

Detailed guide: How to prepare a strategic flood risk assessment

Guidance for local planning authorities on what information to include in a strategic flood risk assessment.

UKEF supports Startle's expansion into the American market

About the transaction: Startle

Region	Surrey
Sector	Creative industries, sports economy and retail
Export destination	USA
UKEF support	Export working capital scheme

In 2018, Startle secured a five-year, \$4.5 million deal to supply to a national retail brand with over 1,500 stores in the US. Startle's integrated technology includes highly-featured background music systems and is interactive, allowing consumers to choose the music that is played in a bar, shop or restaurant through a social media bot. In 2018, the company secured a five-year, \$4.5 million deal to supply to a national retail brand with over 1,500 stores in the US.

Gaining UKEF support

Delivering a significant deal like this on time would have required Startle to spend working capital on hardware that could be better spent on further growing the company, so it had to explore new ways of financing, including the use of working capital loans. Startle turned to us and we worked with Santander to set up a working capital facility.

We guaranteed 80% of a £660,000 loan, which meant Startle could deliver on time to the customer, meeting all the conditions of its contract. The loan agreement and guarantee were structured to match payments with revenues from the customer, allowing Startle to more successfully manage cash flow.

Since this successful delivery, the company has gone on to recruit two more salespeople in the US and is now able to export its services more easily. The company has also recruited two more people in the UK.

Adam Castleton Chief Executive Officer, Startle, said:

UKEF's support and Santander's professionalism have been vital to the successful delivery of this contract and in our continuing expansion into the American market. This contract was a landmark moment for Startle and the financial support offered by UKEF and Santander has formed a key component of our growth. This is how banks and government should work together to support business.

Wedad Kurukgy, Export Finance Manager, Southern Region said:

UKEF finance can be invaluable for exciting companies that demonstrate significant growth potential. Startle's success has shown the company has significant scope for future expansion. I look forward to working with the company as they continue to build on this exciting potential and expand their overseas footprint.

Get the Exporters' Edge

Putting the right finance and insurance in place can give you the exporting edge, helping you to win contracts, fulfil orders and get paid.

[Tell us about your business](#)

PM launches sentencing review to look at most dangerous and prolific offenders

An urgent review of sentencing policy has been ordered by the Prime Minister today (12 August 2019), to ensure the public are properly protected from the most dangerous criminals.

The work, to be kicked off immediately, will focus on violent and sexual offenders and whether they are serving sentences that truly reflect the severity of their crimes.

It will consider whether changes in legislation are needed to lock them up for longer – by not letting them out part-way through a sentence. It will also look at how to break the cycle of repeat offenders.

The Prime Minister has instructed the Government review team to report directly to him with recommendations this autumn.

The review will look at:

- sentencing for the most serious violent and sexual offenders
- the rules governing when and how these offenders are released
- sentencing of the most prolific offenders

This confirms a commitment made by the Prime Minister when he entered Downing Street last month.

It forms part of a Government overhaul of the criminal justice system to further protect the public – by cracking down on crime, raising prison standards, rehabilitating offenders and cutting the vicious cycle of re-offending.

Also today a further £85 million has been awarded to the Crown Prosecution Service to build capacity and manage caseloads over the next two years.

The Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

Dangerous criminals must be kept off our streets, serving the sentences they deserve – victims want to see it, the public want to see it and I want to see it.

To ensure confidence in the system, the punishment must truly fit the crime. We have all seen examples of rapists and murderers let out too soon or people offending again as soon as they're released.

This ends now. We want them caught, locked up, punished and properly rehabilitated.

Later today the Prime Minister will host leaders from the police, probation and prison sectors to discuss how to cut crime and improve the criminal justice system.

Yesterday he announced [up to £2.5 billion investment to create 10,000 extra prison places](#), starting with the new Full Sutton prison.

This follows announcements to recruit 20,000 new police officers over the next three years and the Home Secretary's confirmation that all 43 police forces in England and Wales can use enhanced stop and search powers.

[Edtech startup scopes global opportunities with Expo 2020 Dubai](#)

grant award

Today (August 12) is International Youth Day and with the theme this year being “Transforming Education”, UK EdTech company ScienceScope, is leading the way in making education more inclusive and accessible for youth across the globe.

The Somerset-based start-up which develops technology to upskill students with tools around the ‘Internet of Things’ (IoT), has been awarded an Expo Live Innovation Impact Grant thanks in part to support from the Department for International Trade (DIT). The grant will be used to implement a digital pilot scheme at schools in the Gulf region and beyond.

ScienceScope has already started making in-roads globally outside of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), such as securing a deal with the National Institute of Education in Singapore last year, which will see the company build an IoT lab on-site and provide every school in Singapore with 300 micro:bits – its flagship product, within the next three years.

To further push the company’s export ambitions, DIT has provided it with an ‘Export for Growth’ grant to support international business development activities. Initiatives like Export for Growth have played a significant role in ScienceScope’s achievements, with total exports now accounting for 90% of overall sales.

ScienceScope CEO David Crellin said:

Since meeting with DIT to discuss the grant scheme at Expo 2020 Dubai, I knew it was the right opportunity to bring our products to schools in the region. The Gulf States represents a hugely untapped market where we can offer expertise to enhance the students’ learning experience around technology.

DIT really kicked things off with the grant application, and we were ecstatic once notified of being successful.

DIT became aware of ScienceScope’s domestic success and approached the company to discuss how its education technology could be taken into schools overseas. DIT’s International Trade Advisors (ITAs) kept in regular contact with the company to explore opportunities, one being the ‘Innovation Impact Grant Programme’ from Expo Live, which supports innovative initiatives that encapsulate the spirit of Expo 2020 Dubai.

David Crellin continues:

We’re in discussion with quite a few nations about our products,

including Nigeria, Ghana, Kazakhstan and parts of Malaysia which is fantastic. Our short-term ambition is to implement the Digital Maker Programme in schools across five markets within the next two years.

DIT is really focused on supporting companies like ours, and we've had a significant amount of support from them. Working with DIT has been invaluable as they really kick started our exporting process, and we look forward to pushing on with our international expansion plans.

The company's Digital Maker Programme is a scheme in which educators are empowered to support students in schools to develop innovation and creativity skills and demonstrate how technology interaction can be incorporated throughout the curriculum to solve real problems.

Laura Faulkner OBE, UK Commissioner General and Project Director for the UK Pavilion, Expo 2020 Dubai, said:

I am delighted that not only is DIT leading the UK's participation in Expo 2020 Dubai on behalf of Government, but we are also utilising this global platform to promote leading British expertise and innovation.

ScienceScope is a fantastic example of a pioneering British business setting the bar high in its sector. The company has been incredibly successful in finding new markets and helping to develop global solutions, allowing pupils and teachers to learn and teach to their full potential.

ScienceScope is based in Downside School near Bath, offering significant opportunities for the company to work with the students and teachers on a range of new projects. For example, in the autumn/winter term of this year, the EdTech firm will be implementing a Science and Technology project in which pupils will programme the micro:bit as a datalogger to conduct Science investigations into reaction time, sound level and cooling/heating curves.

[Loss of brake control on a passenger](#)

train approaching Edinburgh Waverley

At about 07:26 hrs on Thursday 1 August 2019, train 1B26, the Edinburgh portion of the 23:36 hrs 'Lowland Sleeper' service from London Euston, failed to stop as scheduled at Edinburgh Waverley station. It was brought to a stand approximately 650 metres beyond its intended stopping point. There was no damage or any injuries as a consequence of the incident. However, the outcome could potentially have been much worse, had it led to a collision with another train.

The train comprised eight Mark 5 coaches hauled by a Class 92 electric locomotive that had been attached at Carstairs. On the approach to Edinburgh the driver discovered that his train's braking performance was well below normal. The RAIB's preliminary investigation indicates that he had no control of the brakes on the coaches because a brake pipe isolating valve was in the closed position when the train left Carstairs station. This meant that the only effective brakes on the train as it approached Edinburgh were those on the locomotive, which were insufficient to maintain control of the train. The train was brought to a stand by the operation of an emergency device in one of the coaches by the Train Manager, which caused the train brakes to apply.

The RAIB's investigation will identify the sequence of events that led to the incident and will include consideration of:

- how the isolating valve came to be closed at Carstairs;
- the preparation of the train at Carstairs, including the attachment of the locomotive and testing of the train's brakes;
- how the train was driven;
- the suitability of relevant procedures and working practices;
- the design and approval of the brake system fitted to the Mark 5 coaches; and
- any relevant underlying management or organisational factors.

The train operator issued a safety alert to the industry on 5 August 2019 (NIR 3350/224) reminding railway staff of the importance of carrying out the brake continuity test after all other train preparation activities.

Our investigation is independent of any investigation by the railway industry, the [Office of Rail and Road](#).

We will publish our findings, including any recommendations to improve safety, at the conclusion of our investigation. This report will be available on our website.

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