

# Letter to medicines and medical products suppliers: 17 November 2020

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Last updated 28 December 2020 [+ show all updates](#)

## 1. 28 December 2020

Added message that DHSC's requests of industry set out in this letter remain valid and current, after the trade and cooperation agreement reached between the EU and the UK.

## 2. 17 November 2020

First published.

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## Northumberland river users asked to help protect white-clawed crayfish

The Environment Agency is asking river users in Northumberland to play their part to help safeguard the future of the rare native white-clawed crayfish in the River Wansbeck.

It comes after increased reports of invasive American signal crayfish being present in the nearby River Coquet. Signal crayfish carry a plague disease which is fatal to the native species. Ecology experts are advising river users to take extra care not to transfer the invasive signal crayfish between the two rivers and put the protected white-clawed crayfish in danger.

Environment Agency Biodiversity Technical Specialist, Scott Mackenzie, said:

At the moment, it is difficult to say how extensive the signal crayfish population is in the River Coquet, but it is essential that we take every step to prevent their spread.

River users should Check – Clean – Dry their footwear, equipment and even their dogs after spending time in and around watercourses. Anything that has made contact with the water and riverbank needs to be cleaned thoroughly after use with warm water and environmentally friendly detergent. Then fully dried for 48 hours

to make sure all parasites are killed. This will help stop the disease spreading from one watercourse to another.

The American species of crayfish is bigger, more aggressive and out-competes our native crayfish. Most importantly it also carries a fungal disease known as crayfish plague that has wiped out our native crayfish from most rivers in the south of England.

The River Wansbeck is one of the last native crayfish strongholds in the country.

Scott added:

The invasive signal crayfish poses a significant risk to the future of the native white-clawed crayfish and we want to do everything in our powers to help safeguard the population that lives in the River Wansbeck.

With the Coquet and Wansbeck catchments being so close to each other, river users including dog walkers, canoeists and anglers, often enjoy using both rivers. If the signal crayfish makes it into the River Wansbeck and other local rivers that support this native species, it could have a devastating impact on white-clawed populations.

The River Coquet is one of a number of North East rivers to have records of signal crayfish. Other rivers nearby include the River Pont and the River Blyth.

The Environment Agency has notified its partners in the area to help get the message to regular recreational users, as well as those organisations who may be doing work in the watercourses.

A year ago the Northumberland Catchment Partnership unveiled the Northumberland Crayfish Conservation Strategy which aims to protect the species, with conservation efforts including identifying potential habitat improvements and developing safe havens.

Back in August the Environment Agency warned the public of crayfish plague in the River Leven, which killed a large number of white-clawed crayfish. The native population on the Leven was previously unknown and the Environment Agency is now investigating whether any survived the outbreak.

The crayfish plague is only harmful to the native white-clawed crayfish and can't be transmitted to humans or other animals.

If you ever need to report anything to the Environment Agency please call the incident hotline on 0800 80 70 60.

If you see an invasive signal crayfish in the River Coquet or the River Wansbeck please [contact the Environmental Records Centre North East \(ERIC\)](#)

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## Winners of International Space Pitch Day revealed

The winners of the inaugural International Space Pitch Day were today announced marking several world firsts.

Ten tech start-ups successfully secured same-day contracts worth up to £53,000 (\$66,000) to fast-track the development of their innovations after pitching direct to UK, US and NATO military leaders.

Air Vice-Marshal Harvey Smyth, UK Director Space, unveiled the winners following an afternoon of pitches in front of a global audience during the first day of the Defence Space Conference hosted from London.

It is the first time two nations anywhere in the world have come together to award defence contracts based around a pitch-style event, similar to Dragon's Den/Shark Tank.

It is also the first time two nations have awarded joint defence innovation contracts to an overseas-based enterprise in this way.

And it is the first time same-day contracts have been awarded in this way to industry by the UK Ministry of Defence.

Air Vice-Marshal Smyth said:

Congratulations to the winners and all those that took part in the first International Space Pitch Day – it has captured the imagination of innovators and militaries not just across the UK and US, but all over the world.

It has achieved several world firsts and we look forward to building on its success as we seek to fast-track innovation and cutting-edge technology to the front line quicker than ever before with fresh ways of working with industry to make sure we stay ahead of our shared adversaries and the threats they pose.

Dr Will Roper, Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics, said:

Pitch Days open the government's aperture to work with commercially-focused companies.

Competing for technology outside of our fence lines has been a major U.S. Air Force and Space Force theme. Partnering with our allies to compete globally is the natural evolution.

Space is especially exciting with so many ideas brought to the table by these firms, and I'm confident international space cooperation has a bright future.

Gary Aitkenhead, Dstl chief executive, said:

International Space Pitch Day represents an innovative way of working, ensuring that UK and US Defence are able to keep up with the rapid pace of commercial technology development.

We aim to connect world-class space innovation to military end-users at pace, supported by business and commercialisation training.

The winning companies are:

- 114 AI Innovation Ltd (India)
- Clearbox Systems Pty Ltd (Australia)
- Clutch Space Systems Ltd (UK)
- Cognitive Space, Inc. (US)
- precursor SPC (US)
- Riskaware Ltd and Telespazio Vega UK (UK)
- Rocket Communications (US)
- Slingshot Aerospace, Inc. (US)
- Spire Global UK (UK)
- Swim.ai, Inc. (US)

Fifteen proposals from tech start-ups and innovators battled it out to win funding by pitching to UK, US and NATO military leaders after being selected to take part in International Space Pitch Day from scores of entries from across the world.

#### **Notes to editors:**

International Space Pitch Day is a joint UK-US initiative that aims to find, fund and fast-track innovation and technology that gives advantage to military personnel and operations in the space domain.

[The competition](#) was open to innovators and entrepreneurs from all over the world delivered through the UK [Defence and Security Accelerator \(DASA\)](#), assisted by [Starburst Accelerator](#).

It is specifically designed to bolster tech start-ups and small and medium-

sized enterprises (SMEs) and harness the power of their ingenuity and innovation.

The endeavour is jointly funded by the UK's [Defence Science and Technology Laboratory \(Dstl\)](#), [Royal Air Force](#) and the [US Air Force](#).

A grand coalition of Dstl, NASA, Royal Air Force, UK Strategic Command, the US Air Force, US Space Force, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) has been assembled to find, fund, and fast-track the best ideas from start-up innovators to the front line.

Starburst Aerospace is acting as an industry partner to the International Space Pitch Day and carry out specialist training and mentoring on its behalf through an Allied Defence Accelerator. More details can be found at the International Space Pitch Day [Virtual Learning Environment](#).

The format is the first of its kind in an international collaboration between two international allies.

#### **Winning proposal summaries:**

##### **114 AI Innovation LLP (India)**

Title: Spacewise

Exploitation toolset to visualise, access and analyse multiple input streams of Data for advanced Space Command and Control using Cognitive AI. This toolset enables space operations with allies and commercial partners by allowing visualization and analysis of multiple different sources of data in real time.

##### **Clearbox Systems Pty Ltd (Australia)**

Title: AI-enabled decision support for satellite service selection

To enhance a distributed satellite spectrum monitoring tool to incorporate AI-enabled decision support for satellite service selection. Applying AI techniques to the data and decision space can assist in improving prioritisation and selection of satellite services based on the Radio Frequency environment.

##### **Clutch Space Systems Limited (United Kingdom)**

Title: Space Resources Operational Availability Tool (SROAT)

The tool will be provided to operators to enable efficient and autonomous utilisation and assessment of the space assets for planning, and during operations. A prototype will include weather forecast interfaces, and orbit propagation, provide the satellite and payload simulations, automated mission planning code to support advanced queries, and provide the visualisation and AI modules.

## **Cognitive Space, Inc. (United States)**

Title: Multi-Level Security through Partitioned Blockchain

Extending an AI-driven cloud satellite mission planning solution to include segregated access for multi-level security through the use of blockchain technology. This solution will provide a common operational picture of space assets across multiple security levels while providing means of filtering accessible data and actions based on security clearance and need to know basis.

## **precursor SPC (United States)**

Title: 4D Space Weather Impact Tool

A Space Weather Impact Tool that delivers high-fidelity visualization of current, near-real time Space Weather conditions and forecasts of Space Weather conditions utilizing beacon satellites, multiple data sources, and ionospheric calibration systems to add the time dimension to Space Weather observations with an AI platform for forecasting. This novel approach improves ionospheric observation granularity by +10X while enabling Space Weather forecasting, and, delivering asset availability and management knowledge for mission readiness.

## **Riskaware Limited and Telespazio Vega UK (United Kingdom)**

Title: SpaceAware Resilience

A comprehensive multi-tier modelling and visualisation tool aimed at supporting battlefield and business operations with risk and threat analysis to mission critical space assets and the impact on the operational theatre.

## **Rocket Communications (United States)**

Title: Space:ACME – 4D Visualization Solution for Space Awareness, Communication, and Manoeuvre Evaluation

SpaceACME will provide intuitive and visual system for operators to envision system status, orbits, and predicted events; easily create multiple manoeuvre options and view/compare them to help decision-makers quickly grasp implications and improve decisions. Standardised visual language/formats will enable communication of status/alternatives across operation centres.

## **Slingshot Aerospace, Inc. (United States)**

Title: Slingshot Orbital Ensemble Catalogue

Slingshot Aerospace and its partner CGI Federal, propose to deliver an active data curation capability that uses machine learning to create an ensemble catalogue using all individual provider catalogues. This proposed solution will enable space warfighters to build and maintain data trust for space safety and sustainability.

## **Spire Global UK (United Kingdom)**

Title: Space Weather as a Service

The ability to produce a space weather recognised environmental picture and to convert that into operational action requires an underpinning sensor/modelling capability and a well-defined machine-to-machine Application Programming Interface (API). This project will demonstrate a new ionospheric scintillation service targeted at Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS), satcom and missile defence users.

## **Swim.ai, Inc. (United States)**

Title: Real-Time Orbital Situational Awareness Platform (ROSA)

ROSA will analyse multiple real-time and relational-data sources, create live digital twin models of all satellites, and provide real-time situational awareness including location, attributes, trajectories, and impact of space weather. Alerts will notify operators and commanders of threats of intercept, weather risks, changes in pattern of life, overflights, and resources available for battle-planning. Both will see results in real-time on a common operating picture, tailored for mission.

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# **UK and Canada co-chair chapeau to Global Media Freedom Conference communiqué**

Press release

Coalition Co-Chairs, the UK and Canada, share the Media Freedom Coalition Communique after the first ministerial-level meeting at the 2020 Global Media Freedom Conference.



The first Ministerial meeting of the Media Freedom Coalition took place today 16 November. As co-Chairs of the Coalition, the UK and Canada are happy to share the Communiqué issued by the Coalition.

The Communiqué recognises that media freedom is essential to the protection of human rights, a cornerstone of democracy and a means to help address the current health crisis through countering false information.

The Communiqué also recognises the continued decline in media freedom caused in part by the rise of authoritarianism. In response, the Communiqué recalls the commitment of all Coalition members to the Global Pledge on Media Freedom agreed at the London Conference 2019.

Moreover, the Communiqué also welcomes:

- new members to the Coalition
- the continuous work of the Advisory Network to support media freedom
- the work of the High Level Legal Panel
- progress of UNESCO to support grass roots work through the global Media Defence Fund, and
- efforts to at the national level to improve the media environment, including through legal protections, so that journalists can carry out their work without fear of harm, arrest or intimidation

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## [Animal medicines seizure notice: Border Force, Heathrow Airport \(2\)](#)

News story

Details of seizure notice served to Border Force, Heathrow Airport following a routine search.





The following veterinary medicines were detained and subsequently seized at Border Force, Heathrow Airport following an attempt to import.

This parcel was addressed to a residential premise in the UK and contained:

- 2 boxes of 10 x 5ml vials of Gestavet
- 2 boxes of 10 x 5ml vials of Solvent

These products are non-UK veterinary medicines. The UK authorised version of this product is intended for use in pigs and indications include induction and synchronisation of heat.

These medicines were seized under Regulation 25 (Importation of unauthorised veterinary medicinal products) of the Veterinary Medicines Regulations 2013.

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