

Dstl Acquires First Satellite Ground Control Station

Based at Portsdown West, Hampshire, the ground station will use its 6.3m diameter antenna to direct satellites in both low-Earth and geosynchronous orbits, and will form a core part of the Dstl Space Science & Technology (S&T) programme.

Scientists from Dstl's Space Group will develop and test software for satellite operations, and train civilian and military personnel in satellite mission operations. Towards the end of 2019, the ground station will task its first satellites, before progressing to control multiple satellite missions and other ground assets by 2021.

This ground station represents the first of a number of significant steps in conducting in-orbit research and concept demonstrator missions for the benefit of the MOD to better understand the space domain to enable freedom of action for future UK operations. This includes the protection of UK operations against emerging space-based threats.

Dstl Chief Executive, Gary Aitkenhead, said:

Dstl is building world-class expertise in developing systems for the space environment. Creating a ground infrastructure for future Space S&T missions is a key milestone in the continued rapid growth in our Space programme, supporting both Dstl, our colleagues across the MOD, and our other national and international partners.