

UK Defence cyber skills to be boosted through industry partnership

- Defence personnel to be upskilled in tackling cyber threats
- Industry collaboration to increase UK's cyber resilience
- Work follows National Audit Office praise for the department's approach to conflict digitisation

The Ministry of Defence will collaborate with Immersive Labs, an industry leader in cyber resilience, to support the department's new Digital Skills for Defence programme to build stronger digital skills, and follows a successful trial by the British Army.

Tested against industry benchmarks, the collaboration will see personnel from the Army, Royal Navy, Royal Air Force, Strategic Command and Civil Service engaged, with access to 1,600 realistic simulations and hands-on cybersecurity labs to evaluate individual and teams in decision-making against the latest threats.

As the recent National Audit Office (NAO) [report on the MOD's Digital Strategy](#) noted, the Department is showing good practice when it comes to the challenge of modern conflict rapidly digitising, affecting Defence work and how the Armed Forces operate in the battlefield.

Minister for Defence Procurement, Alex Chalk said:

The NAO has rightly highlighted our focus on remaining at the forefront of digital capability, which is crucial as the shape of the modern battlefield continues to change at unprecedented speed.

Utilising the best technology and brightest minds in industry will only serve to bolster the rank of cyber experts focused on protecting the UK.

Exploiting digital capabilities and data is fundamental to our success in modern military operations and to the effective running of Defence. Building on the feedback from the NAO report, the department is striving to build a workforce with the digital skills it needs to deliver the digital transformation of defence.

The report acknowledged positive progress being made by the department on bringing together and aligning such digital practitioners across Defence. However, with a shortfall of homegrown talent and a very competitive market across the public and private sectors, the collaboration with Immersive Labs will also help identify cybersecurity talent to fill open roles and bolster the ranks of UK cyber experts.

Director of Functional Integration, Claire Fry said:

The Digital Skills for Defence programme is crucial in our drive to provide the right digital skills and capabilities across Defence to take advantage of the opportunity brought about by the ever-increasing pace of technological change.

Immersive Labs is one of a number of organisations we are working with to deliver training that will upskill our workforce. This will enable us to champion our One Defence Mindset and create an environment where our digital skills can flourish in a unified, connected and digitally integrated way.

MOD established the Digital Skills for Defence programme to deliver critical digital skills for Defence Leaders, Digital Professionals, and the whole Military and Civilian workforce. The programme is fundamental in building and retaining operational and business advantage. MOD's ambition goes beyond education, seeking to transform to a learning culture where teams work collaboratively across the organisation.