

Press release: Defence Minister and industry leaders commit to closer collaboration

The companies and the Minister signed a joint document, named 'Vision 2025', which includes new pledges from both parties to improve the productivity of the UK defence sector and ensure the armed forces obtain the capabilities they need in the future.

After welcoming remarks from the Defence Minister and Charles Woodburn, Chief Executive of BAE Systems, attendees took part in sessions focused on boosting defence exports, encouraging innovation within the defence industry and accelerating the inclusion of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) in the market.

The Defence Minister also unveiled the MOD's [SME Action Plan](#) at the event, setting out the department's commitment to supporting smaller businesses across the defence supply chain. Developed with input from businesses, industry bodies and Trade Associations, the SME Action Plan includes a range of measures to increase the MOD's procurement spend with SMEs by removing barriers to entry to the defence market. The Plan sets an ambitious target to spend 25% of the MOD's total procurement budget with SMEs by 2022.

Speaking at the Defence Suppliers Forum, Defence Minister Stuart Andrew said:

Vision 2025 represents a significant evolution in government-industry collaboration. By committing to work together more closely, we will ensure our armed forces continue to benefit from world-leading capabilities while driving up value-for-money for UK taxpayers.

Small and medium-sized businesses will play a crucial role in delivering our future military capability, so I am delighted to endorse the publication of our SME Action Plan today. Engaging with smaller and innovative suppliers will help create a more resilient supply chain while boosting local economies and creating jobs.

Charles Woodburn, Chief Executive, BAE Systems, said:

The UK Defence Sector has a long history of successful collaborative working with customers and partners.

Vision 2025 will help ensure that we remain best placed to design, deliver and maintain the world class defence capabilities that the Armed Forces need and deserve.

The defence industry in the UK supports 260,000 jobs and contributed £9bn in exports in 2017. The MOD invested £18.9bn with UK industry in 2017/18, equating to £290 per resident.