

April MoD contracts worth £60m by Chris Graham
More than twenty British-based firms won over £60m worth of contracts awarded by the Ministry of Defence in April, all but £2m worth going to eight companies. Topping the list of major awards was GC Rieber Shipping of Sevenoaks, Kent, with a £26m contract from the Salvage & Marine Operations Team, DE&S (Defence Equipment & Support), Bath for the charter of a vessel to act as the UK Ice Patrol Ship, operating under the White Ensign, for three years from early 2011, with two one-year options to extend. A purchase option at the end of the charter may also be considered. The vessel will operate in the Antarctic in the Austral Summer and is expected to reach all Ice Stations within the British Antarctic Territory during this period. Norwegian-owned Rieber Shipping currently owns seven and operates eight advanced multi-functional special purpose vessels for subsea, ice/support and marine seismic work. The company owns one high-capacity seismic vessel and has a new vessel under construction for delivery in the first quarter of 2012. Veolia Environmental Services of Pontypool, Torfaen won a £10m contract for toxic waste disposal services (except radioactive waste and contaminated soil) over four years from the MoD's Disposal Services Authority (DSA), DE&S. Entering the market as recently as 1990, Veolia Environmental Services can now claim to be the leading recycling and waste management company in the UK, operating a network of recycling facilities across the country. The Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust of Fareham, Hants, gained a £7m contract for the provision of secondary health care for military personnel from 2011 to 2013. Capita Secure Information Systems Ltd of Chippenham, Wiltshire, won a £5.5m contract to maintain radio-communications equipment for Defence Fixed Networks (DFN), DE&S at Corsham, Wilts. This includes the provision of a fully managed Airwave radio terminal service for the Ministry of Defence, and the supply of leased radio terminals for use on the UK Airwave network and associated services and equipment. A £5m contract for fire and explosion protection and control consultancy services for Expedition Campaign Infrastructure (ECI), DE&S, Abbey Wood, Bristol, has been awarded to Hesco Bastion of Leeds. LB Bentley Ltd of Stroud, Gloucester, has won an MoD contract worth £1.38m to supply compressed-air dryers and provide "through life" support for dryers/filtration and associated equipment fitted to HM ships and submarines. A £3m contract to supply aviation kerosene for the Defence Fuels Group (DFG), DE&S, Wimborne, Dorset, has gone to the Dubai office of World Fuel Services, WFS operates world-wide and has its headquarters in Miami, Florida. This contract is for the supply and delivery of turbine fuel, aviation: kerosene type NATO F-35 AVTUR (Aviation Turbine Fuel), in bulk and drums, to Nanyuki Airstrip, Kenya. The contract is for two years, plus a possible one-year option at the discretion of the MoD who point out that there are no guaranteed volumes on this requirement, and estimated quantities are based on historical data. The total annual requirement is in the region of 3.5m litres. There are up to six exercise periods per year requiring air support, when demand is likely to be in the region of 510,000 litres over 5-6 week periods. Fuel is also required in support of routine and emergency flights outside of exercise periods, but demand will be lower.