

[News story: Laser Directed Energy Weapon \(LDEW\) testing](#)

Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) scientists are conducting trials that will enable Dstl to characterise the effectiveness of Laser Directed Energy Weapon (LDEW), in support of the LDEW Capability Demonstrator. The programme will culminate in a technology demonstrator in 2019.

The goal of the programme is to demonstrate a standalone laser directed energy weapon system that is capable of acquiring, tracking and engaging aerial and surface targets at various ranges and in different weather conditions.

The project will enable the Ministry of Defence's (MOD) Dstl to advise the MOD on the future procurement programme requirements and to establish a road map to an in-service capability. If it is successful, the first laser weapons could come into service in the mid-2020s.

Watch the video of a test laser melting a mortar bomb.

[Watch the video of a test laser melting a mortar bomb](#)

Minister for Defence Procurement, Harriet Baldwin has said:

“The UK has long enjoyed a reputation as a world leader in innovation and it is truly ground-breaking projects like the Laser Directed Energy Weapon which will keep this country ahead of the curve.

“The Defence Innovation Initiative and £800M Defence Innovation Fund aim to encourage imagination, ingenuity and entrepreneurship, in pursuit of maintaining a military advantage in the future.

“With a rising Defence budget, and a £178 billion equipment plan, our commitment to innovation will deliver a safer and more prosperous Britain.”