

DESIDER

AN INSIDE LOOK AT DEFENCE EQUIPMENT & SUPPORT



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



In this issue



4
**THE DE&S
STRATEGY**



7
**TOMORROW:
SHARPENING
DEFENCE'S
OPERATIONAL
EDGE**

8
**TOGETHER:
SECURING THE
UK'S ADVANTAGE**



11
**DESIGNING
DE&S' NEW
FRONT DOOR**



14
**TRANSFORMING
SUPPORT FOR ARMY
VEHICLES AND
EQUIPMENT**



15
**UPGRADE TO
A FALKLANDS
HELICOPTER
STALWART**

18
**TOM NEVARD
MEMORIAL
COMPETITION
2023**



22
**ALEX HOLMES
INTERVIEW**





START

Talking

In this edition of Desider, we're celebrating the external publication of DE&S' strategy. The strategy is built on contributions from across the defence enterprise, including industry. I'm very proud of what we have achieved and the One Defence effort it represents.

The strategy is our response to a world that has become more dangerous and insecure. Threats to the international norms and laws we live by are multiplying rapidly, while technology is moving forwards at an ever-faster rate. War has returned to Europe for the first time in decades, bringing with it global economic turmoil and immense suffering, especially for our allies in Ukraine.

Our defence enterprise is in direct competition with those of our adversaries. Their defence budgets are growing at a rapid pace, developing new kit with fewer concerns for safety and a larger appetite for risk. To ensure our security and prosperity, we must out-perform them in operational support and acquisition.

DE&S occupies a unique position in the defence enterprise, as a bridge between our armed forces and industry. The DE&S strategy is our commitment to strengthening UK Defence, developing new sovereign skills and ensuring greater industrial capacity. We are evolving our role, deploying our experience and insights to become an interface, a critical companion and a trusted partner to both.

We completed the strategy at the beginning of the year, but held off wider publication to ensure it was consistent and fully supportive of the Defence Command Paper Refresh, which I'm pleased to say it is. We are now six months into implementation and moving at pace.

We begin this edition with an excellent overview of the strategy and operating model from Jill Hatcher, our Director Strategy, People, Change and Corporate. Jill really captures the driving force behind the strategy when she says: "We have to raise the bar from good enough to great. The strategy is our roadmap to get there. It's a commitment to be better."

As Jill goes on to explain, the strategy is founded on an ethos of: 'by us, for us'; a truly participatory approach to designing and enacting our strategy and operating model. We have benefitted from thousands of inputs from people across defence, who helped us see where DE&S is now and where we need to get it to.

These inputs have helped us distil our intentions into three pillars: Today, Tomorrow and Together. They might seem simple, but there's plenty beneath each of them. We've given some of our people and partners the opportunity to explore them in the articles that follow.

First, an insight into DE&S' Operations Directorate, whose mission it is to deliver the outputs our armed forces need today. They have been at the forefront of UK support to Ukraine, including the donation of more than £1.3 billion worth of equipment, while ensuring our armed forces have everything they need right now to deliver operations safely and successfully.

Then James Gavin, Head of the Future Capability Group, explains how the strategy will drive DE&S to sharpen our operational edge for tomorrow. As he rightly says: "It's crucial that our armed forces be at the forefront of innovation to maintain the operational advantage over our adversaries and deter future threats."

And finally, we hear from Kevin Craven, CEO of the ADS trade association, and General Sir Jim Hockenhull, Commander UK Strategic Command, to help us bring it all together.

As head of the largest UK defence sector trade association, Kevin's well-placed to give us the industry perspective on our strategy. He describes it as a "very welcome step" towards strengthening the relationship between the MOD and industry. UK Strategic Command works to support and align the armed forces, and as such General Hockenhull focuses on the crucial importance of integration and the role DE&S must play in ensuring Defence is a well-functioning "system of systems".

I would like to close by welcoming Grant Shapps MP as the new Secretary of State for Defence, and to thank Ben Wallace MP for the dedication, passion and support he has shown during his tenure.

It's only by working together, alongside our industry and MOD partners, that we can build a more effective DE&S and a stronger defence enterprise, focused on what really matters. This is about our nation's security and prosperity. This is about equipping our armed forces with the edge to protect our nation.

Every reader of Desider can choose to play a part in the safety and security of the UK and our allies. I hope what you read in this edition inspires you to action, as much as creating and implementing the DE&S Strategy has inspired us.

SENIOR LEADER COMMENT

DE&S publishes its strategy: a commitment to deliver for defence

Jill Hatcher, Director Strategy, People, Change and Corporate, sets out DE&S' strategy, which is publicly released this month.

This edition of Desider marks the public launch of our strategy. It's a turning point for our organisation.

In the last three years the economics, politics and technology that drive our world have changed dramatically. So too have the threats our nation faces. Every day the news reminds us of the unstable world our armed forces and allies operate in.

To continue to be effective, we must change. We have to raise the bar from good enough to great. The strategy is our roadmap to get there. It's a commitment to be better. It's built around a simple formula for our strategic aspirations: Today, Tomorrow, Together. This is our plan to get out in front of the UK's adversaries today and be ready for the threats they bring tomorrow.

Today, it's about making sure our armed forces and allies have the munitions, stores, medicines and equipment they need, when they need it, to deter or defeat any threat. And ensuring the equipment we've already supplied is maintained and ready to be deployed.

Tomorrow directs us to think about future threats and challenges. Our adversaries are moving fast to develop new advantages and it's crucial we stay ahead of them. We must work with MOD partners, allies and the defence industry, and employ the latest developments in science and technology to rapidly upgrade equipment and make sure it works to deliver maximum effect.

The only way to achieve this is as One Defence, **together**. The whole defence enterprise must work in harmony to meet today's immediate capacity demands and develop the game-changing platforms and industrial strength we will need tomorrow.

This will mean significant changes to how we work. We will use 'sprints' to identify and cut bureaucracy and waste. We are creating three control centres that will turn data into insights to help us to solve the problems that stop us getting the best equipment and support to our armed forces. And we are designing a new operating model that will free up our people to work smarter, faster, more collaboratively and ultimately where it's needed most.

I'm writing this article having just moved from Director HR to my new role as Director Strategy, People, Change and Corporate. For me, people are the key to our strategy and our mission. I've built a



career on placing people at the heart of Defence and truly believe we will only succeed if we harness their wealth of experience, diversity of thought and passion to deliver for our armed forces.

This is why we have taken a 'by us, for us' approach to implementing our strategy. The result is collaborative and bottom-up; thousands of people from across defence, not just DE&S colleagues, but MOD, front-line commands and industry, came together to help us see where we are today, define tomorrow's challenges and to develop pan-defence solutions.

All of Defence, DE&S included, has an incredibly important mission: to keep our nation and our allies safe and help them prosper. DE&S equips our armed forces with the edge to protect our nation. To do that successfully, we need to constantly evolve and always strive to be better. Our strategy is our public commitment to making that a reality.



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FEATURE

TODAY: Delivering availability where and when it is needed

The DE&S Operations Directorate is less than a year old, but has already developed a rapid response regime that focuses support to military operations around the world.

Supporting military operations around the world, on behalf of the UK and its allies, is a top priority for Defence and the focus of the 'Today' pillar within DE&S' strategy. This aims to ensure the UK Armed Forces have the equipment, munitions, stores and supplies they need to deliver current operations, and that existing equipment is safely maintained and ready to be deployed where and when it is needed.

Behind this work is the Operations Directorate, which DE&S formed in December 2022. Headed up by Major General Anna-Lee Reilly, the Directorate works alongside DE&S delivery teams, military personnel and partners from across the MOD, Strategic Command, Army Headquarters and industry.

During its first year the Directorate has focused on Ukraine. It has coordinated the donation of over £1.3 billion worth of UK equipment through grants from existing stockpiles and additional rapid procurement. This includes munitions, vehicles, personal protective equipment and equipment to support the training of thousands of Ukrainian personnel. In parallel, the Directorate is working with DE&S Operating Centres to rapidly replenish equipment gifted to Ukraine.

"DE&S' new strategy is rightly looking at what we need to do in the future to give our armed forces the edge to defend the UK," says Major General Reilly. "But, through the 'Today' pillar, it also emphasises what we need to do right now to support our military colleagues and allies engaged in live operations. This is what we are focussed on delivering today."

"Our work to support Ukraine has given us the opportunity to change the way we react to new and evolving situations. We have developed ways of working at a faster pace, and the recent Defence Command Paper Refresh rightly praised the way DE&S has adapted its approach."

While Ukraine has been their major focus since Russia's invasion, the Operations Directorate also supports many other, varied global

operations. For example, over the past 12 months the team has been involved in the drawdown of UK military equipment from Mali, the response to the severe flooding in Pakistan and the extraction of UK nationals from Sudan.

Within the Operations Directorate, the Gateway team provides a single DE&S operations point of contact for all of Defence. It is the essential link into DE&S for defence stakeholders, enabling an efficient and speedy response to operational demands. The Rapid Procurement team swiftly acquires equipment and munitions to support Ukraine and replenish UK stocks. The Equipment Support team provides contracted support for UK-manufactured items and assists Ukrainian allies with contract support for domestically produced vehicles. And the Replenishment and Resilience team works with DE&S colleagues and teams across Defence to quickly replace equipment and munitions gifted from UK stockpiles. None of this would be possible without the support of the Directorate's Finance, Commercial, International and Secretariat, Chief of Staff and Business Management teams.

"The Operations Directorate," adds Major General Reilly, "is still young and there are areas we can improve on, but I am proud of the way the team has come together, the support we have received from across DE&S, and what we are all doing to deliver for the nation and support Ukraine."



Ukrainian personnel train on AS90 artillery systems in the UK.

FEATURE

TOMORROW: Sharpening Defence's operational edge

James Gavin, Head of the Future Capability Group, tells Desider about how DE&S is readying itself, and the defence enterprise, for the challenges of tomorrow.

With technology advancing faster than ever, it's crucial that our armed forces be at the forefront of innovation to maintain the operational advantage over our adversaries and deter future threats. The second pillar of the DE&S strategy – 'Tomorrow' – looks forwards, driving DE&S to be ready for the future of defence.

We are committed to making sure the UK defence enterprise is able to exploit advances in science and technology. We are putting the right people and processes in place to rapidly develop new equipment and maximise the benefits that DE&S' unique position can bring.

The DE&S Future Capability Group (FCG) is a key driver of this. We help the UK Armed Forces make better informed decisions, and reduce the technical and commercial risks of new concepts, requirements and solutions. We work across the defence enterprise to develop and test novel, disruptive, complex, cross-cutting capabilities, and pioneer new ways of working that dramatically speed up procurement.

We are harnessing the power of emergent expertise in everything from digital engineering to uncrewed aerial vehicles. We foster strong collaborative relationships with teams across the MOD innovation ecosystem and develop agile framework contracts with suppliers to bring our latest thinking to life, turning novel technology into operational advantage.

As part of our strategy and the MOD's Digital Strategy for Defence, DE&S is establishing three control centres, which will use transformative digital capabilities to increase availability, reduce delivery times, and ensure new equipment integrates better across our armed forces and alongside our allies.

One of the control centres is focused using the latest techniques to rapidly upgrade, develop and deploy new capabilities, and establish how digital engineering processes, such as 3D printing, can accelerate acquisition, unlock capability and reduce cost.

Feeding into this, FCG, working with UK Strategic Command, is powering efforts to accelerate the use of 3D printing. By enabling manufacturing at point of need, our armed forces can use 3D printing to create the parts they need wherever they are, reducing supply chain burdens, boosting availability, enhancing efficiency and streamlining defence logistics.



To support our front-lines and maintain the advantage over our competition, we are ensuring a continuous pipeline of the right people with the right skills to keep DE&S at the forefront of digital capabilities. Analytical skills, for example, will be essential to get the greatest value from the vast amount of data soon to be accessible through the control centres.

The DE&S Entry Talent Centre of Expertise is investing in cutting-edge learning and development schemes. For example, the Digital Technology Degree Apprenticeship, which supports the continued growth of a technically skilled workforce in specialisms, such as cyber security, software engineering and data assurance.

We are moving from an organisation that uses digital technology to one where our people think and operate with a digital mindset and can confidently operate in a digital world. DE&S has in place a long-term strategy to become 'digital to the core', to ensure we are fit for the future and can provide the best possible service to our armed forces tomorrow.

FEATURE

TOGETHER: A procurement system to secure the UK's advantage

As the largest trade association for the defence and affiliated sectors in the UK, Kevin Craven, CEO of ADS, shares the industry reception to DE&S' strategy with Desider.



The defence sector makes an exceptionally important contribution to the UK economy, generating £22.8 billion in turnover, directly employing 147,500 people, including 6,900 apprentices, and delivering £9.8 billion in added value.

Our defence industrial base is a vital pillar of our society and is essential to protecting our way of life, and our industry needs to be highly innovative, agile and responsive to ongoing requirements. Today, our operational support to Ukraine continues to cement the UK's standing in the international community and the critical role our industry plays in maintaining global stability and security is more evident now than ever. At the heart of that critical role is a dedication to operational excellence, a culture of inclusivity, and the ability to exploit research and development opportunities.

Day in, day out, our national security benefits from the improving strategic relationship that the MOD continues to develop with industry. The new roadmap for DE&S is a very timely step towards formalising this process.

Industry welcomes the commitment by DE&S to enhancing operational delivery. Creating a domain-agnostic support solution that is best for Defence, allows industry to exploit innovations and collaboratively ensure that equipment is ready for use. Our members are proud collaborators within this framework.

The industrial ecosystem values the ongoing initiatives by the MOD to ensure that technology deficits are filled, with businesses consistently innovating new, robust capabilities to meet the UK's ongoing operational requirements. Our members see and deeply value long-term planning cycles as enablers of investment in productivity and surge capacity, with a consistent strategic direction providing the basis for an agile and responsive approach.

Those longer-term planning cycles, in turn, also allow industry to invest and develop in its most valuable, scarce and critical resource: our people delivering the capabilities we need. Underpinned by new commitments to combat the critical skills gap, industry is able to plan recruitment cycles accordingly. While not unique to our sector, ADS members report 10,000 current vacancies, and it is only through shared and collaborative goals that the workforce shortage in our domain can be addressed.

For both industry and government to secure the UK's advantage and thrive in an increasingly competitive and challenging international context, our operating and financial environment must be built on a collaborative approach to strategic planning that enables the development of new technologies.

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FEATURE

Strategic Command and DE&S: Working together to drive integration

General Sir James Hockenhull, Head of UK Strategic Command, gives Desider his view on the DE&S strategy and why defence must work as a ‘system of systems’.

There’s an exciting opportunity in the confluence of activity happening across Defence right now, where groups with enterprise responsibilities are adopting a new approach to working on behalf of the whole of Defence.

At Strategic Command, our job is to advocate and enable horizontal connections across Defence, pushing integration and coherence. We drive, partner and support organisations across Defence; and that choice of verbs is important. We provide a positive enterprise-wide function.

Strategic Command is responsible for the conceptual direction of travel. We align ‘our concepts to capability to campaigning’, to ensure we deliver equipment in a more integrated process between Head Office, Strategic Command, the single Services and delivery organisations, including DE&S. This will support effective campaigns, which are multi-dimensional, multi-modal and multi-year, where it is essential that the capabilities operate as a fully integrated ‘system of systems’.

The relationship between Strategic Command, thinking about the future, and DE&S, delivering the future, is fundamental. We are a key link between DE&S and the Front-line Commands, for example through the Defence Support Organisation.

Around 18 months ago, we set up a new team within Strategic Command called the Integration Design Authority. Their role is to help ensure that new capabilities are ‘integrated by design’ when being brought into service. The relationship between DE&S and the Integration Design Authority will be critical to ensuring we have a ‘systems approach’ to how we work.

The DE&S strategy is bringing the idea of a defence-wide system to life. It gives DE&S delivery teams the ability to have more impact on how new equipment is contracted and a real voice in what that kit looks like. While the Senior Responsible Owner will have a clear set of requirements, there will be insights that come from within a joined-up DE&S, which will inform the acquisition strategy, the type of capability chosen and through-life support.

Many of my team, myself included, have been involved with the DE&S strategy and operating model development. I can’t think of anything we currently buy that doesn’t have dependencies with other platforms and DE&S recognised early-on that it wouldn’t be possible to reform defence procurement without looking at the end-to-end system. The DE&S strategy will make for a whole-



Defence approach, geared towards an integrated enterprise that will generate sharper insight and greater opportunities.

I see the partnership between Strategic Command and DE&S as a powerful force, ensuring we get the best capability into the hands of the end-user, in the fastest, most efficient, and effective way.

We should all be able to get behind our purpose of protecting the nation and helping it prosper. That’s a great mantra to get people out of bed and come into work every day. Our responsibility is to make sure that we enable our people to deliver on that purpose as easily and as clearly as they possibly can.

FEATURE

Designing DE&S' new front door

Euan McLaren, project manager in the Special Projects – Tactical Communications delivery team, tells Desider about the gateway that will give new defence procurement the best possible start.

I'm a DE&S project manager and have participated in all of the operating model working group stages from current state review to the detailed design of the defence enterprise capability gateway.

You've already heard from Jill Hatcher, Director Strategy, People, Change and Corporate, about DE&S' plans to design a new operating model that works as part of One Defence and is ready for today and tomorrow's challenges. The goal of this work is to become an organisation where we target our efforts for maximum impact and work more swiftly, strategically and collaboratively.

The new operating model will allow DE&S to advise and guide the Front-line Commands from the beginning of a project. It will empower delivery teams to streamline decision-making and move new projects through the procurement process faster, while supporting current capabilities and ensuring availability for our armed forces. It will save money and time without compromising safety, and speed up the process of bringing new equipment into service.

This is a part of an all-of-Defence endeavour. You can read more about the enterprise-wide redesign that's underway across the MOD in the next article. Mike Wareing introduces Defence Design and explains the role of DE&S and industry in this broader reform work.

The new DE&S operating model will be built around four areas of work. The first area is the defence enterprise capability gateway. I like to think of this as DE&S' front door; it allows us to better listen to the Front-line Commands, and bring in international partners, technology specialists and a deep understanding of the existing Defence landscape, to help them see what's possible and how best to meet their needs.



An open exchange of ideas, at the very start of the process, will lead to faster, smarter solutions, create a collective understanding of capability requirements and capacity realities, and reduce the likelihood of costly and timely remedial work later on. It will help us have more accurate delivery planning and budgeting, and allow the defence enterprise to make smart, realistic decisions about project plans and future capability. Having a single point of entry into DE&S gives Defence the ability to prioritise limited resources on capabilities, projects and programmes with a pan-defence view.

To succeed we need to involve our partners from across industry and our international allies. If we want to be

leaders in understanding the latest technological developments, industrial capability, international opportunities and partnerships, we can't do it in isolation. DE&S is working to foster closer connections with these communities, so that we, as the enabling organisation, are asked better questions when the Front-line Commands come to us, and we can provide better answers in return.

With the gateway acting as the front door in our new structure we should see better project delivery and better results for our service personnel because all work will start with a better plan. Projects don't end badly – they start badly. The new gateway means Defence will be able to give them the best possible start.

FEATURE

Defence Design: Working together for fundamental change

Mike Wareing, the MOD's Director of Defence Design, explains how Defence is building on the DE&S operating model to change the way it operates across the whole enterprise.

It's been exciting to be part of the DE&S operating model optimisation journey. In this article, I will outline how the Defence Design team is working with people across Defence to build on the momentum and insight this has created and fundamentally change the way we operate across the whole defence enterprise.

The reasons our defence system must change are clear: we have never faced threats like we do today. The world is changing – technologically, geopolitically and economically – with greater speed and volatility than ever before. Recognising this, the UK Government is investing record amounts into Defence and we must make sure that every pound is spent with maximum efficiency.

Defence Design is working across the enterprise to improve how we achieve our goals by creating the structures, processes and behaviours that will enable our people to deliver in this challenging context. We are building on existing operating model optimisation and improvement initiatives across Defence to change the way we work.

My aspiration is that Defence Design will set a clear direction for the MOD, a 'North Star', enabling us to become an integrated system. Through this holistic, whole-enterprise approach we will improve how the constituent parts of Defence and our partners, including those in industry, operate together.

Collaboration and transparency are at the heart of Defence Design. We have been inspired by the DE&S mantra of 'by us, for us' and have sought to put this principle into practice from the outset. This means that, while our work is directed by our Executive Committee, Defence Design is engaging with a broad spectrum of experts and colleagues from across the MOD, wider government, academia and industry. To kick start this work, in June and July we brought together hundreds of people for a series of workshops, where we reviewed our current operating model and set high-level design principles for our future.

A collaborative approach means working closely with DE&S as they progress their operating model optimisation. We recognise that the interfaces between MOD, DE&S and industry are vital to ensuring our nation's security and prosperity; they are also some of the most complex. Therefore, improving the end-to-end system will enable and support the changes being taken forward in the future DE&S operating model. Together, we're striking the right balance between individual organisational optimisation and enterprise-wide redesign to improve the way Defence works.

The release of the DE&S strategy and the latest phase of its optimisation work demonstrates the appetite and readiness for fundamental change that exists throughout the Defence system.



As we design the future defence operating model, we will start piloting changes as early as possible. However, we ultimately see this as the beginning of a new approach to operating model design, in which we continuously review and adapt to meet our needs.

Our adversaries are relentless in their approach; Defence Design will make sure that we keep pace, with a system that is able to evolve and is geared towards delivering prioritised outcomes that protect the nation and help it prosper.



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FEATURE

Transforming support for army vehicles and equipment

The Land Equipment Operating Centre is transforming how they will support the Army's vehicles and equipment in the future.

The Army is undertaking its most significant modernisation in a generation. Its warfighting capability will be transformed to make it an expeditionary fighting force that is more deployable, agile and lethal.

In response to Army's modernisation programme, and supply, maintenance and obsolescence challenges facing their vehicles, the Land Integrated Operating Services (LIOS) team within the DE&S Land Equipment Operating Centre (LEOC) is changing the way it contracts for support and the way DE&S, the Army and the defence industry operate together.

An Integrated Operating Services contract framework will improve industry relationships, leading to better value for money and upkeep, and more frequent updates and upgrades. This will create better availability and improved capability of land equipment.

The LIOS team will deliver a series of output-based support contracts with industry that secure access to the critical design and system engineering skills that the Army needs for timely upkeep, updates and upgrades. This will be done by creating a commercial framework operating model that each vehicle support contract will be based on.

LIOS will provide new arrangements to meet the through-life support requirements of the UK's biggest and most complex vehicles, including Challenger 3, Boxer and Ajax, which are due to come into service in the latter half of the decade.

This work directly supports the DE&S strategy by increasing the availability and resilience of in-service military vehicles and systems, harnessing digital technology to improve DE&S operations and defence

outputs, and accelerating the development and integration of new capabilities.

LIOS is an important part of the UK Land Industrial Strategy (LIS) and is key to delivering its strategic objectives. It will put capabilities on a through-life footing, with regular updates and upgrades built in to improve availability, preserve performance and enhance the ability to adapt. Through improved collaboration with the Army, wider MOD and industry, LIOS will drive greater opportunities for the defence industry and the UK economy.

The UK currently has £8 billion invested in supporting the Army's vehicles up to 2045 and, with broader economic

challenges, the war in Ukraine and LIS requirements, there is a need to sustain and enhance the UK support network to make it more efficient and effective.

The intent is to incrementally deliver LIOS, between 2025 and 2045, reframing support contracts to seek better outputs for current in-service vehicles, as well as with new vehicles entering service.

Aligning to the DE&S operating model, LIOS will ensure through-life management is applied to the Army's new vehicles from the very start of their service. It will incentivise a step-change in vehicle availability and through-life performance now and in the future.



A UK Foxhound takes part in Exercise Spring Storm in Estonia.

NEWS

Upgrade to a Falklands helicopter stalwart



New Sikorsky helicopters arrive to help move people and supplies around the islands in support of British Forces.

Moving around the Falkland Islands has become slightly easier. Two Sikorsky S-92A helicopters – capable of operating in heavy weather conditions – have been delivered to British Forces based in the South Atlantic.

The delivery marks another successful collaboration between DE&S, industry partners and Strategic Command, the body responsible for running the UK's network of overseas military bases.

The aircraft, operated by Bristow Group, have significant upgrades on the existing Sikorsky model, which has served in the Islands for many years. They will primarily be used in a support role, carrying people, equipment and other supplies. Each twin-engine craft, renowned for its reliability, can seat up to 19 passengers and has a maximum take-off weight of 12,500kg.

Once fully operational, the new arrivals will complement the Leonardo AW189 fleet, which provide critical search-and-rescue services both on land and at sea.

The Falkland Islands Resupply Ship transported the helicopters into Mare Harbour ahead of their transfer to the Mount Pleasant Complex, the headquarters of British Forces in the region. Since then, their highly trained crews have worked to bring the new arrivals up to full operational status. This was achieved at the start of August, when the older models were withdrawn.

One of the key improvements of the new model is its ability to operate in challenging weather – a bonus given the harsh storms experienced in the South Atlantic. There is also a plan to cross-train engineering staff to service and maintain both the Sikorsky and Leonardo aircrafts, and align shift patterns to allow for a more efficient operation.

Barry Paton, team leader of the Multi Helicopter Platforms delivery team at DE&S, said: "We are proud to have worked collaboratively with our colleagues at Strategic Command

and in industry to deliver this significant uplift in sustained long-term capability in the Falkland Islands."

Group Captain James Grindlay, Deputy Commander British Forces South Atlantic Islands, added: "The support helicopter transition is now complete, with Bristow flying people and freight across the Falkland Islands using both new Sikorskys.

"The second new S-92 arrived recently and has now taken over from the older S-61 – a stalwart of these islands. This iconic aircraft has now started its well-earned retirement after 40 years of service.

"Alongside the Leonardo AW-189, which provides round-the-clock search-and-rescue cover, the new S-92s offer our forces modern aircraft equipped for the challenges of the Falklands environment now and in the future."

NEWS

News in Brief

Lightweight recovery vehicles delivered to the British Army

Two new lightweight recovery vehicles (LWRVs) have been delivered to the Army, thanks to an effective collaboration between DE&S and its industry partners, NP Aerospace and Supacat.

The LWRV has been designed to recover Jackal, Coyote and Foxhound vehicles from the Protected Mobility Vehicle fleet, providing the Army's light forces with the ability to carry out complex recoveries in difficult terrain.

Two LWRVs were delivered to British Army units in Tern Hill, Shropshire, and Leuchars, near Dundee, as part of the MOD's Protected Mobility Engineering and Technical Support contract. Later this year, the Army will receive two further LWRVs to fulfil their need for off-road capability in harsh environments, like those encountered by the UK Task Group during Operation Newcombe in Mali.

Vehicle Support team leader Brigadier Matt Wilkinson said: "The announcement of the lightweight recovery vehicle reaching Initial Operating Capability is the product of a fantastic collaboration between the British Army, DE&S, Supacat and NP Aerospace. We now have a lightweight recovery capability which the British Army can use to inform their Future Soldier requirements for recovery vehicles."

NIBS



DE&S CEO joins Women in Defence UK Strategic Advisory Board

DE&S CEO Andy Start has joined the Women In Defence UK Strategic Advisory Board.

Women in Defence UK is an independent not-for-profit organisation, which connects over 15,000 people committed to accelerating gender equity from across the UK defence sector.

The organisation's mission is to see at least 30 percent of defence roles held by women, and partnerships with key defence organisations, including DE&S, are pivotal to this.

Angela Owen OBE, founder of Women in Defence UK, explained why they invited Andy to join: "Andy's passion for equity, diversity and inclusion shines through in what he says and, importantly,

what he does. Truly 'Deeds not Words' in action. His advice and wisdom will complement the existing board members and strengthen our drive towards gender equity in defence."

Responding to the announcement, Andy said: "I'm immensely proud to be joining the Women in Defence UK Strategic Advisory Board. Their unwavering dedication to promoting gender equity is inspiring. We have made huge strides and achieved a great deal, but there is still a long way to go. Together we will make a difference. I am thrilled to be part of this dynamic team and to contribute to effecting real change in the defence sector."



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NEWS

Apprentices and graduates at the Tom Nevard Memorial Competition 2023

DE&S apprentices and graduates, and their peers from across Defence, competed in the 71st Tom Nevard Memorial Competition.

The Tom Nevard Memorial Competition returned to Shrivenham's Defence Academy in August for its 71st year. The week-long event saw 82 MOD apprentices and graduates, including 45 from DE&S, gather to work together on a range of hands-on challenges that tested their design, problem-solving, communication, and resource, project and risk-management skills.

The event's original purpose was to test the practical skills and craftsmanship of the MOD's best apprentices. While the competition still tests these, it is also an opportunity for apprentices and graduates to meet, compare experiences, foster relationships and develop new networks.

This year's challenges included the Electrical Challenge to create a counter-improvised explosive device and land-sweeper robot, and the Group Challenge, which required participants to build a hovercraft that could carry a model tank along an indoor racetrack.

DE&S apprentice Ben Hughes, based at Defence Munitions Gosport, won the CEO's Challenge, using hand tools to cut and shape a block of brass into a replica of a First World War tank.

"The Tom Nevard Competition was a great way to end the first year of my apprenticeship. To not only compete in the CEO's Challenge, but to win it as well, was a great experience. Building

the winning model tank was a real challenge of my hand-fitting and time management skills. The competition was great fun and gave me a chance to meet other apprentices. I look forward to hopefully competing next year on a different challenge."

DE&S apprentice Charlie Hamilton, based at Abbey Wood, won the Non-Engineering Challenge to design and make a pop-pop boat powered by a candle.

"The Tom Nevard Competition was an amazing experience. Despite it being an individual challenge, there was a lot of collaboration, and everyone was so supportive and helpful. After spending a week testing and modifying my boat, race day felt more daunting than I had expected. I never realised quite how competitive I could be! I think the strawberries I decorated my boat with helped to win the race. I would definitely recommend the competition to other apprentices and graduates, and would happily go back again next year!"

The competition began in 1952 in honour of Tom Nevard – an Assistant Secretary in the Labour Branch of the Ministry of Supply – who is credited with introducing apprenticeships to the MOD.

DE&S Deputy CEO and DG Strategic Enablers, Adrian Baguley was delighted to attend and judge the competition this year and said: "Some of the craftsmanship was simply breath-taking, as was the ingenuity!"



NEWS

A boost for Ukraine's air defences

New contract awarded by DE&S will supply counter-drone systems to help Ukraine defend against Russian attacks.

Ukraine's air defence capability has been boosted by a £56 million equipment contract, awarded by DE&S. The deal is part of a broader package of military support funded by the UK and its allies.

The contract with Norwegian defence company Kongsberg will purchase vehicle-mounted counter-drone systems to detect, track and destroy or disrupt uncrewed aerial systems (UAS). The Cortex Typhon system is designed to be operated by as few as two users, and can be rapidly deployed and repositioned to maximise its operational effectiveness.

Cortex Typhon systems can operate individually or as part of an integrated network, and use a complex suite of sensors, cameras, radars and electronic surveillance equipment to physically destroy or disrupt drones.

Former Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said: "These air defence systems have the capability and flexibility to be rapidly deployed to either protect Ukraine's civilian population and infrastructure, or be put to use on the front-line. The International Fund for Ukraine highlights the unity and resolve of our allies to work together to provide Ukraine with cutting-edge equipment to meet its capability requirements."

The contract is part of a procurement package that will use more than £140 million in funding from the International Fund for Ukraine (IFU) to supply air defence capability, drones, radars and electronic warfare systems. The IFU uses financial contributions from international partners to procure priority military assistance for Ukraine, ensuring the continued supply of lethal and non-lethal military support through 2023 and beyond. It is administered



by the MOD on behalf of an Executive Panel, comprising the UK, Norway, the Netherlands, Denmark and Sweden.

This announcement comes as a new set of aerial reconnaissance drones arrives in Ukraine, designed to carry out both land and sea-based missions. Multiple types of aerial reconnaissance drones for different roles are being purchased and delivered through the IFU, including for target acquisition, electronic warfare, guiding artillery and night operations. The Armed Forces of Ukraine has already begun training on the systems, which will form a package of more than 100 drones.

Major General Anna-Lee Reilly, DE&S Director Operations, added: "As the war in Ukraine wages on, it is crucial we continue to provide our Ukrainian

allies with the technology they need to protect themselves from the ongoing Russian threat. This order for Cortex Typhon re-emphasises the importance of the UK and our allies working together to meet that urgent need."

More than £770 million has been raised through the IFU, following contributions from the UK, Norway, the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, Iceland and Lithuania.

The UK remains fully committed to supporting Ukraine. A further £2.3 billion is already earmarked for military support this year, with additional munitions and equipment to be delivered in the coming months. Further UK assistance continues in the form of humanitarian support and economic aid.

NEWS



DE&S awards £50 million contract to support military vehicles gifted to Ukraine

New contract will ensure Challenger 2 tanks and other vehicles are maintained by Babcock, as Kyiv's counter-offensive moves forward.

DE&S has awarded Babcock International a £50 million contract to support vital UK military vehicles gifted to Ukraine.

Babcock will provide technical support and training to Ukraine's military land assets, including the Challenger 2 tanks and the Combat Vehicle Reconnaissance (Tracked), which are helping repel Russia's ongoing invasion. Under the contract, Babcock will also deliver spares, manage vital equipment supply chains, and give ad-hoc training to Ukrainian mechanics and engineers during the initial one-year contract.

The UK Government first announced that 14 Challenger 2 tanks would be sent to Ukraine at the start of this year. Ukrainian tank crews subsequently spent several weeks in the UK training to use the vehicle before returning to launch their country's counter-offensive. The crews were taught how to command, drive and work together as a Challenger 2 tank team, and how to effectively identify and engage enemy targets.

The MOD confirmed that these formidable vehicles were dispatched in March. They were first seen in action in video released by a military unit in June.

DE&S Director Operations Major General Anna-Lee Reilly said: "With the conflict in Ukraine now in its second year, it is critical

that the Ministry of Defence continues to assist the Ukrainians with the sustainment of their battle-winning equipment. This is even more important as the counter-offensive develops.

"Our defence industry has a critical role to play in sustaining the equipment provided by the UK. This contract draws together the strengths of prime contractor Babcock, with the vehicles' manufacturers – Rheinmetall, BAE Systems and RBSL – to deliver an agile, scalable and balanced package of support that will continue to assist the Armed Forces of Ukraine."

Helping to ensure mission readiness, DE&S is providing operational support as an interface between the Armed Forces of Ukraine, the Permanent Joint Headquarters and International Donor Coordination Centre.

David Lockwood, Babcock Group CEO, said: "We are honoured to stand with the Ukrainian and UK Governments, providing critical support for Ukraine's urgent military operations. Through the relentless commitment of our teams, and supply chain partners, we will deliver land defence assets and equipment that Ukrainian troops can have the utmost confidence in. Their mission is our mission."

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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.

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PEOPLE

Alex Holmes

Job title:

DE&S Strategy Advisor

What does your role involve?

Working with a wide range of stakeholders from across Defence; exploring, developing and delivering ways to effectively communicate our strategy.

What do you most enjoy about your job?

Meeting DE&S people. People are our most important asset and I love learning about their roles, hearing their ideas and feeding back innovative solutions to our senior leaders. I also love working with our amazing degree apprentices and graduates. They have so much energy and bring fantastic ideas to the table.

What is the greatest accomplishment in your career so far?

Launching the 'DE&S Strategy: By us For us' platform on Defence Ideas. This platform will enable people from across our sites to engage with our strategy, have their say and contribute to discussions, working together to develop solutions to problem statements.

Personally, my greatest achievement was completing a Level 4 Award in Leadership and Management with the Chartered Management Institute.

What keeps you energised about working at DE&S?

Development opportunities are accessible to everyone and you are actively encouraged to become the best you can be. Change is a glorious thing and although it can be scary when faced with the unknown, it is so rewarding once the benefits can be seen and felt.

Who or what has shaped who you are?

I was a quiet child who struggled with anxiety and didn't have the opportunity to go to university. I started off as a temp in retail aged 16 and completed my NVQs while working. These skills saw me grow and achieve while raising a young family. Now in Defence, I've been able to continue my love of supporting others to reach their full potential.

The strong female leaders in my life have had the biggest influence in shaping me into who I am today. From my mum, who at 17 studied engineering and is now the access control product manager for UK and Ireland in a world-leading organisation, to DE&S Corporate Services Group Head of Function Elizabeth Wombwell, who took me under her wing and empowered me to reach my potential.

What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

Spending time with my husband, daughters and two cockerpoos, eating out with friends (love a cheeky cocktail too), and pushing myself to achieve new things, like completing the Tough Mudder obstacle run.

What might surprise people about you?

In my younger years, I was a valued member of my local youth club, as well as the South Gloucestershire Youth Forum, the British Youth Council and the UK Youth Parliament. Wanting to give something back, at 18 I became a youth worker in my spare time, and I still like to volunteer when I can. During the pandemic lockdowns, I joined the Bristol Spiderman Team as Harley Quinn, and went out spreading joy to children in Bristol and South Gloucestershire with a group of other famous heroes, while raising money for the Bristol Children's Hospital Grand Appeal.

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

Never let anyone tell you that you can't achieve something. Only you can determine what you can achieve, don't let other people's opinions hold you back from greatness.





EDITOR'S CHOICE

A Swordfish Mk1 W5856 aircraft in the skies above RAF Valley. W5856 is the oldest surviving airworthy Fairey Swordfish in the world.

Want to receive Desider direct to your inbox? Email: Jonathan.mazliah100@mod.gov.uk

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British Army Pathfinder troops jumped from an RAF C-17 Globemaster over Estonia as part of a NATO exercise.

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