

UK start-up to supply interceptor missiles to UK military and Gulf partners

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- Interceptor missile known as 'Skyhammer' is designed to counter Shahed-style attack drones, with the first deliveries in May.
- Comes as Defence Secretary opens the London Defence Conference, bringing together international leaders and policymakers from government, military, industry, academia.

The UK military and Gulf partners will be better protected against drone attacks, as a veteran-founded British start-up is set to supply new interceptor missiles.

Speaking at the London Defence Conference, Defence Secretary John Healey MP announced the Ministry of Defence intends to buy cutting-edge interceptor missiles, designed to counter Iranian Shahed-style attack drones, for the UK Armed Forces and Gulf partners.

Subject to contract, the substantial first tranche of missiles and launchers will be delivered to the Ministry of Defence in May, with more missiles and associated launchers set to be supplied within the first six months of the agreement.

This innovation demonstrates how the UK defence industry can deliver at pace - learning lessons from the ongoing conflicts in Ukraine and the Middle East to deliver cost-effective air defence solutions for the UK and its partners.

Cambridge Aerospace's new missile, known as 'Skyhammer', has a range of 30km and a maximum speed of 700km/h. The deal will further boost British business by creating over 50 new jobs and supporting 125 current jobs at Cambridge Aerospace, making defence an engine for growth. The UK is delivering the largest sustained increase in defence spending since the end of the Cold War, hitting 2.6% of GDP from 2027.

The announcement comes as the Defence Secretary opens the London Defence Conference, speaking to policymakers, industry and academia on a new era for defence and the importance of warfighting readiness.

Defence Secretary John Healey MP said:

We are applying the approach for UK support to Ukraine and accelerating contracts with the most innovative British businesses to rapidly expand support to Gulf partners and equip our own forces with anti-drone tech.

Our government backing for Cambridge Aerospace is a prime case of a veteran-founded UK defence start-up scaling at pace to deliver new interceptor missiles within weeks for our Armed Forces and Gulf partners, and good jobs and security here in the UK.

CEO of Cambridge Aerospace Steven Barrett said:

With aerial threats to the UK and our allies increasing by the day, it is critical that we can defend ourselves effectively. Skyhammer was designed to do exactly that - bringing affordable mass to protect our skies. We welcome the Government's commitment to supporting UK air defence with scalable, sovereign solutions.

The multi-million pound contract with Cambridge Aerospace is set to include integration, technical support and end user training.

This initiative builds on last month's roundtable event in London which saw representatives from 13 key UK-based defence companies meeting Gulf ambassadors and defence attachés to explore new industry support for regional allies.

The Ministry of Defence, through the National Armaments Director (NAD) Group, is working to speed up financing and licensing for exports to Gulf partners. As part of this, a new Task Force has been created within the NAD Group to collaborate across government to support partners across the Middle East working with UK industry. It will also manage the impact of the conflict on the UK defence supply chain and gather requirements for stock replenishment.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-start-up-to-supply-interceptor-missiles-to-uk-military-and-gulf-partners>