Test site to help develop autonomous ship work

Work to develop and test marine autonomous surface ships has been given a boost after a site which will allow sharing of valuable data was chosen in Portland, Dorset (UK).

The Maritime & Coastguard Agency's (MCA) MARLab which includes Solis Marine Consultants and Maritrace, have chosen Portland harbour as a test site for a new online platform which will allow data sharing.

It means that data can be shared between the MCA and various other organisations, all of which will help in the development and testing of MASS in UK waters. Data collected around marine traffic moments, weather and even sea bed information can then be shared with industry for programming of their autonomous vessels.

Ros Blazejczyk, project manager for Solis Marine said: 'Portland presents an ideal choice for this test as a well-defined harbour which is big enough for a MASS test area but not so large that data sets for this viability study become unwieldy.'

Tom Owen, MD at Maritrace added that like many ports, Portland has many separate data-sources it uses to manage its port on a day-to-day basis.

There is an interesting challenge involved in harmonising those sources into a single distribution platform, however the quality of those sources and the enthusiasm and cooperation we have received from the Portland harbour authority have been incredibly helpful as part of this exciting project,' he said.

The MARLab project team will now move forward with software development whilst continuing to engage with the UK MASS industry to determine how data sets held by the MCA and other government organisations can be best utilised with a view to encouraging the testing of autonomous and smart vessels in the UK.'

Dr Katrina Kemp from the MCA said: 'This project forms a vital part of a wider initiative by the MCA to make sure the UK is a world leader in autonomous and smart shipping, with UK waters being open for testing of this exciting new technology.'

[Over half of charities hit by fraud knew the perpetrator, according to new research](#)

Over half (53%) of charities affected by fraud over the past two years knew the perpetrator, according to new research into the fraud and cybercrime risks facing charities.

The research suggests over a third of those committing fraud were the charity's own staff members; trustees and volunteers together were responsible for 28%; beneficiaries were identified in 13% of known frauds.

The Commission says charities can be at particular risk of insider fraud, because they often rely excessively on goodwill and trust in single individuals.

The findings are based on the largest-ever survey of charities' attitude towards fraud and cybercrime, commissioned by the charity regulator, the Charity Commission and in partnership with the Fraud Advisory Panel, and are launched on Monday 21st October and Wednesday 23 October 2019.

While there is no evidence that charities are at greater risk of fraud or financial crime than other types of organisation, the risk of fraud in charities appears to be growing, costing the sector millions — and potentially billions — of pounds each year. The potential impact of this on the reputation of charity and charities' ability to deliver maximum benefit in pursuit of their causes cannot be ignored.

Gap between awareness and action on fraud

The new research indicates that charities are increasingly aware of the wider risk of fraud. Over two thirds of charities (69%) think fraud is major risk to the charity sector and insider fraud is recognised as among the greatest threats to charities.

But the findings show that charities are not always recognising how vulnerable their own organisations are, and are not consistently putting basic checks and balances in place:

- over a third (34%) think their organisation is not vulnerable to any of the most common types of charity fraud;
- 85% of charities think they're doing everything they can to prevent fraud, but
- almost half don't have any good-practice protections in place.

The Commission is concerned about this gap between awareness and practical action because it poses a threat to a charity's ability to deliver for beneficiaries if donors cannot be confident in charities' stewardship of the

money it receives. The Commission is calling on charities to take simple steps, including to:

- introduce and enforce basic financial controls [e.g. having at least two signatories to bank accounts and cheques, undertaking regular bank reconciliations]
- ensure no one single individual has oversight or control of financial arrangements; effective segregation of duties is a crucial method of preventing, and detecting fraud.
- encourage staff, volunteers and trustees to speak out when they see something they feel uncomfortable about.

Helen Stephenson CBE, chief executive of the Charity Commission, says it is vital that the regulator helps charities tackle fraud effectively:

> We want to help charities maximise the positive impact they have in the lives of those they exist to serve, and in society as a whole. Preventing and tackling fraud against charities is a vital part of that.
>
> While the majority of those involved in charity are honest, passionate, and committed, charities can unfortunately be vulnerable to exploitation and abuse by those intent on personal gain. And when a charity does fall victim to fraud, more is lost than money. Fraud can have a hugely detrimental impact on morale in a charity, and on public trust.
>
> The good news is that it's possible to disrupt and prevent fraud, if charities put basic measures in place. That starts with charities acknowledging that they're vulnerable to abuse and being determined to prevent people taking advantage of their good name and the generosity of those who support their cause. We therefore applaud charities that are open about the steps they're taking to identify and tackle fraud and call on all charities to put protective steps in place to keep their charity safe from harm. Zero tolerance of fraud is an important element of sound financial stewardship which is vital to public trust and confidence in charities.
>
> The steps we are recommending are simple because we know that smaller charities in particular don't need or want lots of bureaucracy — just the tools they need to deliver as much benefit as possible.

Growing risk of cybercrime against charities

The new research indicates that charities are increasingly aware of the risks of cybercrime, which is a term that describes crimes that exploit or attack a charity's digital presence, data or systems, such as phishing and malicious emails, hacking and extortion.

The survey shows that more than half (58%) of charities think cybercrime is a major risk to the charity sector and almost a quarter (22%) believe cybercrime is a greater risk to the charity sector than other sectors. Larger charities are generally more likely to appreciate the risk of cybercrime and take action to prevent it.

Helen Stephenson said:

> Charities, like other organisations, rely increasingly on digital technology to deliver on their purposes. It is therefore vital that charities take reasonable steps to strengthen their systems against those intent on causing harm. Protecting a charity in this area is not just about systems or financial assets, but also about people: charities hold sensitive data on beneficiaries, staff and volunteers, and have a responsibility to keep that data safe.
>
> I hope the findings of our research, and the tools we and others have made available to charities, help trustees and other leaders in charities of all sizes protect their organisations against the key risks.

Case study: leading the fight against fraud — Macmillan Cancer Support

Since establishing its dedicated resource for counteracting and better protecting itself against fraud in 2015, Macmillan Cancer Support has recovered nearly £400,000. In addition to an award-winning specialist counter-fraud team, who investigate and resolve fraud cases, the charity has introduced robust fraud reporting processes and has rolled out counter-fraud training to frontline staff. Guidance on spotting and reporting fraud is available to all staff and is regularly featured in internal news and updates.

Bob Browell, Counter-fraud manager at Macmillan Cancer Support says:

"Macmillan relies almost entirely on public donations to provide vital support for the growing number of people living with cancer in the UK and the money we have been able to recover will make a huge difference. Any pound lost to fraud is a pound too many and our vital counter-fraud processes enable us to identify, prevent and stop fraud quickly and effectively."

New pledge to help charities tackle fraud

Alongside the findings of the surveys, the Commission is launching a new pledge designed to help charities protect themselves. All charities, regardless of size or type, are encouraged to adopt 'Tackling Charity Fraud — Eight Guiding Principles', a collective mission statement which the Commission has developed in partnership with the Fraud Advisory Panel. The pledge is also endorsed by international charity regulators from USA, Australia, New Zealand, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Ends.

Notes to Editors:

1. The two reports, [Preventing Charity Fraud](#) and [Preventing Charity Cybercrime](#) are available to download on GOV.UK.
2. Red flags for insider fraud include people being:

1. All Fraud Awareness Week campaign materials, including free webinars and help sheets, are available on the new [Fraud Awareness Hub](#).
2. The National Cyber Security Centre and the Charity Commission have worked together to develop several resources relevant to charities of all sizes. [Cyber Security: Small Charity Guide](#) – This guide provides simple, free or low-cost steps to improve cyber security. [The Board Toolkit](#) – Relevant for larger charities, this guidance helps boards and senior managers understand cyber security from a governance perspective, making it easier to have productive conversations with technical colleagues.

[Get your ducks in a row, with 100 days to go](#)

With 100 days to go before the 31 January deadline, HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) is reminding customers to complete their tax returns early to beat the Christmas and New Year rush.

Last year more than 2,000 people sent us their tax returns on Christmas Day. Customers should consider submitting their returns early to avoid the stress of a last minute rush. By doing their Self Assessment return now, customers can start planning their festive activities.

Angela MacDonald, HMRC's Director General for Customer Services, said:

> The deadline for completing Self Assessment tax returns is only 100 days away, yet, so many of us wait until January to start the process. Avoid the last minute rush by completing your tax returns on time and then enjoy the upcoming festive period.

> We want to help people get their tax returns right – starting the process early and giving yourself time to gather all the information you need will help avoid that stressful, late rush to file.

Tax is automatically deducted from the majority of UK taxpayers' wages, pensions or savings. For people or businesses where tax is not automatically

deducted, or when they may have earned additional untaxed income, they are required to complete a Self Assessment tax return each year.

HMRC is also reminding people who are liable for the High Income Child Benefit Charge that they may need to file a tax return before the deadline. Those with income over £50,000 who receive child benefit, or those whose partner gets it, are liable for the charge. Customers can check their annual income via their P60 or Personal Tax Account, and use HMRC's child benefit tax calculator.

HMRC provides lots of support for people who need to complete their tax return. Help is also available on GOV.UK or from the Self Assessment helpline on 0300 200 3310.

The deadline for paper tax returns is 31 October 2019 and the deadline for online tax returns and paying any tax owed is 31 January 2020. If customers miss the deadline, they can face a minimum £100 penalty for late submissions.

- You can read our [Self Assessment guidance](#) online to help you file your return
- If you're doing Self Assessment online for the first time, you need to register for Self Assessment Online. It can take a few days for the registration to arrive in the post, so it's important that customers do it as soon as possible. They should contact HMRC for support if they're concerned about missing the deadline.
- Be aware of copycat websites and phishing scams – always type in the full online address www.gov.uk/hmrc to obtain the correct link to file your Self Assessment return online securely and free of charge
- Customers can also [register for HMRC's help and support email service](#)

Platform Evacuation off Shetland

The coastguard rescue helicopter based at Sumburgh in Shetland as well as two other aircraft from Norway transferred the personnel to other operating platforms in the area. Due to poor weather conditions in the area, transfer by helicopter was the safest option.

The platform, located approximately 125 miles north east of Shetland.
(Addition 11.13am 22/10/19 — just over 100 nautical miles north east of
Lerwick).

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[Communities Secretary launches 'most ambitious heritage preservation campaign for 40 years'](#)

- Communities across England encouraged to nominate heritage assets which
  make their community what it is
- New £700,000 fund to get modern monuments men and women making sure more
  buildings are locally protected

Local people will be empowered to nominate heritage buildings which are
important to them and reflect their local area and identity in the most
ambitious local heritage campaign for 40 years, launched today (23 October
2019) by Communities Secretary Robert Jenrick.

The new campaign will challenge every single local authority across England
to draw up lists of buildings of significant historical and cultural value to
an area, ensuring important local monuments are no longer left neglected and
unloved.

Local people will be empowered to nominate heritage assets which are
important to them and reflect their local area and identity, supported by a
team of heritage experts, funded by £700,000 to help 10 English counties
identify areas which need protecting.

To support this, Historic England will launch a national campaign on local
identity getting the country talking about what defines our heritage.

The Communities Secretary is taking the direct step of contacting every
parish council in England to make sure they are conserving the buildings
which have played a remarkable role in their local history and need our
support.

Whilst this is already happening in trailblazing local areas such as Lee-on-
the-Solent, which has overseen the redevelopment of a Second World War Naval
site into modern housing, today's news will mean all councils will have to
follow their example and protect their historic buildings.

In addition, a local heritage champion will be appointed to spearhead the

campaign and encourage councils to increase local listings.

Building on [September's announcement](#) of £95 million to boost the economic potential of 69 High Street Heritage Action Zones, the government will also work with Historic England to identify important buildings in these zones to be nationally listed.

Communities Secretary Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP said:

> Today I've launched the most ambitious heritage preservation campaign for decades.
>
> This will empower local people to protect thousands of historic buildings and preserve them for future generations.
>
> Getting more buildings locally listed isn't just about keeping a building intact — it keeps a community's identity thriving.

Culture Secretary Nicky Morgan said:

> Our built heritage is one of the things that make England one of the top tourist destinations in the world. It helps us attract millions of visitors every year who are keen to see the historic buildings at the heart of our communities, helping to boost our economy and make our towns and cities better places to live, work and visit.
>
> By encouraging more local listings, we will ensure that buildings are protected for future generations so that the benefits heritage brings are felt right across the country.

The measures announced today to help protect local heritage through the planning system follow the publication of the government's new [design guide](#), which will help inspire to reflect what communities already love about their areas — such as listed buildings.

A new national design code, to be published next year, will also require local authorities to ensure any development reflects existing character and heritage.

The 10 counties that will receive an allocation of today's funding will be announced in due course.

The planning system recognises three types of heritage asset — those which are of international importance, those which are of national importance and those which are important locally.

Nationally important heritage assets (eg listed buildings, scheduled monuments etc) are identified and given statutory protection by DCMS (having consulted Historic England) on the basis of nationally-set selection

criteria. Locally important heritage assets are identified by local planning authorities and neighbourhood plan forums based on locally-set criteria.