

Our Twitter followers will have read about the excitements and angsts surrounding the staging of DSEi 2011 in London's former docklands. If I were G4S and Smiths, I'd think carefully about how security is done – the inevitable talking point on day 1, and at peak times, both here and at Farnborough, is the queues waiting as patiently as they can for their staff and kit to process them. Do you want an audience of your peers standing in judgement of your efficiency in such a way every year? We shall have to await the data, but anecdotal evidence is that visitor numbers are down, even though 641 UK based companies were exhibiting in a total of over 1300.

ADS published a report on the economic significance of the defence and security domain at home and abroad. Defence ministers and parliamentarians duely turned up to bury them in praise. There were so many announcements, conferences, releases that complete coverage isn't possible. So here are some bullets of stuff that caught our eye over the first three days.

Quick out of the traps, QinetiQ and Dytecnica announced an MoU on shared product development related to force protection. QQ is also collaborating with Blazepoint to develop a monitoring of aircraft component health programme, while selling its fuels and lubricants testing business to Intertek. Dutch Daedulus Aviation and Jordanian partners are to establish a regional military aviation maintenance, repair and overhaul centre in Amman.

Progress on the FRES Specialist Vehicle replacement for Scimitar and CVR(T) was demonstrated with the appearance of the turret for the reconnaissance turret with 40mm CTAS. Unmanned firings are 5 months ahead of schedule. Thales showed off its Orion stabilised day/night sighting system. Development has about 9 more months to run.

A maritime composite training system has been delivered by BAE Systems to the Royal Navy at Portsmouth and Devonport. An upgraded surface to air missile RBS70 NG was introduced by SAAB following trials. Magna Parva is to form a centre of excellence for unmanned systems for maritime, land, air and space . It also showed off a hand-portable, field deployable, laboratory suite. Rheinmetall has combined all its electro-optics activities Europe –wide and launched Rheinmetall Electro-optics at DSEi.

Making its international market debut was a new light recovery vehicle to retrieve MRAPs, from Penman and EKA. Brunswick has unveiled a new 11 metre rigid hull inflatable boat. The pic makes it look like great fun!

A & P on the Tyne will shortly be shipping a 3000 tonne module, part of the new aircraft carrier flight deck and hangar, to Rosyth to be installed on top of lower block 3, which arrived there from Govan last month. Chalkie, chuck over the face cream – sorry, specialist camouflage cream from BCB International. Incongruously, they are introducing the Sandbagger, which does what it says on the side – fills 480 sandbags per hour per shoveller.

The U K Defence Forum Facebook album has a pic of the Griffon Hoverwork's 2400TD craft, shown for the first time. The primes – BAE Systems, Thales, Raytheon, Lockheed Martin, Babcock (lanyard suppliers to the gentry at the exhibition, and the media) Boeing etc – were huge. But so are their PR machines, so mostly they can shift for themselves here. But full marks to MBDA for getting their munitions loads associated with the F-35 Lightning mock up which kept the queues vaguely sane outside the south door of the ExCel Centre. (See also U K Defence Forum on Facebook) They also announced another RAF order for Dual Mode Brimstone to replace UOR stock.

MSI-Defence Systems unveiled a single 20mm stabilised gun system – which they reckon offers the potential for customers to upgrade capabilities while still using legacy ordnance stocks. From Thermoteknix comes an addition to its range of ultra low powered miniature thermal camera cores – best in class, they say. ITT Electronic Systems added HF capability to its Spearhead VHF tactical radios to produce – wait for it – Spearhead HF.

Contributing to Op Ellamy has been Rubb the portable buildings people. 11 of their shelters have been in use with the RAF in Southern Italy, from where Tornado GR4s and Typhoons have deployed. Chemring Countermeasures announced they'd self fund the building and test of 'Bravo' model of their Centurion 130mm shipborne soft-kill launcher, buikding in expertise from their last-year Roke Manor research acquisition.

Outside was a Lynx Wildcat – pic on Facebook too – the first production aircraft is flying. Sat in it at Farnborough last year too, unphotographed. My old mates at Nexter showed off a new 6x6 technology demonstrator. And the now "combat proven" VBCI which MoD turned down for FRES UV. They were told at the time it could be in service in Afghanistan on Op Herrick 15, instead of still on the drawing board....as usual, the best is the enemy of the good?

Cassidian claims the world's first truly secure wireless data mobile internet protocol node. Lucky them – they've had their MoD through life support service contract for Cormorant extended to the end of next year, and are in talks to extend to 2014/15.

Amongst the new exhibitors was Lanode, whose devices are used in connections between networks having different security connections. Another newbie TEK Military Seating showed off its new blast protection seats. Sticklers Fibre Optic Cleaning Products is pretty self explanatory – it's also a first timer, and is part of the Belgian group MicroCare. Archangel Systems showed off its V-PRO to warn crew of rollovers of light and medium vehicles.

Pulse Electronics launched high power density supply units. Lifesaver Defence Systems introduced two new, smaller portable water filtration products.

Ultra's recently acquired 3eTI says its new parent will enable it to look outside the USA. It will be incorporating Ultra's acoustic gunfire locator into its multi-sensor perimeter security system.

Pearson Engineering was showing for the first times its bridge launch mechanism fitted onto a Warrior hull. Faun Trackway has extended its range of temporary runway landing mats with one specially for UAVs, which will be available next year.

AmSafe is to supply Boeing with barrier nets for the KC-46A airtanker. . Kent Periscopes has won a repair and refurbishment contract for up to 6,500 SUSAT weapons sights a year, with options which could extend to 2015.

And as the show closed, Farnborough was claiming things are looking good already for next year....

Postscript : 26th September, the DSEi team announced that attendance figure this year as 29,112; an increase of 16% on the previous edition in 2009, many of these coming on the first morning (that explains a lot!!). This year's DSEi featured 1,391 exhibiting companies representing 46 countries and included 30 national pavilions making this the largest DSEi ever.