

News story: 'Spirit of Yorkshire runs right through our nation's defence': Defence Minister hails Yorkshire firms on Huddersfield visit

Today the Minister paid a visit to a range of companies in the city, working on everything from future anti-submarine warships like HMS Sheffield to fire fighting vehicles based in Afghanistan.

Defence Minister Stuart Andrew said:

The spirit of Yorkshire runs right through our nation's defence with its prestigious military history and engineering prowess. From the design and integration of warship gearboxes to the provision of NATO fire vehicles, Huddersfield is a proud supplier to our Armed Forces.

We spent £232m with companies in Yorkshire and the Humber last year, supporting 1,800 jobs, and the firms I have visited today epitomise the incredible experience, expertise and ingenuity that this region has to offer.

The Minister paid a visit to David Brown and Santasalo in Huddersfield, one of the world's largest mechanical power transmission brands. The company specialises in the engineering, manufacture and support of industrial gearboxes for a variety of industries including defence. It has undertaken work in supporting the design and integration of gearboxes for the UK's world-class Type 26 anti-submarine warships, one of which was named as HMS Sheffield by the minister on Thursday. The company is a long-term supplier to the Royal Navy, supplying gearboxes for Type 23 Frigates, Type 45 Destroyers and nuclear submarines, and also works on Army vehicle projects.

The Minister also visited Rosenbauer UK, a Fire & Rescue Service supplier of front line fire vehicles, fire-fighting equipment and clothing, and auxiliary systems and components. The company's founder and Managing Director, Oliver North, is a former Royal Engineer. As well as a contract with the MOD, the company provides NATO with two Panther Fire Vehicles for use in Kabul Airport in Afghanistan.

The Minister also visited the purpose-built 3M Buckley Innovation Centre (3M BIC) at the University of Huddersfield which is home to dozens of pioneering companies. It facilitates business growth, encourages business to academia collaboration and actively promotes innovation. Facilities include hot desks and individual office spaces to rent in a variety of sizes, flexible

workshops and state-of-the-art laboratories, as well as meeting and conference spaces equipped with the latest audio-visual technology.

The visit came the morning after the Minister attended the Employer Recognition Scheme Awards in Guildhall in Hull. The awards recognise employers who support the Armed Forces Covenant, a pledge to treat those who serve or who have served in the armed forces and their families with fairness and respect. Companies can make commitments like employing veterans or encouraging employees to join the Reserves. Winners included Bradford Metropolitan District Council, York St John University and the Hull & East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust.