

DESIDER

AN INSIDE LOOK INTO LIFE AT DEFENCE EQUIPMENT & SUPPORT



**PROTECTING OUR NATION, OUR TERRITORIES AND OUR ALLIES
TODAY, TOMORROW, TOGETHER**



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START

Talking

It's clear that the world has become a more competitive, complex and threatening environment than we could ever have foreseen 12 months ago. The threat-level continues to be high. Together with our allies and industry partners, we continue to provide essential support to global defence operations to meet this challenge head on. It is clear in the excellent support we are providing to Ukraine in the face of Russian aggression that unity of purpose brings out the best in all of us and shows how we can excel together as one Defence team. Once again, I would like to say a big thank you to all the DE&S teams and our industry partners who have responded with great agility and pace to support the people of Ukraine.

Our continued success and the criticality of Defence operations depends on DE&S and industry working together as one Defence team, focused on our mission to equip and support our armed forces with the edge to protect the nation. Underpinning this, it's vitally important that we continue to invest in our people and our skills base at all levels. People and skills are key areas of focus for the Defence Suppliers Forum. There are already some great initiatives in place, across both Defence and industry, aimed at unlocking and realising the full potential of all our people to deliver defence capability.

Leadership, at all levels, is one of our key skills and you can read more about the successful leadership programmes we run in DE&S, and the new ones we have just launched, on page 20. We're also extremely proud to be supporting the next generation of people in DE&S. This month we celebrate our apprentices, with a feature on page 6 about our successful partnership with Weston College to provide tailored DE&S apprenticeships and degrees. It's inspiring to learn that many staff in DE&S started their careers in Defence as apprentices and are still here today – read Richie's case study on page 4 to find out more.

Against the wider international context, the defence landscape is rapidly evolving and, as an organisation, we must continue to evolve with it. While our collective capability depends on our people, it's vital we have the right framework to support them. That's why, as part of our Strategy Refresh, we're going through a review of how to further optimise our operating model. We'll engage widely across Defence and our industry partners as we progress this work – so look out for more on this in the coming months.

Few organisations have a higher collective purpose than ours – to protect our nation, our territories and our allies. It's our people who are at the heart of this. Our future success belongs to us all.

PEOPLE

From apprentice to munitions leader

Richie Ireland began his career at DE&S as an apprentice. He is now deputy head of the DE&S Defence Munitions team, based in Beith, Scotland. Here, Richie reflects on his career to date and the importance of apprenticeships.

Almost 22 years ago, I had the privilege of becoming an apprentice with the Defence Logistics Organisation (which later formed part of DE&S) at their Beith munitions site. I had left school at 16 and started working as a labourer in a sawmill, but I felt I had more potential that I could fulfil. I wanted to use the enjoyment I found in all things engineering and technical in my professional life.

I hadn't considered myself academic at that age and always had more interest in practical, hands-on things. When I saw the apprenticeship scheme advertised in my local newspaper, I successfully applied for it. The scheme helped me grow my practical skills and formalise these through a vocational qualification. The scheme fused lots of theory too, which helped me to earn a higher national certificate and helped me realise I had academic potential.

When I finished my apprenticeship, I was able to take my first engineering management role, at Faslane Naval Base. I worked as a telecommunications engineer and led a team of specialists. It was my first opportunity to practice my new technical skills, particularly in electronics and IT, and to use my understanding of working in industrial environments to develop my leadership approach.

My apprenticeship roots help me in my leadership role today because I can better relate to our front-line delivery workforce and understand the challenges they're facing through my personal experience of time spent on the shop floor, and how leadership decisions can impact on our people and processes. I've been fortunate to progress up the leadership chain by undertaking multiple roles, from technical manager to senior leader, before becoming what is now known as a level 5 in DE&S. I've even enjoyed a few stints in roles within our senior leadership group, where I felt my industrial perspective really added value. I owe lots to my mentors who have challenged me and helped me grow.

DE&S offers a unique apprenticeship route where you get the best of both vocational and academic training. Nowhere else in the technical engineering world do you get the chance to be both a client for procuring and supporting new kit, and be on the frontline as the person maintaining a weapon or fixing a tank. DE&S really gives you an unrivalled thread of experience and understanding.

DE&S works with some niche, technical skillsets and we've benefitted from the long service of many committed, talented individuals. We need to maintain this for generations to come, training and sustaining our people, as well as bringing new talent into the business.

When I think about future DE&S apprenticeship schemes, it would be great to see us work in partnership with more academic providers across all our DE&S sites. I'd like to see an increase in the diversity of those who choose apprenticeship schemes and it would be great to see some of our existing colleagues, who have experience in the business, but don't have vocational professional qualifications take advantage of the apprenticeships DE&S offers. It's important that apprenticeships become more attractive to different communities, and I'd love to see more mobility of DE&S apprentices around the country as well.

I would heartily recommend the apprenticeship route and I believe that not only does an apprenticeship give you a great grounding, it's also a fantastic opportunity to launch your career.



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Investing in our people

DE&S apprenticeship facilitator and Weston College's Vice Principal for Curriculum Delivery and Technical Education, Jo Philpott, speaks to Desider about the importance of engineering apprenticeships in Defence.

Apprenticeships are a great way to gain a nationally recognised qualification while working. DE&S and Weston College's partnership has existed since 2017. We work together to provide tailored apprenticeships, covering both the academic and vocational sides of working as an engineer.

Weston and DE&S work together to plan and decide what the training is going to look like over the course of the apprenticeship. We work closely to agree the roles and tasks that the apprentices will need to learn as they split their apprenticeship between Weston college and DE&S sites. This customised approach helps meet the needs of Weston, DE&S and the apprentice.

What's unique about the apprenticeships we offer is that, alongside the academic teaching and professional accreditation they earn, we provide hands-on experience with skills like welding, milling, turning and building electrical circuits. And then when the apprentices spend time working with the teams at DE&S – rotating through different job roles in the land, air and ships domains – they're able to put into practice what they've learnt at Weston

and have a really rounded appreciation of what engineering is. The quality and variety of our training programmes sets us apart from similar apprenticeships.

I think two strong aspects of our partnership with DE&S are the honest and real communication we have about our goals and a shared understanding of the importance of adapting what we offer to our apprentices to make sure they always get the very best. Our apprentices love the mix of hands-on experience – whether through the outward-bound team building events we host or in workshops at college – and the corporate experience they gain from working within DE&S and closely with military commands.

Learning while they earn, upskilling and using their new knowledge in a real-world business is something our apprentices always feedback to us as a highlight of their apprenticeships.

Our apprentices have the opportunity to play a key role in Defence. They can influence new procurement measures, improve safety and support the upkeep of in-service equipment. In the future, it would be great if we could enhance the apprenticeships our partnership offers by including more time spent with



different employers to show that breadth of connectivity between the whole of the aerospace sector. The work our apprentices do is extremely meaningful and the specialist skills they develop throughout their apprenticeship sees them best placed to strengthen the future of Defence.



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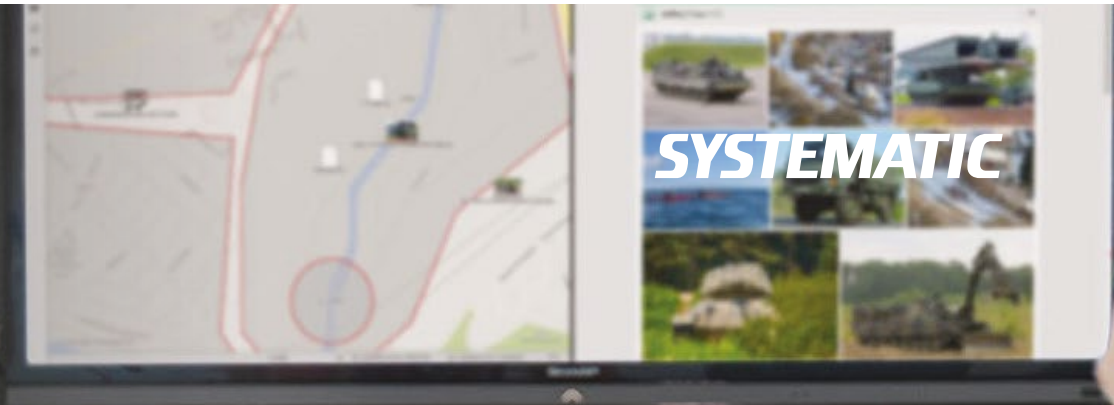
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NEWS

DE&S helps to deliver Exercise Joint Protector 2022

Recently the Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF) successfully undertook Exercise Joint Protector 2022. The exercise was made possible thanks to the Joint Command and Staff Trainer (JCAST) contract, delivered by the DE&S Soldier Training and Special Projects team.

The JEF brings together 10 European nations, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the UK, who share a united resolve to defend the security of Northern Europe and the Baltic Sea. It provides a responsive, capable and ready military force that undertakes integrated activities across Northern Europe. These activities are preventative and proportionate. They are designed to demonstrate a shared solidarity and capability to stand together for security and stability.

Exercise Joint Protector 2022 involved roughly 600 personnel and was delivered by the UK Strategic Command's Joint Warfare Training Organisation. The JCAST contract is managed by Training and Simulation Systems Portfolio (TSSP) and provides UK Strategic Command with a fully realised simulated environment and a range of support services to conduct JEF exercises.

The major training exercise saw the 10 nations train together in a Command Post Exercise focused on security in the northern Baltic Sea region. Over two weeks, personnel were challenged in a series of highly realistic scenarios. Crafted by military specialists, these focused on how JEF nations would be deployed and would counter a hostile action that fell below the threshold of actual military conflict. The exercise was designed to test the skills of headquarters



personnel to provide command and control functions, and to improve their resilience and responsiveness. The exercise demonstrated how, by planning, training and working together, the JEF can respond quickly to security challenges and global crises.

The UK has taken on the role of 'framework nation', contributing Standing Joint Force Headquarters to the JEF and, through DE&S, facilitating this exercise. Without this vital UK capability in place, the 10 JEF nations would not have the resources and specialised technology to train and exercise together.

UK Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said: "The Joint Expeditionary Force has been at the forefront of providing diplomatic, financial, humanitarian and military support, something we will continue to do until Russia has withdrawn their forces".

The UK's binding commitment as framework nation has firmly cemented the critical need for the JCAST contract. With this in mind, the project team in TSSP are working with the Joint Warfare Training Organisation to develop the follow-on capability for future multinational JEF exercises, with the UK continuing to play a leading role.

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FEATURE

CELEBRATING DE&S APPRENTICES

DE&S is proud to celebrate its talented workforce during National Apprenticeship Week (6 – 10 February). Below, hear from a few of DE&S' fantastic apprentices and about their career paths to date...

Eli Mei – Aerospace engineering degree apprentice

As an apprentice, I've done placements with different teams across the business, helping them support and deliver projects. I am currently working on Typhoon fighter jets in avionics, helping provide diagnostic support and data exploitation to the RAF.

Studying and working at the same time is really rewarding because I get to see what I've learned at university put into practice, which really helps cement my knowledge.

Being able to support the UK Armed Forces is also a big reason I enjoy working for DE&S. I've been able to work with front-line military personnel first-hand, both remotely and at various bases across the country.

I am a member of the LGBTQ+ network and this support, as well as the support I have received personally while in my different roles, has really helped create a positive working environment.

Ruby Smith – Digital marketing apprentice

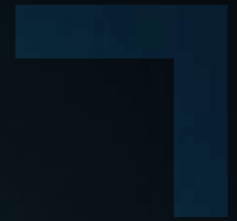
My apprenticeship covers all aspects of digital marketing, from social media and website building to content creation and campaign analytics.

After being with DE&S for two years as a business manager, I was really keen to explore other areas of the business and develop my skills in communications. I've done an apprenticeship before and really enjoyed it, so when I was given this opportunity to move teams and start a new qualification I thought it was a no-brainer.

I enjoy the variation within my job – being able to be involved in events and campaigns. DE&S' reputation is extremely important, so helping to shape this is extremely rewarding and it's a proud moment for me.

It's great working for DE&S because of the career progression. I think it's great that DE&S invests in its people. If you're interested in something, they will try their hardest to find opportunities for you.





Amit Modhwadia – Project delivery apprentice

I previously worked in hospitality and I decided to change career because I wanted something that was a bit more stable and also something that's a lot more rewarding. The work we do makes a real tangible difference to our front-line commands. I also enjoy the wide variety of work we do.

I'm involved in the mentoring scheme, where we go into the local community and act as mentors for local students. It's a great way of showing people what we do day-to-day, but we also want to show that we are inclusive and work with the community.

The main benefits of being a DE&S apprentice are career progression once you finish your apprenticeship. There are plenty of ways to find your niche, and you also have things like flexi-time and time off for volunteering, which is something I'm passionate about.

Sophie Gregory – Project professional apprentice

After I finished school I wasn't sure if I wanted to go to university or do an apprenticeship. I had a gap year and was working in catering in nursing homes during the pandemic. It was quite a stressful time and I decided I needed a change of career. I found out about DE&S apprenticeships, and I thought this would be a good opportunity to develop my skills when on the job and gain some qualifications.

There's lots of opportunity to get involved in loads of different things - you can jump across to different areas and can develop your skills along the way.

I've been up to RAF Waddington to see some of the data terminals that we've been working on and meet some of the team who it's directly affecting. It was really rewarding because it's not just on a page, it's a physical thing that we're helping to work towards.



NEWS

Challenger 2 tank explainer

Britain's main battle tank, the Challenger 2, procured and supported by DE&S, has travelled the world on operations with the British Army. The heavily armoured, highly-mobile tank prioritises firepower and protection, and is accurate and versatile. A consignment of Challenger 2 tanks will be sent to Ukraine to bolster the Ukrainian's fight against Russia's illegal invasion.

NEWS

WEIGHT:
62.5 tonnes

MAIN ARMAMENT:
L30A1 120mm rifled gun

MAXIMUM SPEED:
37 mph

CREW: 4
Commander, Gunner, Loader, Driver

FUEL CAPACITY:
1,592 litres

SUSPENSION:
Hydro-pneumatic suspension

LENGTH:
11.55 metres



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Desider is the monthly corporate magazine for DE&S. It is aimed at readers across the wider MOD, armed forces and defence industry. It covers the work of people at DE&S and its partners, and other corporate news and information.

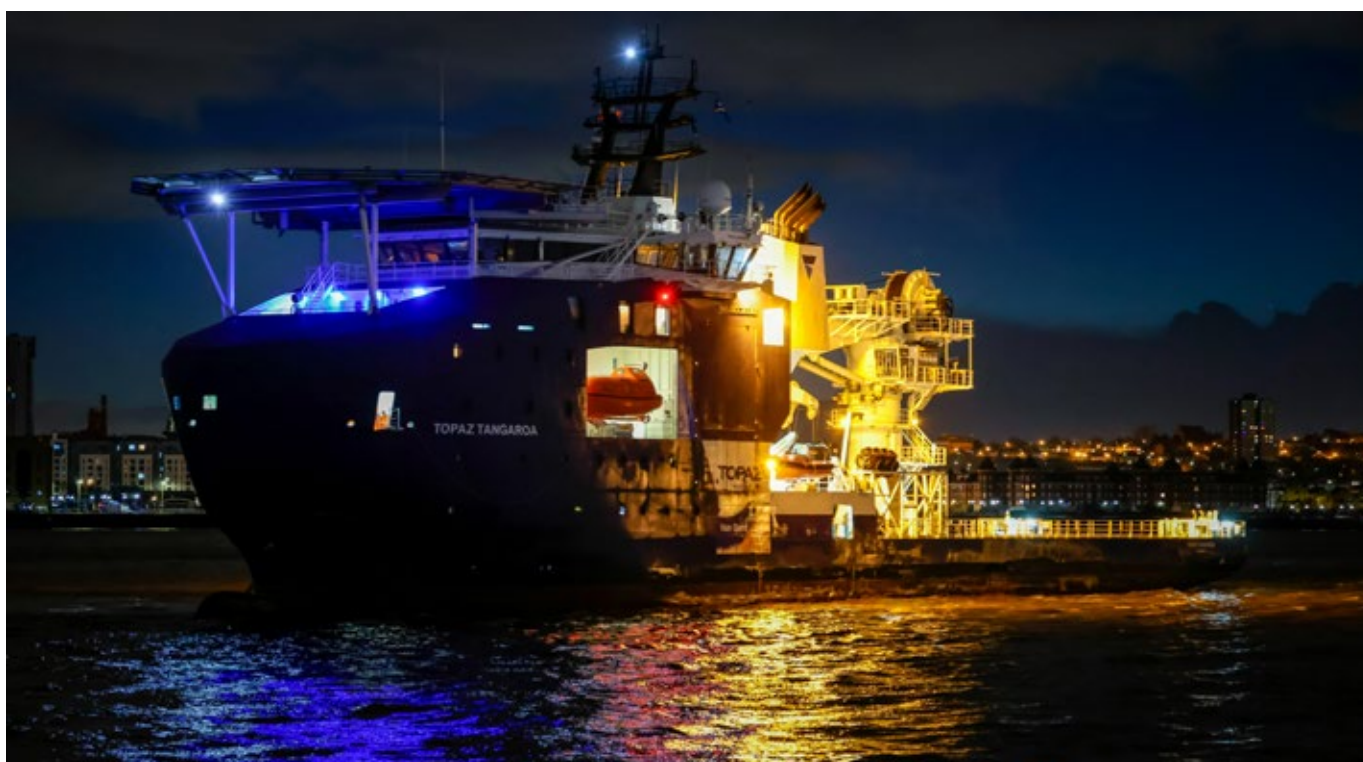
A large commercial airplane is positioned on a runway, viewed from a low angle looking down the center. A bright yellow center line runs from the foreground towards the plane, creating a strong sense of perspective. The sky is overcast and grey.

DESIDER

NEWS

Protecting critical underwater cables

A new Seabed Warfare ship has been purchased by DE&S to carry cutting-edge equipment that will help protect the UK's critical national infrastructure from hostile attacks.



The 6,000-tonne, 98-metre-long off-shore patrol vessel can handle a range of activities, including operating remote and autonomous off-board systems for underwater surveillance and seabed warfare. The Topaz Tangaroa is the first of two Multi-Role Ocean Surveillance (MROS) ships that will be operated by the Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA).

These ships are vital to national security as they protect key energy and communication cables and pipelines on the seabed, which have become an increasingly attractive target for the UK's adversaries. As a result of this heightened threat, Defence Secretary Ben Wallace accelerated the procurement of the MROS vessels.

The Topaz Tangaroa was built in 2019 by Vard and purchased for £65 million by the

DE&S Ships Acquisition team. It has now arrived at Cammell Laird in Birkenhead where it will now undergo a short period of modification before a planned entry into service with the RFA later this year.

MROS project manager Gareth Morris said: "I'm incredibly proud to have worked collaboratively with an innovative team to deliver this critical new capability to the Royal Navy and Royal Fleet Auxiliary. Lessons learned during this fast-paced and novel procurement journey have been invaluable and will positively impact future projects."

DE&S Director General Ships Vice Admiral Paul Marshall said: "DE&S worked at pace to successfully accelerate the purchase and delivery of the first ship under the critical MROS programme. We continue to work with agility to support the UK MOD

in addressing both the current and future threats posed by an ever-changing world."

The Ships Acquisition team did extensive market analysis before the purchase of Topaz Tangaroa, which previously operated around the world on commercial charters. That analysis proved that adapting a vessel from the commercial market to meet the Seabed Warfare requirements was the best way to maximise value for money for the taxpayer and ensure timely delivery of an essential new vessel to the Royal Navy.

Head of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary, Commodore David Eagles said: "This is an entirely new mission for the Royal Fleet Auxiliary – and one we relish. We have been entrusted with supporting a key operation to safeguard the UK's infrastructure, security and prosperity, and that fills all of us in the RFA with pride."

PEOPLE

It all starts with an apprenticeship

Neil Dando began his career as a technician apprentice and, 37 years later, he now leads the DE&S Ships Hydrographic and Patrol delivery team. Part of his current role is as a chief engineer, known as the Platform Authority under Defence Safety Regulations, where he is responsible for ensuring that the ships his team supports remain safe to operate. Here, Neil speaks to Desider about his career and how his apprenticeship led him to where he is today.

How did you start your journey as an apprentice?

I was 15 when I applied to a job advert in the Bath Evening Chronicle. I wasn't aware of any career options or aspirations at that age. It was simply seen as a good job and that recognition still applies today. I enjoyed technology, woodwork and metalwork at school, so I understood a little of what it would mean to do a draughtsman apprenticeship. My dad had been in the Royal Navy in the '60s. We'd gone to Navy Days in Plymouth while on holiday and 'working with navy ships' sounded kind of exciting. So, on 25 September 1985, I started as a technician apprentice with the MOD at Foxhill in Bath.

After four years as an apprentice, I was placed in the team responsible for in-service support of Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) Argus and the procurement of a new aviation support ship, which would later become the Royal Navy's helicopter carrier, HMS Ocean. There were some great people in the team and it was my first experience working in support of the RFA, an association that has now stretched over 20 years.

Did you always have a career path?

I've had plenty of varied roles and levels of responsibility since finishing my apprenticeship, but I haven't really planned my career. I've always just focused on doing my current job well. Then, once I felt I was reasonably competent and experienced enough to apply for a promotion, I would. The MOD also sponsored my Mechanical Engineering degree, which I completed part-time over a five-year period, and that really opened up opportunities.

What is your advice to current apprentices?

Concentrate on being the best you can be in the placement or role you're in and the opportunities for increased responsibility and promotion will come naturally. And, when they do come, grab every opportunity with both hands. Never be afraid to volunteer for something unfamiliar – experience is the vital element to any engineer's career and you need to gather that wherever you find it.



What does it take to be a good engineer?

The softer skills can be just as important as getting your qualifications and registering with your engineering institute. You need to be an effective communicator; retaining a nagging sense of doubt also helps, and equally know when you've got enough data or evidence to form a defensible decision. Suitable, sufficient and proportionate are my guiding words.

Being a chief engineer in DE&S means more than just making engineering decisions. There are so many challenges across the board, including finance, contract arrangements, scheduling, controlling new capability insertion, maintaining the existing material state of the ships, and making the safety case. But the real challenge is ensuring my team's capacity can meet the demands of Navy Command and, if we can't, to understand what we'll carry forward at risk, what work we'll delay and what we'll prioritise.

NEWS

News in Brief

Success for HMS Medway



Offshore patrol vessel HMS Medway, procured and maintained by DE&S, is currently deployed to the Caribbean, as part of the Royal Navy's permanent presence in the region.

Medway had a very eventful and successful 2022. Throughout the hurricane season, which runs from mid-summer to the end of November, the ship's dedicated crisis response troop provided relief to island communities.

In September, Medway helped repair

the perimeter fence around the airport and restore generators at the prison on Turks and Caicos Islands, just 12 hours after Hurricane Fiona passed by. It then responded to Hurricane Ian after it struck the Cayman Islands, turning up within four hours of the storm.

Between hurricanes, the ship's team worked with island communities' disaster relief teams to build relationships, and share skills to enable a rapid response in the event of a future emergency. They trained alongside

the Antigua and Barbuda Defence Force, highlighting basic demolitions techniques, safely completing the journey from classroom theory to practical demonstrations.

Medway's recent deployment also saw it seize £24 million of cocaine, as part of a joint counter-narcotics operation with the US Coast Guard.

The ship, which clocked up 10,000 miles on her autumn patrol, will now undergo a routine maintenance period in Jacksonville, Florida.

Successful transfer of marine services contract ensures seamless support

On 17 December, Defence Marine Services completed the complex transfer of the contract for marine services, as the final stage of a 15-year private finance initiative (PFI), ensuring a seamless continuation of support.

The DE&S commercial team successfully led both the procurement of the new contract and the exit from the PFI. The PFI was a long-term contract between SDMS and the MOD, where SDMS designed, built, financed and operated public assets and related services.

Under the £1.2 billion contract, which ran from 2007 to 2022, Serco, the main sub-contractor, operated and maintained 111 vessels and provided a range of in-port and out-of-port activities. These included: provision of tugs for ship movements, passenger transfer services, the movement of explosives and fuel, support for military exercises, and the maintenance of 330 moorings and navigational markers.

Unravelling a PFI is very complicated. The main challenge is the buy back and transfer of assets and title, in this

case a fleet of support vessels, so that critical services continue to be provided under a new interim contract. An added complication was the negotiation of terms that maintained competition as a future procurement option.

But thanks to thorough planning, stakeholder and contractor engagement, and a well-prepared delivery team, the PFI was closed on time with the fleet of vessels transferred at 23:59 on 16 December 2022, ready for service on the first day of the new contract at midnight on 17 December.

NEWS

Continuous improvement reinforces ISO 9001 certification for DE&S

In November 2022, DE&S' ISO 9001 certification body, National Quality Assurance (NQA), conducted its first surveillance audit and found that DE&S had continued to meet the required standard.

ISO 9001 is the internationally recognised standard for 'quality management'. DE&S first became ISO 9001 certified in December 2021, and NQA are required to undertake annual surveillance audits to

maintain the certification.

Judith Hargreaves, the NQA auditor, said: "All who participated in the audit showed a great level of knowledge within their role, a great deal of passion for the projects being worked on, and a knowledge of how improvements will be made, demonstrating a plan already in place."

This is a significant achievement for an organisation of DE&S' size and complexity, and reflects positively on DE&S' approach

to improving the visibility and impact of quality management across the business. It demonstrates a drive to continuously improve DE&S' Business Management System, and the processes and procedures that underpin it.

As with any audit, there are areas that have been identified for improvement, which will be taken forward with the relevant business areas in the coming months.

Steel cut for second Type 31

Steel has now been cut for the second Type 31 frigate. At a ceremony at the Babcock Rosyth dockyard in Scotland, Defence minister Alex Chalk cut steel for HMS Active in the presence of veterans who served on its Type 21 namesake during the Falklands Conflict.

Construction of the fleet is the lead programme of the National Shipbuilding Strategy. It will support around 1,250 highly-skilled jobs in Rosyth and an additional 150 apprenticeships. A further 1,250 roles in the UK supply chain are also expected to be supported by the programme.

Babcock has also created 250 new roles aimed at people not currently in education, employment or training. These will be recruited in collaboration with Fife Council, Fife College and local employability programmes.



The contract for the frigates was placed by the Type 31 delivery team at DE&S. Helga Kitney, DE&S team leader, said: "The cutting of steel for HMS Active, the second of the Type 31 Frigates, just 16 months after the first ship, is a testament to the continued delivery of this innovative

programme by industry and MOD at an unprecedented pace."

Type 31 vessels will have the capabilities to engage in a range of operational roles, including interception and disruption of illegal maritime activity and humanitarian support.

UK hosts Five Eyes sustainment and supply chain forum

The UK recently hosted the Joint Sustainment & Supply Chain Forum (JSSCF) – a long-standing Five Eyes forum that specifically allows collaboration on critical supply chain and transformation issues.

Lisa Smith, US Assistant Secretary of Defense for Product Support, explained: "The JSSCF provides a unique opportunity to share best practices and explore opportunities with our allies while achieving the goals of the National Defence Strategy."

The twice annual forum is considered the thought leader in global defence supply chain management. The theme for the most recent event was 'Building Supply Chain Resiliency in Times of Uncertainty' and featured guest speakers from the USA, Canada, New Zealand, Australia and the UK. Topics included national perspectives on life cycle issues and reform initiatives, climate change, environmental and energy initiatives.

During the event, the UK Strategic Command Supply Chain Strategy was

launched by Director Joint Support, Major General Simon Hutchings OBE. He said: "The Joint Sustainment & Supply Chain Forum is a powerful medium in which we can share and debate key sustainment and resilience issues against the backdrop of a dynamic global supply chain environment, which is impacting all members. At this forum, we are able to share some key insights. For example our efforts to share data around foreign military sales is particularly enlightening..."

NEWS

New contract means investment boost to UK naval shipbuilding

Huge investment in UK shipbuilding and hundreds of new jobs created after DE&S awards £1.6 billion contract for new naval support vessels to be built at iconic Belfast and Appledore shipyards.

DE&S have awarded a £1.6 billion contract to Team Resolute to deliver three Fleet Solid Support ships for the Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA). These vessels will provide crucial munitions, stores and provisions to the Royal Navy's aircraft carriers, destroyers and frigates.

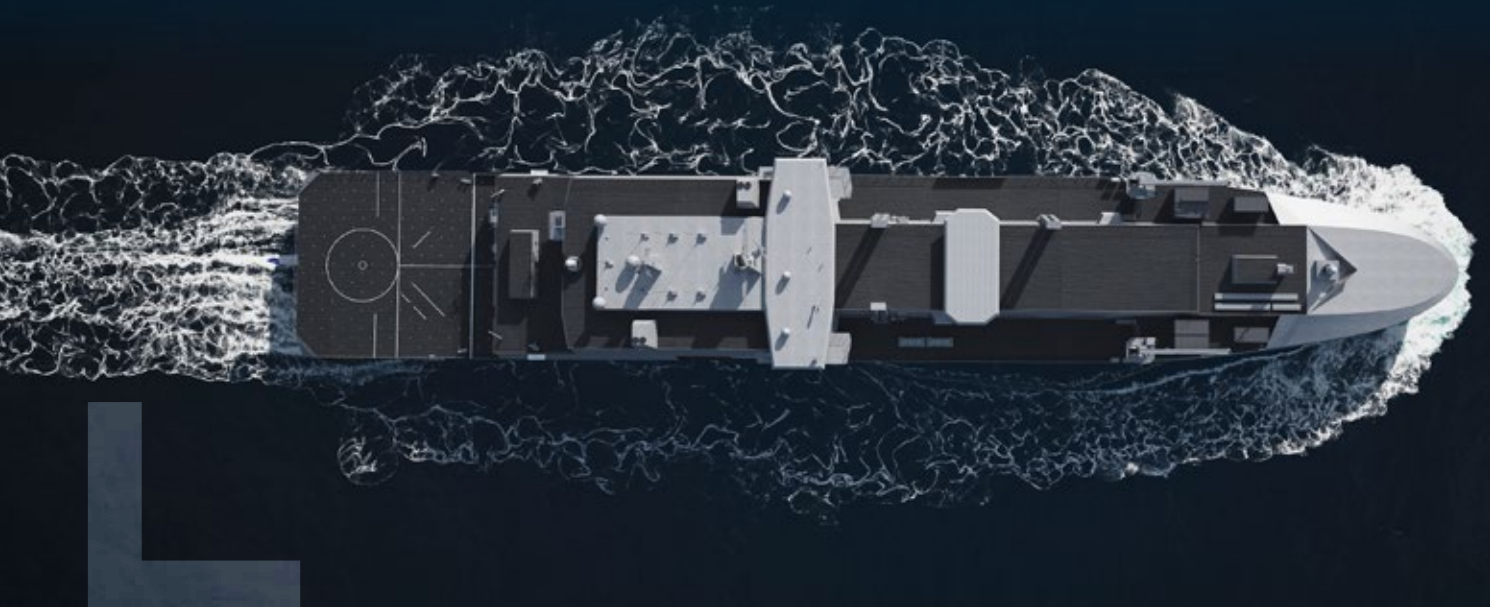
The majority of the ships' production will take place in the UK. The contract will increase industrial productivity, and develop the domestic supply chain and workforce, while improving the shipbuilding industry's environmental sustainability. The contract is expected to create 1,200 UK shipyard jobs,

hundreds of graduate and apprentice opportunities, and an expected 800 further jobs across the UK supply chain.

BMT, Harland & Wolff and Navantia UK, the three companies that make up Team Resolute, have pledged to invest around £100 million in UK shipyards, including £77 million in infrastructure at Harland & Wolff's Belfast and Appledore shipyards. This will create around 900 jobs in Belfast alone and make it one of the most advanced shipyards in the UK.

On announcement of the contract, Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said: "This contract is a significant boost to the UK's

NEWS





historic shipbuilding industry, balancing shipbuilding across the Union. Creating jobs and prosperity, Team Resolute is bringing shipbuilding back to Belfast, developing a modern, resilient and thriving shipbuilding industry that will support naval and commercial shipbuilding into the future.”

Delivering on ambitions to bolster UK shipbuilding, as laid out in the National Shipbuilding Strategy Refresh, the contract aims to bring significant capital investment into the UK, while providing ships that are essential to the Carrier-led Maritime Strike Group. The contract complements existing Type 26 and Type 31 frigate construction contracts in Scotland, bolstering the UK’s shipbuilding capabilities.

Vice Admiral Paul Marshall, Director General Ships at DE&S, said: “DE&S looks forward to working with our industry partners to deliver what will be the essential, last big piece of the UK’s Carrier-led Maritime Strike Group, which will serve for decades to come.”

The majority of the blocks and modules for the ships will be constructed at Harland & Wolff’s facilities, following the entirely British design crafted by Bath-based company BMT.

Build work will also take place at Navantia’s shipyard in Cadiz, Spain. The final assembly for all three 216-metre-long vessels – each the length of two Premier League football pitches – will be completed at the Belfast shipyard.

On behalf of Team Resolute, Group CEO of Harland & Wolff John Wood said: “This programme will bring £77 million of investment into the Harland & Wolff shipyards and create around 1,200 shipyard jobs, spring boarding Harland & Wolff back into the naval shipbuilding sphere and significantly enhancing our export opportunities for the future.”

The contract aims to deliver 200 further education opportunities on graduate placements and apprentice programmes, with 120 highly-skilled jobs supported at BMT. Harland & Wolff’s welding academy is set to train 300 new UK welders.

Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Chris Heaton-Harris said: “The award of this major UK Government contract is fantastic news for Northern Ireland and the UK shipbuilding industry.”

Production is due to start in 2025 with shipyard investment and improvements starting immediately. All three fleet solid support ships are expected to be operational by 2032.



FEATURE

New leadership programmes to support under-represented groups

Recognising that the key to success is the dedication and professionalism of its people, DE&S has launched a suite of leadership development programmes to better support under-represented groups within the organisation. This reflects DE&S' commitment to developing its staff, maintaining a focus on equality, diversity, inclusion and wellbeing, and fostering diversity of thought, perspectives and experiences.

Jo Osburn-Hughes, Land Chief Operating Officer and DE&S Diversity & Inclusion Co-Champion, said: "In D&S we are committed to promoting a culture that enables people to thrive and excel. Building on the success of the Becoming programme, we have launched two similar programmes to support other under-represented groups. These programmes are an exciting opportunity to acquire new skills and develop leadership behaviours, and a great way for us to invest in our people to meet the challenges of the future."



Becoming

The Becoming programme is an initiative to help and support women to develop their identities as leaders. Designed and delivered by the DE&S Leadership, Skills & Growth team, in partnership with external specialists Half the Sky, the programme aims to accelerate and advance women's careers and achieve stronger female representation in leadership roles. Colleagues enrolled on the programme receive coaching, and take part in independent reflective tasks and workshops. A recent Becoming programme participant said: "I'm already noticing positive changes in my behaviour and the ways I handle challenges"

Participants also hear from inspirational keynote speakers. Past speakers have included international rugby star Maggie Alphonsi MBE, Kanye King CBE, founder of the Music of Black Origin (MOBO) Awards, and British mountaineer and motivational speaker Bonita Norris.

Boost

The creativity and diversity of its people is an important reason why DE&S is recognised as a leader in the delivery of military equipment and support. DE&S needs leaders who can embed equality, diversity, inclusion and wellbeing into its culture through communication, education and action. Boost is a new development programme for people who identify as being part of an ethnic minority group. The programme will help participants understand how to reach their potential as leaders. Over six months, Boost will help them develop the insights and skills needed to address the barriers to their growth and success, and harness their skills to help create more inclusive cultures across the organisation.

Beyond

To support the leadership development of its disabled colleagues, DE&S has launched the Beyond programme.

Beyond will draw on cutting-edge research on the issues that influence the progression of leaders from minoritised communities and the issues that affect the organisation.

Over the course of six months, participants will be taught how to navigate organisational politics and career anchors to reach their potential as leaders, and how to bring authority and presence to their work lives. They will develop a powerful sense of self and see the value they bring to enhance and influence a more inclusive organisation. Through personal and group work, both online and in-person, they will learn how to overcome organisational structures and own their growth and success.

NEWS

News in Brief

The Destiny outreach programme

The Destiny Programme was created by DE&S to inspire school children in areas with limited social mobility to find their inner talent, boost their confidence around a role in the working world, and consider DE&S as a potential future employer.

Apprentices and graduate volunteers from DE&S' Entry Talent Centre of Expertise (ETCoE) work with local schools to introduce

students to all areas of the business.

When working with Cotham School in Bristol, the students learned about the procurement cycle through a case study on clinical face masks. The students learned about business planning, project management, design, procurement, manufacturing, and marketing and communications. Breaking down the procurement cycle, students had the

chance to experience the full range of work available at DE&S. This approach had the added bonus of developing the mentoring, presentation and communication skills of ETCoE apprentices and graduate volunteers who designed and delivered the teaching activities to the students, both remotely and in person. Future Destiny Programmes will continue to be managed by the DE&S ETCoE.



DE&S apprentices supporting the local community

The DE&S Entry Talent Centre of Expertise (ETCoE) project professional apprentices are continuing their work with secondary schools in the local Bristol community.

Since 2019, the ETCoE has been developing and delivering an outreach programme with Olympus Academy Trust (OAT) schools to help support students with mentoring, CV writing and mock interviews, and to raise awareness of DE&S apprenticeships.

The OAT outreach programme runs four

projects each academic year for local students aged between 16 and 18. It offers valuable skills to students and also gives DE&S apprentices the chance to build their skills in project management, interviewing and mentoring.

Natalie Elias, ETCoE Capability Development Manager, said: "These opportunities really are a great chance to give back to our local community and encourage talent to apply for our apprenticeship and graduate schemes."

Sophie Gregory, a project professional

apprentice, said: "I found out about DE&S apprenticeships through the Olympus Academy Trust programme. I thought it would be a good opportunity to develop my skills while working and gaining some qualifications. Now at DE&S, me and my colleagues have gone out to local schools to help local sixth formers decide what they want to do in their next stages. An apprenticeship is a really good option to consider, especially at DE&S, because there are lots of opportunities for qualifications and to develop your wider skills."

PEOPLE

Paul Long

Name:

Paul Long

Job title:

Information Support Administrator

What does your role involve?

My role is IT-based; I work with sites across DE&S to handle data reporting on ships information. Working with multiple stakeholders, I simplify crucial data and distribute this information to the business to support the upkeep of Royal Navy ships. I also work with a large team in Abbey Wood to support the account maintenance of devices used by DE&S staff.

What do you most enjoy about your job?

I enjoy being able to interact with the wider business, both in my role and through outreach opportunities. My role is people-facing and I really enjoy helping other teams and learning more about different areas of DE&S. This gives me lots of opportunities to develop both personally and professionally.

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

I was really proud to recently be recognised by my team for my efficient and hard work to rectify a backlog of important ship signal data. I was also proud to be part of a great team that managed a laptop rollout project to the wider MOD, providing technical support to thousands of people. Elsewhere, I've helped with DE&S outreach work that's been hugely rewarding. I've enjoyed going out to local primary schools to help children with neurodiverse conditions by hosting mock interviews and DE&S career fairs. Having the opportunity to help the wider community is great, and especially rewarding to help children with autism by giving them career advice and guidance. This is something I wish I had when I was younger. It is great to be able to be a role model for them.

What keeps you energised about working at DE&S?

The opportunities DE&S gives me to improve my skillsets. DE&S provides a lot of opportunities to learn more about other areas of the business, which I love. DE&S always supports its staff to learn more about the wider business and getting to know how other areas of the business work keeps things interesting for me.

Who or what has shaped who you are?

My experiences throughout my life. I have had a lot of different opportunities that have pushed me out of my comfort zone. For example, I've had the opportunity to go to different countries and travel and immerse myself in different cultures. This has really boosted my confidence, helped me believe in myself and made me realise how adaptable I am when presented with challenging situations.

What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

Game design. I'm currently creating a 2-D action game called Amputhief that I intend to release fully to the wider market this year. I've really enjoyed working with my friends on the character design and the supporting music. Working on this project also helped me with my coding skills, which is transferable into my own role at DE&S.

What might surprise people about you?

To know that I am autistic – unless I otherwise mention it, most people tend to not pick up on this without a keen eye for it. Admittedly, I don't bring it up very often, but I am slowly starting to have less of a turtle-shell mentality about it. When I do bring it up, I am always reminded to be proud of my own neurodiversity because of what it has allowed me to do and what I have achieved.

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

Don't overthink things. Granted, I often fall into that pitfall, but I am trying to improve. Sometimes a problem has a simpler solution than you might think it needs, but it just needs to be broken down a bit to help understand the smaller parts inside it.



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