

Devon defence jobs secured after British Army vehicle contract win

Devon-based engineering firm Supacat has landed a major contract to manufacture potentially hundreds of combat vehicles for the British Army.

The company will collaborate with defence giant Babcock on the project to deliver at least 70 light armoured, high mobility transporters from its HMT 400 series, known by The Army as 'The Jackal'.

Supacat said the programme could lead to as many as 240 of the vehicles being produced, "should operational requirements demand".

Work will take place between Supacat's manufacturing facilities at Dunkeswell near Honiton and Babcock's Devonport site in Plymouth.

According to the Ministry of Defence (MoD) procurement arm Defence, Equipment and Support (DE&S), the deal is worth £90m, and will help to secure 10 jobs at Supacat and 90 at Babcock.

DE&S awards [@SupacatLtd](#) a £90M contract for High Mobility Transporters.

Securing ten jobs at Supacat and 90 jobs at [@Babcockplc](#) 69 vehicles to the HMTV fleet as a Jackal (L400) or Coyote (L600)

Supporting [@BritishArmy](#) operations and readiness <https://t.co/YuCgc101KW>

– Defence Equipment & Support (@DefenceES)

Originally developed in the 1990s, the Jackal is produced in 4×4, 6×6 and convertible 'Extenda' formats, and is used by specialist and other armed forces worldwide. Supacat said further export opportunities were "currently being explored" which could bring more investment into the South West.

Supacat said its latest contract would build its "well established" relationship with Babcock. The two firms assembled more than 600 vehicles in Devonport within a three-year period, which were used by British forces in Afghanistan.

Chief executive Nick Ames said: "This is an enormously important contract win for us. Primarily it further evidences our customer's confidence in our HMT 400 product after 20 years of service. Furthermore it gives us a platform to secure potential export orders and thereby shows how investment in UK products can provide benefit to the wider UK economy. It also allows us to broaden and deepen our relationship with Babcock as a world class engineering partner.

"Above all, this contract win is the result of the unstinting belief and passion of our staff in the product. It is through their hard work and dedication that the business is here to deliver this contract and take the confidence to continue to develop more battle winning and lifesaving equipment in the future."

Tom Newman, chief executive of Babcock's Land Sector, added that the order was "fantastic news" for the firm and for Plymouth.

Mr Newman added: "We are proud to be playing our part in supporting the British Army's Land Industrial Strategy by securing critical industrial skills and capabilities and enhancing social value, including the creation of 90 new jobs.

"This new contract shows how British industry can work collaboratively to rapidly respond to defence requirements and deliver in short timescales. The HMT 400 series is also not

only a battle-proven vehicle but a fantastic export asset in its own right, and our chosen build location in the freeport zone of Plymouth will enhance its export prospects.”

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