MOD Request For Information

1. **Contract Title**

Policing, Defence & Security Body Armour Innovation and On-Going Development

2. **Contracting Authority:**

Ministry of Defence, DSTL, Defence Science & Technology Laboratory (DSTL)
Dstl Porton Down, Building 5, Room G-02, Salisbury, SP4 0JQ, United Kingdom
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Attn: C A Flynn

3. **Object of the Request for Information:**

Short description of requirement:

Dstl's Crime and Policing Studies Programme (hereinafter referred to as the Authority), is considering options for Science & Technology (S&T), with respect to innovative design and development of body armour within a Policing and wider Defence and Security arenas.

The Authority is considering options, with regards to improving the fit, comfort and wearability of body armour for Policing, but also for Defence and Security Personnel. These factors are key to wellbeing and performance of the end-user, as well as affording them increased protection.

The Authority is releasing this RFI to inform future work and develop options for potential future funding levels, which may help support on-going S&T and industry development to address known body armour issues, including but not limited to:

* Improving both comfort in a diverse workforce (for example, female specific/inclusive armour, shaped armour, anthropometry research);
* Increasing the coverage afforded (and thereby protection) by the body armour;
* Improving the fit for the end-user (for example, through adjustable systems or innovative sizing regimes for 1st to 99th percentile user);
* Reducing the burden on the end-user (for example, by minimising system mass, optimising load carriage options for body-worn equipment, or scalable systems);
* Maximizing mobility to ensure task performance is not hindered (for example, though flexible armour systems or low-profile designs);
* Reducing musculoskeletal or environmental injury risk (for example, through smart fabrics and materials, in-built wearable technology or cooling systems)
* Improving public perception of Policing and Defence and Security Personnel when wearing body armour (for example, through recognisable brands, covert armour, or modern designs that look less intimidating).

The Authority wish to understand what body armour technologies and innovations are currently at a low to medium Technology Readiness Level which may help to address the above issues within 2-8 years if the projects were to receive MOD support.

Advice on what Technology Readiness Levels are can be found here: https://www.gov.uk/government/news/guidance-on-technology-readiness-levels

The Authority is issuing this Request for Information to gauge interest and to understand the technology horizon in relation to undertaking S&T in this area with an external provider within the UK and/or overseas.

4. **Information Requested**

To assist the Authority, respondents to this RFI should provide:

1) Details of the body armour technology / innovation, including current Technology Readiness Level (TRL);

2) Details on which of the body armour issues identified above, the technology/innovation aid in addressing;

3) Anticipated benefit to the end user and proposed metrics to evidence this;
4) Indication of the volume/value of development which would be required per annum, and length of time to be commercially viable;

5) Breakdown of proposed phases of development remaining to be commercially viable.

Respondents are advised that any resulting MOD funded projects or procurement will be conducted competitively. Information you provide to us in response to this RFI, that is not already available to us from other sources, will be handled in-confidence. By submitting a response to this RFI you are giving us permission to keep and use the information for our internal purposes, and to provide the information onwards, in-confidence, within UK Government. We will not use or disclose the information for any other purpose, without first requesting permission to do so. This RFI is not a commitment to subsequently launch a formal procurement procedure.

**Time-limit**: Responses by Friday 29th October 2021