Dstl launches Defence Data Research Centre

The Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) has announced the formation of the Defence Data Research Centre (DDRC) as part of the newly released Defence AI Strategy and the newly-established Defence AI Centre.

Awarded through competition and operating under the Serapis framework, the DDRC comprises a consortium led by the University of Exeter, supported by the Universities of Liverpool and Surrey and the Digital Catapult.

The Centre will focus on problems related to the use of data for artificial intelligence (AI) applications, which can often be inaccessible or unusable its raw state; up to 80% of time can be spent in getting data in a state where it can be used, and some projects never start at all due insurmountable data issues.

The principal task will be investigating problems within a defence context, such as logistics support, object tracking and data wranging among many other potential areas, with the expectation that any solutions and mitigations developed by the Centre could be applied elsewhere to benefit the wider UK economy.

The establishment of the Centre is expected to result in the creation of at least 5 to 8 new academic posts starting from September 2022, with the potential to grow further.

Glen Hart, Senior Principal Scientist from Dstl, commented:

The DDRC will be a centre of excellence which links academic expertise from the South West, South East and North West with the defence insight of Dstl.

This is the first centre dedicated to data research and

experimentation within defence which will play a key role in future defence innovation.

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