

News story: Billion-pound investment in vital MOD testing sites

The funding injection is part of the existing £5.6bn deal with defence supplier QinetiQ, which trials and tests everything from missile systems to underwater sensors and night vision capabilities.

The funding will support the employment of around 1,800 people across 16 MOD-owned testing sites through the Long Term Partnering Agreement (LTPA) with QinetiQ.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

Ensuring our cutting-edge equipment is tried and tested before it is sent to the frontline is crucial to our military's capability.

This £1.3bn investment will not only guarantee our Armed Forces' have the reliable, state-of-the-art weaponry they need, but will also support jobs across the nation.

The £1.3bn boost, which will also deliver £85m of savings and modernises the contract mechanics, will ensure essential test and evaluation services for many of the MOD's high-profile programmes continue to be supported until March 2028.

Those programmes include the Queen Elizabeth aircraft carriers and the Dreadnought submarines.

QinetiQ supporting HMS Queen Elizabeth. QinetiQ copyright.

As well as the funding injection, QinetiQ and the MOD have agreed a portfolio of investments, worth £190m, to improve capability resilience and to ensure that the Test and Evaluation sites around the country, including MOD Pendine in Wales, MOD British Underwater Test and Evaluation Centre (BUTEC) at Kyle of Lochalsh in Scotland, and MOD Boscombe Down in England, remain fully operational.

The latest £1.3bn commitment will also cover the running costs of training services, equipment and the operational staff that support the test and evaluation ranges.

Chief Executive Officer at DE&S, Sir Simon Bollom said:

This latest contract amendment under the LTPA demonstrates how we are continuing to support our key defence programmes by investing in essential test and evaluation services.

This is another example of how DE&S is working collaboratively with industry and the Front Line Commands to ensure our Armed Forces have the best value equipment and training to meet the operational demand.

QinetiQ Chief Executive, Steve Wadey said:

Today's agreement enhances our contribution to the safety and operational effectiveness of UK armed forces in an era when threats to our security remain acute and are changing rapidly.

In line with our strategy, we are introducing innovative ways of working and making selective investments to reinforce the UK's position as a world-leader in the generation and assurance of military capability. This will enable us to support the MOD's future programmes and win more work from both UK and international customers.