



Ministry
of Defence

Defence
Suppliers Forum

Defence Suppliers Forum Newsletter



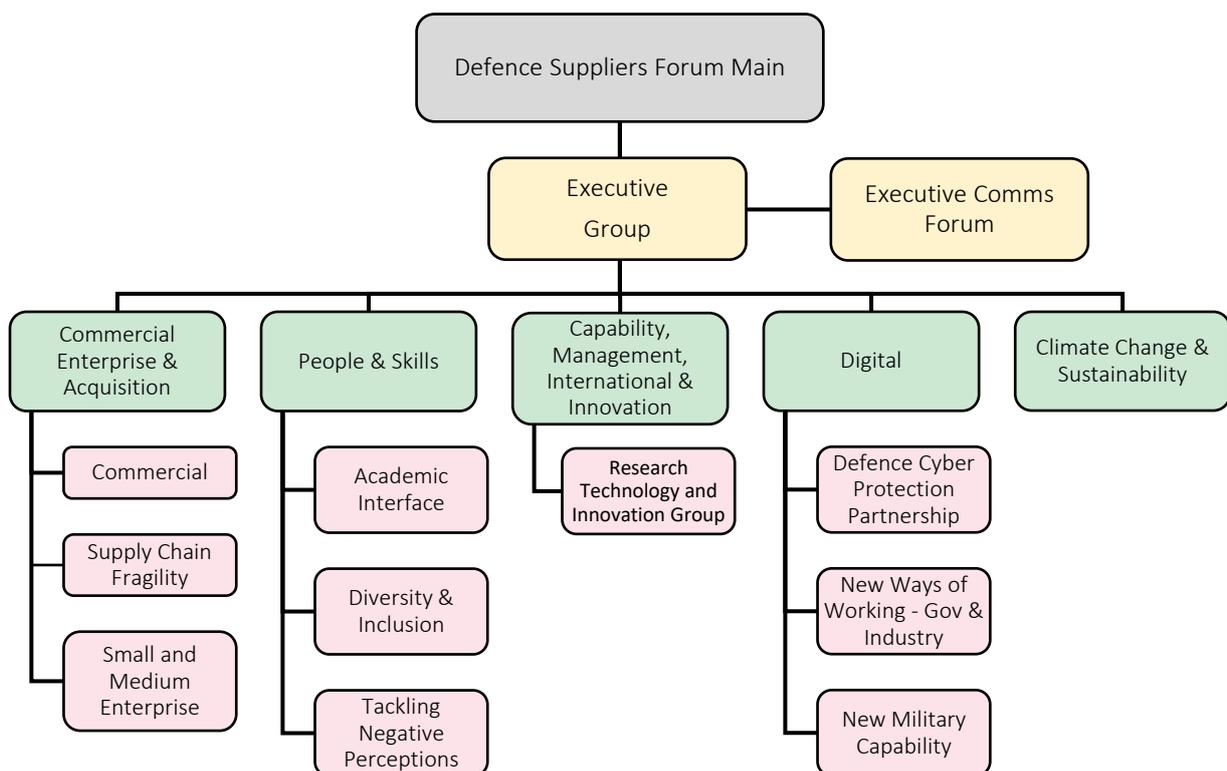
February 2021

Defence Suppliers Forum

The Defence Suppliers Forum (DSF) enables strategic engagement between Government and the Defence Industry to facilitate the effective sharing of information, aligning our objectives and optimising the delivery of Defence capability from the Defence budget.

Within the Defence landscape we expect the future to bring continued and significant change, including in technology, military doctrine, and the economic environment. The Joint Industry 2025 Vision recognises that there is a need for improved pace and agility and for the joint approach to defence capability to be markedly different. The DSF is central to delivering the Joint Vision and its work therefore aims to create a more collaborative, but also demanding approach to MOD’s relationship with Industry in order to deliver more within the funding envelope.

The DSF is co-chaired by the Right Honourable Ben Wallace MP, Secretary of State for Defence, and Charles Woodburn, Chief Executive BAES. Across the DSF groups membership includes senior officials from MOD and other government departments and representatives from MOD’s strategic and mid-tier suppliers, as well as small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). This monthly newsletter provides an overview of the key discussions and outputs from the various DSF groups.



February 2021 Issue

People & Skills – New Working Groups

Following the 2020 DSF Engineering Skills Survey, the People and Skills Steering Group are establishing two new working groups to support the priority areas that the survey highlighted. These are:

- Diversity and inclusion – focusing on how to address the imbalances within the Defence sector, thereby widening the talent pool and tackling skills shortages.
- Tackling negative perceptions – focusing on addressing the perception problem within the Defence sector that makes it difficult to attract people.

The existing Academic Interface working group will also continue to meet and focus on developing the Skills Passport work as well as developing a Defence enterprise demand signal to academia to ensure future skill needs are accounted for.

These new working groups are now looking for MOD and Industry members. If you are interested in being involved, please contact Emma.Booth108@mod.gov.uk.

Digital Steering Group

Work continues to enable development of the agreed key areas of focus for the Defence Suppliers Forum Digital Steering Group:

- New ways of working - Gov and Industry (process)

Recent meetings

- 12 Jan – Commercial Working Group
- 13 Jan – Executive Group
- 22 Jan – Supply Chain Fragility Group
- 28 Jan – Commercial Enterprise and Acquisition Steering Group
- 9 Feb – Commercial Working Group
- 10 Feb – Executive Group Communications Forum

Upcoming meetings

- 17 Feb – Digital Steering Group
- 22 Feb – Capability Management, International and Innovation Group
- 24 Feb – Supply Chain Fragility Group
- 24 Feb – People and Skills Steering Group
- 25 Feb – Commercial Enterprise and Acquisition Steering Group
- 10 Mar – Executive Group
- 11 Mar – SME Working Group

- New military capability (tech)

techUK, as the lead trade association for the Digital Steering Group, have formally begun the process for industry nominations.

Please contact techUK's Head of Defence Programme Fred Sugden at fred.sugden@techuk.org for more information.

Capability Priorities and Collaboration Process

Under the auspices of the DSF CMII, the CPCP pilot has continued to make strong progress over the past several weeks. The pilot is focused explicitly on Vehicle and Operational Infrastructure Powerplant (VOIP), which looks into the electrification of the British Army's medium wheeled platform fleet (≤ 30 tons) and continued with a series of bilateral engagements in January 2021.

Twenty organisations comprising specialist SMEs, start-ups, primes and academic institutions were selected to engage in a bilateral review with the MOD. UKDSC hosted these bilateral discussions with representation from Army HQ Capability Ground Manoeuvre. During the bilateral sessions, each organisation had the opportunity to present their relevant capabilities supporting Battery Electric Vehicles (BEV) or Hybrid Electric Vehicles (HEV). The solutions presented varied across hybrid and full electric technologies, drivetrains, charging, power management, advanced batteries and fuel cells. Alternative power generation technologies such as hydrogen were also presented, as was a full range of services from design to through-life support.



The spectrum of technology discussed ranged from low technology readiness levels to operationally proven capabilities. Several of the organisations already had experience in providing technologies for military applications; several others were not traditional Defence companies, albeit with a background delivering electric vehicle technology to the civil automotive, transport or mining sectors.

The bilateral engagements also enabled Army HQ to gain a greater in-depth understanding of the potential timeframes and level of investment required to bring various technologies to maturity. The organisations subsequently offered an insight into how their companies could fit into any future industrial partnership, delivering a land platform programme or support the MOD through a technology convening forum, such as an Industry Advisory Group.

The outputs from all bilateral engagements have now been captured and will be used to inform the capability assessment segment of the outcomes report. The UKDSC team has begun summarising the capability assessment and working on the additional outputs such as the DLoD analysis and the market/competitor analysis. The outcomes report will be delivered to Army HQ by 31st March. For further information, please contact the team at [DSF CMII Project E-Veh@ukdsc.org](mailto:DSF_CMII_Project_E-Veh@ukdsc.org).

Social Value - Supplier Training Sessions

The Cabinet Office is hosting a training event for Tech UK and the British Services Association (BSA) on the 22nd February 2021. The event will focus on Social Value and employment themes outlined in the recently published Social Value Model within [PPN 06/20](#).

To find out more about this event or if you would like the Cabinet Office to host a further session, please contact DefComrciPol-1C-Multiuser@mod.gov.uk or samantha.butler@cabinetoffice.gov.uk.

National Worker Testing Programme

Defence suppliers are encouraged to register for the new workplace testing programme which seeks to detect asymptomatic infections in the workforce. Testing is key to breaking the chains of transmission. More than 2.5 million tests have been distributed across the public and private sectors so far, and an online portal has been launched to make it even easier for business in the private sector to get involved and find out more about offering rapid testing in the workplace. All those who can work from home should continue to do so.

You can find the toolkit via the new government portal (<https://www.gov.uk/get-workplace-coronavirus-tests>) where employers can register for tests to be delivered and with details of how to set up testing centres. Tests are delivered free of charge but there will be some overheads in terms of manpower and infrastructure incurred by employers to set up test centres.

You can register to order tests if:

- your business is registered in England
- you employ 50 people or more. *Smaller employers should use the existing community testing programme.*
- your employees cannot work from home

Links to the testing portal can be found on the Defence Suppliers Portal and via Twitter

What is REACH?

Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH), addresses the production and use of chemical substances, and their potential impacts on both human health and the environment.

As of 1 January 2021 the UK REACH and the EU REACH regulations operate independently from each other. Companies that supply and purchase substances, mixtures or articles to and from the EU/EEA/Northern Ireland and Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales) will need to ensure that the relevant duties are met under both pieces of legislation.

Information on, how to comply with the EU and UK REACH chemical regulations when using, making, selling or importing chemicals in the UK and in the EU, can be found [here](#).