News story: Knife Crime Market Exploration

To aid in the design of the challenge we are engaging the market in order to provide the HO with an understanding of what capabilities currently exist or are in development that could provide solutions.

Background

The HO is concerned about recent increases in homicides, gun crime and knife crime. Although crime has fallen rapidly over the last 20 years, some types of violent crime recorded by the police have shown increases since late 2014. In 2017, knife crime rose by 22% across England and Wales which has resulted in a significant increase in fatal stabbings and incidents where serious injury has been caused. The use of knives to enable acquisitive crime has also seen a marked increase. Whilst the increase in knife crime is a complex problem with many influencing factors, the ability for police to detect knives being carried by people is fundamental to reducing the harm caused. This is particularly challenging when knives are concealed and carried in crowded spaces. Consequently, the use of current detection systems is limited. The UK Police have implemented strategies to tackle the issue and the application of science and technology must play an important role in tackling this threat and in April 2018, the Government launched the Serious Violence Strategy, which aims to tackle knife crime and other forms of serious violence.

What we want

The HO is interested in solutions that can identify or detect people carrying, overtly or covertly, a wide variety of steel-bladed knives in open spaces, crowds and uncontrolled areas (i.e. where there is no presence of security). There is a requirement to detect steel-bladed knives in the presence of other commonly carried benign metal items (e.g. keys, phones, coins etc.). As well as being concealed on the person, this also includes knives carried in bags (e.g. handbags, backpacks etc.).

We are interested in all forms of potential solutions from specific technologies, through to advances in behavioural sciences. Potential solutions could be at any level of maturity, but we are particularly interested in those at the higher end of the scale.

Solutions that can contribute to the detection of steel-bladed weapons being carried by individuals or groups will support the UK Police in their decision making process regarding an appropriate operational response and ultimately reduce the number of casualties across the UK.

By completing the Capability Submission Form neither the Government nor yourselves are committing to anything, but your submissions will be used to

help focus the direction of the work.

What we don’t want

We are not interested in literature reviews, paper-based studies and marginal improvements to existing capabilities (i.e. those used in controlled areas such as metal detectors in arches and hand-held devices). For this challenge we are only interested in steel-bladed weapons, not other forms of blade such as polymeric or ceramic.

How to submit a Capability Submission Form

Complete the attached one page form Knife Crime Capability Submission Form (ODT, 868KB) (noting the word limits) and then email it to accelerator@dstl.gov.uk by 5pm on 20 July 2018. Please only provide details of one product/capability per form. If you have a number of potential solutions then please submit multiple forms.

If you have any questions then please email accelerator@dstl.gov.uk with Knife Crime in the subject line.

How we use your Information

Information you provide to us in a Capability Submission Form Knife Crime Capability Submission Form (ODT, 868KB) that is not already available to us from other sources, will be handled in-confidence. By submitting a Capability Submission Form Knife Crime Capability Submission Form (ODT, 868KB) you are giving us permission to keep and use the information for our internal purposes, and to provide the information onwards, in-confidence, within UK Government. The Defence and Security Accelerator will not use or disclose the information for any other purpose, without first requesting permission to do so.