

Launch of Space to Innovate Campaign Bravo Drop

The [Defence Science and Technology Laboratory](#) (Dstl) Space Programme and [UK Space Agency](#) (UKSA) are working together with the Defence and [Security Accelerator](#) (DASA), to launch the [Bravo Drop](#) of the Space to Innovate Campaign.

The Bravo Drop of the Space to Innovate Campaign is now open for proposals. This Drop focuses on solving two challenge sets:

Challenge 1: Novel sensing and Intelligence, Surveillance & Reconnaissance (ISR) technologies

This challenge seeks to develop technologies and demonstrations of novel sensing modes for the space domain for military and intelligence applications; both space-to-ground and space-to-space. Novel modes in this context could include, but are not limited to:

- non-traditional space sensing bands (e.g. ultraviolet)
- gravimetric imaging of the space environment
- sparse aperture imaging technologies and processing
- use of novel materials (e.g. meta-materials or graphene) for space sensing applications

We are looking to develop enabling technologies for future sensing satellites. These could include:

- large aperture (optical and Radio Frequency) deployment and development
- precision timing technologies
- technologies for increasing satellite agility and pointing accuracy for military requirements
- improved assurance of ISR satellites
- technologies to improve data flow (tasking, collection, processing, exploitation and dissemination)

Challenge 2: Novel approaches to significantly improve signal-to-noise performance of space-related communications, sensing, identification or tracking capabilities for use in Defence and/or Security applications.

This challenge seeks to identify novel technologies, techniques, processes or algorithms that offer improvements to the overall signal-to-noise characteristics of electromagnetic systems used for Defence and/or Security space domain applications.

DASA is interested in such methods for enhancing the performance of systems such as electro-optical, infra-red or radio frequency systems for communications, Earth Observation or space domain awareness (SDA)

applications. Areas for consideration may include (as examples, but are not limited to) the following areas:

- novel technologies to support, or be applied to, either ground-based or on-orbit capabilities: these could apply to space-to-space, ground-to-space and / or space-to-ground segments
- exploration of novel signal processing algorithms and techniques to acquire (and exploit) improved signal response or a reduction in noise performance
- novel hardware and / or software technologies and processes to enhance signal detection and / or data collection performance of imaging, sensing or communications
- exploration of novel radio frequency (RF) systems to detect, monitor or communicate with space objects in any / all orbital regimes

Do you have the solution? [Submit a proposal now](#)

Bravo Drop: Key dates and funding available

The Bravo Drop is now open for proposals until 9th November 2021. The value of funded contracts will vary from £125k to £400k, with durations of 6, 12 or 18 months. Bravo Drop projects are expected to reach TRL 3-6 at the end of the contract. DASA expects to fund up to 5 projects within this drop. The total amount of funding available for the Alpha and Bravo Drops is expected to be £2m.

What is the Space to Innovate Campaign?

The Space to Innovate Campaign seeks proposals that can maintain the UK's freedom of action in the space domain by developing future space technologies that enhance and protect space military and civil potential.

The campaign format is unique from other DASA competitions and comprises space-related challenges that will be released in "drops" throughout 2021 and 2022. The Bravo Drop follows the output of the [Alpha Drop](#), which focused on space visualisation and Space Situational Awareness, and builds on new areas of innovation.

What are the benefits of the DASA campaign and Drop format?

This campaign approach enables greater variation of contract values and durations to be issued by DASA, which provides larger and longer contracts for more mature technologies, whilst also enabling less mature innovations to be explored.

The campaign and drop concept enables a cycle of innovative ideas to be contracted as well as maturing existing technologies to a higher level. It also encourages proposals from a range of innovators, start-ups to established companies to universities – all ideas are welcome.

For more information, and to submit your proposal ahead of the 9th November

deadline, [please click here](#).

Submit a proposal now!

The closing date for proposals for the Alpha challenge drop is 09 November 2021. [Click here for the full document and submit your idea!](#)

Collision and derailment of a freight train at Kisby user worked level crossing

News story

Investigation into a collision and derailment of a freight train at Kisby user worked level crossing, Cambridgeshire, 19 August 2021.



The locomotive and trailer following the accident

At 09:01 hrs on 19 August 2021, a freight train consisting of a class 66 locomotive and 36 container wagons struck a loaded farm trailer at Kisby user worked level crossing, situated near to March, in Cambridgeshire. The train driver applied the train's emergency brake around 6 seconds before the collision occurred, but the train was still travelling at around 58 mph (93 km/h) when it struck the trailer.

As a result of the collision, the trailer parted from the tractor that was pulling it and was then dragged along by the train. The leading axle of the locomotive and an unladen wagon in the middle of the train also derailed. The train ran derailed for around 780 metres before it came to a stop.

Both the train and tractor drivers suffered shock following the accident and the train driver was also treated for minor injuries. The locomotive suffered

significant structural damage during the accident and level crossing and track equipment were also extensively damaged. Train services were disrupted on both lines for four days while the train was recovered and repairs were made to the track and signalling infrastructure.

Kisby user worked crossing is fitted with a telephone and with user-operated powered (POGO) gates. These gates are not interlocked with the railway's signalling system. Users are directed by signs at the crossing to use the telephones to obtain permission from the signaller before opening the crossing gates and crossing the railway. RAIB has been unable to find any evidence that a request to use the crossing was made by the driver of the tractor involved.

Our investigation will seek to identify the sequence of events which led to the accident, including the actions of the tractor driver and other users of the crossing. It will examine how the crossing was being managed and how the risks associated with its use were being assessed and mitigated by Network Rail.

Our investigation is independent of any investigation by the railway industry or by the industry's regulator, the [Office of Rail and Road](#).

We will publish our findings, including any recommendations to improve safety, at the conclusion of our investigation. This report will be available on our website.

You can [subscribe](#) to automated emails notifying you when we publish our reports

Published 14 September 2021

[Lord Risby has been reappointed as a Member of the Horserace Betting Levy Board](#)

News story

The Secretary of State has reappointed Lord Risby to a third term as a Member of the Horserace Betting Levy Board from 01 January 2022 until 31 December 2025.



Before entering Parliament Lord Risby worked in the City, becoming a vice-president at Merrill Lynch. Standing down after eight years as a Conservative MP, for Bury St Edmunds and then West Suffolk, Lord Risby entered the House of Lords in 2010. He had also been Vice-Chairman of the Conservative Party from 2005-2010. He is currently the British Trade Envoy to Algeria and to Lebanon, and is Chairman of the British Ukrainian Society. He is President of the Association for Decentralised Energy and Deputy Chairman of the Small Business Bureau Ltd.

Horseshoe Betting Levy Board Members are remunerated at £19,665 per annum. This third term reappointment has been made in accordance with the [Cabinet Office's Governance Code on Public Appointments](#). The process is regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments. The Government's Governance Code requires that any significant political activity undertaken by an appointee in the last five years is declared. This is defined as including holding office, public speaking, making a recordable donation or candidature for election. Lord Risby has declared that he was Conservative member of Parliament between 1992 and 2010 and has since been a member of the House of Lords.

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[British High Commissioner visits Nasarawa State](#)

During the two-day visit, the High Commissioner visited the Nasarawa State Governor, His Excellency, Abdullahi Sule. The High Commissioner commended the Governor on his achievements in his first 2 years in office including an increase in the state's education budget to 35% and improving business environment indicators and concrete investments. They also discussed current efforts to stimulate the economy in the state.

During her visit to Nasarawa State, the High Commissioner got the chance to see first hand, some of the examples of what's making Nasarawa such a popular

and increasingly prosperous area to live, work and invest in. Known as the “Home of Solid Minerals”, the state houses solid minerals of economic potentials such as zinc, lead, gold, tin and tantalite.

High Commissioner Catriona Laing at the Nasarawa Bus Terminal in Karu

During her stay in Nasarawa State, the High Commissioner visited the Nasarawa Bus Terminal in Karu, to witness the progress the initiative is taking as construction at the site continues. The planned Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system that will operate from the bus station, will improve the lives of Nasarawa residents. It also aligns with Nigeria’s climate change commitments in its new Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC), where 22% of transport kilometres should be BRTs by 2030.

High Commissioner Catriona Laing at the Durbar in Lafia Stadium, Nasarawa

The High Commissioner also attended her first Durbar in Nigeria, at the Lafia Stadium, where she met with some of Nasarawa’s traditional leaders. She thanked the leaders for honouring her and spoke about the need to continually celebrate and uphold history, culture and tradition.

The visit to Nasarawa State was an opportunity for the High Commissioner to stopover at the Kilema Local Rice Mill. The UK has helped develop flood and drought-resilient rice varieties for Nigeria and introduced techniques to reduce methane from rice-growing climate-smart agriculture.

In advancing the agricultural sector of the state, the UK Government previously supported a fertiliser distribution and livestock vaccination system that still exists in Nasarawa State. On animal vaccines, the UK leveraged a community-based organisation, FAHCI to establish a vaccinators’ network and to prime the market. FAHCI has continued to stock vaccines in their Lafia office and retail to vaccinators that come from the rural parts of Lafia, Doma and Akwanga LGAs. We continue to support research and production of animal vaccines as well researching drought and flood resilient seeds and nutritious crops.

At the end of the visit, the British High Commissioner, Catriona Laing, said:

The UK Government is increasing support for the Nigerian Government’s economic reform efforts, including diversification of the economy to promote conditions for sustainable and inclusive growth. We continue to lead efforts to mobilise the international community and the Nigerian Government to do more.

Our trade and investment relationship goes across a number of sectors and we want to increase that investment, especially in the non-oil sectors that make up over 90% of Nigeria’s economy and which are key to Nigeria’s recovery after the COVID-19 recession.

Being here in Lafia has helped me see at first hand the many great investment opportunities Nasarawa State has to offer and I'm very grateful to Governor Abdullahi Sule for inviting me.

High Commissioner at the Shabu Cassava Processing Centre in Nasarawa State

[UN Human Rights Council 48: Core Group Statement on Sri Lanka](#)

Thank you Madam President

This statement is by the Core Group on Sri Lanka comprising Canada, Germany, North Macedonia, Malawi, Montenegro and the UK.

We thank the High Commissioner for her update on Sri Lanka and call for OHCHR to be granted the resources needed to implement resolution 46/1.

We recognise the challenges Sri Lanka is facing due to the COVID 19 pandemic and express our condolences to the people of Sri Lanka for the many lives that have been lost.

We continue to stress the importance of a comprehensive reconciliation and accountability process. We note Sri Lanka's declared intent to promote reconciliation and to ensure the continuity of the work of the Office of Missing Persons and the Office for Reparations. We call on the Government to ensure the political independence of these institutions. We are disappointed that even the limited progress made on accountability on key emblematic cases has regressed. Recent developments on the case involving the disappearance of 11 youths in 2008-2009 is of particular concern.

We are deeply concerned about current human rights developments, in particular increased limitations being put on civic space including reports of surveillance and intimidation of civil society groups, intimidation of journalists and reprisals against those protesting peacefully. We stress the importance of providing a safe and enabling environment for civil society actors.

We further reiterate our request made at the 47th session for independent and impartial investigations into deaths in police custody.

The Government of Sri Lanka's outreach to the international community and statements of intent regarding reforming the Prevention of Terrorism Act is welcome, though our longstanding concerns about this legislation still remain. We urge the Government of Sri Lanka to bring its counter-terrorism legislation in line with its international human rights obligations. We call

on the government of Sri Lanka to reconsider their intention to introduce a rehabilitation process under the Prevention of Terrorism Act that lacks judicial oversight. In this context we remain concerned about the ongoing detention of human rights lawyer Hejaaz Hizbullah and the poet and teacher Ahnaf Jazeem under the PTA.

We call on Sri Lanka to cooperate fully with the High Commissioner and remain ready to support the Government on the implementation of resolution 46/1.

Thank you.