Unmanned Air Systems

Unmanned Air Systems (UAS) have potential application across all capability areas and military Commands. In the vast majority of cases, the use of UK remotely-piloted aircraft systems is for non-combat surveillance and reconnaissance.

The programme covers all UAS classes, environments and epochs, and aims to

ensure that lessons identified from current urgent operational requirements and Watchkeeper procurement are used to inform all capability areas.

This is a multi-functional programme which provides a coherent approach and tackles a number of UAS issues, including:

- acquisition support to all UAS classes
- understanding capability and military tasks best undertaken by UAS
- UAS unique issues, particularly resulting from making the pilot remote from the vehicle (eg development and application of autonomy technologies and new vehicle vulnerabilities, such as cyber)
- pan-defence lines of development issues (manning, personnel, airworthiness and safety, logistics and support concepts)

Approximate funding (2015/16):

£14.4 million - 77% is delivered externally*

*The 2015/16 funding is a projected forecast and is subject to change in-year.

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- common UAS technologies to enable shared development and agile in-service support (eg airspace access, UAS control stations, battlespace integration, common modular scalable mission systems)
- coalition and manned/unmanned interoperability
- relationships with wider Government, academia and non-defence industries on manned technologies across air, surface and sub-surface

Working in partnership

Some aspects of this programme have already been contracted, including:

- BAE Systems leads a consortium of UK suppliers in the delivery of the advanced mission systems (AMS DE-RISC) and European Component Orientated Architecture (ECOA) contracts. The scope of this work includes the development of architectures, standards and demonstration techniques for the next generation of remotely-piloted air systems.

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- QinetiQ leads a consortium, including Thales and BAE Systems, to deliver the unmanned aircraft systems autonomy and mission management contract
- BAE Systems also leads a consortium of UK suppliers in the Autonomous Systems Underpinning Research (ASUR) programme. The ASUR programme supports Dstl in the delivery of underpinning technologies for all unmanned systems through a series of open calls

Much of the Programme has been contracted for FY15/16 and therefore this is only limited opportunity to get involved this year.

Details of these routes to contracting can be found in the 'How to sell to Dstl - get involved' factsheet.

For more information about this programme, contact: centralenquiries@dstl.gov.uk

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