

Armoured vehicles to test electric technology

Offering improved silent mobility, hybrid and electric drive systems will provide sustainability benefits and deliver potential military advantages, reducing noise and increasing stealth capability. Electric systems will also provide game-changing power off-board, while increased power onboard will allow the vehicles to operate the latest technologies.

The innovative hybrid electric-drive system will be developed by NP Aerospace. The Coventry-based company will work in collaboration with General Dynamics UK, Supacat and Magtec to create prototypes of the Foxhound and Jackal 2 vehicles to test the new technology.

Defence Minister Jeremy Quin, said:

It is vital our armoured vehicles are equipped with the latest technology so we can maintain our battle-winning edge.

These tests will ensure our Armed Forces have the latest, safest and most efficient technology, while continuing to support prosperity across the UK. They represent a potential opportunity to improve our vehicles sustainability and military effectiveness.

Alongside delivering multiple technical and operational enhancements, the introduction of hybrid technology will ultimately reduce the Army's reliance on fossil fuels – a step towards the Government's 2050 net zero goal.

Adopting greener technology into the MOD's equipment fleet is part of the department's strategy to reduce its contributions to carbon and greenhouse gas emissions. Measures like this will be reflected in the department's ongoing Climate Change and Sustainability Review, led by Lt Gen Richard Nugee.

Lt General Richard Nugee said:

It is great to see the Army testing electric vehicles that will benefit not only our world-class personnel, but also our planet. This goes to show how seriously we are incorporating sustainability into our operations, while simultaneously pushing the boundaries of military innovation.

The review will focus on a range of initiatives from the MOD's NZ50 strategy to setting the right baseline for defence's emissions and carbon footprint, with findings set to be published in December 2020.

This next-generation army vehicle technology is being tested under the Protected Mobility Engineering & Technical Support (PMETS) programme, which is ensuring that the UK's cutting-edge fleet of 2,200 armoured vehicles are continuously updated and upgraded.

The £63m PMETS contract was awarded to NP Aerospace in 2019, supporting 100 jobs in Coventry and 250 jobs across the UK supply chain until 2024.

The hybrid electric drives project is known as Technology Demonstrator 6 (TD6), which sees the Army prototype hybrid drives and assess the benefits. The initial stages of TD6 is expected to be showcased at the Defence Vehicle Dynamics 20 (DVD20) in November.