

## Minister for Defence Procurement announces millions awarded to defence firms through the Defence Growth Partnership's Innovation Challenge

Yesterday at the Institute of Engineering and Technology, at an event organised by the UK Defence Solutions Centre (UKDSC), Defence Minister Stuart Andrew announced the winners of the final phase of the Defence Growth Partnership's (DGP) Innovation Challenge. The UKDSC on behalf of the DGP and in partnership with the MOD has supported these challenges throughout the phases of this cutting-edge innovation programme. The final stage of the programme was launched at the Farnborough International Air show in July with the goal of developing innovative solutions to key strategic future demands for UK defence in autonomy and big data.



Alan Cook CBE, Co-chair of the Defence Growth Partnership addresses leading industry and military figures from the defence equipment community

The winning companies and their ground-breaking technologies will receive combined investment and support worth over £4 million from the MOD and £6 million from industry partners to see their full development in an approach which seeks to create high quality UK jobs, boost defence exports and encourage collaboration between large industry, SMEs and academia.

Alan Cook CBE, Co-chair of the Defence Growth Partnership, said:

“The innovative solutions developed by our own defence companies over the course of the Innovation Challenge is amazing. Using autonomy and big data these winning companies have found unique solutions to the ongoing challenges we face in the defence sector.”

“The winners of the DGP's Innovation Challenge Final Phase have proven that their products are fundamentally important to the growth and prosperity of their companies. This final funding for the winners will enable them to complete their development and ultimately provide essential solutions in a dynamic, international and competitive market. Their success will benefit the defence sector in the UK and help us win more business in export markets. “



Defence Minister Stuart Andrew announces the winners of the Innovation Challenge.

Defence Minister Stuart Andrew said:

“From shrewd navigation software, A.I. driven autonomous vehicles, laser radar to mixed reality training systems, today’s winners are a clear demonstration of industry rising to meet the complex challenges of modern warfare. The MOD, working with commercial partners, will see these pioneering technologies go from the drawing board to the battlefield.”

The winning solutions announced are:

- Close Air Solutions with Project Hyper Real Immersion - developing an augmented reality training and simulation solution
- QinetiQ’s Software Defined Multifunction LIDAR - developing an air and ground based payload combining a range of real-time LIDA ISR capabilities with an optical data link in the same sensor
- Horiba Mira’s UGV Localisation and Perception using Deep Learning Neural Networks – developing an AI based vehicle localisation and navigation system
- Polaris’ Ants on Deck – developing an innovation aimed at optimising autonomous routings in complex environments



Defence Minister Stuart Andrew meets winners of the Innovation Challenge.

The Defence and Security Accelerator, working together with the UK Defence Solutions Centre, established the competition in 2012 to explore and develop solutions to ensure the UK armed forces stay ahead of adversaries by finding more efficient methods of communication, logistics, protection, intelligence and training. The initial investment of £10 million for the competition has been matched pound for pound with industry partners and since then, the competition has received an additional £4 million. This is part of the wider £800 million Defence Innovation Fund.