The honour, the National Apprenticeship Service Macro Employer (for organisations of more than 5,000 people) of the Year award in the south west grouping was presented by journalist Kate Adie to Mark Skinner, the apprentice management team leader, at the regional awards ceremony at Sandy Park, Exeter on 2 June.

Major General Ken Ferguson, Director Human Resources, said: "This is a prestigious award and much valued recognition of the quality and maturity of our scheme.

"In all categories of the competition judges were looking for organisations whose commitment to apprenticeships extends to training in general, with a high standard of continuous professional development."

In a large field of entries DE&S was recognised for the quality of the schemes offered and the progressive approach to how the advanced apprenticeships are delivered.



Award winners: – DE&S apprentice managers – back from left: Warren Pickles, Dick Pirrie, Andrew Moul. Front: Fiona Foster, Philip Rotherham, Dave Greenham

Last year saw the largest intake of advanced apprentices in recent times with 68 starting at Abbey Wood, 13 at Devonport and 15 at Rosyth.

This year the target is 43 at Abbey Wood and 13 at Devonport which will result in DE&S having nearly 200 advanced (technician) apprentices in training for future employment as Band D technical

officers.

Warren Pickles, apprentice management team business manager, said: "Receiving this award is excellent recognition for our team, particularly given the fact that we are continually striving to do things better while rising to the daily challenges that increased apprentice numbers present."



Pictures: Chris Homewood

Oar-inspiring: Team Aqua Power puts its back into racing across Bristol's floating harbour while, right, the team celebrates in style at the end

Team is pipped at the post in Dragon Boat race drama

A TEAM from Unmanned Air Systems were edged out of victory in the annual Bristol Rotary Club's Dragon Boat Race by just 0.35 of a second.

Team Aqua Power were one of 34 to enter the event at Baltic Wharf in Bristol's floating harbour.

And it was a photo-finish in the final which saw 360 Degrees, a team from Airbus UK, win an exciting finale over 250 metres.

Team Aqua Power, well supported shoreside by colleagues, family and friends, stormed through three heats to qualify for the semi-final as the third fastest boat on the water.

Paddling like men and women possessed they finished their semi-final heat in a close second, but an anxious wait followed, before being declared fastest runners up.

Team manager John Bingham, who organised training sessions with Bristol Empire Dragons, said: "The team's fundraising and efforts on the day have made me immensely proud; to muster a crew of 20 from a relatively small DE&S team

and to do so well is a real achievement."

His comments were echoed by UAS team leader Jonathan Barratt who said: "My team did enormously well and have again demonstrated how the UAS team has pulled together, literally in this case, since its formation 18 months ago."

Family, friends and colleagues raised more than £2,000 for the Multiple Sclerosis Society, Alzheimer's Society, Cancer Research UK, Motor Neurone Disease Association and Macular Disease Society.

Boat Crew – James Hayton (skipper and stroke), Jon Millington (stroke), Alex Trenchard (Drum), Brian Storey, Lyndon Hoyle, Jason Bailey, Andy Abu-Baker, Ed Hartridge, Ben Yeates, Andy Mellor, Gareth Morgan, Alastair Goodwin, Craig Simpson, Mick Avery, Kerry Fletcher, Kevin Jones, Lee Pearce, Clive Winter, James Nuttall and Alison Millar.

Shore Crew – Sue Langley (treasurer), Mary Bates, Katherine Coleman, Ian Gawinowski and John Bingham (manager).



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Opportunity knocks for DE&S charity teams



Bath Opportunity Pre-School gets its cash bonus, right, – from left: WO2 Martin Parry [DE&S], Sally Petit and her son Matthew [BOP], Rose Hawkins and her daughter Brooke [BOP], Carole Wadham [BOP Chair], Lyn Richardson [DE&S]

TWO DE&S teams continue to support west country charities.

Staff from Short Range Air Defence (SHORAD) and Medium Range Air Defence (MRAD) teams raised money to provide opportunities for pre-school children with special educational needs and the elderly with care needs.

The teams raised £1,000 for Bath Opportunity Pre-School (BOP) and another £1,000 for the Research Institute for the Care of Elderly people (RICE).

Their main aims include research into the ageing process and to offer help and support to people and their families who have Alzheimer’s disease and other memory problems.

Such was the success of fundraising which included cake baking contests, the weekly bonus ball, quiz evenings, a Christmas raffle and several meat raffles, that a surplus of £250 was also sent to Help for Heroes.



Cash too for research Institute for the Care of the Elderly, left – from left: Lyn Richardson [DE&S], Prof Roy Jones [RICE], Chief Petty Officer David Hill [DE&S]

Your best feet forward



MEMBERS OF DE&S at Boscombe Down put their best feet forward to complete a 26-mile walk from Winchester Cathedral to Salisbury Cathedral for charity.

The members from Trials, Evaluation Services and Targets team were joined by their industrial partners QinetiQ to raise money for south and west of England children’s charity Naomi House.

Money is still being collected with QinetiQ pledging to match the final amount.

Pictured above are Mike Dominy (TEST), Dr Peter Wrighton (QinetiQ) and Alan Watson (TEST)

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Queen rewards staff in birthday honours

LIEUTENANT GENERAL Dick Applegate heads the list of DE&S-sponsored winners in the Queen's Birthday Honours List.

Lt General Applegate, who becomes a companion of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath (CB) was, until recently, Chief of Materiel (Land) with DE&S.

Marlene Morley, head of DE&S' collocation team, is made a Commander of the British Empire.

Mrs Morley was delighted with being awarded the CBE.

"It is a great honour for me and it recognises the achievements and progress made by the whole Collocation team," she said.

Honours have been spread around a number of DE&S sites and teams.

Community work in and around Devonport's naval base earned a Royal Navy sailor the MBE.

Warrant Officer Andy Collings, the visitors' officer at the base, is praised for determination and tirelessness in building up the base's relationship with the community across a wide range of activities, from liaising with Plymouth City Council on public military events to working with young people for charitable causes.

WO Collings, of Plymstock, said: "On opening the letter and discovering that I had been selected for this very fine honour, I felt overwhelmed and speechless.

"I felt I had only been doing my job. It is an awesome privilege for others to think so highly of you they nominate you for this award. And then to be chosen from such an admirable cast of nominees is just amazing.

"I have been completely humbled by this situation and still struggle to accept it is true. I have a wonderful job. To be rewarded for doing something I enjoy is something very special."

He has served in the Royal Navy for 32 years, due to retire next year.



Proud: WO Andy Collings of Devonport

Clyde sailors' Corrie knees up

FIVE SAILORS represented Clyde naval base at an old fashioned street party in Weatherfield's most famous piece of real estate – Coronation Street!

The trip was part of *The Sun* newspaper's Armed Forces Day celebrations where they called on members of the services to head to the TV soap's set in Manchester for a right old knees-up.

Lieutenant Paul Mulroy, Warrant Officer Robert Wilson, Chief Petty Officer Blue Deacon, LOM Mick Hughes, LOGS Tommy Tucker and ET Rocque Fernandes all represented the naval base at the event at the end of May.

Honours List

Companion of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath (CB)

Lt General Richard Applegate, Formerly Chief of Materiel (Land)

Commander Order of the British Empire (CBE)

Mrs Marlene Morley (Head of DE&S Collocation team)

Officer Order of the British Empire (OBE)

Mr Steven Freed (Harrier, Survival & Tornado team), Mr John Hamby (QinetiQ – Deputy Technical Director), Lieutenant Colonel Michael Purnell (Force Protection team, recommended as Commanding Officer 101 Force Support Battalion)

Member Order of the British Empire (MBE)

Mr Andrew Bennett (Artillery Systems) Mr Norman Bone (Selex Galileo – UK Chief Business Officer), Warrant Officer 1 Andrew Collings (HMS Drake, HMNB Devonport), Lieutenant Colonel Colin Francis (Defence Supply Chain Operations & Movement – recommended as Second in Command 6 Regiment The Royal Logistic Corps), Mr Daryl Hayler (MBDA UK Ltd – Integration and Systems Validation Engineer), Mr Craig Powell (Force Protection Delivery Team), Mr Jonathan Stewart (Country Manager, KBR), Major Alan Young (Special Projects Multi Air Platforms team – recommended as Air Integration Lead, Special Projects Communications Information Surveillance and Reconnaissance Delivery Team)

Meritorious Service Medal (MSM)

Warrant Officer David Britland (Defence Cryptosecurity Authority), Petty Officer Sharon Connell-Malcolm (HMS Nelson, HMNB Portsmouth), Warrant Officer 1 Derek Goult (In Service Submarines), Warrant Officer 1 Karen Smith (OIC Recovery Cell, HMNB Portsmouth), Warrant Officer 1 Stephen Smith (Apache team), Warrant Officer 1 Neil Young (Special Projects Multi Air Platform – Formerly Apache team).

Chief of Air Staff Commendation

Squadron Leader Samuel McDonagh (Search and Rescue Helicopters team - Formerly Search and Rescue Training Unit)

HR Information Notes are for

They contain vital information for all staff in DE&S - they are the main vehicle for announcing implementation of HR changes to line managers and individuals.

18/2010 – Review of DE&S Civilian Vacancies

19/2010 – DE&S Whitley Structure

20/2010 – Inclusion of Skills Development within Personal Objectives 2010-11

21/2010 – Armed Forces Act 2006 – Implementation in DE&S

22/2010 – Guidance for DE&S staff seeking financial assistance from the DE&S HR Engineering Upskilling Fund to undertake Engineering related Professional Development

23/2010 – Chief of Defence Materiel Commendation Scheme

YOU

Drake's new gate all set to offer a warmer welcome



Opening ceremony: Commodore Ian Jess opens *HMS Drake's* gate

THE MAIN gate at *HMS Drake* in Devonport has reopened after modernisation and refurbishment – the first big upgrade since the early 1970s.

The work sees a newly-refurbished entrance area providing a modern working environment for duty personnel.

Fire alarms have been upgraded with CCTV and an alarm system linked to Hasler disabled cabins.

Welcome and waiting areas have been given a much-needed makeover and there are improvements to the road's one-way system along with disabled access.

Devonport's commander, Commodore Ian Jess, said: "The major improvements mark a significant change and upgrade in the safety and security to users and operators.

"*HMS Drake* is looking fantastic and the refurbishment has achieved a streamlined and updated look, while still retaining the traditional feel of a naval establishment.

"None of what I've described would have been possible without the excellent working relationship we have with our defence partner Interserve, and the drive and determination shown by the management team."

Base backs children's safety event

PERSONNEL FROM Devonport have supported a major fun-filled event for hundreds of children with the potential to save lives and reduce accidents.

Plymouth Junior Life Skills event is now in its third year and so far more than 5,000 10 and 11-year-old pupils have attended the action-packed events aimed at increasing awareness of Citizenship and Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHEE). This year a further 2,000 attended the exciting, interactive, multi-agency event.

The event was hosted by the Royal Navy at the MOD sports training facilities at Bull Point.

Devonport Commander, Commodore Ian Jess, said: "The naval base is pleased to be helping create a safer community with Junior Life Skills.

"The Royal Navy and the naval base play a key role in Plymouth with a strong relationship with the city and have an interest in inheriting a safer workforce when today's Junior Life Skills students are adults.

"Our workforce is based on an award-winning health and safety culture – so we welcome the youngsters and will continue to act as a good role model."

Corsham centre boasts a proud new makeover



DIY success: many hours of donated labour has given Corsham's community centre its first spruce-up for more than seven years

MEMBERS OF Military Support Squadron and the local community have come together to upgrade Corsham's community centre.

The small but vital welfare facility in the married quarters outside the wire is regarded as a haven for military personnel, civil servants, contractors and local people.

The spruce-up is the first investment in the centre for more than seven years and has been boosted by donations from RAF Central Funds, 10 Signal Regiment, DIY chain B&Q and SSAFA.



Work inside the building makes more flexible use of space and is more child friendly while there is new double glazing, new TVs and children's play equipment.

The project began in February and finished last month after a complete

re-decoration.

PC Lee Maplesden, the Joint Support Unit Corsham liaison officer has tirelessly committed his time to the centre for many years.

The centre also has a coffee shop open daily from 0930-1300.

Matthew takes to the hills for ski-bob thrills and spills

A DE&S team member has been helping limbless ex-servicemen enjoy new sports in the mountains.

Lt Col Matthew Tresidder of the Defence Clothing team, joined 14 amputees and their helpers as a paying guest for a trip to Sölden in Austria where the British Limbless Ex-Servicemen's Association had organised a series of rehabilitation events to try new skills and sports.

Rehabilitation events have included diving and sailing but one that has been running for the last 20 years is the ski-bob event, akin to mountain-biking on skis.

"The determination and focus of these men and women have never ceased to impress me," said Matthew.

"Having already suffered so much, they are prepared to put up with all sorts of pain and discomfort in order to succeed. Although the cause of their injuries is widely varied – from Danny who lost his leg in Afghanistan to Mick who lost both of his in a train accident – they are determined to show that their injury does not mean the end of their lives, more the beginning of a new one.

"More than once have I been told that 'life is better now: I have a reason to get up in the morning'."

Injuries cover the whole range of conflicts – Chris who lost his arm in Northern Ireland, Bob who lost his in the Gulf War, Rob who lost his leg in Bosnia or Danny who trod on a pressure plate IED in Afghanistan. In addition to these there were also other causes – cancer and car accidents. Whether a member of the Regular Armed Forces or the Reserves, BLESMA is open to anyone who has lost a limb.

By the end of the week everyone passed their respective assessment tests and proved their capability by skiing down the mountain from top to bottom – a vertical drop of more than 1,000 metres over a 9km run.

Money donated to BLESMA to support this event came to more than £14,000, earmarked for future ski-bob events.



Above: Matthew Tresidder, right, helps out on the slopes while, right, Matthew is pictured (on the left) with donations for future ski-bob events

Stay safe and sound at work

THE HEALTH and Safety Executive (HSE) has launched a campaign on Worker Involvement called 'Do Your Bit'.

The campaign, designed to encourage employees' involvement in improving the safety culture within their organisation, will run for 12 months.

Visit the new campaign website at www.hse.gov.uk.

In addition, search for ABC on the MOD web to find out more about how DE&S is encouraging worker participation through the DE&S Making Safety and Environmental Protection Personal Campaign.

Clyde visitors feel full force of the law

VANS, TRAILERS and heavy goods vehicles have been subjected to thorough safety checks as they enter Clyde naval base.

Members of the MOD Police teamed up with colleagues from Strathclyde Police's traffic department and the Vehicle Operator Services Agency (VOSA) for a joint safety initiative.

VOSA inspectors looked at brakes, steering and vehicle tachographs while MOD Police officers went over the vehicles with trained search dogs.

Strathclyde Police also brought along their automatic numberplate recognition camera, which monitors vehicles to make sure tax, MOT and insurance are up-to-date.

Three vehicles received a 'delayed prohibition' – meaning they were ordered to take their vehicles to the garage – while five received an



MOD constable Dennis Young with search dog Samson and Strathclyde PC Barry Gourley

'immediate prohibition' which saw them being taken off the road immediately due to safety concerns.

Sergeant George Smart, Divisional Community Safety Manager, said: "One vehicle coming into the base with a hazardous load was guilty of four different safety offences,

while overall there was one tachograph offence and one case of a driver driving out-of-hours.

"The message is clear. Safety at Clyde is paramount and we will do all we can to make sure vehicles coming into the base are safe and meet the required regulations."



how

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