

Airbus awarded MOD satellite communications contract

Airbus has been awarded a military satellite communications systems contract by the Ministry of Defence.

The aerospace giant will provide post-design services to allow for an upgrade to the UK's SKYNET military satellite communications systems.

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The company said the deal would help it to support roles with production of the SKYNET 6A satellite to take place at its Stevenage and Portsmouth facilities.

Richard Budd, head of secure communications in the UK, US and Australia for Airbus Defence and Space, said: "The scope of SDSC – which runs from March 2024 for five years – includes both the satellites and the infrastructure on the ground.

"The contract supports the retention of specialist space and ground-segment roles and confirms Airbus' ongoing involvement in the SKYNET programme, including the production of the SKYNET 6A satellite in our Stevenage and Portsmouth facilities."

Steven Fisher, the MOD's director of delivery for intelligence and expeditionary services said: "SDSC reflects our ongoing commitment to maintain the SKYNET 5 system that forms the backbone of UK military satellite communications.

"It also recognises Airbus as the design authority for SKYNET 5, alongside being a key strategic supplier of UK sovereign space capability in the form of SKYNET 6A, which is a vital first step in our programme to replace and replenish our

space-based assets.”