

# Confidence in a crisis – Conducttr Crisis Training Software

Modern technology, the internet, and social media have been a catalyst for major change in defence and security. As well as fighting on the ground, armies and governments must also win the battle for hearts and minds. This becomes increasingly difficult when adversaries employ more complex tactics to spread misinformation. News, especially fake news, travels fast, so it is imperative that war fighters are prepared for battle in the digital world.

Conducttr began in the entertainment industry, creating augmented and immersive reality for TV and film fans. Following two rounds of DASA funding, the business now focuses solely on providing immersive “life-like” training for influence and information warfare. Their technology provides a comprehensive real-time simulated information environment for social media and news and models target audience reactions.

The additional funding has already led to considerable impact for the business. Since their first round of DASA funding, Conducttr has doubled their staff headcount and expanded their portfolio, gaining the attention of big-name clients, including Vodafone, UEFA and the United Nations.

**Robert Pratten, CEO of Conducttr said:**

Many of our customers are not aware of the possibilities of the technology before we meet them. DASA gave us the opportunity to work alongside potential end-users so we were able to gain a first-hand understanding of their requirements. This gave us invaluable insights to create something truly leading edge and world-beating.

Working with DASA enabled Conducttr to test its technology in a defence setting by running training activities with Ministry of Defence personnel.

These opportunities have enabled Conducttr to further develop their product for defence and security use whilst also highlighting its potential to strengthen government response to crises such as cyber attacks, pandemics, flooding, earthquakes, terrorist threats, and other major incidents.

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## Appointment of Lord and Lady Justices

## of Appeal: 31 August 2021

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## Appointment of Lord and Lady Justices of Appeal: 31 August 2021

Press release

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The Queen has been pleased to approve the appointment of Mrs Justice Whipple as a Lady Justice of Appeal and Mr Justice William Davis and Mr Justice Snowden as Lord Justices of Appeal.

These appointments will fill vacancies which have arisen in the Court of Appeal.

### **Further information**

The appointment of Lord and Lady Justices of the Court of Appeal are made by Her Majesty The Queen on the advice of the Prime Minister and the Lord Chancellor following the recommendation of an independent selection panel.

The selection panel was chaired by the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Burnett of Maldon. The other panel members were Sir Geoffrey Vos, the Master of the Rolls; Lord Kakkar, the Chairman of the Judicial Appointments Commission; and two lay Judicial Appointments Commissioners, Ms Sue Hoyle OBE and Ms Jane Furniss CBE.

In accordance with section 79 of the Constitutional Reform Act 2005 as amended by the Crime and Courts Act 2013, the panel determined the selection

process to be followed. In accordance with s10(3) of the Senior Courts Act 1981, the selection exercise was open to applicants that satisfied the judicial eligibility condition on a 7-year basis or were Judges of the High Court.

## **Biographical notes**

Mr Justice William Davis: Called to the Bar (Inner Temple) in 1975 and took Silk in 1998. He was made a Bencher in 2007. He was appointed a Recorder in 1995, a Circuit Judge in 2008, a Senior Circuit Judge (Resident Judge) in 2009 and a High Court Judge in the Queen's Bench Division in 2014. He was a Presiding Judge on the Northern Circuit between 2016-2019. He has been Judicial Lead for Youth Justice for England and Wales since 2014.

Mr Justice Snowden: Called to the Bar (Lincoln's Inn) in 1986 and took Silk in 2003. He was appointed a Recorder of the Crown Court in 2006, a Deputy High Court Judge in 2008 and a High Court Judge of the Chancery Division in 2015. He has been Vice-Chancellor of the County Palatine of Lancaster and Supervising Judge of the Business and Property Courts for the Northern and North-Eastern Circuits since 2019. He was elected a Bencher of Lincoln's Inn in 2010.

Mrs Justice Whipple: Admitted to the Roll as a solicitor in 1991. She transferred to the Bar and was called in 1994. She took Silk in 2010. She was made a Bencher of Middle Temple in 2012. She was appointed a Recorder in 2005, a deputy High Court Judge in 2013 and appointed a High Court Judge in the Queen's Bench Division in 2015. She was a Judicial Commissioner of the Judicial Appointments Commission from 2016-2019. She has been a Presiding Judge for the South Eastern Circuit since 2018 and is currently the lead Presider on that Circuit.

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## **Government to consult on better protections for UK audiences on video-on-demand services**

- Netflix, Amazon Prime Video and Apple TV+ could be subject to stricter rules protecting UK audiences from harmful material
- It would mean audiences – particularly children – receive a consistent level of protection on video-on-demand services as they do on traditional broadcasters
- Ministers seek views to level the regulatory playing field in consultation launched today

The government is considering how to better level the regulatory playing field between mainstream VoD services and traditional broadcasters and is seeking views on the matter in a consultation launched today. This could mean aligning the content standards rules for on-demand TV services with those for traditional linear TV like BBC 1 and Sky.

Now that the UK has left the EU there is an opportunity to create regulation suited to UK viewers that goes beyond the minimum standards as set out in EU regulation under the revised Audiovisual Media Services Directive.

Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden said:

We want to give UK audiences peace of mind that however they watch TV in the digital age, the shows they enjoy are held to the same high standards that British broadcasting is world-renowned for.

It is right that now we have left the EU, we look at introducing proportionate new rules so that UK audiences are protected from harm.

Ofcom data shows a huge growth in popularity and use of on-demand services in the UK. The number of households that subscribe to one rose by almost 350% between 2014 and 2020. In 2021, 75% per cent of UK households say that they have used a subscription VoD service.

Viewers have access to thousands of hours of VoD shows and content at the touch of a button. However, services like Netflix, Amazon Prime Video and Disney+ are not regulated in the UK to the same extent as UK linear TV channels.

For example, except for BBC iPlayer, they are not subject to Ofcom's Broadcasting Code which sets out appropriate standards for content including harmful or offensive material, accuracy, fairness and privacy.

This means there is a gap between existing protections for audiences watching traditional TV and those watching newer VoD services. There are some protections for under-18s but minimal rules exist to regulate content. There are very few rules to protect audiences, for example, from misleading health advice or pseudoscience documentaries.

Some service providers have taken welcome steps to introduce their own standards and procedures for audience protection – such as pin-codes and content warnings – but the extent of these measures varies across services. Age ratings are also inconsistent and sometimes non-existent.

The consultation asks for views on whether UK audiences viewing TV-like VoD programmes should receive the same or similar level of protections as when they are watching traditional television. It asks which measures can and should be made consistent across VoD services.

It will also consider whether mainstream VoD services not currently regulated

in the UK by Ofcom – like Netflix and Apple TV+ – should be brought within UK jurisdiction to provide accountability to UK audiences who use them.

Not all VoD providers deliver a TV-like experience, so any regulatory change will need to be proportionate, particularly for smaller or niche services, to ensure essential protections like freedom of speech are not affected.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

- The [consultation](#) is open for 8 weeks and closes on 26 October at 23:45 BST.
- This review into VoD regulation will form part of a number of measures as part of a wide-ranging broadcasting White Paper into the future of broadcasting which will be published this autumn.
- The consultation examines the current level of audience protection from harmful content provided through regulation and voluntarily by individual VoD services, and what steps are required to ensure appropriate protection levels for UK audiences going forward.
- Now the UK has left the European Union, this is an opportunity to improve upon EU aligned provisions under the Audiovisual Media Services Directive with regulations that are designed in the best interests of UK audiences.
- This consultation does not seek responses on wider broadcasting regulation, nor changes to how television or public service broadcasters such as the BBC or Channel 4 are funded or regulated. This consultation will also not cover changes to advertising rules/restrictions and does not cover topics such as introducing levies/quotas on VoD services. Responses on these issues will not be considered as part of this consultation.

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## **[Guidance: UK SMI Q 7: good practice when ordering and undertaking diagnostic tests for infectious disease serology](#)**

UK Standards for Microbiology Investigations Q 7: good practice when ordering and undertaking diagnostic tests for infectious disease serology.