

by Chris Graham

A £2.5m contract gained by Marlborough Communications of Horley, Surrey, for Defence Equipment & Support (DE&S) Bristol, worth a potential £20m, to supply and support Nano unmanned aerial vehicles (drones) topped the list of 64 contracts awarded by the Ministry of Defence last month.

Nano is a miniature unmanned air system, weighing as little as 200gms, that delivers man-portable 'over the hill' intelligence, surveillance, target acquisition and reconnaissance (ISTAR) for the infantry soldier. The Unmanned Air Systems (UAS) Team is responsible for delivering all Defence Equipment & Support (DE&S) Unmanned Air Vehicle programmes. This team also directs the United Kingdom's Unmanned Air System related acquisition policy and standards. This includes Unmanned Air System safety and engineering discipline, directing future research & development and providing guidance to industry. Other unmanned air systems include Desert Hawk, Hermes 450 and Watchkeeper, all operated by the Royal Artillery, and Reaper, remotely flown by the RAF's 39 Squadron. Marlborough Communications Ltd, based at secure premises near Gatwick airport, is a military communications and signal intercept specialist.

Babcock Marine (Devonport) Ltd has won a £14m contract for repair and maintenance services on ships at Devonport Royal Dockyard. The MoD combined contract award via HMS Richmond is worth a total of £14,263,000.

A contract worth £5m-£10m to supply Ridgback armoured military vehicles has gone to Integrated Survivability Technologies Ltd, Bristol, awarded by GB-Bristol for the Protected Mobility Team, Defence Equipment & Support (DE&S) for the development and supply of integrated Ridgback vehicles.

Capita Secure Information Systems Ltd, Chippenham, has won an MoD Combined Contract Award for £3.5m to provide a managed service for Airwave Control Room Equipment for the MoD Police & Guarding Agency. Awarded by GB-Corsham, the total value of the contract is £3,502,369.

Energys Ltd, Newport, Gwent, has gained a £3.3m contract to supply batteries and associated spares. Awarded by GB-Telford, the final value of the contract is £3,347,000.

A six-year contract worth £2.8m for close range weapons training at HMS Collingwood at Portsmouth has gone to QinetiQ Ltd, Farnborough. Awarded by GB-Abbey Wood, this is for training simulators.

A two-year, £2m contract to supply valves has gone to Thompson Valves Ltd, Poole, Dorset. Awarded by GB-Bristol, the contract is to manufacture and repair OEM (original equipment manufacture) non-first level valves.

Ballyclare Ltd, Reddish, Stockport, Greater Manchester, has been awarded a four-year, £1.7m contract by GB-Huntingdon to supply flying clothing. Fast Air Support Team (FAST), DE&S, require the manufacture and supply of a fire retardant version of the waterproof cold weather jacket Mk3 and trousers Mk3A & B based on the existing MRI 3199 design. It is anticipated that approximately 9,200 jackets and 3,400 trousers will be required during the duration of the contract.

A £1.5m contract to supply and fit transponders in Sea King helicopters has gone to AgustaWestland Helicopters, Yeovil. The MoD has a requirement to replace the existing Identification Friend or Foe (IFF)/Secondary Surveillance Radar (SSR) transponders fitted to the Royal Air Force Search and Rescue Helicopters, with the Successor Identification Friend or Foe (SIFF) system. The requirement is to meet the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) mandate for the carriage of a Mode S transponder and therefore all Sea King Mk 3 HAR and Sea King Mk3A HAR platforms are required to be fitted with SIFF by the end of March 2012. Awarded by GB-Yeovil for the Sea King Project Team, DE&S, the final value of the contract is £1,594,170.

Icon Polymer Ltd, Retford, Nottinghamshire, has gained a £1.2m contract to supply hoses. Awarded by GB-Bristol, the contract is for the manufacture and repair of OEM non-first level hoses and bellows and is worth a total of £1,260,000.

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contract awarded by GB-Bristol and worth anything from £685,000 to £3.4m for post design services on the Warthog military vehicle has gone to Singapore Technologies Kinetics Ltd, Singapore. Warthog, a modified and better protected version of the Singapore Army Bronco is an all-terrain protected mobility vehicle equipped with an upgraded cooling and filtration system, Bowman BCIP 5 communications fit, mine blast protection and Electronic Counter Measures (ECM). Warthog provides Protected Mobility (PM) for the infantry with its protection, firepower and mobility. It also operates in a Mounted Close Combat (MCC) role and provides support to Dismounted Close Combat (DCC). The vehicle is able to operate in a range of environments including the Green Zone and desert areas of Afghanistan. With its associated communications, ECM suite, mine blast protection, load carriage, crew-served weapon system. Warthog provides a protected weapon station from which the commander will be able to quickly deliver fire on either the 7.62mm general purpose machine gun (GPMG) or 0.5 calibre heavy machine gun (HMG). The mount allows accurate, suppressive fire out to 1000m.

A three-year, £1.2m MoD Combined Contract Award to build accommodation blocks in Oman has gone to AddressInterserve (Defence) Ltd, London, appointed Prime Contract (PC) Infrastructure Support Provider (ISP) in Muscat, Oman. The work, 100km north west of Muscat involves single-storey, block-work construction with an external render, with water, electrical and sewage services (including a packaged sewage treatment plant), comprising twenty accommodation blocks, nine ablution blocks, a gymnasium, an office complex, two industrial hangars with integrated offices, and a welfare facility. The contract includes the operation, maintenance and repair of buildings, fixed plant, equipment and installations within the facility and is worth a total of £1,276,170.

The University of Southampton has been given a four-year, £1.1m contract to provide adult-education services at university level in three modules: Post Graduate Certificate of Education in Post Compulsory Education & Training, Post Graduate Diploma delivered by supported distance learning, Research Methods and Dissertation module leading to the award of a Masters Degree. The training population will consist of an estimated maximum of 27 personnel per year in two cohorts. Awarded by GB-Andover, the contract is worth a total of £1,144,000.

A two-year, £1m contract to supply aluminium targets for firing ranges has been awarded to Bozeat Industrial Ltd, t/a B1 Engineering, Wellingborough, Northants. The GB-Bristol contract is worth £1,072,994.