

Armed Forces to benefit from £45 million contract for life-saving explosive devices protection system

- UK Armed Forces to receive crucial protection system against improvised explosive devices
- £45 million contract supports British Defence industry
- Project supports cutting edge UK skills and capability development, laying the foundation for long term growth

Soldiers, vehicles and UK military bases around the world will receive innovative digital protection against remote and radio controlled Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) through a £45 million contract with British industry.

Under the contract awarded to Team Protect, the work – called Project CRENIC – sees UK military experts collaborate with small and medium businesses during the next five years.

Team Protect comprises of PA Consulting, Leonardo, Leidos Innovations UK, and Marshall Land Systems. This contract will sustain more than 50 jobs around the country, including in the North-West, East and South-West of England. The project aims to support and create further jobs through contracts with small and medium enterprises.

The project will develop equipment designed to be carried by soldiers, fitted to vehicles and protect military bases by detecting and disrupting explosive devices using advanced techniques across the electromagnetic spectrum.

Defence Procurement Minister Alex Chalk said:

Our Armed Forces dedicate their lives to protecting and securing our nation. As the technology used by our adversaries to threaten our people and operations evolves, we are innovating to stay ahead of the challenge.

This project brings together pioneering UK technology and industry to create a world leading protection system for our Armed Forces.

The new system will be supported by the Defence Cyber and Electromagnetic Activities (CEMA) Architecture, which uses a common set of hardware and software open technology standards, equivalent to desktop computers and cellular phone software, to allow for wider industry participation and support reconfiguration for other military uses. This will allow the Armed Forces to modify the solutions in the future and allow for greater collaboration with allies.

Major General Robin Anderton-Brown, Director Capability Strategic Command, said:

Incorporating cutting-edge technology and adopting an agile acquisition approach, CRENIC will deliver a world-leading capability to protect our forces deployed on global operations.

Using the Defence CEMA Architecture, Project CRENIC will enable information to be shared across multiple domains, making it the first capability to directly support Multi-Domain Integration. This means information only needs to be collected once and can then be used many times. The project is expected to support electronic warfare in the future, including countering remotely piloted air systems.

On behalf of Team Protect, Peter Lovell, Global Head of Defence and Security at PA Consulting said:

We are delighted that Team Protect has been selected to be the System Integrator (SI) for this project. The work marks a strong progression of the collaborative approach between industry and the Ministry of Defence to deliver innovative solutions to keep UK forces safe.

The team has deep and extensive experience across vital capabilities, including complex programme delivery, engineering, agile software development, and digital transformation. We will deliver this project and keep UK forces safer by leveraging our relative strengths – using ingenuity to help deliver a positive human future.

A cutting-edge integration laboratory facility will also be established to support the development of the system. The laboratory will promote innovation and experimentation as the new capability evolves against emerging threats.

First deliveries of the new equipment for vehicle and soldier carried systems for use on operations are due to take place in 2026. Equipment will be incrementally deployed and will evolve to meet the needs of the British Army, Royal Marines and Royal Air Force land forces long into the future.

[Learning from our experiences together](#)

– further updates

Veterans UK is responsible for administering compensation and pensions schemes for both serving personnel, veterans and their families, as well as the Veterans Welfare and Defence Transition Services. However, did you know that Veterans UK is part of the Ministry of Defence's shared services delivery organisation, Defence Business Services?

As well our veterans services, in DBS we also look after Pay, HR, and lots more in-between for the Armed Forces Community. So, chances are that if you have served even one day in the UK Armed Forces, you will have used the services of DBS.

In Veterans UK we know that we can continuously improve how we provide our services and make your experience of Veterans UK and DBS a better one. We can't do that without listening to the people that have or could use our services, and better understand what we can do to help you.

We have taken the results of our [DBS Veterans Customer Satisfaction Survey](#) and alongside those, invited many members of the armed forces and veterans communities, and their advocates, to 'Lived Experience' events, where senior leaders and staff from Veterans UK have listened to feedback and suggestions on what they need from us directly from veterans and supporting organisations.

We are committed to enhancing our services where we can and playing our part to deliver on the [Government's Veterans' Strategy Action Plan 2022/24](#) and we have been working hard to address some of the key points raised through the feedback we have received as part of our promise to continuously improve.

Our end users told us that they want and need more information about how the compensation scheme claim and appeals processes work.

Our first step has been to produce a comprehensive suite of diagrams that illustrate the flow of a claim or an appeal, and what happens as the application is considered and processed. The diagrams show what information is needed to accurately consider an application and where we get that from, in order to ensure that claimants receive what they are eligible for and entitled to, in accordance with legislation.

We want to be transparent and by sharing what we do with each of the claims, we hope that we can work together, with our end users, to ensure their claims are dealt with quickly and accurately.

Armed Forces Compensation Scheme: claims and appeals – Customer Journey Maps

As part of Veterans UK's continued commitment to enhancing our services, we have also produced a similar suite of diagrams to help customers with the Armed Forces Pension Scheme (AFPS). These maps will illustrate the flow of

various processes within the scheme, such as Early Payment of Preserved Pension (EPPP) and Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure (IDRP), so that customers can see the end-to-end process regarding their Armed Forces Pension.

Armed Forces Pension Scheme – Customer Journey Maps

[Discretionary Awards Appeal Review \(DAAR\)](#) (PDF, 396 KB, 1 page)

[Discretionary Awards Appeal Review \(DAAR\) accessible version](#) (ODT, 23.9 KB)

[Discretionary Awards Review \(DAR\)](#) (PDF, 398 KB, 1 page)

[Discretionary Awards Review \(DAR\) accessible version](#) (ODT, 23.4 KB)

[Early Payment of Preserved Pension \(EPPP\) and Early Payment of Preserved Pension Increases \(EPPI\)](#) (PDF, 405 KB, 1 page)

[Early Payment of Preserved Pension \(EPPP\) and Early Payment of Preserved Pension Increases \(EPPI\) accessible version](#) (ODT, 23.9 KB)

[Ill-Health Tier Award Reviews](#) (PDF, 396 KB, 1 page)

[Ill-Health Tier Award Reviews accessible version](#) (ODT, 23.6 KB)

[Ill-Health Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure \(IDRP\)](#) (PDF, 396 KB, 1 page)

[Ill-Health Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure \(IDRP\) accessible version](#) (ODT, 23.7 KB)

[Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure \(IDRP\)](#) (PDF, 396 KB, 1 page)

[Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure \(IDRP\) accessible version](#) (ODT, 23.3 KB)

We are also modernising our services and looking forward to providing more digitally enabled ways for individuals and their representatives to make a claim, monitor its progress, and stay in touch with us. We will keep you informed of these improvements as they develop, via this and other channels. You can also follow us on Facebook@modveteransuk and Twitter VeteransUK_MOD.

Dormant training firm shut down after abusing covid support

Keysholders Ltd was wound up by the High Court on 21 June 2022 and the

Official Receiver has been appointed Liquidator of the company.

The company purported to be involved in training, research and development but there was no evidence it had been trading after March 2019, a year before the pandemic.

However, in May 2020 the company successfully applied for a £40,000 Bounce Back Loan, despite funding through the scheme only being available to firms adversely impacted by the pandemic.

The company stated in its application that its turnover for period ending 31 December 2019 had been £200,000, when in reality its turnover was closer to £65,000.

The director of Keysholders at the time of its winding up was Olayinka Adediran and in August 2020, she submitted an application for funding through the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan scheme for £250,000. This was rejected, but the loan application now stated turnover for year ending 31 December 2019 was in fact £550,000.

In November 2020, Keysholders obtained the first of four grants through the Job Retention Scheme (JRS), totalling £20,000. This scheme allowed firms to retain staff through the pandemic, by providing funding of 80% of wages up to a limit of £2,500 per month per employee.

However, the contract for the staff member these payments were theoretically for, shows that they were employed after the date on that the business was eligible to receive JRS funding for that individual.

The High Court agreed that closing down the company was in the public interest, given that it was trading without commercial probity and was used as a vehicle to abuse three Covid relief schemes.

Edna Okhiria, Chief Investigator at the Insolvency Service, said:

Our investigation found that this company could demonstrate no evidence of legitimate trading since at least March 2019, yet has been claiming taxpayers' money through Covid-19 financial support schemes that it was not entitled to.

We will always seek to have companies wound-up in such cases, in the public interest.

Notes to editors

Keysholders Ltd (company number 05645956), was incorporated in December 2005.

All public enquiries concerning the affairs of the company should be made to: The Official Receiver, Public Interest Unit, 16th Floor, 1 Westfield Avenue, Stratford, London, E20 1HZ. Telephone: 0300 678 0015 Email: piu.or@insolvency.gov.uk.

Company Investigations, part of the Insolvency Service, uses powers under the Companies Act 1985 to conduct confidential fact-finding investigations into the activities of live limited companies in the UK on behalf of the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). [Further information about live company investigations is available here.](#)

[Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct, is available here.](#)

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

[Heads of Mission join Palestinian farmers in olive harvesting](#)

World news story

UK, EU, Belgium, Finland, Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden join Palestinian farmers in olive harvesting in Kufr Ni'mah village near Ramallah.



Heads of Mission and representatives from the UK, EU, Belgium, Finland, Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden visited Kufr Ni'mah village in the Ramallah district today. They took part in the olive harvest, which began this month and which has significant cultural and economic importance for Palestinians.

According to UN OCHA, nearly half of cultivated Palestinian agricultural land in the West Bank is planted with 10 million olive trees. An estimated 100,000 families in the West Bank rely on olive oil for primary or secondary sources of income according to the West Bank Protection Consortium.

Participants heard from locals, the West Bank Protection Consortium and Première Urgence Internationale about settler violence in the Ramallah district, which is getting worse for farmers each year and which often peaks during the Olive Harvest season. In the discussion, participants reiterated

their continued opposition to Israel's settlement policy and concern over the increasing rates of settler violence.

British Consul General Diane Corner said: "The Olive Harvest is a special time for Palestinians. It is central to their economy, their culture and their heritage. Sadly, persistent settler violence continues to be a major concern. As the occupying power, the Israeli authorities should ensure settlers who are responsible for crimes against Palestinians are held to account and should protect Palestinians against such violence."

During the visit, Heads of Mission and diplomats were briefed on recent settler attacks against Palestinians across the West Bank and in the Ramallah district in particular. Settler violence is at record levels – the UN has recorded the highest monthly average of settler attacks since it began tracking incidents in 2005.

Published 28 October 2022

[Help for vulnerable people to spot disinformation and boost online safety](#)

- Funding awarded to improve media literacy among vulnerable and 'hard-to-reach' groups
- Will support projects across the UK to ensure everyone can protect themselves from online disinformation
- Part of the government's Online Media Literacy Strategy to help people be safe online

Elderly, disabled and other vulnerable people will get better support to stay safe online and avoid being misled by disinformation thanks to a funding boost from the government to mark UNESCO Global Media and Information Literacy Week.

More than £1 million has been granted to 17 UK organisations to pilot new ways of boosting media literacy skills for people at risk of experiencing online abuse and being deceived into believing false information, such as vaccine disinformation, deepfake videos or propaganda created by hostile states.

Research shows some people struggle to engage and benefit from the range of

media literacy education on offer, due to limited experience or overconfidence in using the internet, as well as a lack of awareness of how to access resources and their unavailability outside of schools and colleges.

[The Media Literacy Taskforce Fund](#) is one of two funding schemes created to target 'hard-to-reach' and vulnerable groups by investing in community-led projects to ensure everyone has the opportunity to improve their media literacy skills and protect themselves from online disinformation.

Social enterprise [Freshrb](#) will work with young people to develop their own podcasts exploring online dis- and misinformation to be aired on local radio. Another project run by charity [Internet Matters](#) will provide media literacy training for dozens of care workers and leavers in the Greater Manchester area.

Elderly people from diverse backgrounds in Leeds will have access to digital media skills training online and in community centres as part of the [Leeds Older People's Forum](#). [Parent Zone](#) is working with eight local councils including Calderdale, Luton and Middlesbrough to deliver media literacy resources tailored to parents and carers of teenagers.

A separate scheme, the [Media Literacy Programme Fund](#), will deliver training courses, online learning, tech solutions and mentoring schemes to vulnerable internet users.

Digital Secretary Michelle Donelan said:

With the rise of online disinformation, teaching people to identify fact from fiction has never been more important to public safety.

As well as bringing forward new laws to tackle the root causes of these problems, we are funding organisations to give people the skills to stay safe online so everyone can benefit from all the internet has to offer.

Winning projects in the [Media Literacy Programme Fund](#) to receive grants today include:

- [NewsGuard](#), which will work with ageing-focused charities to, deliver workshops to older adults to support them in spotting mis- and disinformation online;
- The [Economist Educational Foundation](#) will work with disadvantaged schools and boost teachers' skills through news literacy training and support students to engage with the news and think critically about what they're consuming online;
- Online Safety charity [Glitch](#) will deliver workshops and training to vulnerable and marginalised women to support their media literacy skills including tackling online abuse.

All the schemes are part of the government's plans to deliver the [Online Media Literacy Strategy](#), a national action plan to empower people to stay

safe online by giving them the skills they need to think critically about what they see and read on the internet.

Launched in July 2021, the three-year strategy supports media literacy organisations to deliver education and initiatives in a more wide-reaching and effective way. The [year two](#) plan, published in April, is backed by more than £2 million in targeted funding, including today's announcement. This is in addition to the £250,000 grant funding delivered to five organisations working with schools to adapt media literacy resources for teachers working with disabled students in our year one action plan.

The announcement coincides with the [UNESCO Global Media and Information Literacy Week](#), a global initiative celebrating the progress countries have made toward making media literacy education more accessible to its citizens by implementing national media and information literacy policies.

The grant funding complements the measures in the groundbreaking [Online Safety Bill](#), which supports a safer online environment by requiring tech firms to protect children from harmful content and tackle criminal activity on their platforms.

- DCMS is backing the country's powerhouse sectors to grow the economy and make a difference where people live.
- DCMS sectors, like tech, telecoms and the creative industries, contribute £211 billion to the economy each year and support more than four million jobs across the UK. And they are creating new jobs, with 250k more jobs filled now than before the pandemic.
- The digital sector contributes approximately £138 billion to the economy. There are 1,822,000 jobs in the sector – 250,000 more than in 2019 before the pandemic.
- The UNESCO Global Media and Information Literacy Week, this year hosted in Nigeria, is an annual celebration of the progress achieved towards [Media and Information Literacy for All](#). The 2022 theme is "Nurturing Trust: A Media and Information Literacy Imperative".
- The UK's independent communications regulator, Ofcom, [defines media literacy](#) as the 'ability to use, understand and create media and communications in a variety of contexts'.
- More than 170 organisations are currently involved in delivering media literacy education in the UK.
- DCMS has created a webpage offering [online media literacy resources](#).
- See the full list of grant recipients below.

Winners of the Media Literacy Programme Fund:

Winners of the Media Literacy Taskforce Fund: