

Countering Drones Phase 2 competition gains extra funding

An additional £1.5M funding is being allocated to the Defence and Security Accelerator's (DASA) [Countering Drones](#) competition.

The Home Office Counter-Drones Unit owns domestic counter-drones policy for the Government, working closely across the Government and operational partners to understand risk and operational requirements. The Government priority is to help industry and academia to deliver world-leading counter-drone solutions to support the safe and responsible use of drones in the UK. This DASA competition provides an immediate opportunity to help us further develop the critical counter-drone technical capabilities we need at pace, and to support counter-drone exploitation routes in the future.

It is critical that industry, academia and the Government work together to solve the counter-drone challenges of the future. In light of this, the Home Office and the Department for Transport (DfT) are working closely with the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) in support of Phase 2 of this DASA competition.

The Home Office and DfT putting in this additional funding brings the new total to at least £3M. We anticipate that this should more than double the number of proposals that the Government will be able to award for this DASA competition.

In light of this additional funding, the deadline for this competition will be extended by 10 days: proposals for funding to meet these challenges must be submitted by Friday 31st July at midday (BST) via the DASA submission service for which you will be [required to register](#).

For this new funding, we are particularly keen to hear from industry and academia who have innovative solutions to respond to domestic security needs, in addition to the needs already published. While the scope of the existing competition, and challenges within, in general reflect these broad requirements, a further scenario to illustrate some of the added considerations faced is as follows:

A scenario could include numerous drones being used at an important installation, major event or demonstration over a wide, complex geographic area, and over a prolonged period of time. The small UAVs (sUAVs) could be a mix of commercially available, high performance multirotor types, being operated directly in a planned and sophisticated manner. They could also include legitimate drones. The intent of the sUAVs could range from surveillance to malicious disruption or attack. There may be electronically sensitive infrastructure in the area.

We are interested in C-sUAS solutions that can be static, mobile, portable or temporarily deployable on vehicle(s), to:

- Detect presence of sUAVs
- Determine location, intent and assess the risk posed
- Locate operator
- Enforce a 'no-drone' zone

The impacts of COVID-19 have made it even more important for the Government to communicate with industry and academia as clearly and efficiently as possible. Despite the challenge of COVID-19 the Government is dedicated to continuing to collaborate closely with the drone and counter-drone industries. This work will therefore be in lieu of a separate Home Office Counter-Drone Unit Grand Challenge this financial year, to reduce the burden on industry that different competitions bring. The outputs from this enhanced DASA competition will still allow the Home Office and DfT to scope the focus for any potential future investment in developing counter-drone technologies.