

News story: Advances in aviation security set to go on trial across the UK

Government funding worth up to £1 million is being announced today (Wed 5 June 2019) to enable pioneering aviation security solutions to be tested and trialled in a variety of environments which could include sports venues, shopping centres, museums and airports.

The Future Aviation Security Solutions (FASS) programme is a joint initiative between the Department for Transport (DfT) and Home Office. It will award the funding to suppliers through the Defence and Security Accelerator (DASA) to cover the costs of testing and trialling their prototypes.

The funding is part of a government commitment to further strengthen aviation security and support the development of solutions that could lead to increased security effectiveness, shorter queues and faster more efficient screening at airports.

It will allow those with innovative ideas capable of enhancing aviation security to bid for the opportunity to potentially trial their concept in a public or live airport environment, or put it through further testing in a laboratory to determine its detection capability.

Innovators can often struggle to access the materials and facilities that can help them gather the real-world data needed to take their pioneering ideas forward. The FASS programme understands that testing and trialling are crucial parts of the development process and this competition will support innovators to gain access to the materials and facilities they need.

FASS is designed to encourage, fund and support the development of innovative technology to deliver a step change in aviation security. Its aim is to deliver solutions to aviation security challenges that can be deployed at checkpoints.

[Find out more about this funding opportunity.](#)

Press release: Bottles of success for water filter business

It's World Environment Day and as countries around the world look for ways to tackle some of our biggest environmental issues, one company is leading the

way in clean drinking water. Water-to-Go, a Bedfordshire-based filtered water bottle manufacturer has secured new distributors in New Zealand and Australia for its water filtration bottles.

Founder Dave Shanks created new nano technology filters, after advancing technology that was originally developed for NASA, which can filter out in excess of 99.9% of microbiological contaminants. The filter sits beneath the drinking spout of the reusable, recyclable BPA free bottles. He then saw the opportunity to export the technology globally, starting with Sweden and France.

The company now exports to 55 countries, including Mexico and India. The business plans to launch in the USA this year and already has had all materials approved by the FDA. In 2018, the company launched in China, where the demand is high and the distributor in Shanghai, HH (Shanghai) Environment Technology Co., Ltd., continues to grow the business across China, Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan.

This came about with help from an International Trade Adviser from the Department for International Trade (DIT) who was able to make in-market introductions to help with a launch event.

The business formed relationships with partners in China, which is making a big push for environmental change, particularly as it hosts the Beijing Expo 2019 where DIT is leading the UK's participation. The UK is showcasing its capabilities in the green technology space, focusing on climate management and building a more sustainable future at the expo.

Exporting is a significant part of the company's success and was considered from the very beginning when Shanks realised there was an opportunity to replace single-use plastic water bottles around the world, and find a way to ensure clean quality water.

Looking to the future, the business is searching out partners in sub-Saharan Africa where the need and demand for technology like this is high.

Dave Shanks, director and founder of Water-to-Go said:

If you can talk to distributors regularly, build the relationships in the same way as you would a UK client, and think of them as an extension of your salesforce, then you will find success.

Our trade adviser has been invaluable and stays in constant contact with us, offering support and expertise when we are looking at new markets. When we first went to China, DIT put us in contact with CBBC for our launch event, and this has helped our business grow in market.

We'll continue to work with regions where the need and demand is highest and will work closely with our International Trade Advisor to reach into those new markets.

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Notes to Editors

DIT helps businesses export, drives inward and outward investment, negotiates market access and trade deals, and champions free trade.

We are an international economic department, responsible for:

- supporting and encouraging UK businesses to drive sustainable international growth
- ensuring the UK remains a leading destination for international investment and maintains its number one position for international investment stock in Europe
- opening markets, building a trade framework with new and existing partners which is free and fair
- using trade and investment to underpin the government's agenda for a Global Britain and its ambitions for prosperity, stability and security worldwide.

Latest statistics from the ONS show UK firms sold more overseas in the 2018/19 financial year, £639.9 billion, than at any time since records began. The UK has now achieved 36 consecutive months of export growth on an annual rolling basis.

Separate OECD data shows UK exports grew faster than Germany, France and Italy between 2016 and 2018. Export Strategy

- The Export Strategy sets out how the government will support businesses of all sizes to make the most of the opportunities presented by markets around the world.
- A government-led collaboration with business, developed after extensive engagement with a range of UK firms – the Strategy sets a new ambition from government to increase exports as a proportion of UK GDP to 35%.
- It presents a streamlined and targeted offer for businesses of all sizes, set to raise productivity, boost wages and protect employment across the UK.
- This is just the start – in the months ahead DIT will lead work across government to assess what more we can do to support UK business to

achieve a step change in their exporting performance.

[News story: UK Government Minister reiterates importance of Oil and Gas sector](#)

Today [Wednesday 5 June] Lord Duncan visited the annual Oil and Gas UK industry conference in Aberdeen, speaking to the delegates about the importance of the sector and its future.

Lord Duncan said:

I was pleased to be in Aberdeen for the Oil and Gas UK annual conference where we marked the success of the industry while looking at the challenges ahead as we move to a low carbon economy. Offshore oil and gas continues to be a success story for us supporting almost 300,000 jobs across the UK and more than a third of those being in Scotland. The UK Government continues to support the sector including contributing £90 million towards the Oil and Gas Technology Centre as part of the Aberdeen City Region Deal. This will help develop new capabilities, skills and jobs for the present and the future.

As times change we must harness new opportunities. The oil and gas industry will continue to have a key role to play in meeting our energy needs, making the sector greener and using its expertise to help develop new forms of energy such as renewables. This transition and diversification includes tapping into the large pools of talent from traditionally underrepresented groups in the industry, such as women. Engaging with the sector on these vital topics is key to ensuring there continues to be a bright future ahead for Scotland's economy and jobs.

The UK Government has supported the sector through the £250 million Aberdeen City Region Deal, calls for evidence on UK decommissioning in the Spring Statement 2019 and the establishment of the Oil and Gas authority as a strong, independent regulator and industry steward to maximise economic recovery from the UK Continental Shelf (UKCS).

Following his speech Lord Duncan toured the stands on display.

[News story: Cycle to Work Scheme](#)

Cycle to Work is a [government initiative](#) that we've supported for many years which offers our employees who want to cycle to work the opportunity to get a new bike and accessories, tax-free.

As well as the scheme, we also offer 'Bikeability' training courses through a local cycle dealer. The training takes the cyclist through a comprehensive programme aimed at equipping them with skills and knowledge for safe cycling.

We also have an active cycling group made up of our employees.

Viv Winter who is part of the group said:

Many employees choose to cycle to work. As well as being one of the healthiest and most environmentally friendly modes of transport, cycling is a great way to reduce congestion.

Employees have found this hugely beneficial and have really enjoyed it.

Over the past 5 years almost 3,000 of our employees have benefitted from the scheme, which is designed to encourage people to get active, try alternative travel and reduce pollution. Not only that but a total value of almost £2.3 million has been spent through local suppliers.

Tracey West, a Sellafield Ltd employee purchased an electric bike last year through the scheme, she said:

The scheme allowed me to buy a powerbike from a local supplier and I now cycle to work every day. It's a great way of getting fitter, reducing vehicles on the road and a lot better for the environment.

[Press release: Hundreds of commercial properties "sitting targets" for waste criminals](#)

The Environment Agency is urging owners of land and property across the South

East to be extra vigilant after investigations reveal that 'baled waste crime' is on the increase.

The waste is often plastic, builders, commercial or household rubbish that cannot be recycled and which has no monetary value. The waste is compressed into a block or 'bale' and concealed by plastic strapping.

There have been incidents of large scale dumping of baled waste on privately-owned sites across Kent, Surrey, Sussex and Hampshire since 2017.

Alan Cansdale, an Environment Manager for the Environment Agency, said:

These criminal offences have not been random or opportunistic dumping of waste, but rather systematic and organised crime where secure sites have been targeted using what appears to be legal and above board measures through the property and land leasing process.

Most of the sites have been cleared at great expense to the landowners, with clean-up costs in excess of £200,000 a site.

The Environment Agency wants owners of property and land to be vigilant and to better protect themselves from these unscrupulous individuals. We're also asking that businesses, organisations and individuals manage their waste responsibly to prevent it from getting into criminal hands in the first place.

The deposit sites include leased and rental properties where the criminals provide false details to secure warehouse space, barns or open land on industrial estates, farms or private property – with articulated trailers on public roads or car parks being targeted as well.

In a bid to stop waste criminals in their tracks, the Environment Agency is appealing to property and land owners, commercial property agents, trade associations and local authorities to be on their guard. With the right advice and checks, landlords can also help safeguard themselves.

Tom Ormesher, Environment and Land Use Adviser for the National Farmers Union (NFU) in the South East, said:

We are keen to raise awareness among our membership about the horrendous impacts of this type of organised waste crime. By following tips from the Environment Agency, farmers can take some steps to protect themselves from these scammers and avoid being landed with a huge waste problem and a bill that could run to thousands of pounds.

Robin Edwards, South East Regional Director for the Country Land & Business

Association (CLA), which represents thousands of farmers, landowners and rural businesses, said:

We wholeheartedly welcome this campaign, as it addresses a growing problem which has a serious impact on landowners and the environment in our region.

We would urge landowners and rural communities to be extra vigilant, be extremely wary around any requests or offers to store waste, and report any incidents or suspicious activity to the Environment Agency.

Commercial property agents, trade associations and local authorities across the region have been given the following advice for landlords and landowners.

- Carry out rigorous checks on prospective new tenants. Land and property owners have a responsibility to ensure anyone leasing their land/premises complies with regulations, so it is essential that you establish how and for what they are going to use the land/property.
- Check any empty land and property regularly and make sure it is secure.
- It is illegal to store waste on your land without the required permits. You may be committing an offence by allowing waste to be stored on your land or property without the relevant permissions and you could be liable to prosecution and the cost of removing the waste.
- Landlords should check before signing a contract that the contract complies with regulations. You can [view whether a potential tenant holds the correct permit to carry out waste operations](#).
- The offer of payment to temporarily store waste is a scam, the waste will likely never be collected.
- Be vigilant and report any unusual behaviour. If you are suspicious of prospective tenants please contact us for more information and advice.
- If you are approached to store baled waste, even on a short term basis, refuse the material and call the Environment Agency on 0800 80 70 60 or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

There are hundreds of commercial properties across the South East thought to be empty, all of which are potential targets for waste criminals.

The economic impact of waste crime in England is an estimated £604M per annum. The Environment Agency is working hard to address this. Its specialist crime unit uses intelligence to track and prosecute organised crime gangs involved in illegal waste activity and to ensure any necessary action is taken against them.

Anyone who sees waste crime taking place, or who has been a victim of illegal baled waste deposit is advised not to approach as these people can be dangerous. Report it by calling our incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60 or call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

The Environment Agency is working closely with the police in their investigation into these offences.