

HydroSurv wins ADMIRALTY Coastal Inundation Challenge

The UK Hydrographic Office (UKHO) have announced HydroSurv as the winner of the fourth ADMIRALTY Marine Innovation Programme challenge: assessing risk and resilience for coastal flooding.

For many people around the world, coastal inundation poses a significant threat. Caused by storm and tidal surges, coastal inundation can completely submerge coastal areas in sea water – causing substantial damage to infrastructure and harm to vulnerable communities. As part of the ADMIRALTY Marine Innovation Programme, the latest challenge called upon innovators and start-ups to develop solutions that could identify coastal areas that are most at risk of flooding and help communities build resilience.

As a global-innovator in uncrewed survey vessels and cloud applications for ocean industries, HydroSurv responded to the challenge with a prototype solution that used data collection and automated change detection software to identify areas at risk of coastal inundation. By analysing the differences between new bathymetry collected by uncrewed surface vessels and wider data sets, the solution will be able to detect changes to coastal marine environments, such as erosion and movement of the seabed, that could increase the risk of coastal inundation.

As the challenge winner, HydroSurv will now collaborate with the UKHO, utilising marine geospatial data and expertise to develop an alpha product for wider release.

Commenting on the announcement, HydroSurv's Founder and Chief Executive David Hull said:

UKHO is a world-leader in hydrography and marine geospatial data solutions for the ocean industries, and at HydroSurv we also recognise the need for updated solutions that respond to the future need for resilient shoreline management.

Climate change is driving the year-on-year increase to flood risk caused by rising sea-levels and extremes of weather, and by 2050, global damage costs could reach more than \$1 trillion annually. The coastal practitioners and engineers involved in protecting coastal communities need to understand the rate of change in what is a dynamic environment. Access to frequent, reliable and repeatable data from a variety of sources is necessary to make actionable decisions.

We're proud that the UKHO have selected our cloud-based application as the winner for the Coastal Inundation Challenge. Recognition from UKHO is the best example that our product has real potential to deliver impact. Timing to market this solution will be crucial, and the expertise base brought together through this collaboration will enable us to deliver an improved solution for users around the world at a rapid pace.

Melissa Yeong, Head of Market (APAC and Middle East) also commented on HydroSurv's winning submission:

Many congratulations to HydroSurv on winning this challenge and creating a solution that will help to mitigate coastal inundation globally.

As one of the most common and costly disasters facing communities across the globe, coastal inundation poses an imminent threat to life and livelihoods, communities and economic development. Marine geospatial data can play a key role in helping disaster relief agencies and governments identify areas at risk and how factors such as weather conditions could further intensify the effects.

UKHO is empowering innovators and start-ups with the opportunity to work with our ADMIRALTY data. There are exciting times ahead for UKHO in supporting the development of powerful solutions that will have a positive impact on protecting and supporting our oceans, and we look forward to seeing more developments emerge in the coming years.

SLC recognised at FREDIE Awards

The Student Loans Company (SLC) has been recognised at the National Centre for Diversity (NCD) FREDIE Awards which champion fairness, respect, equality, diversity, inclusion and engagement.

SLC Chief Executive, Paula Sussex was presented with the Chief Executive of the Year Award at an online ceremony which took place last week.

The award follows the organisation's success in achieving the Investors in Diversity (IiD) accreditation earlier in the year.

The FREDIE Awards and IiD accreditation recognise SLC's commitment to creating an environment that enabled colleagues to support one another through the pandemic, and for its success in embedding the principles of fairness, respect, equality, diversity, inclusion and engagement in all areas of the organisation. This was demonstrated through a number of initiatives, led by colleagues across SLC, including the creation of SLC@Home; an online home working hub which provided tools, support, guidance, and digital Communication Cells to allow on-going engagement between teams working remotely.

Other examples also include the establishment of employee networks such as the LGBT+ group, Arcus and the organisation wide celebration of events such as religious festivals. SLC has been looking at how it can build diversity into technology roles through the active promotion of STEM opportunities for women. And this month, SLC also launched a remote Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) service which sees expertly trained SLC Mental Health First Aiders providing remote support to colleagues who need it.

Accepting the award Paula said:

I am honoured to be presented with this award, which is really for the whole SLC team. I have been so impressed with how, despite a global pandemic, diversity has continued to thrive at SLC thanks to the commitment of my colleagues to the FREDIE principles.

Of course, there is always more that can be done, and we will continue to drive forward our equality, diversity and inclusion agenda – not just for our employees but for our customers too. SLC exists to enable people to invest in their futures through further and higher education – and we need to ensure our service is inclusive of the diversity of our 9 million customers.

[CMA secures refund rights for McAfee customers](#)

Press release

Following CMA action, McAfee, a leading supplier of anti-virus software, has extended its refund rights for all customers whose contracts have auto-renewed.



The changes secured by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) as part of its [investigation into the anti-virus software sector](#) include:

- McAfee ensuring that customers whose contract auto-renews for another year will be able to end their contract and seek a refund for the remaining months. In addition, this new refund right will be backdated for people who were previously refused a refund in 2020.
- The process for turning off auto-renewal will be made more straightforward for customers in the future.
- Providing clearer information upfront on pricing, for example by making clear that the auto-renewal price in the second year is higher than the price paid when the anti-virus product was first purchased.
- Locating important information about how to turn off automatic renewal and obtain a refund more prominently on its website and in emails sent to customers.

The investigation into the sector was launched in response to the loyalty penalty '[super-complaint](#)' from Citizens Advice about long term customers overpaying for key services. This raised concerns that some anti-virus software companies' terms and practices may be unfair and could result in UK customers paying for services they no longer want or need.

Andrea Coscelli, CMA Chief Executive, said:

"People should not be tied into auto-renewing contracts for products they no longer want or need. Because of our investigation, it will be easier for McAfee's customers to get money back if a contract renews when they didn't want it to.

"Subscriptions should be clearly described, easy to exit and customers should not be tied into ongoing auto-renewals without adequate refund rights. Companies who use auto-renewals unfairly risk action from the CMA."

Notes to Editors:

1. The CMA opened its investigation into the anti-virus software sector in November 2018. The CMA's investigation was conducted under the Enterprise Act 2002.
2. In relation to McAfee, the CMA's investigation has been concluded with the CMA accepting undertakings from McAfee Ireland Limited. These undertakings have been provided to the CMA voluntarily and without any

admission of wrongdoing or liability.

3. McAfee Ireland Limited is the first company to agree undertakings with the CMA as part of its wider programme of work looking into subscription contracts in the [anti-virus software](#) and [online video gaming](#) sectors.
4. McAfee's existing refund policy covers customers whose contracts have already been auto-renewed by allowing them to request a full refund of the auto-renewal fee for a period of 60 days from the date the fee is taken. Following the CMA's action, after this full refund window, consumers can seek a partial refund of the auto-renewal fee in proportion to the amount of the contract that is outstanding at the point at which the refund is requested. This will be calculated on a monthly basis. The request for a partial refund can be made until the end of the penultimate month of the contract period covered by the fee. This new right for consumers is available now.
5. McAfee have agreed to make further changes to their website and communications with customers to improve clarity, which will be made within the coming months. McAfee will provide regular reports to the CMA as to their customers' experience of ending auto-renewal and seeking refunds.
6. Whilst the CMA can raise concerns around a breach of consumer protection law, ultimately, only a court can rule that a particular practice infringes the law and no such ruling has been made in this matter.
7. For media enquiries, contact the CMA press office on 020 3738 6460 or press@cma.gov.uk.

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[JETS job scheme relaunching 100,000 careers](#)

On average, nearly 500 jobseekers a day across Great Britain have started on the government's £238 million JETS – Job Entry Targeted Support – scheme over the last seven months.

And just under 13,000 have already returned to work after securing new roles through JETS.

With opportunities opening up as the country proceeds carefully along the roadmap to Covid-recovery, it means the Department for Work and Pensions is well on the way to hitting its target of helping 250,000 by September.

Secretary of State for Work and Pensions Thérèse Coffey said:

Behind these figures are real people dealt a rough hand by the

pandemic who are now receiving vital support to get back into work, at a time when they need it most.

Our Plan for Jobs is delivering and opening up opportunities in every region and nation across the country, and we remain relentlessly focused on turning our jabs into jobs as we build back better.

The support helps people out of work for three months by giving them access to the tailored, flexible support needed to move back into work quickly. That includes specialist advice on how they can utilise existing or build new skills to move into growing sectors where jobs are available, such as green energy and construction, as well as CV and interview guidance.

Elliot Dock, aged 33, from Eastbourne is one of the successful JETS graduates now in work as a direct result of the scheme. He was struggling to find a job during the pandemic despite having previous experience of working on a farm. This was where his passion lay and his Work Coach set him up on a skills course to boost his employability.

He is now working for an agricultural contracting company based in West Sussex and is thankful for all the support he received in firing up his career again.

Elliot said:

My experience of JETS has been outstanding. I'm so grateful for all the help in finding work, and not only any old job but something I'm actually interested in, at a place where I can build a career.

Chief Executive of the Shaw Trust, one of the eleven organisations delivering the support, Chris Luck said:

I'm delighted that through JETS we have supported Elliot back into the career field he enjoys. We know that good work is more than just a job; it gives purpose and brings a sense of well-being.

At Shaw Trust, in partnership with the DWP, we are proud to support hundreds to return to work and see them begin to rebuild their lives.

The announcement follows new employment figures released last week that showed the unemployment rate had fallen for a third month to 4.8% – with government continuing to ramp up support to get people back into work.

Once enrolled the tailored programme also gives job hunters the boost they need to return to employment through an action plan agreed with their personal adviser, peer support and signposting to opportunities to build vital skills.

JETS is a key pillar of the government's Plan for Jobs, which is helping people of all ages into work. The flagship Kickstart Scheme has seen an average of 400 young people a day start a job over the last month, with over 200,000 new high quality jobs created.

To help deliver the Plan, the DWP has recruited an additional 13,500 Work Coaches to protect, support and create jobs across the country, providing one-to-one support tailored to individual claimants and local jobs markets.

Media enquiries for this press release – 020 3267 5144

Follow DWP on:

Dedicated government team to protect researchers' work from hostile activity

A dedicated new team is to be established within government to offer researchers advice on how to protect their work from hostile activity, ensuring international collaboration is done safely and securely.

The new Research Collaboration Advice Team (RCAT) within the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) will promote government advice on security-related topics, such as export controls, cyber security and protection of intellectual property. It will ensure researchers' work is protected, and that the UK research sector remains open and secure.

The government is committed to supporting the UK's brilliant scientists, researchers and businesses to make the most of the enormous benefits that come from working with partners overseas. Last month we confirmed our association to the world's largest collaborative research programme, Horizon Europe – worth around €95 billion over the next decade.

The RCAT team will help researchers make the most of their collaborations while helping them to protect themselves from those who seek to compromise the UK's national security. Such behaviour left unchecked can leave the UK vulnerable to disruption, unfair leverage, and espionage. The threats to science and research in particular– primarily the theft, misuse or exploitation of intellectual property by hostile actors – are growing, evolving and increasingly complex.

The team will respond to requests from British universities who have identified potential risks within current projects or proposals. Advisers will also proactively approach research institutions and support them to implement advice and guidance already on offer.

Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng said:

Keeping the country safe is the primary responsibility of any government, and it is essential that we do everything in our power to support our brilliant scientists and researchers in pursuit of our ambition to become a global science superpower.

This new team will give universities and institutions access to the latest advice on safe collaboration with international partners and protections against those who seek to harm the UK.

Science Minister Amanda Solloway said:

The UK is home to some of the world's leading scientists and researchers. Their vital work over the past year in response to the pandemic demonstrates how crucial it is to foster an open yet secure environment for pioneering research.

Researchers need to take precautions when collaborating internationally, and this new team will support them as we cement our status as a science superpower.

The leadership of the new team will be based in Manchester, with advisers distributed across the UK.

Today's announcement is the latest in a series of measures being taken by the government to keep the UK safe from hostile activity. Last month, the National Security and Investment Act received royal assent, strengthening the UK's ability to investigate and intervene in potentially hostile mergers, acquisitions and other types of deals that could threaten our national security. The UK's screening powers have also been extended to include assets like intellectual property, as well as companies.

Last year, the government supported Universities UK (UUK) to publish guidelines for the sector on managing security-related risks within international collaboration. These followed the launch of the government-funded Trusted Research campaign in 2019 by the Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure and National Cyber Security Centre, which helps UK universities and research institutions to make informed decisions about international collaboration and associated risks.

Professor Julia Buckingham, President, Universities UK said:

International collaboration lies at the heart of excellent research, delivers huge benefits to the UK and helps to ensure that we are recognised as a global science superpower. We have a responsibility to ensure that our collaborations are safe and secure, and our universities take these responsibilities very seriously.

Together with UUK's guidelines on Managing Risk in Internationalisation, the work of this new team and the specialist advice and support it provides will help to ensure that the public can be confident in our research collaborations. We particularly welcome the creation of a single point of contact in government, which builds on recommendations made by Universities UK and will provide valuable insights for institutions and researchers.

Recruitment for the new team will begin this week.