

Linda Knutsen appointed head of Dstl's Exploration Division

News story

Linda has been appointed head of the newly formed division to focus on transformative technology, systems, concepts and strategy.



Linda has worked for the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) and its predecessors since 1994 and brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to the role. After completing an MSc in Analytical Chemistry, Linda's career began at the RN Scientific Service as a Forensic Chemist in the Naval Aircraft Materials Laboratory. She moved to Defence Research Agency (DRA) Haslar, which later became DERA, a predecessor to Dstl. She advanced through various roles, most recently as Capability Leader in Dstl's Platform Systems Division. Linda was also responsible for leading a team to establish strategic relationships with senior leaders in the Royal Navy, and provide thought leadership in science and technology.

Linda says:

I am really excited to be the first Division Head of Dstl's Exploration Division. A lot of hard work has gone into launching the division and there has never been a better opportunity for us to capitalise on the Government's commitment to S&T. We are in a fantastic position to demonstrate the difference we can make to UK Defence and Security and I am looking forward to leading my new team in this challenge.

Dstl's Exploration Division will pinpoint futuristic high impact ideas with the greatest potential. Such ideas could be 'over the horizon' technologies, next generation concepts or existing systems that could be adapted for Defence and Security. The initiative will increase Dstl's ability to shape generation-after-next equipment and strategy for the armed forces while continuing to support current operational requirements.

Exploration Division will use AI and data analytics to scan the horizon for transformative technologies such as quantum sensing or quantum cryptography, neuromorphic computing, and telexistence. It will incubate the most promising of these and will imagine entirely new systems to provide the UK's armed forces and security forces with game changing capabilities to create strategic advantage over future adversaries.

Linda and her team will work collaboratively with customers and industry partners to test the value and fitness for purpose of transformative technologies, concepts, systems or services using the best new and existing methods. New and novel working practices will ensure freedom of movement for people into and out of Dstl to work with partners and suppliers.

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