

[Dstl announces 2022 satellite launch](#)

The satellites demonstrate further progress towards the government's ambition that by 2030 the UK will have the ability to monitor, protect and defend our interests in and through space.

The two Prometheus 2 CubeSats will operate in low Earth Orbit, 550km above the Earth.

Built by In-Space Missions Ltd in Alton and designed with Airbus Defence and Space, the 2 tiny satellites (just 30cm x 20cm x 10cm), comparable to the size of a shoebox, will provide a test platform for monitoring radio signals including GPS, and sophisticated imaging, paving the way for a more collaborative and connected space communication system with our combat allies.

The mission is a collaborative project with Dstl's international partners and Airbus Defence and Space UK who will share the satellite's operations, with additional ground stations being provided by Dstl's international partners and Airbus.

These satellites will support MOD's science and technology activities both in orbit and on the ground through the development of ground systems focused at Dstl's site near Portsmouth.

The satellites will host a wide array of payloads including a hyperspectral imager, Global Positioning System receivers, a wide-field-of-view imager and multiple software-defined radios.

Lessons learnt from this demonstration will be used to de-risk key technologies, generate the next wave of collaborative science and technology experiments, enhance international collaboration and Dstl's own satellite operations capability as it looks to lead a growing number of space and ground demonstrator missions.

Mike O'Callaghan, Dstl's Space Programme Manager, said:

Over the next decade the UK will spend an additional £1.4 billion on space to enhance our space domain awareness, develop a UK-built intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance satellite constellation and a supporting digital backbone in space, underpinned by Dstl science and technology research.

Prometheus 2 will be the first directly-owned Dstl satellites and shows the power of collaboration with both commercial and our international partners. The Prometheus 2 satellites will also provide an exciting new opportunity to further develop our new ground station in Portsmouth.

Richard Franklin, Managing Director of Airbus Defence and Space UK, said:

Investing in, developing and proving new technologies and services, with our customers, is a key part of our strategy.

On this occasion the opportunity to engage and promote SME capabilities is even more rewarding and demonstrates that we partner to solve real problems.

The Prometheus 2 CubeSats will help us further improve what we can offer our customers and is tangible proof that our active engagement with SMEs is delivering results for the future UK space sector as a whole.

Tony Holt, Chief Technology Officer, In-Space Missions, said:

We are thrilled to be building and operating the spacecraft for this ground-breaking Dstl mission and honoured to be collaborating with such high calibre UK and international partners.

This is an exciting time for the space industry in the UK and we are delighted to be part of the team delivering Prometheus 2.

Find out more about [Dstl's space science and technology capability](#) and [how to work with us](#).