

# [Look out! DASA competition seeks to enhance Royal Navy early warning capabilities](#)

News story

Getting the full picture: £1.25 million for innovations that improve situational awareness for Royal Navy Carrier and Littoral Strike Groups



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So, in partnership with the Royal Navy, the [Defence and Security Accelerator](#) (DASA) is pleased to launch the [Look out! Maritime Early Warning Innovations](#) competition, which aims to develop alternative future concepts for the Early Warning systems currently deployed in Maritime Task Groups.

## **How much funding is available?**

£1.25 million is available for Phase 1 of the competition, with a maximum of £250k for each funded proposal. The closing date for proposals is midday BST on Tuesday 6 July 2021.

## **Seeking an alternative solution to traditional airborne sensor-mounted platforms**

Royal Navy Carrier and Littoral Strike Groups need a capability that provides air and surface surveillance that enables over-the-horizon situational awareness. This capability ensures Commanders can detect, track and recognise surface and airborne objects, and respond to them efficiently.

Current early warning maritime capabilities are delivered by sensors mounted aboard airborne platforms, with the current assumption for a follow-on for Crowsnest (an AEW fitted to the Merlin Mk2 helicopter) being a singular large

radar sensor mounted on an uncrewed air platform.

## **Have an alternative solution?**

DASA welcomes alternatives that are not based on this approach and match or exceed current airborne capabilities. We are seeking a potential successor to Crowsnest, which has a planned out-of-service date of 2029. [Submit a proposal](#)  
If you have an innovative idea that can enhance:

- surveillance horizons and/or target detection capability
- operational effectiveness through timely processing and dissemination of information
- operational efficiency through optimisation of system functionality

## **What early warning maritime challenges do we want you to overcome?**

- improving threat detection and situational awareness, including detecting, tracking, recognising and identifying hostile and non-hostile contacts, on the surface of the water and in the air
- enhancing information processing and dissemination, including integrating the data from sensors and other air and surface platforms within the Maritime Task Group into a composite picture of activity to enable timely decision making
- optimising efficiency by minimising workforce requirement through a reduced operator and support burden
- novel or innovative methods of combining system functionality will also be considered, alongside solutions to enhance decision-making efficiency

## **Thinking of submitting a proposal?**

The closing date for proposals is Tuesday 6 July 2021 at midday BST. [Click here for the full scope in the competition document.](#)

Published 11 May 2021

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## **Carer jailed for longer**

A Bradford man has had his sentence increased following an intervention by the Solicitor General, Rt Hon Lucy Frazer QC MP.

Barry Riley, 63, abused his position of trust to steal over £100,000 from Ann Skelton, a disabled woman who had granted him Power of Attorney over her finances.

Riley would travel weekly from Bradford to stay with Ann Skelton at her home in Bristol. Between 2015 and 2018 he exploited his position for his own financial gain.

On 10 March 2018, Riley attempted to murder Ann Skelton by smothering her with a pillow, but he stopped before killing her.

The police were alerted. Riley claimed that Ann Skelton had asked him to help her end her life, but she made it clear that he had in fact attacked her. Ann Skelton died in May 2018, though not as a result of any injury or harm caused by the attempt on her life. Following her death, her family and the police discovered the extent of Riley's fraudulent activity.

Prior to these offences, Riley had 24 previous convictions for 73 offences. At the time of his arrest he was also found to have small amounts of cannabis and cocaine.

Riley plead guilty to attempted murder; he initially attempted to plead on the basis he was asked by Ann Skelton to help end her life, however the basis of his plea was rejected. Riley was convicted of fraud after a trial and pleaded guilty to offences of possession of class A and B drugs.

On 25 February 2021, Riley was sentenced to 11 years and 8 months' imprisonment at Bristol Crown Court.

Following the Court's decision, the Solicitor General referred Riley's sentence to the Court of Appeal under the Unduly Lenient Sentence (ULS) scheme. On 11 May 2021, the Court ruled that the sentence was unduly lenient and increased it to 15 years' imprisonment.

After the hearing at the Court of Appeal the Solicitor General, Rt Hon Lucy Frazer QC MP, said:

Riley stole from a vulnerable woman who considered him a friend. To escape detection, he then sought to take her life. Sadly, Ann Skelton never lived to see justice delivered, but I hope today's decision by the Court of Appeal will bring some comfort to her family.

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## Future threats and opportunities: competition for students



(image credit: Pixabay)

The Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) has launched a quest to uncover visions of the future from the brightest student minds in the UK.

Entrants must answer the question: what do you believe to be the future threats or opportunities facing UK defence and security over the next 25 years?

The competition is open to undergraduate and postgraduate students currently based at UK academic institutions, and the deadline has been extended to the end of July 2021.

The 5 finalists will be invited to (virtually) present their essay to a panel of senior current and former government officials, before the final winner is revealed.

The winner will receive £250 prize and the top 5 will receive certificates of commendation.

The top 10 essays may be published in a journal style publication.

## How to enter

Submit your essays to [futuresessaycompetition@dstl.gov.uk](mailto:futuresessaycompetition@dstl.gov.uk)

The competition closes on 31 July 2021 and the virtual presentation and announcement of winners will take place in June.

All entrants who place within the top 10 will be asked to submit a picture of their student ID for verification.

## Essay guidance

Topic: what do you believe to be the future threats or opportunities facing UK defence and security over the next 25 years?

Your essay can focus on a particular theme or act as an opinion piece.

Suggested themes include, but are not limited to:

- emerging technology and the legal, ethical, technical, moral or policy implications
- societal reactions to advancements in technology or changes in policy
- how does technology affect policy or industry
- emerging misuse of technology
- individual privacy
- strategic advantage and competition
- prosperity and economic strength
- alliances and international relations
- global norms across all domains (including cyber and space) digital freedoms
- pandemic and future policy
- data technology

There is a 2000 word limit (10% allowance).

All essays must follow standard academic rigour and use either Harvard or Chicago referencing styles.

You must include a title and abstract (not included in the word count). The abstract should include key themes and arguments.

Essays will be marked based on the following weighting:

| Marks allocated to                 | Weighting |
|------------------------------------|-----------|
| Academic rigour                    | 15%       |
| Originality of thought             | 25%       |
| Credibility and relevance of topic | 25%       |
| Use of real world case studies     | 15%       |
| Engaging writing                   | 20%       |

Published 15 February 2021

Last updated 11 May 2021 + [show all updates](#)

1. 11 May 2021

Closing date extended to 31 July 2021.

2. 15 February 2021

First published.

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## [Meet Dstl's outstanding apprentice](#)

Annabel Nash, 21, is working for Cyber and Information Systems (CIS) at the organisation where her dad Stuart, a senior principal adviser, and her mum, Kerri, a commercial manager, first met.

She credits her parents' passion for their jobs and their positive stories about the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) for piquing her interest in the organisation and encouraging her to apply for the role she started 18 months ago.

Her other links with defence include a sister who works for BAE plus a boyfriend and a grandfather in the armed forces.

Annabel, from Drayton, Portsmouth, said:

I came from doing my A-Levels and I didn't really know what I wanted to do.

I read the advert for the apprenticeship and looking at the qualities and job description it fitted me quite well. I feel like

I had the correct attributes for the job.

Obviously as an apprenticeship it was good as I would learn all those skills and also learn on the job, and earn money as well so that was really attractive.

I think apprenticeships nowadays should be pushed out more for schools and colleges because I think they are amazing.

What I've been able to achieve through the apprenticeship has been really good and launched my career at an incredible place.

### [The People Inside: Annabel Nash](#)

Annabel works for the world-class science facility through the apprenticeship scheme run by Solent University.

She won the Outstanding Apprentice of the Year gong from the university after setting up a network to support the mental wellbeing of fellow students during the COVID-19 pandemic.

This was an online group, with regular catch-ups, enabling everyone from the course to share experiences and support each other with the challenges of studying and of learning during a pandemic.

Judges also praised her determined and proactive approach to her work and her desire to continuously improve.

She said:

I feel really proud to be part of an organisation like Dstl because I think the work we do here is amazing. Even in the short amount of time I have been here some of the work I have seen produced is beyond my imagination.

Everyone here is so nice and friendly. I get on well with everyone on the team and they are all really supportive and understanding. I am proud that I have been able to quickly adapt to a professional environment.

Winning Solent's Outstanding Apprentice of Year was amazing. I was shocked, I was obviously so happy. It really solidified to myself that what I was doing is good. I am extremely proud to have already started progressing in my career.

She went on to say she loves her current role and aspires to be a project manager with the organisation and has already been promoted.

As my parents both work in the organisation they understand what I do. It does create conversation and we can talk about it at the



dinner table.

Some of my friends don't really understand what I do. You go to work then you come back and they ask 'what do you do?'

You do feel quite funny when you have to explain to your friends you can't tell them what you are working on. They accept it and go along with that and know that some of the work at Dstl is secret.

Working at Dstl is not Annabel's first experience of performing at a world-class level as in her free time she has been a national and world dance champion.