

Record £2.8 billion commercial benefits delivered through Crown Commercial Service agreements

- Almost £3 billion achieved in commercial benefits in 2021/22 through CCS agreements
- Total spent through agreements has doubled over the past 5 years to £27.6 billion
- SMEs have benefited from £2.2 billion in direct spending, an additional £687 million directly compared to 2020/21

Almost £3 billion in commercial benefits have been achieved for public sector organisations through use of Crown Commercial Service (CCS) agreements, delivering record value for taxpayers.

CCS agreements provide public sector bodies with a choice of suppliers who offer the best value, leveraging the scale of public sector demand to secure competitive prices. By using these agreements, public sector customers can achieve commercial benefits such as reduced costs compared to market prices and better value in contract terms and conditions.

The newly published CCS annual report and accounts for 2021/22 shows £2.8 billion of commercial benefits were achieved across the public sector. CCS agreements secured £1.9 billion in benefits for central government, and a further £0.9 billion for the wider public sector.

This includes £4 million in savings for 14 NHS trusts on mobile and data services, such as voice calls, connectivity and applications. The Student Loan Company also saved £1.6 million by outsourcing its print and mail services through CCS's Managed Print and Digital Solutions framework.

ACRO Criminal Records Office, a national police unit, was able to improve efficiency and accuracy by putting in place a machine translation solution through CCS's Language Services framework. This enabled the organisation to translate vital conviction information quickly from EU member states and prevent criminal cases being thrown out of court, saving £6,000 in 3 months and helping to make our streets safer.

Minister for Brexit Opportunities and Government Efficiency, Jacob Rees-Mogg said:

The Crown Commercial Service is one of the highest-performing parts of the Government. It provides the best value for taxpayers day in, day out. At a time of high inflation and squeezed budgets, its work is more valuable than ever.

By leveraging the scale of public sector demand when choosing suppliers, these agreements have secured billions in savings, which

can be used to support vital services delivered across the public sector.

Spending through CCS frameworks has doubled in five years, reaching £27.6 billion in 2021/22. This means CCS is on course to hit its target of £30 billion by 2024 and represents an increase of £4.9 billion on the 2020/21 total. CCS also assisted customers with contracts valued at over £5 billion annually by running procurements on their behalf.

The amount spent directly with small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) increased by £687 million compared to the year before. In total, £2.2 billion was spent directly with SMEs, supporting growth and jobs across the UK.

Simon Tse, CEO of Crown Commercial Service, said:

Growing the economy is a top priority and supporting small businesses will do just that.

The past year has seen record spending with SMEs through CCS agreements and suppliers have been paid promptly, aiding their growth and spreading economic prosperity across the country.

CCS agreements have also supported public sector customers with key policy priorities, such as net zero commitments and supply chain auditing.

Thousands of customers used CCS's dedicated net zero web pages over the last 12 months to identify agreements that help them meet sustainability goals.

CCS also published its first annual modern slavery statement in November. This set out steps being taken to identify, prevent and mitigate the risks of modern slavery in CCS operations and supply chains, including ensuring that suppliers are publishing an annually updated modern slavery statement.

Chair of the CCS Board, Tony van Kralingen said:

Crown Commercial Service has once again driven significant value for taxpayers, while continuing to develop and enhance its reputation for excellence across central government and the wider public sector.

I am delighted to be able to end my term as Chair of the CCS Board with such outstanding results. The Board and I are confident that the platform for continued success is well established.

The year at a glance

- £27.6 billion of public sector spend was channelled through CCS agreements, doubling spend over 5 years
- Customers who have used CCS agreements have achieved commercial benefits

equivalent to £2.8 billion

- CCS's employee engagement index, as measured by the Civil Service People Survey, remains high at 71% in 2021
- £2.2 billion was spent directly with SMEs through CCS's commercial agreements in 2021/22 – an additional £687m compared to 2020/21
- The assisted procurement service helped deliver procurements for customers worth a total annual contract value of £5 billion

Read the full report

You can read [CCS's Annual Report and Accounts](#).

You can find a full list of all the commercial agreements CCS offers, alongside details of how CCS can help you build policy considerations into your procurement, in our [interactive digital brochure](#).

PM's remarks at Farnborough Air Show: 18 July 2022

It is fantastic to be here at Farnborough the scene of many of the most exciting developments in the history of powered flight

It was here that the de Havilland comet ushered in the jet age

here that the world first saw the Vulcan bomber, a beautiful machine I remember from my childhood

and here that spectators saw first the amazing aeronautical ability of the Typhoon

which I experienced myself last Thursday

With the help of wing commander Paul Hanson I took off from RAF Coningsby straight up like a vertical firecracker

we slipped the surly bonds of earth

as the poet Magee puts it

and danced the skies on laughter silvered wings

we flung that eager craft through footless halls of air

and generally put it through its paces, I can tell you

and after a while the wing commander said to me

do you want to have a go

and I said are you sure

it seems very expensive to me

we only have 148 of them and they cost about £75m a pop

and he said don't worry

you can't break it

and I thought oh well famous last words

and so I pushed the joystick right over to the right and we did an aileron roll and then I hauled the joystick right back and we did a fantastic loop the loop

and then I did a more complicated thing called a barrel roll in which I pushed the stick up and right a bit

and we started to pull a few Gs, as they say

and when I came back to consciousness I could see

the sea getting closer and closer

and I started to dream about the incredible forest of wind farms I could see

and I thought about the way this government in the last few years has been reclaiming doggerland

harvesting the drowned prairies of the north sea

and harvesting them once again with gigawatt after gigawatt of clean green energy

helping to deliver a long term sustainable solution to our energy needs

ending any dependence on Putin whatsoever

and this reverie must have gone on for a while because my colleague said er I am taking back control now

and we headed happily home

and I was absolutely stunned by the typhoon

because it is now more than 25 years since I first flew a fast jet

I went out, thanks to the RAF, to Seymour Johnson air force base in north Carolina and flew an F15E strike eagle

and I remember sitting in that cockpit and looking at wires running either side of me that were attached to pedals at the pilot's feet

and were pulling the flaps

and I looked at that and I thought this really isn't so different from a sopwith camel

and on Thursday last week at Coningsby I asked them afterwards, as you ask about what would happen in a fight between a tyrannosaurus rex and a Killer whale

what would happen in a fight between a typhoon and an F15E strike eagle

and they said it would be no contest

almost 30 years ago when I went up in a F15E

the strike eagle seemed to me to be the last word in strength and power and aggression

but compared to the typhoon, according to the RAF, it would be so motionless and defenceless that a dogfight

in the brutal words of one typhoon pilot would be like clubbing seals

and so the lesson I draw is about the scale and the pace of technological change

It was only 85 years ago that my grandfather was flying wellington bombers

with equipment so primitive that you really have to marvel at the bravery of the men and women who were involved in that war

in fact he used up quite a few wellington bombers

he crashed twice – the second time into a church

I am afraid he was always prone to religious doubts

I marvel at the bravery of that generation

and let's face it – it was only 120 years ago that this whole enterprise began – of heavier than air powered flight –

in machines, barely more than a century ago, that looked like laundry baskets lashed together with leather and canvas

and propelled by lawnmower engines

and if you can go from a laundry basket to a typhoon in a century

I just want you to imagine what the next 20 years and the next 50 years will bring

and I want you to know that this government believes in British aviation

and British technological genius and its power to bring jobs and growth across our whole country, uniting and levelling up across the whole country and that is why we are investing so massively in defence, the biggest uplift since the end of the Cold War,

and that is why I am so obsessed with the FCAS with Team Tempest and everything that that involves

I think it is a fantastic project

There are already 560 UK companies playing their part more than a thousand apprentices and new graduates involved

and I am a passionate believer in the potential of our burgeoning partnership – not just with Italy, but with Japan

an incredible thing to be doing now 80 years after the end of the Second World War

and of course, FCAS is not just a plane

it is a whole platform for technological change and industrial spin-offs of all kinds

because the combat aircraft systems of the future will be very different even from the typhoon

and some of them will be manned, some of them will be crewed and some of them won't be

and in developing these new technologies

and maintaining the air superiority that we have luxuriated in for so long and which is so crucial for our long term security

I want our country to be in the lead

and then on this scorching day

with the thermometer about to blow and temperatures here apparently higher than the Sahara

there is the next great technological challenge

which is how to send a plane across the Atlantic without burning tonnes of kerosene and adding the carbon tea cosy that is heating our planet to destruction

we know that we must fix it

we know that time is running out

and that is why one of the first things I initiated 3 years ago was a project called Jet Zero

in which I think many of you are participating and thank you very much for what you are doing – a zero carbon plane

and people think it's impossible

they say pigs might fly

well let me tell you

this is not only the country that built the first jet engine, but the first plane across the Atlantic

In 1909 a pilot by the name of John Theodore Cuthbert Moore Brabazon took off with a six week old piglet in a waste paper basket tied to the strut of a Short Brothers biplane

We showed that pigs could fly a hundred years ago

and we are going to fix zero carbon aviation as well

not just because it's right for our planet but because it will drive jobs and growth around the country

and that is why, today, we are investing a further quarter of a billion today in UK aviation technology and innovation

and so, in conclusion, I want you to know that after 3 happy years in the cockpit

and after performing some pretty difficult if not astonishing feats

getting Brexit done and restoring this country's ability to make its own laws in parliament

vaccinating our population faster than any other comparable country and ensuring the fastest growth in the G7

and being the first European country to give the Ukrainians the vital military help they need see off Putin's aggression

not to mention, cutting neighbourhood crime by 31 per cent

lowest unemployment for almost 50 years

gigabit broadband from 7 to 69 per cent households in this country

and many many other statistics

I am now going to hand over the controls

seamlessly to someone else

I don't know who

but whoever it is I can tell you that the twin engines, the great Rolls Royce twin engines of this conservative government will roar on

fantastic public services

a dynamic free market economy

each boosting the other and developing millions of tons of thrust

and there could be no better example of that relationship

that symbiosis between government and the private sector than the aviation industry

and if you want a final example of this government's ambition I give you not just FCAS, not just Jet Zero but space flight as well

This year if all goes well

we will launch the first UK satellite in history to enter space from UK soil

as Newquay becomes this country's equivalent of Cape Kennedy, shortly to be followed by Shetland as well

and I leave it to you to imagine who

at this stage I would like to send into orbit

Perhaps a volunteer could be found from the green benches of parliament

I leave that entirely to your speculation

but for now, with so much to look forward to in this incredible sector and with the UK at the leading edge of progress

not just for our national security, the security of our friends and neighbours

not just for our economic prosperity around the whole country

but for the protection of the planet itself

I declare this great Farnborough air show open

UK builds momentum on combat air

programme with demonstrator set to fly within five years

- UK develops next generation fighter demonstrator aircraft as part of the Future Combat Air System (FCAS) programme.
- Project involves the Ministry of Defence and the Team Tempest industry partners, led by BAE Systems.
- Comes as the UK deepens collaboration with Japan and Italy as it builds a combat air international partnership.
- FCAS Enterprise launches its 'Generation Tempest' initiative creating early careers job opportunities across the UK and a new Tempest Academy.

A new flying demonstrator will be unveiled within the next five years as part of the UK's major next generation fighter aircraft programme, the Future Combat Air System (FCAS). It comes as the future combat air programme launches a new recruitment and skills initiative known as Generation Tempest, set to create thousands of new job opportunities across the United Kingdom.

The demonstrator aircraft is already in development between the Government and Team Tempest industry partners and the UK is actively progressing collaboration opportunities on the project with Italian industry partners.

The flying demonstrator will be a piloted supersonic aircraft testing a range of new technologies including integration of stealth compatible features. This is the first time the UK will have developed a new fast aircraft using 21st century technology.

Work is rapidly gathering pace on this important part of the FCAS programme, with development of the demonstrator underway at BAE Systems' facility near Preston in the north of England. This is being supported by hundreds of companies and thousands of engineers across the UK.

The demonstrator is vital for ensuring our technology, skills and industrial capability are ready for the future. Designing and building the flying demonstrator will prove integration and test skills. It will also provide invaluable data and lessons to UK industry to support the introduction of a new FCAS aircraft from 2035.

Separately, the UK is now conducting joint concept analysis with close partners Japan and Italy to understand areas of shared interest and to explore potential Future Combat Air partnership options and continues to explore wider partnerships. Further decisions are expected to be made by the end of 2022. Like the UK, both Japan and Italy operate F-35 fighter jets and the nations have undertaken joint exercises together in the past.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:

I am delighted that the UK, alongside Italy, Japan and Sweden are

working on the same combat air journey together.

Our work with Japan and Italy on cutting-edge technologies like this, shows the benefit of our alliances across the world.

The design and development of the demonstrator aircraft represents an important milestone, showcasing the success and talent of our engineers, programmers and software developers. This programme will go on to attract opportunities for many more great minds and talent from across the UK.

To support the programme, a series of measures to attract the brightest minds onto FCAS have been announced, including plans for a new Tempest Academy, joint recruitment and talent development between partners, and the launch of a new [careers website](#). It is hoped that this initiative will create a 'Generation Tempest' who will bring their own unique ideas and experiences to the programme.

The FCAS programme plays an important role in supporting the Government's levelling up ambitions, employing around 2,500 highly skilled people across the UK including at combat air sector industrial hubs in Scotland, the north-west and south-west of England. The programme now employs 1,000 apprentices and graduates, offering attractive employment opportunities in STEM subjects such as industrial digitisation, artificial intelligence and data analytics.

Team Tempest partners, BAE Systems, Rolls-Royce, Leonardo UK and MBDA UK, aim to hire an additional 1,300 early careers starters by the end of 2023.

UK Director Future Combat Air Richard Berthon said:

FCAS is an exciting, dynamic and inclusive programme, needing a diversity of people, ideas and skills working together. We are recruiting fresh talent who will lead FCAS, delivering one of the world's most important Defence programmes.

The FCAS programme is driving developments at the cutting edge of technology and there have been a series of advances across UK industry supporting the programme, some of which are being showcased at Farnborough Airshow this week including:

- Rolls-Royce Defence has delivered a new gas turbine demonstrator engine, known as Orpheus, designed, built and tested in under two years to prove innovative technology developments for FCAS. Working with international partners, Rolls Royce have also agreed the next stage of the full-scale engine demonstrator programme.
- BAE Systems has used digital transformation to design and build a representative military fast jet fuselage, demonstrating how innovative technologies can transform the design and manufacturing capability for Tempest. Commercial robots were adapted and utilised, and 65% of the parts were guided into location using automation.

- Leonardo UK and Japan's Mitsubishi Electric have agreed the concept for a radar technology demonstrator called JAGUAR, first unveiled in February, following the completion of joint concept work and feasibility studies earlier this year.
 - Leonardo has also revealed ongoing bilateral work to support the future electronics on-board the FCAS programme. Leonardo in the UK and in Italy are working together on a number of projects with Elettronica in Italy including joint assessment of potential architecture of a common Integrated Sensing and Non-Kinetic Effects (ISANKE) and Integrated Communications System. The work is complementary to ongoing collaboration with Japan on 6th generation sensor capabilities, an area in which Italy will soon be involved.
 - MBDA unveiled its concept for a weapon effects management system, to aid the coordination of all available weapons in the battle space using Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning enhanced software.
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Pre-recorded evidence for rape victims rolled out to courts across the Midlands

- pre-recorded evidence now available in 4 more courts in the Midlands.
- measure aims to reduce trauma for victims and witnesses to help them give better evidence
- rollout means it is now available in over two-thirds of all Crown Courts in England and Wales

The measure, which has already been successfully introduced in 54 Crown Courts across England and Wales, allows victims and witnesses of crimes such as rape and modern slavery to have their cross-examination video-recorded and played later during trial. This is subject to a successful application to the court.

The recording takes place as close to the time of the offence as possible, while memories remain fresh, and helps victims avoid the stress of giving evidence in a courtroom setting, which many find traumatic.

From today, the measure will be available immediately at Birmingham, Coventry, Derby and Wolverhampton Crown Courts.

The move follows the successful implementation for vulnerable victims, such as children or those who have limited mental capacity, across the country – with more than 2,500 witnesses having already benefitted from the technology since August 2020.

Justice Minister, Tom Pursglove, said:

We're overhauling the entire response to rape and rolling out pre-recorded evidence to every Crown Court in England and Wales is a key part of that – sparing victims the stress of testifying during a live trial.

We're also recruiting more independent sexual violence advisors, improving collaboration between police and prosecutors, and delivering a Victims' Bill to ensure they get the justice they deserve.

While there is still much more to do, we are starting to see the results of these efforts, with rape convictions up by more than a quarter since before the pandemic.

This extension means it is now available for victims of rape at 58 Crown Courts, over two-thirds of all Crown Courts in England and Wales. The government is committed to rolling it out nationwide by the end of September.

The measure is also designed to maintain a defendant's right to a fair trial and any decision to pre-record evidence is made by a judge on a case-by-case basis.

The roll out of pre-recorded evidence is a key pledge within the government's Rape Review Action Plan. The plan sets out clear actions for the police, prosecutors, and courts. These include a new approach to investigations, reducing the number of victims withdrawing from the process, increasing the volume of trials being heard, protecting the public and putting more rapists behind bars.

In June, the government published the latest Rape Review Progress report and committed to piloting specialist rape support in three courtrooms as recommended by the Joint Inspectorates of the CPS and Police. This would offer support, such as Independent Sexual Violence Advisors, within the court itself, as well as providing trauma training to court staff. These courtrooms will be set up at Snaresbrook Crown Court in London as well as Leeds and Newcastle Crown Courts.

Today's announcement builds on recent government action to make our streets safer and increase confidence in the justice system, including the publication of a draft Victims' Bill. The legislation seeks to amplify victims' voices, and places greater accountability on agencies such as the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) and police for the service they provide to them.

Guidance:

- Both the defence and prosecution lawyers will be present in court during the pre-recording as will the judge and the defendant.
- The independent judiciary will be responsible for overseeing the use of pre-recorded evidence and will have discretion to ensure that the interests of justice are served.
- Pre-recording cross-examination preserves a defendant's right to a fair

trial.

- Vulnerable witnesses and victims are defined as all child witnesses under 18 and any witness whose quality of evidence is likely to be diminished because they are suffering from a mental disorder or physical disability or has significant impairment of intelligence and social functioning.
- Intimidated witnesses and victims for the purposes of this pilot were defined as complainants of sexual offences and modern slavery offences who are witnesses in proceedings relating to that offence, or that offence and any other offences.
- There are 71 Crown Court Centres in the UK, and a total of 83 Crown Court locations.
- Rape convictions are increasing – there has been a 15 percent increase in the number of people convicted for rape offences in the last three months. There were 467 convictions last quarter (CPS Prosecution Statistics – October to December 2021), compared to 407, 398 and 376 in the quarters before. Total completed prosecutions for rape cases have increased by 10 percent from 600 (July – September 2021) to 661 (October-December 2021).
- The average number of days for adult rape from CPS charge to the case being completed continued to fall, down by 38 days (8.3 percent) since the peak in June 2021 – down from 457 days to 419 in October – December 2021.
- The measure is being rolled out to the following courts today:
 - Birmingham
 - Coventry
 - Derby
 - Wolverhampton
- The Courts already operating pre-recorded evidence for intimidated victims are:
 - Bolton
 - Burnley
 - Preston
 - Carlisle
 - Lancaster
 - Warrington
 - Chester
 - Manchester Crown Square
 - Manchester Minshull Street
 - Swindon Crown Court
 - Sheffield
 - Doncaster
 - Newcastle
 - Portsmouth
 - Southampton
 - Isle of Wight
 - Winchester
 - Bournemouth
 - Bristol
 - Exeter
 - Gloucester

- Plymouth
- Salisbury
- Truro
- Liverpool
- Leeds
- Kingston-Upon-Thames
- Harrow
- Isleworth
- Wood Green
- Durham
- York
- Grimsby
- Hull
- Bradford
- Teesside Crown Court
- Warwick
- Shrewsbury
- Stafford
- Stoke-on-Trent
- Worcester
- Hereford
- Nottingham
- Lincoln
- Leicester
- Northampton
- Taunton
- Caernarfon
- Cardiff
- Merthyr Tydfil
- Mold
- Newport
- Swansea
- Preston Crown Court and Family Court (Sessions House)

Countdown to launch: British-built satellite completes line-up for first launch from Spaceport Cornwall

- Named 'DOVER', RHEA Group's first satellite will fly into space on Virgin Orbit's maiden UK launch, sharing a ride with five additional satellite missions, including the first ever satellite to be built in Wales.
- Today's announcement confirms the UK is on track to become the first country in Europe to launch satellites into space from home soil this

year, a key ambition of the Government's National Space Strategy.

A new research satellite from international engineering firm Rhea Group, built in Oxfordshire by space company Open Cosmos, will be launched from the UK later this year.

Virgin Orbit will launch the 'DOVER' pathfinder satellite from Spaceport Cornwall. The satellite will transmit an innovative new signal, specially designed by engineers at RHEA, to provide data from space that can be used on the ground to obtain a position or an accurate time. It will broadcast these new signals so that their performance can be tested as part of the research project.

This new satellite completes the line-up for the UK's first launch, which also includes satellites from organisations such as Space Forge, the Satellite Applications Catapult and Horizon Technologies, as well as the Prometheus-2 research demonstration satellites. Prometheus-2 was co-funded and designed with Airbus Defence and Space and assembled by In-Space Missions, as part of a collaboration between the UK's Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) and international partners, including the US National Reconnaissance Office.

The UK is poised to become the first country in Europe to launch satellites into orbit this year from home soil, a key ambition of the UK Government's National Space Strategy. Spaceport Cornwall is at the heart of a growing aerospace and space cluster and will create 150 jobs in the local area.

The development of a commercial launch capability will give the UK access to the growing global launch market, delivering a further boost to the thriving space and satellite sector, which is already home to more than 47,000 jobs across the country and supports billions of pounds of wider economic activity.

From left, Rebecca Evernden, Director of Space at BEIS, Dr Paul Bate, CEO of the UK Space Agency, Prime Minister Boris Johnson, British ESA astronaut Tim Peake, and Lord Willetts, Chair of the UK Space Agency on the UK Space Pavillion at the Farnborough International Airshow today (18 July 2022)

Dr Paul Bate, CEO of the UK Space Agency, said:

The countdown is on to the first satellite launch from Spaceport Cornwall, with a full complement of satellites confirmed by Virgin Orbit for what promises to be a landmark moment for our thriving space sector.

It's fantastic that RHEA Group's DOVER satellite is joining the launch, which showcases both our domestic satellite manufacturing expertise and the international interest in the UK as a launch destination.

The ability to launch satellites from UK soil will support our work to catalyse investment into the space sector, deliver new capabilities and champion the incredible role of space to benefit life on Earth.

The ‘DOVER’ pathfinder satellite

RHEA Group’s Dover satellite, the company’s first, was co-funded by the UK Space Agency’s investment in the European Space Agency’s Navigation Innovation and Support Programme (NAVISP). It’s named after the Dover Strait, where the English Channel is narrowest and shipping lanes are busiest, as this is a key location for testing new techniques and technologies for Positioning, Navigation and Timing (PNT).

The satellite is a strong example of UK expertise in PNT technology, which underpins vast swathes of economic activity, as well as small satellite manufacturing, with Open Cosmos building the satellite at the Harwell Space Cluster, Oxfordshire.

Emma Jones, RHEA’s UK Business Director, said:

This is a momentous event for RHEA. This year we are celebrating our 30th anniversary and it is a great milestone to launch our first ever satellite in the same year. The UK is in the very desirable position of establishing a number of spaceports, and it is thrilling to have a RHEA satellite on board the first launch to take off from UK soil.

Florian Deconinck, Vice President of Institutional Partnerships & Future Missions at Open Cosmos, said:

DOVER is a great example of Open Cosmos’ ability to design, manufacture, launch and operate satellites in a responsive manner. The timescales for this future mission are impressively aggressive: 8 months from the moment of first contact with RHEA to getting an operating satellite in orbit. This is the result of a close partnership between Open Cosmos and RHEA, the very reactive support from UK Space Agency and ESA-NAVISP teams, and the possibility of delivering all the phases from a single location, the UK.

The launch

During the launch mission, a Virgin Orbit 747 will take off from the runway at Spaceport Cornwall, carrying a rocket beneath its wing. The plane will fly out over the ocean before blasting the rocket into space, delivering satellites into orbit around the Earth. In the cockpit will be Squadron Leader Mathew ‘Stanny’ Stannard, an RAF Test Pilot serving on industrial

placement as one of Virgin Orbit's pilots.

This will be the first satellite launch from UK soil and Virgin Orbit's first mission outside the US. It follows the successful 'Straight Up' mission, that delivered seven satellites into space from Mojave in California on Saturday 2nd July.

Dan Hart, CEO of Virgin Orbit, said:

We're very pleased to have been selected by RHEA Group to launch its first satellite. The DOVER satellite, which was designed in Belgium, built in the UK, funded by the European Space Agency, and now will be launched from Cornwall, is a great example of the power that comes with the infusion of space collaboration taking place across the globe.

The work RHEA will do with their DOVER satellite will help to assure reliable navigation, which touches all of us and can be vital for everything from environmentally-efficient shipping to national security.

Melissa Thorpe, Head of Spaceport Cornwall, said:

We're thrilled to have 'DOVER' complete the line-up of satellites onboard Virgin Orbit's first launch from Cornwall. Each payload highlights the innovation happening within the small satellite industry, and how it can benefit life on earth, while showcasing the growing collaboration between UK Space and international partners.

This is another great moment in the countdown to launch from Cornwall.

UK spaceflight programme

With funding first announced at the Farnborough International Airshow in 2018, the UK Space Agency is supporting the development of commercial and sustainable satellite launch operations across the UK, working with a range of partners including Spaceport Cornwall and Virgin Orbit, Space Hub Sutherland and Orbex, and SaxaVord Spaceport, Lockheed Martin and ABL Space Systems.

The space sector has shown remarkable resilience in the face of global challenges such as the pandemic, with more than 1,700 satellites launched worldwide in 2021 alone. These provide vital technologies used every day by people and businesses, including communications, Earth observation and navigation services.

The UK has world-leading expertise in satellite design, manufacturing, data

and applications but, until now, has not been able to launch them from home soil.