

# £100m investment for maritime electronic warfare capabilities

Defence Equipment and Support (DE&S) have awarded a £100-million contract to a Babcock-led partnership with Elbit Systems UK and QinetiQ to deliver cutting-edge electronic warfare (EW) systems to the Royal Navy.

The EW technology will allow more simultaneous detection and identification of radio signals over a greater frequency range than current capabilities. This will aid faster operational decision-making, enhanced situational awareness and anti-ship missile defence capability.

Around 170 jobs are expected to be created and sustained across the UK by the 13-year contract, mainly in the South West of England, ranging from manufacturing to software development roles.

## **Defence Secretary of State Ben Wallace said:**

“In a world of rapidly evolving threats, these enhancements will upgrade the Royal Navy with pioneering radar detection capabilities maintaining the UK’s operational advantage at sea.

“The £100-million investment with key industry partners will underpin vital defence outputs whilst supporting jobs and investment in the South-West of England.”

This is the first phase of a £500-million Maritime Electronics Warfare Programme (MEWP) to deliver battle-winning operational advantage on Type 45, 26 and 31 frigates, as well as the Queen Elizabeth class aircraft carriers.

## **Senior Responsible Owner for the programme, Royal Navy Commodore Steve Prest, said:**

“The ability to understand and exploit the increasingly complex electromagnetic environment is critical for the operational success of the Royal Navy.

“This technology will deliver a generational leap in our electronic warfare capabilities to ensure we maintain the operational advantage we need well into the 21st century.”

## **Rear Admiral Jim Higham, DE&S Director Ship Support, said:**

“I am delighted to have achieved contract award and look forward to working with Babcock, Elbit and QinetiQ. Now the real work begins – delivering this crucial capability to the frontline to time and cost and supporting the men and women of the Royal Navy in what they deliver for our nation.”

Babcock, Elbit and QinetiQ will work as one team with DE&S, the Navy and Dstl

(Defence Science and Technology Laboratories) to design, manufacture, deliver and integrate the capability before providing in-service support for the duration of the contract.

Strengthening maritime capabilities ensures the Royal Navy are spearheading innovation and are prepared for new and emerging threats. This ambition, outlined in the Defence Command Paper, is reinforced by the £24 billion increase in defence spending over the next four years.

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## Somerset farmer fined for second time for polluting watercourse

Hembrow, of Huntham Farm, Stoke St Gregory, pleaded guilty to polluting a watercourse, a tributary of Sedgemoor Old Rhyne, 3 times.

A short distance downstream the watercourse enters the West Sedgemoor Site of Special Scientific, the Somerset Levels and Moors Special Protection Area and RAMSAR site.

The case was heard at Taunton Magistrates' Court on 6 October 2021, when the 33-year-old was ordered to pay the Environment Agency costs of £9,567.38, fines totalling £1,689 and a victim surcharge of £168.

On 19 June 2019, following a report of low dissolved oxygen levels on the Sedgemoor Old Rhyne, Environment Officers found a tributary polluted with slurry. They traced the pollution back to Huntham Farm, where a slurry lagoon had overtopped. Slurry had run across a farm track, collected in the orchard, and made its way to the watercourse, polluting more than 1.5 kilometres.

A week later, although the farmer had taken action to try and prevent further pollution, slurry was still visible on the bed of the watercourse.

On 29 October 2019, Environment Officers again attended a report of pollution to the same tributary of the Sedgemoor Old Rhyne. Their investigations found a surface water drain discharging to the tributary, and using dye tracing confirmed the drain was contaminated with run off from from dirty yards.

On 30 January 2020 following reports of further pollution to the tributary of the Sedgemoor Old Rhyne, Environment Officers found the tributary polluted with slurry due to slurry spreading activity on nearby fields. Slurry had been applied at a rate which caused run off in to the ditch.

In 2016 Hembrow was found guilty of polluting this same tributary of the Sedgemoor Old Rhyne.

Jo Masters, of the Environment Agency, said:

It was disappointing to find continual pollution from Huntham Farm following a previous prosecution in 2016.

We always strive to work with farmers to reduce the risk of pollution, protect the environment, and ensure they are compliant with the regulations.

If you are concerned about pollution to water or land, contact our 24-hour incident line on 0800-807060.

### ###Offences

Causing an unpermitted water discharge activity, namely the discharge of poisonous, noxious or polluting matter from Huntham Farm, Stoke St Gregory, Somerset into inland fresh waters contrary to Regulations 12(1)(b) and Regulation 38(1)(a) of the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010.

- June 2019 pollution: fine £921.00
- October 2019 pollution: fine £384
- January 2021 pollution: fine £384

### Previous offence

In August 2016 Hembrow was fined £410 after he pleaded guilty to causing an unpermitted water discharge activity, namely the discharge of poisonous, noxious or polluting matter from Huntham Farm, Stoke St Gregory, Somerset into inland fresh waters contrary to Regulations 12(1)(b) and Regulation 38(1)(a) of the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010.

He was fined a further £410 with a £41 victim surcharge after admitting failing to ensure that silage was made and stored in accordance with Regulation 3(1) contrary to Regulation 10(1) of the Water Resources (Control of Pollution) (Silage, Slurry and agricultural Fuel Oil) (England) Regulations 2010.

John Hembrow pleaded guilty to breaching condition B (I)(II) and B(II) (III) of a Consent to Discharge dated December 1, 1970 in that it permitted a water discharge activity, namely discharged effluent from the land and premises at Huntham Farm, Stoke St Gregory, into the tributary of the West Sedgemoor Main Drain containing silage liquor and which exceeded the limit of the biological oxygen demand of 200 parts per million not in accordance with its Consent to Discharge contrary to Regulations 12(1)(b) and 38(2) of the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010. He was fined £330 with a £33 victim surcharge.

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## 39th Universal Periodic Review of human rights: UK statement on Trinidad and Tobago

World news story

The UK delivered the statement on Trinidad and Tobago at the 39th Session of Universal Periodic Review (UPR), sharing recommendations to improve their human rights record.



Thank you, Madam President.

The United Kingdom welcomes Trinidad and Tobago's efforts to register Venezuelan migrants and initiatives it has taken to eliminate human trafficking, including by developing a National Action Plan. We also welcome the steps taken by the Government to tackle gender-based violence including the establishment of a specialist police unit and the amendments made to the Domestic Violence Act legislation, which have strengthened victim protection. We encourage Trinidad and Tobago to continue to enhance protections for all victims of gender-based violence.

We commend the significant efforts made by Trinidad and Tobago to address slow judicial processes and reduce pre-trial detention. We also note the increased powers given to the Police Complaints Authority to improve accountability. We urge the Government to consider what further reform is needed, including to tackle the challenge of corruption.

We recommend that Trinidad and Tobago:

- Take concrete steps to strengthen the protection mechanisms, emergency and long-term support services, for all suspected victims of modern slavery, including those from vulnerable migrant communities;
- Adopt an open, merit-based process when selecting national candidates for UN Treaty Body elections;
- Implement a roadmap to accelerate the development of national refugee legislation to incorporate international commitments into domestic law.

Thank you, Madam President.

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## [39th Universal Periodic Review of human rights: UK statement on Antigua and Barbuda](#)

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# UK Government

The United Kingdom welcomes Antigua and Barbuda's accession to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and encourages the Government to continue upholding these rights. We note that some progress has been made on our recommendations since the last UPR and are hopeful this will continue.

The UK is also pleased to note that the death penalty has not been implemented since 1991. We welcome Antigua and Barbuda changing its sentencing guidelines in 2020, which will further reduce the likelihood of the death penalty being applied. We urge the Government to consider what further reform is needed to continue to tackle pressing concerns, such as human trafficking and domestic violence.

We recommend that Antigua and Barbuda:

- Implement legislation to address modern slavery and human trafficking and expedite current cases by providing adequate resources and training for officials to effectively investigate and prosecute cases and protect victims.
- Develop, adopt and implement, in a consultative manner, a national gender policy with measures for the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence against all women, girls, men and boys regardless of legal or migratory status, nationality, gender identity or sexual orientation.

- Adopt an open, merit-based process when selecting national candidates for UN Treaty Body elections.

Thank you.

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## [Time is running out for customers with Post Office card accounts](#)

Around 24,000 HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) customers with a Post Office card account have just 3 weeks left to update the department with new payment details before the 30 November 2021 deadline, or risk having payments paused.

From 1 December 2021, HMRC will stop making tax credits, Child Benefit and Guardian's Allowance payments to Post Office card accounts. HMRC is urging account holders to contact them to update their bank account details to continue receiving payments without disruption.

Customers can choose to receive their benefits and credits payments to a bank, building society or credit union account. If they already have an alternative account, they can contact HMRC now to update their details.

Child Benefit and Guardian's Allowance customers can use their Personal Tax Account to provide revised account details, [change their bank account details via GOV.UK](#) or by contacting the Child Benefit helpline on 0300 200 3100. Tax credits customers can [change their bank account details](#) by contacting the tax credits helpline on 0345 300 3900. If customers cannot open a bank account, they should contact HMRC.

Myrtle Lloyd, HMRC's Director General for Customer Services, said:

Time is running out for customers who have been using a Post Office card account to get payments from us. They need to give us their new account details now to avoid their payments being suspended.

They can update their details online or by calling us, and they need to be very careful to avoid handing over personal details to fraudsters contacting them claiming to be from HMRC.

If a customer misses the 30 November deadline, their payments will be paused until the customer notifies HMRC of their new account details.

The Money Advice and Pensions Service offers information and advice about [how to choose the right current account](#) and [how to open an account](#).

HMRC has been contacting customers recently to urge them to take action.

HMRC urges everyone to be alert if they are contacted out of the blue by someone asking for money or personal information. Customers should always type in the full online address [www.gov.uk/hmrc](http://www.gov.uk/hmrc) to access the correct HMRC contact information. HMRC sees high numbers of fraudsters emailing, calling or texting people claiming to be from the department. If in doubt, HMRC advises not to reply directly to anything suspicious, but to contact them straight away and [search GOV.UK for 'HMRC scams'](#).

HMRC has been writing to affected customers since October 2019 to notify them that their Post Office card accounts will be closing, urging them to take action so their payments are not affected.

In September 2021, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) [announced that it has agreed a 12-month extension for its customers who use a Post Office card account](#). If any HMRC customers also receive DWP payments, this extension only applies to DWP-related payments.