



Strategic
Command

The Strategic Command Strategy



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Foreword

The modern world is becoming increasingly complex, competitive and challenging for Defence.

The distinction between war and peace no longer applies. We face authoritarian rivals who oppose and challenge the international order through coercion, disinformation and violent strategies, aiming to win without fighting in the Grey Zone. They are increasingly gaining technological advantage, expanding warfare into the new domains of space and cyber. We must regain the strategic initiative by furthering integration and securing advantage through Science and Technology (S&T).

In a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous world, the only certainty we have is that there will be further change.

To meet that challenge, we need to be better at responding to the unpredictable. Defence must become agile, responsive and able to act in an integrated way. This means ensuring that every part of Defence can work seamlessly together with other Government departments and our allies and partners overseas. It also means embracing the opportunities presented by our world-leading S&T sectors. It means experimenting with new technology and becoming experts in data exploitation. We need to join up our people, equipment and information through integration.

It's through this integrated approach, which places the use of technology and data at its heart, that we will become more agile and more able to respond to the unknown. But to get there, Defence must change.

Strategic Command leads Defence in making that change.

Strategic Command deals with the strategic and military realities of the threat every day – from UK operations and special forces, to defending our digital networks and our bases around the world. We also lead on critical support functions: medical; intelligence; digital capabilities; and logistic, engineering and equipment support. That experience makes Strategic Command unique in Defence and is the reason we have been charged with leading the shift to the new way of operating.

Our strategy directs and guides that transformation, linking the actions of all the organisations which make up Strategic Command.

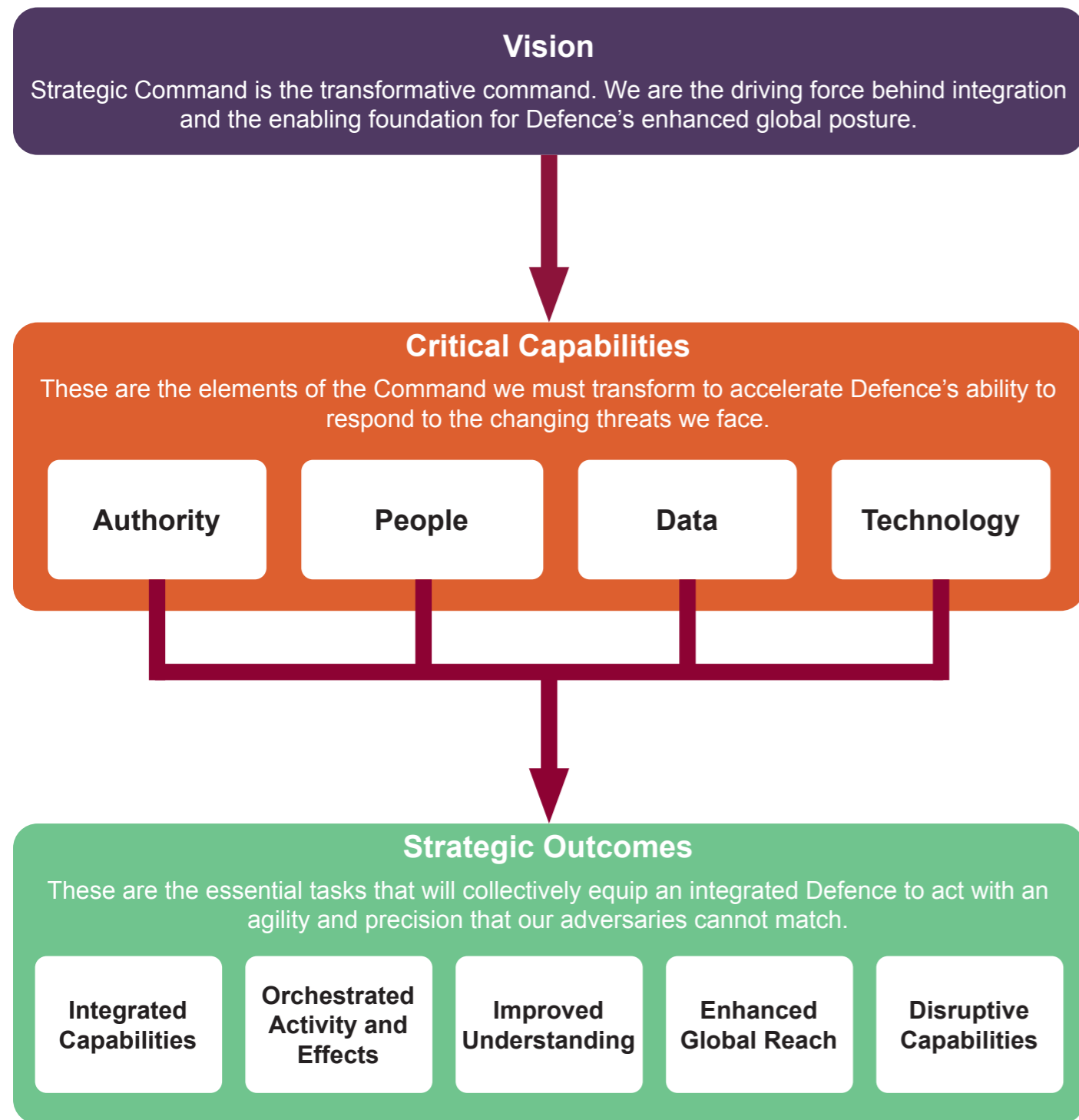
It sets out the Command's intent, but it is not a plan. It recognises that the future is uncertain and therefore sets out what we will need the Integrated Force 2030 to do, rather than defining exactly how we get there. Its delivery is the responsibility of the Command's Executive Committee. There will be an implementation roadmap, updated annually to take account of changes in the world, our adversaries' intent and capabilities, advances in technology and our progress in delivering our strategy. This will ensure we remain flexible as an organisation, able to seize opportunities and mitigate risks to achieving our strategy.



General Sir Patrick Sanders
Commander
Strategic Command

Our Vision

The purpose of this strategy is to direct the transformation of Strategic Command to truly deliver as Defence's integrator. Our competitors are pursuing, aggressively, the opportunities presented by the information age; if we don't transform then Defence will fail.



By 2025 we will have embedded integration and accelerated transformation to deliver benefits across Defence:

- The Command will be transformed, with optimised structures and people with the right – increasingly digital – skills Defence requires.
- The whole force will be educated, trained and inspired to think and operate in an integrated, multi-domain context.
- Our reach and effectiveness will be enhanced by increasingly adaptable support and medical services, an optimised strategic base and resilient overseas basing.
- Our decision-makers will be supported by more timely and relevant information and intelligence.
- The Digital Backbone will be revolutionising the way we work, from support to front-line operations.
- Integrated operations will be the default: all military activity conducted within a coordinated national approach that includes non-lethal effects (e.g. cyber and information).

By 2030 we will be contributing significantly to national strategic advantage and will have unlocked the pan-Defence agility necessary to respond to changes in the threat:

- We will sense and understand through enduring forward presence, improved networks and enhanced Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR).
- We will orchestrate, communicate and command via robust, secure strategic communications, using greatly improved space and cyber capabilities.
- We will operate and influence at range from enhanced global hubs, delivering effect seamlessly alongside other elements of national power.
- We will increasingly constrain our adversaries by presenting multiple dilemmas in an agile way through integrated action.
- We will continually innovate and experiment to cement our strategic advantage, applying agile procurement, support and delivery processes in support of operations.
- We will have transformed Defence culture so the whole force instinctively thinks, acts and delivers in an integrated way.

The Threat

The global security environment is deteriorating....

- The whole of the UK, its people and interests face a wider range of state and non-state threats enabled by increasingly rapid advances in technology that are accessible to more of our adversaries.
- Russia continues to pose the greatest nuclear, conventional military and sub-threshold threat to European security. It's a capable and unpredictable actor that is modernising its armed forces, integrating whole of state activity, and demonstrating a considerable appetite for risk.
- China is by far the most significant geopolitical factor in the world today. It poses a complex, systemic, challenge to the UK that we need to protect our values and global interests against.
- Iran and North Korea continue to pose regional challenges and their nuclear programmes threaten global stability.
- Terrorism will continue to pose a dynamic and evolving threat to the UK and its interests but increasingly through cyberspace and other advanced weapons.
- Climate change and biodiversity loss represents a global challenge, driving instability, migration, desertification, competition for natural resources and conflict.

The battlefield is changing...

- We are now competing constantly with adversaries across the physical, virtual and cognitive dimensions and all five domains at a speed, scale and degree of persistence not seen before.
- Our historic technological advantage is being eroded by targeted investment in capabilities designed to counter our strengths and challenge strategic stability.
- The imaginative employment of relatively low-cost capabilities is challenging highly capable air defence, electronic warfare systems and heavily armoured forces alike.
- Advanced technologies are being developed but with limited international agreement on norms and conventions, and a lack of ethical or moral standards to encourage their responsible use.
- States are increasingly integrating the traditional domains of land, maritime and air with the newer domains of cyberspace and space.
- Adversaries will continue to test us where they perceive us to be weak, but in ways that extend well beyond the traditional battlefield by exploiting technology and the virtual dimension to control the narrative and influence opinion.

Our Response

We can capitalise on our traditional strengths...

- Well supported and equipped conventional forces.
- World-leading cyber capabilities and Special Forces.
- A comprehensive ability to understand and assess our adversaries and environments.
- The UK's Science & Technology base.
- Our allies and partners.
- Our people.

...but we must change for the better...

- Using our **authority** as Defence's integrator to ensure we go beyond the traditional concept of 'joint' to a depth of Multi-Domain Integration.
- Educating, equipping and inspiring our **people** to embrace integration and help us deliver change across Defence.
- Embracing the power of **data**: gathering, processing and evaluating it at speed.
- Creating more agile ways to identify, acquire and adopt new **technologies** that counter threats in innovative ways.

...in order to...

- **Integrate capabilities** across domains, with industry, government, allies and partners.
- **Improve our understanding** to enable decision-making at the speed of relevance.
- **Orchestrate activity and effects** with all national levers of influence.
- **Enhance our global reach** by deploying for longer, to greater effect.
- Operate, and compete, effectively 'sub-threshold' using cutting-edge **disruptive capabilities**.
- All as part of a continuous campaigning approach within an overall operational design that drives the tempo of strategic activity rather than responding to others.



Multi-Domain Integration Operational Scenario

In 2015...

We saw the Russian incursion into Syria in support of the Assad regime; a range of strategic, operational and tactical activity across multiple domains as part of an overall campaign design:

- Simultaneous cruise missile strikes into Northern Syria, from the Caspian Sea.
- Posturing of Russian missile capable submarines in the Eastern Mediterranean.
- A sophisticated, modernised, integrated air defence system established across Syria.
- Strong and enduring sustainment chains to support forces in Syria through Tartus Port on the maritime side, and through the Bassel al Assad airbase into Syria.
- An information and influence campaign which allowed President Putin to establish a strategic-level relationship with the Assad regime.
- State of the art unmanned aerial systems tested.
- Space and cyber and electro-magnetic domain capabilities were also likely to have been incorporated throughout their campaign, including the provision of intelligence from space.

In the future....

We need to be able to compete with, deter and, if necessary, defeat the approaches of our adversaries. We will do this through Multi-Domain Integration:

- Moving beyond the traditional three domains of maritime, air and land to the five domains of maritime, air, land, space and cyber & electro-magnetic activity.
- Operating with partners across government and beyond to our allies, especially in NATO.
- Exploiting the wealth of classified and open-source information and applying it on operations globally more rapidly through advanced techniques and technologies such as artificial intelligence and machine learning.
- Conducting information operations routinely, based on a detailed understanding of the audiences we need to influence.
- Being persistently engaged globally as a nation, with our partners, in a much more enduring way than we have been in the past.
- Using the improved capacity and covert ability of our special forces to best effect.
- Analysing adversary supply chains to identify weaknesses, and using a range of skills, soft and hard offensive cyber operations, to ensure that we can target those vulnerabilities.
- Invoking social reaction in adversarial states to our advantage.
- Owning the narrative in a much more proactive way than we currently do.



Implementing Multi-Domain Integration...

Bringing all this activity together into an enduring campaign approach is what Multi-Domain Integration is about. We're achieving it on operations today, such as with the Carrier Strike Group on Op FORTIS, as part of the UK's response to systemic competition. However if we want to be able to defeat our adversaries and compete more effectively sub-threshold we need to do better.

Strategic Command is determined to achieve this. We've established the Multi-Domain Integration Change Programme to oversee the key elements of the change required across Defence. Our strategy will ensure all the Command's capacity and resources are prioritised and galvanised towards its delivery.

Critical Capabilities

Strategic Command's critical capabilities are the elements of the Command we must transform to accelerate Defence's ability to respond to the changing threats we face. This will increase our agility, allowing us to respond to the threat and take advantage of technology or other opportunities. Transforming our critical capabilities will speed up delivery of our strategic outcomes, ensuring that Defence makes a significant contribution to restoring the UK's national strategic advantage over our adversaries.

Our Critical Capabilities are:

Authority

The Command has unique roles in Defence that give us influence beyond our organisation. Our authorities will be used pro-actively, consistently and coherently to ensure that we help Defence become more agile, capable and integrated. It will require the support of the whole Defence enterprise and will be done in partnership with other Government organisations.

We will succeed when:

Defence's senior leadership is championing integration and agility as a matter of routine, making best use of optimised evidence, analysis, structures and processes to deliver our authorities to effect positive change across the organisation. Our functional owners are optimally configured and resourced to make their function more efficient and effective across Defence.

Key activities:

Deliver the Multi-Domain Integration Change Programme; enhance industry partnerships; utilise existing authorities to prioritise and inform strategic investment decisions; harness functional leadership across the Command; and identify and deliver the Command's Target Operating Model.



People

Our people will make change happen, managing and utilising our capabilities towards realising the goals of Defence. If we are to reach the Strategic Outcomes, we need a diverse, inclusive, and skilled workforce educated, equipped and inspired to deliver at pace in an integrated way.

We will succeed when:

We have implemented a culture of integration by default, supported by an increased ability to recruit, retain and talent manage specialist cadres across domains, using Unified Career Management (UCM) to ensure increased integration; all supported by improved infrastructure and a workforce plan. We will have identified the future – increasingly digital and cyber – skills Defence requires and have trained and reshaped our workforce accordingly.

Key activities:

Deliver Strategic Command People strategy; advance Cyber and Medical UCM; deliver MDICP culture work strand; enact new Defence Academy syllabus; deliver Empowerment Programme; achieve our Diversity and Inclusion Plan; and implement Reserve Forces 2030.



Critical Capabilities

Data

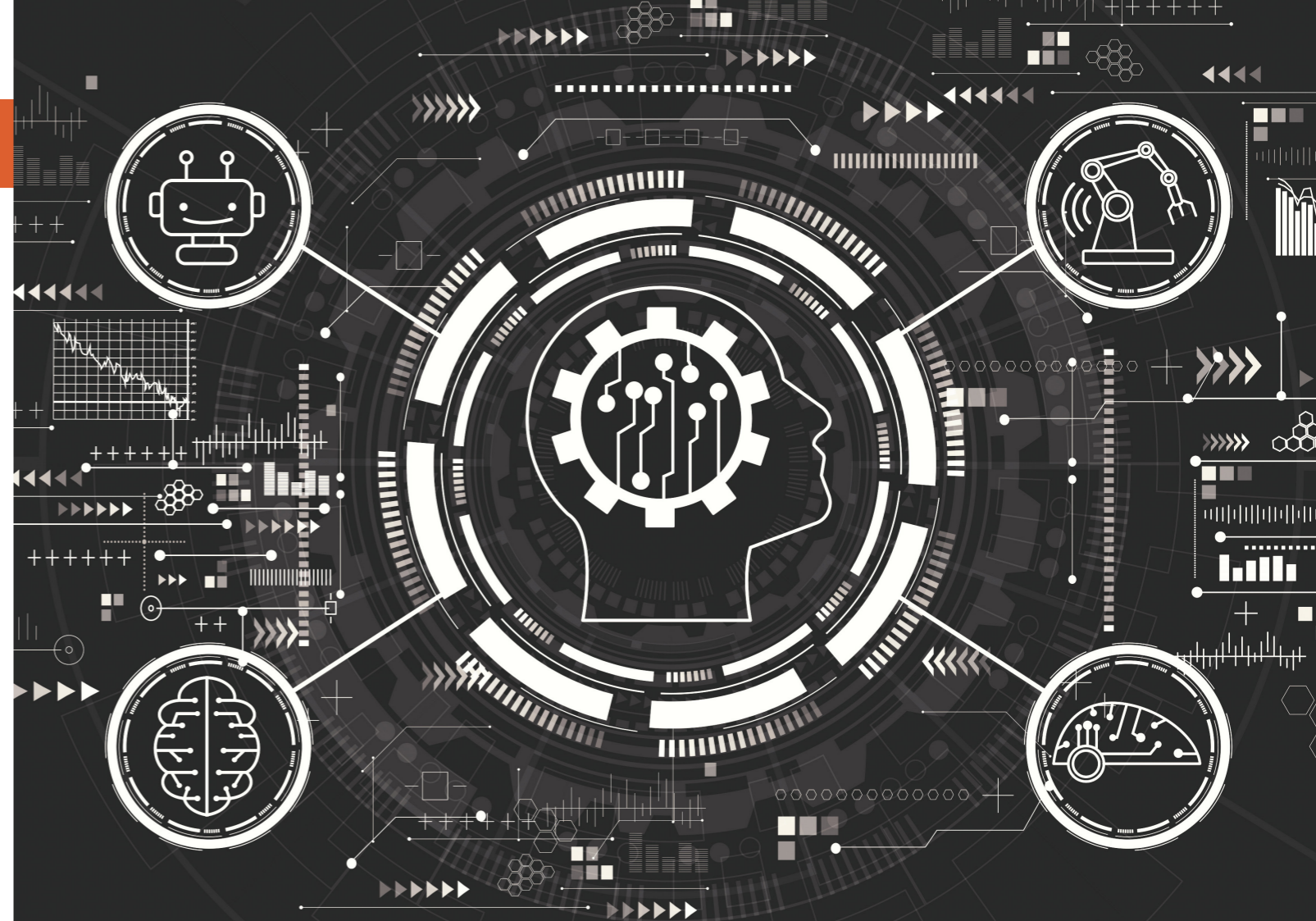
The modern world has made data ubiquitous, and Defence is no different. We will train specialists to manage the data we collect and use secure networks to transfer it to those who need it when they need it. This will improve our ability to gather, process, evaluate and transmit data at speed and empower our people to make faster, better decisions. We will ensure all areas of the Command are maximising the benefits of data and help develop the structures that will allow all of Defence to do the same.

We will succeed when:

Timely, accurate and trustworthy data is acquired, utilised and managed by subject matter experts. Data is accessible to relevant partners through established authoritative data sources, and it is owned and managed by organisations capable of producing and maintaining data management needs.

Key activities:

Deliver Defence Digital Strategy; implement Defence Data Strategy; build the Digital Academy; exploit the Digital Foundry across the Command; and improve Data, Digital and Automation skills and capabilities across the Command.



Technology

The Integrated Review set out the Government's ambition to sustain strategic advantage through S&T to keep pace with the rapid advancement of technology. We need to identify, develop, and adopt emerging technologies alongside a system to facilitate agile thinking and delivery, including widespread use of synthetic environments to support the development and design of integrated operations. We will connect with cross-Government partners to identify and utilise technologies that can help achieve our aims and become a global S&T leader with high-level digital capabilities and skills.

We will succeed when:

Our workforce understands technology as a theatre of strategic competition. We are using effective horizon scanning and futures analysis to identify emerging technologies and we have facilitated an improved relationship with industry which leverages the most relevant private sector technologies, allowing the Command to adopt new technologies at pace. This will be supported by an enhanced commercial capability.

Key activities:

Establish Defence AI centre; use Defence Exercise Programme to exploit experimentation; support realisation of MoD S&T Strategy 2020; increased use of alternative development and acquisition approaches (e.g. spearheads); increased use of synthetics for experimentation and training; continue investment in R&D targeted towards resolving the Command's S&T problem sets; and complete jHub expansion.

Strategic Outcomes

Our strategic outcomes are the most important tasks for the Command, as set out in the “Defence in a Competitive Age” Command Paper, ones that we cannot fail to deliver. Taken together, the strategic outcomes provide a path to an integrated force that understands its environment in real time, works instinctively with partners and allies, and is equipped to decide and act with agility and precision.

Our Strategic Outcomes are:

Integrated Capabilities

To build and equip the Integrated Force 2030 described in the “Defence in a Competitive Age” Command Paper, integration must become the guiding principle in everything we do. Strategic Command will be instrumental in leading the necessary Defence-wide focus on and investment in data and standards that ensure we realise the benefits of open architecture; connecting our current systems more effectively, and integrating new platforms from the outset. Our concepts, doctrine, training and exercise activity will shape how we prepare ourselves and how we engage with those supporting our work, including industry, partners and allies.

We will succeed when:

The focus on integration is embedded across Defence; when new and existing capabilities are integrated by default, and a new military-industrial partnership identifies and pursues technologies and capabilities which benefit the integrated force; and when targeted experimentation and exercise activity in real-world and synthetic environments can turn innovative ideas rapidly into integrated operational capability.

Key activities:

Delivery of the Digital Backbone; delivery of MDICP (input into Joint Requirements Oversight Committee and balance of investment decisions on ‘integration-friendly’ capabilities); an enhanced relationship with industry; and focused elements of the Defence’s exercise programme.



Orchestrated Activity and Effects

In the face of systemic competition, our success may depend upon creating multiple concurrent dilemmas for our adversaries, reducing their freedom of action. To do this, military effects must be employed seamlessly and simultaneously alongside other levers of influence.¹ Strategic Command will enable this coordination through improved, resilient and agile Command & Control (C2) which will improve our ability to decide and act more quickly than our adversaries. Our ability to predict and understand the cognitive effects of our virtual and physical activities must improve.

We will succeed when:

The orchestration of military strategic effects across all domains is instinctive and continually aligned with wider cross-government and international outcomes. Our tactical, operational and strategic C2 has evolved to become more dispersed, federated and resilient; audiences and cognitive effects can be tested synthetically to allow for more sophisticated and better understood outcomes.

Key activities:

Development, Concepts & Doctrine Centre (DCDC) and Defence Academy outputs (including orchestration of military strategic effects guidance); agile C2; Defence Targeting Enterprise; and empowerment of the PJHQ.

1. *Orchestration of Military Strategic Effects Guide*, 27 Jan 2021.

Strategic Outcomes

Improved Understanding

To gain and maintain Information Advantage² and outcompete our adversaries, our decision-makers at all levels must be better informed with more relevant and timely information and intelligence. Strategic Command, principally through Defence Intelligence and Defence Digital, will lead in improving our ability to sense and understand our adversaries and environment ensuring that information is available when and where it is needed.

We will succeed when:

The production and use of intelligence is transformed by the application of new technology to collection, processing, data storage, analysis and distribution; our relationships across government and with allies enhance our strategic awareness; and when a growing sovereign space capability contributes to a greatly improved C4ISR³ ecosystem.

Key activities:

Delivery of the ISR Strategy and DI Transformation; deepened 'Five-Eyes' and cross-government partnerships; creation of the Defence Synthetic Environment; and realisation of the Space ISR Enterprise Plans.

Enhanced Global Reach

The "Defence in a Competitive Age" Command Paper identifies the need for increased forward presence. As such, our forces must deploy for longer and to greater effect, maintaining influence with allies and partners and constraining our adversaries. Strategic Command will develop the capacity and utility of our overseas bases and the support for deployed forces, focusing on Cyprus, Gibraltar and Oman and supporting a deepening defence footprint in Kenya and Germany. Support will include provision of robust, sustainable logistic, medical and welfare services at home and overseas.

We will succeed when:

The integrated force is configured for persistent engagement by default, based in and deploying from well-resourced global hubs and able to reaggregate quickly in response to changing circumstances; when forward support (e.g. logistics and medical) is enhanced, allowing us to maintain a more extensive and effective influence and awareness network.

Key activities:

Focused investment in the UK strategic Base and overseas bases; enhance network connectivity; and delivery of the Defence Support Strategy and Defence Medical Services transformation.

2. 'The credible advantage gained through the continuous, adaptive, decisive and resilient employment of information and information systems'. Information Advantage (JCN2/18)

3. Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance & Reconnaissance.



Disruptive Capabilities

Our concepts and doctrine, developed in response to the global trend towards systemic competition, emphasise the non-lethal and information capabilities which will allow us to achieve the disruptive effects we seek without recourse to warfighting.⁴ In the Information Age, those effects are likely to be cognitive; the battle to control the narrative will be as vital as any physical objective. Strategic Command is responsible for many of these multi-domain capabilities, from special forces to cyber, information and electro-magnetic effects. Harnessing emergent technologies such as AI and quantum computing will be essential to realising this strategic outcome.

We will succeed when:

PJHQ and increasingly agile and covert special forces lead in planning and employing disruptive effects - including an enhanced suite of 'sub-threshold' capabilities embedded by default in defence planning - improving our ability to operate and respond above and below the threshold of conventional warfare; and we maintain Decision Advantage relative to adversaries through resilient defence of our networks and agile, precise and effective Information Activities.

Key activities:

Delivery of the Special Operations Transformation Programme and the Information Advantage Change Campaign; develop and exploit Special Access Programmes on operations; enhancement of the National Cyber Force; and establishment of the Electro-Magnetic Activity Joint User.

4. Integrated Operating Concept, 2 Sep 2021.

Our Values

Change will not be quick or easy; there will be setbacks to overcome and tensions to resolve as we make progress towards realising our strategic outcomes. Throughout this process, Strategic Command's values - described more fully in the Command Charter - will be a core strength that we can all draw upon.

They give us the principles that will guide our work with colleagues and the wider Defence community, providing the foundation that makes Strategic Command a progressive, innovative and inclusive organisation, and a place that anyone in Defence would be proud to be part of.

Progressive

We think progressively and act in the best interests of Defence. We will take responsibility, as individuals and collectively, for the changes that will make the strategy succeed, working with others and sharing knowledge and lessons in pursuit of our common goal.

Innovative

We are not afraid to challenge assumptions and suggest alternative approaches. Sharing good ideas and creating new and agile ways of working will be the norm, as we empower our people to balance risk as they imagine new solutions to emerging problems.

Inclusive

We create an inclusive environment in which everyone feels able to contribute. Fairness and respect will characterise our relationships with colleagues, in a rich and empowering professional environment which has no tolerance for bullying or harassment.

Themes

All of Defence must contribute to broader Government objectives. Strategic Command will ensure it plays a significant part by ensuring that the transformation delivered by our strategy considers how to support, and derive benefits from, three themes: **partnerships; prosperity and sustainability.**

Partnerships

Delivering integration is a team-game, requiring us to co-ordinate our actions across Government and internationally. Strategic Command will enhance existing strengths: internationally with the United States and the other Five-Eyes partners, the rest of NATO, the Combined Joint Expeditionary Force, and the Joint Expeditionary Force; and across Government with the intelligence community. We will look to establish and improve other partnerships in accordance with the priorities stated in the "Defence in a Competitive Age" Command Paper.

Prosperity

Strategic Command already makes an important contribution to the UK's economic security and prosperity, but we can do more. This is because the Command is responsible for many of Defence's capabilities – including AI, cryptography, cyber and intelligence – that are most relevant to achieving the Government's objective of securing strategic advantage through S&T. By implementing the Defence & Security Industrial Strategy and making strategic investments in our R&D, we will be able to enhance our capabilities, contribute to the broader economy and help create or sustain sovereign industries that are essential to the UK's long-term strategic advantage.

Sustainability

Improving our sustainability will make us more likely to achieve the ambition set out in the "Defence in a Competitive Age" Command Paper, and do so at a faster pace. Rationalising data centres decreases energy consumption but also increases the capability of the Digital Backbone; building and/or renovating offices and accommodation increases energy efficiency but also improves the health and wellbeing of our personnel and their families; reducing our 'deployed footprint' in terms of fuel, water and other supplies will improve our ability to sustain ourselves for longer in more austere environments; and reducing our deployed power consumption also reduces our electro-magnetic emissions, reducing the effectiveness of our adversaries' targeting.



