

# [Press release: Defence sector supply chain to bring new opportunities for Welsh businesses](#)

An industry event will be held in south Wales next month with the aim of connecting companies and organisations across the nation with the UK's lucrative defence supply chain.

The Ministry of Defence announced earlier this year that the UK will re-join the Boxer programme and explore options to equip the Army with the 8x8 troop carriers to modernise its vehicle fleet and meet the Army's Mechanised Infantry Vehicle requirement.

The assessment phase for the Mechanised Infantry Vehicle programme, which is due to conclude in 2019, will consider the comparable benefits of manufacturing locations and different supply chains for Boxer, as well as value-for-money. Any deal will be subject to commercial negotiation and assessment. The aim is to have the first vehicles in service with the Army in 2023.

In an effort to ensure that Welsh companies can compete for the manufacture and supply of many of the vehicle sub-systems, Welsh Secretary Alun Cairns is leading the clarion call for organisations to sign up to Artec's industry event at the University of Wales' Treforest Campus on 10 September.

## **Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns said:**

We cannot underestimate the valuable impact the defence sector has on our security and on the Welsh economy, supporting thousands of jobs and millions of pounds of investment across the country.

The Artec industry day provides a significant opportunity for Welsh businesses to capitalise on the supply chain opportunities presented by the Boxer programme and the wider defence sector.

The experience they will gain from it will provide them with the additional credentials needed to help springboard them into other markets and I encourage them to take full advantage.

The UK played a major role in the original design, development and testing of the Boxer, and would reassume the rights it had as a project partner if a deal was to go through – allowing the option for the vehicle to be built and exported from the UK. The deal could see the Boxer fully assembled in the UK with at least 60% of the manufacturing with British industry, sustaining and developing UK industrial capabilities, facilities and skills.

## **Defence Minister for Defence Procurement Stuart Andrew said:**

Wales plays a massive part in ensuring our armed forces have the finest military equipment to defend us, and is already assembling the Army's new Ajax vehicles in what is the biggest order of its kind in three decades.

We spent £945m with Welsh businesses last year, supporting over 6,000 jobs, as the industry continues to thrive. A possible deal for new Boxer armoured vehicles could mean at least 1,000 more British jobs, and I hope local companies seize this opportunity to understand how there could be even more defence work up for grabs for Wales in the future.

Artec, the consortium who manufacture the Boxer vehicle, already have an established UK footprint. Their planned investment in the UK is estimated to secure or create at least 1,000 jobs across the UK, including Wales. As part of the programme, the UK is also expected to see substantial inward investment from Rheinmetall, one of Artec's parent companies, who signalled their intention to launch a production and integration centre for armoured vehicles in the UK. This would represent a significant commitment which would lead to long-lasting armoured vehicle capability in the UK.

Supplier engagement events are an excellent opportunity to share knowledge, compare capabilities and link-up organisations across the supply chain.

Artec, Rheinmetall and KMW are very much looking forward to the event on the 10th September to continue our engagement with the UK industrial base, and develop our supply network to satisfy the MOD's Mechanised Infantry Vehicle (MIV) requirements.

We recognise the level and diversity of capability, skills and know-how within the UK supply chain, and look forward to meeting many more organisations that we can work with to deliver the best solutions to the British Armed Forces.

Wales plays an important role in UK defence providing over 3,000 regulars and reserves to the Armed Forces and supporting over 6,000 industry jobs. The country benefits from Ministry of Defence (MOD) expenditure of £300 per person each year and a huge investment in local industry and commerce worth £945 million.

To sign up to the event, click [here](#)

**ENDS**

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## [Press release: CMA orders sale of scrap metal recycling yards](#)

Having considered responses to the provisional findings of its [Phase 2 merger inquiry](#) published in June, and further analysis of the evidence, an independent inquiry group from the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) is concerned the merger between European Metal Recycling (EMR) and Metal Waste Recycling (MWR) could lead to a worse deal for customers and suppliers.

The inquiry group's final report of the in-depth (phase 2) investigation, published today (14 August), said the merger would harm the choices available to suppliers (such as car breakers) that supply shredder feed (scrap metal that needs to be shredded) in the South East of England, and others such as car manufacturers that sell large volumes of scrap metal through tendered contracts in the West Midlands and the North East of England.

It also found that the merger is likely to lead to a worse deal for customers in the UK that buy a certain type of scrap metal known as new production steel.

The CMA is requiring that EMR sell 5 of the sites it bought from MWR: three in the West Midlands, one in the North East and one in the South East.

In other areas of the business, including the buying (not via a tendered contract) and selling of general scrap metal, the CMA did not find the merger would substantially weaken competition.

EMR is the largest recycler of scrap metal in the UK, while MWR is the fourth largest.

Inquiry chair Lesley Ainsworth, said:

Having an efficient and competitive metal recycling industry is good for the environment and is important for both suppliers and waste metal customers, including those in the automotive and steel manufacturing industries.

Over the course of our inquiry we surveyed, spoke to or received comments from over 850 suppliers and customers. The evidence shows that EMR's purchase of MWR is likely to harm competition in a number of areas and there is a material risk that prices for some suppliers and customers could worsen.

To ensure competition is maintained, we are requiring EMR to sell off some of the sites that it bought from MWR.

Further details are available on the investigation [case page](#).

### Notes to editors:

1. The CMA is the UK's primary competition and consumer authority. It is an independent non-ministerial government department with responsibility for carrying out investigations into mergers, markets and the regulated industries and enforcing competition and consumer law.
2. For CMA updates, follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#).
3. The companies buy scrap metal from factories, car breakers, local authorities and other sources – providing a waste removal and recycling service to thousands of organisations in the UK – then process it before export or sale to UK metal mills and foundries. The CMA is requiring that EMR sell three sites in the West Midlands, one site in the North East, and one site in the South East.
4. Shredder feed is specific grades of scrap metal that require processing using a shredder (a large piece of recycling equipment), for example end of life vehicles.
5. The EMR/MWR inquiry group consists of [Lesley Ainsworth](#) (Group Chair), [Richard Feasey](#), [Andrew Popham](#) and [Stuart McIntosh](#).
6. The CMA referred the merger for an in-depth phase 2 investigation in February 2018, after an initial inquiry found that the merger may raise concerns.
7. All the CMA's functions in phase 2 merger inquiries are performed by independent inquiry groups chosen from the CMA's panel members. The appointed inquiry group are the decision-makers on phase 2 inquiries.
8. The CMA's panel members come from a variety of backgrounds, including economics, law, accountancy and business; the membership of an inquiry group usually reflects a mix of expertise and experience (including industry experience).
9. Media enquiries should be directed to the CMA press office on 020 3738 6460 or [press@cma.gov.uk](mailto:press@cma.gov.uk)

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## [Press release: 800 tonne M6 bridge to bite the dust in major 24-hour operation](#)

The bridge, north of Stafford, which is almost 250ft in length, will be dismantled and the entire 150-tonne centre section lifted clear and taken away in one piece on a 90ft long specialist transporter to a nearby compound.

Other sections of the Creswell Home Farm bridge will be taken away later. In total, the bridge contains enough concrete to fill 40 tipper trucks. The old bridge will be recycled and used in the construction of the upgraded motorway.

While work takes place the M6, between Stafford (junction 14) and Stoke-on-Trent (junction 15), will be closed in both directions for up to 24 hours over the weekend of 22 and 23 September.

Highways England smart motorways project sponsor, Peter Smith, explained:

This is part of our plan to ultimately improve journeys in this area by adding extra capacity and technology to the motorway.

The bridge is no longer in use and is too narrow for the upgraded motorway which will have an extra lane in each direction. Demolishing it is a big and complex job and to do it safely we need to use both carriageways of the motorway, which means it will be closed for up to 24 hours.

We're doing all we can to minimise disruption though and that is why we are arranging to take the centre section away in one piece, rather than breaking it up which would take more time.

I'd like to thank motorists, businesses and residents in advance for their patience. I'd also urge anyone wanting to use the M6 in that area on 22 and 23 September to plan an alternative route to avoid congestion between Stoke and Stafford. Please also allow extra travel time and fuel for your journey.

The motorway is due to close at 8pm on the evening of Saturday 22 September 2018 and reopen on Sunday 23 September 2018 as soon as work allows.

Traffic will be diverted off the M6 between junctions 14 and 15 and will use the A34 Stone Road as the diversion route. This route has been agreed with local authority partners and will be kept clear of other works during the demolition. Drivers are warned to expect delays and urged to avoid the area if possible, allowing lots of extra time for essential journeys.

To reduce M6 traffic on the day, signs will alert motorists to the closure as far away as Dover and Carlisle. Motorists and hauliers travelling between the North West and the Midlands and South of England will be urged to avoid the area by using the M62 and M1.

Work is under way with emergency services and social care providers to ensure they maintain their services along the route.

Creswell Home Farm bridge, just north of junction 14, was built in 1961. Removing it will provide extra space to increase the capacity of the northbound entry and southbound exit slip roads and make them safer, as well as remove an unnecessary maintenance liability.

The demolition does not involve the use of explosives. Some noise from excavators, reversing beepers and concrete crushing will be heard around the bridge while the work takes place.

This is the first of two bridges to be removed. A further 24-hour closure will take place next year to remove the Burton Bank footbridge.

This bridge is too low for the required safety clearance when the hard shoulder becomes a new running lane. Its replacement will be entirely within Highways England land and the current public right of way across the motorway will be maintained.

Highways England is increasing capacity on a 17-mile stretch of the M6 between junctions 13 and 15 by turning the hard shoulder into an extra traffic lane and installing up-to-date technology that will help keep traffic flowing more smoothly. This creates a smart motorway.

This will lead to more reliable journeys on a currently heavily congested route and boost regional growth.

The upgrade will also give drivers better information to help with their journeys, while maintaining high levels of safety.

Work began earlier this year, with bridge strengthening works to prepare for the main scheme. The central reservation barrier is currently being upgraded to a safer, concrete design near junction 15. The work is being limited to a 6-mile stretch only of narrow lanes through to the autumn.

As the central reservation barrier works move south, work will follow behind using contraflow which will speed up the works on the motorway verges and more than halve the number of motorway closures normally required for these works.

The upgrade work also includes:

- Increasing capacity by one third by converting the hard shoulder to a new running lane.
- Installing 20 emergency areas to provide an area of relative safety following a breakdown.
- Hardening the central reserve and installing a reinforced barrier to improve safety.
- Installing approximately 2km of new noise barriers.
- New lighting introduced at junction 15.

The project is due to be completed by March 2022.

More information is available on the [scheme page](#).

## **General enquiries**

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

## Media enquiries

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# **[Press release: Family resettlement and peacebuilding in Sri Lanka boosted by £1 million](#)**

Nearly 600 families resettled on newly released land in the North and East of Sri Lanka will benefit from £1 million from the UK Government to support the provision of basic infrastructure and services.

Helping families return to their villages is a crucial element of Sri Lanka addressing the legacy of civil war and is a key part of the joint strategy agreed by the UN and the government of Sri Lanka to support long-term post-conflict peacebuilding in Sri Lanka.

The funding will help those returning to their homes in the Jaffna, Killinochchi, Mullaitivu and Batticaloa districts by contributing towards roads, wells and sanitary services, and help re-establish access to local government services as well as local civil society organisations.

It will also help families rebuild their lives by supporting livelihood development through training on small business management, and provision of

essential fishing and agricultural equipment.

Minister of State for Asia & the Pacific Mark Field said:

Helping some of the families resettle in districts from which they had been displaced is a very important step. It is symbolic of the steady progress made after decades of conflict. There remains a lot to do, but I am proud of the UK's support to the rebuilding process.

We will continue to encourage the Sri Lankan Government to make progress delivering their Human Rights Council commitments, and I hope that the UK's Sri Lankan diaspora will also play their part in encouraging that progress.

The UK currently supports stability in Sri Lanka through projects designed to build reconciliation and the rule of law; including, police and defence reform, demining, inter-faith mediation and anti-bribery and corruption, among other issues.

The funding is being provided through the UK's Conflict Security and Stability Fund (CSSF), increasing the UK's contribution through the CSSF for Sri Lanka to £7.9 million between 2016 and 2019.

The funding is part of the UK's contribution to Sri Lanka's Peacebuilding Priority Plan; a joint strategy agreed by the UN and the Government of Sri Lanka to support long term post-conflict peacebuilding in Sri Lanka.

- Follow Foreign Office Minister Mark Field [@MarkFieldUK](#)
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## Media enquiries

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