



# Industry Security Notice

Number 2025/01 dated 02 April 2025

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Subject: **Interim Process in support of DEFCON 658**

## Introduction

1. To determine the Cyber Risk Profile in all MOD contracts, the MOD completes a Risk Assessment (RA) for each MOD contract. DEFCON 658 must be included in all MOD contracts with a Cyber Risk Profile higher than 'Not Applicable'. Where contracts contain DEFCON 658, tenderers are required to complete a Supplier Assurance Questionnaire (SAQ) as part of their tender response and, if awarded the contract, the SAQ must be renewed annually by the supplier. RAs and SAQs are completed on MOD's Supplier Cyber Protection Service (SCPS) tool (aka "Octavian").

## Issue

2. With effect from 12:00 4th June 2021 the SCPS tool was replaced with an interim process whilst a new tool is developed by Defence Digital. The interim process is explained in more detail on the [DCPP Gov.uk](https://www.dcpp.gov.uk) web page.

## Status

3. This ISN supersedes ISN 2021/05, and amends the expected turnaround time for SAQ processing to five working days.

## Action by Industry

4. The purpose of this ISN is to make Industry aware of the interim process and provide

guidance on the operation of DEFCON 658 and the Cyber risk processes to be followed until further notice.

5. The interim process is similar to the SCPS process for the most part. However, MOD wishes to make UK Defence Suppliers aware of some changes to the process until a replacement tool is available.

6. DEFCON 658 requires contractors to flow down the RA/SAQ process for any sub-contracts. This contractual obligation will be paused for all contracts, where sub-contracts have not yet been placed, except those where the MOD RA results in a 'High' Cyber Risk Profile. Where the MOD RA is 'High', DCPD will provide the required RA documentation.

7. The SAQ will be completed using either MS Forms (preferred) or a PDF. The SAQ result will be provided by the DCPD team via email. Suppliers should allow a minimum of five working days for the result to be issued, noting that a non-compliant result will require the preparation of a Cyber Implementation Plan (CIP).

8. DEFCON 658 requires contractors to renew the SAQ annually. This contractual obligation will be paused for all contracts containing DEFCON 658.

9. Please note Suppliers must still flow down DEFCON 658 in sub-contracts in accordance with DEFCON 658 Clause 3.1.

## **Tenders issued before 4 June 2021**

10. Where you are taking part in a MOD tendering exercise which commenced prior to 4th June 2021, you may follow the interim process if an SAQ has not already been completed and a copy downloaded from the SCPS tool. The detail of the interim process is hosted on the [DCPD Gov.uk page](#) where Defence Suppliers would usually access the SCPS Tool.

11. If the Cyber Risk Profile is assessed to be 'High' prime contractors must complete a RA for their sub-contractors and sub-contractors must continue this flow down throughout the supply chain until the Cyber Risk Profile is no longer 'High'. Suppliers who require RA or SAQ documentation should contact the [DCPD team](#).

12. If you have completed the tender process using the SCPS tool prior, you should send a copy of the completed SAQ and, if appropriate, CIP with your tender response. If you completed the SAQ using the interim process, a copy of this should be submitted with your tender, along with an email from DCPD confirming the SAQ result and, if appropriate a CIP. The questions and scoring methods for the interim SAQ methods remain unchanged.

## **Tenders issued on/after 4 June 2021**

13. Where suppliers are taking part in a MOD tendering exercise which commenced after

the 4th June 2021, they will be provided by MOD with the Cyber Risk Profile for the tendered contract.

14. If the Cyber Risk Profile is above 'Not Applicable' and the tender documentation includes DEFCON 658, suppliers will be notified that the SCPS Tool is not available and the interim process, hosted on the [DCPP Gov.uk page](#), must be followed until further notice.

15. If the Cyber Risk Profile is 'High', prime contractors must complete a RA for their sub-contractors and sub-contractors must continue this flow down throughout the supply chain until the Cyber Risk Profile is no longer 'High'. Suppliers who require RA or SAQ documentation should contact the [DCPP team](#).

## **Extant contracts containing DEFCON 658**

16. Clause 3.1.3 of DEFCON 658 sets out an obligation for the contractor to renew the SAQ no less than once in each year of the contract. This obligation will be temporarily suspended for all contracts containing DEFCON 658, including those with a High Cyber Risk Profile.

17. If a contractor's annual renewal falls whilst the interim process is in place, it will not need to complete the SAQ until notified that the replacement tool is operational. The MOD will set out a reasonable period within which the renewal process should be completed. This ISN will be updated with more detail in due course.

## **Validity / Expiry Date**

18. This ISN will expire when superseded or withdrawn. This ISN is extant until the new tool becomes available.

19. Once this is operational, MOD will issue a new ISN detailing the actions required to reinstate the full Cyber Security Model process and the period within which suppliers are required to complete these.

## **MOD Point of Contact Details**

20. The point of contact in respect of this ISN is:

DCPP Team  
Directorate of Cyber Defence & Risk (CyDR)  
Ministry of Defence

Email: [ukstratcomdd-cydr-dcpp@mod.gov.uk](mailto:ukstratcomdd-cydr-dcpp@mod.gov.uk) (Multiuser).