



Ministry  
of Defence

**[dstl]**

The Science Inside

**Non-Executive Member of Defence Science  
and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) Board and  
Chair of Dstl Audit and Risk Assurance  
Committee**

**Information pack for applicant**

**Closing date: 10/11/2023**

**Vacancy Reference: P2306-171L - *please  
quote on all correspondence***

  **disability**  
  **confident**

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## **Equal Opportunities**

MOD is committed to be an equal opportunities employer. We value and welcome diversity. The appointment(s) will be governed by the Principle of Public Appointment based on merit with independent assessment and transparency of process. Candidates may come from a wide range of backgrounds and experience although the successful candidate(s) will need to demonstrate that they meet all the criteria for this appointment(s). Applications from women, ethnic minorities and disabled people will be welcomed.

## **Disability Confident Scheme (DSC)**

MOD actively encourages applications from disabled people. As part of this, MOD along with several departments have committed to the Disability Confident Scheme (DCS). One of our commitments is to offer an interview to all disabled applicants who meet the minimum criteria for the role(s). This gives them the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities at the interview stage. To be eligible for DCS the candidate must have a disability, as defined by the [Equality Act 2010](#). Further definition can be found on the [Cabinet Office website](#).

## Chair of Dstl Board message to candidates

Dear Candidate

Thank you for your interest in the role of Non-Executive Member (NEM) of the Dstl Board. Dstl is a most remarkable organisation of 5,000 scientists, engineers, technologists and other specialists performing an extraordinary range of vital work that helps to keep our nation safe. We are literally 'The Science Inside' defence and security. To whet your appetite, take a look at [some of the things we have been involved in this past year](#).

Since being established in its current form just over 20 years ago, and with a lineage reflecting how science and technology has consistently underpinned national security, Dstl is now experiencing an unprecedented level of growth. This is partly driven by the increasing importance attached to defence and security as well as the Government's determination to invest in science and technology more generally. Dstl is by far the largest of the Public Sector Research Establishments, with an annual income accelerating towards £1bn per annum.

This growth in what is expected of Dstl to deliver over the coming years presents both opportunities and challenges for the Executive Team. As a Dstl NEM, your role will be to use your business leadership experience to support, counsel and challenge the Executive through working together as an advisory board that provides assurance to the MOD owner. We are currently looking to replace one of the NEMs whose term of office is coming to an end – and the new NEM will also chair the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. The role will bring a level of commercial or operational acumen that is relevant in helping Dstl work increasingly in partnership with industry. The operating model will also need to evolve to support growth in demand, so experience in leading large scale change, infrastructure (estates and digital) and safe working in hazardous environments will also be welcome.

To find out more about this opportunity please read the enclosed information.

I look forward to hearing from you should you decide these opportunities match your own interests and experience, and you wish to apply.

**Adrian Belton, Chair**

## The Role and Person Specification

Dstl is led by a Board of Directors which includes the Chair and five Non-Executive Members (including one MOD NEM). We are seeking an exceptional individual to join the Dstl Board as a Non-Executive Board Member and Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee (ARAC), a key sub-committee of the Dstl Board, with an anticipated start date of end January 2024. The key responsibilities of a Dstl Non-Executive Member include:

- To provide an independent perspective to the strategic direction of Dstl's work.
- To encourage and support Dstl's drive for continuous improvement through objective, constructive challenge and scrutiny of Dstl's performance.
- To make a creative contribution by questioning existing ways of working and encouraging innovation and new thinking.
- To share knowledge and expertise with both the Board and individual Executive Directors as appropriate.
- To contribute to Board sub-committees and significant change programme boards as appropriate.
- To build effective relationships with Board colleagues, internal and external stakeholders.
- To actively communicate Dstl's role to internal and external stakeholders, and to understand any challenges/concerns.
- To role model Dstl's guiding principles.

The Chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee will work in close partnership with the Dstl Chair and other NEMs, including Dstl's MOD NEM. The role of the Chair is pivotal in achieving Committee effectiveness, ensuring that the committee is appropriately resourced and that it is maintaining effective communication with stakeholders. The ARAC should support the Board and the Dstl Chief Executive (who is accountable to Parliament) by reviewing the comprehensiveness and reliability of assurances on governance, risk management, the control environment and the annual report and financial statements. Key roles of the ARAC include:

1. Providing assistance and guidance to the Dstl Chief Financial Officer in forming key judgements required in preparation of the annual accounts.
2. Ensuring that the work of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee is effective, that the committee is appropriately resourced.
3. Overseeing the process for approval of the annual audited accounts by direct engagement with the audit partner.
4. Reporting key audit findings and recommendations made by Dstl auditors (the National Audit Office) to the board following engagement with the audit team.
5. Overseeing systems of internal control and risk management and make recommendations for improvement as appropriate.
6. Developing a positive and constructive working relationship with the executive team.

The successful candidate must abide by the Seven Principles of Public Life (Annex A) and the Code of Conduct for Board Members<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/code-of-conduct-for-board-members-of-public-bodies>

# Essential and Desirable Criteria

## Essential Criteria

Candidates are required to demonstrate:

### Strategic Leadership

- Senior leadership experience, able to contribute to the development of strategy and associated longer-term issues, introduce new thinking and challenge existing ways of doing things.
- Driving delivery and transformational changes to ensure all challenges facing the business are dealt with effectively and at pace.
- Ability to provide a challenging and supportive role to the Dstl Chair, Chief Executive and other senior executives, using sound judgment, analysis and decision-making skills.
- An engaging and collaborative working style, demonstrating business leadership and influencing skills with a range of stakeholders.

### Professional Expertise

- Extensive high level financial experience – such as a chief financial officer, senior finance executive or similar at an organisation of material size and complexity – and preferably an accountancy qualification such as ACCA, CIPFA, CIMA, ICAEW, IACAS.
- Experience in risk management, performance monitoring and corporate governance best practice.

## Desirable Criteria

It is desirable that the successful candidates bring:

- knowledge and expertise of operating in a technological or scientific environment (not necessarily defence) of comparable scale and complexity to Dstl with a strong emphasis on safety
- an interest in the challenges of Government and an understanding of the public sector
- wider experience of other sectors to foster diversity of thought
- mentoring and counselling colleagues to help them realise their full potential.

### Terms and Conditions of Appointment

This is a ministerial appointment and not an offer of employment. Such appointments are not normally subject to the provisions of employment law.

### Time Commitment and Remuneration

The post requires a time commitment of approximately 25-30 days a year, for which the annual fee is £18,000. The appointment is not pensionable. Reasonable travel and subsistence expenses will be reimbursed in line with MOD's policy, with all costs borne by Dstl.

### Appointment Term

The appointment will be for a period of three years with an anticipated start date of 29 January 2024 (subject to appropriate security clearances). There is a possibility of re-appointment, subject to a satisfactory annual appraisal of performance assessed by the Chairperson of Dstl Board, Board requirements and Ministerial approval.

### Location

Meetings are usually held at Porton Down, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP4 0JQ. Occasional travel to other locations may be required.

## Termination of Appointment

The successful candidate(s) may resign at any time by notice in writing to the Minister for Defence Procurement. Subsequently, the Minister for Defence Procurement can remove you from office if you fail to perform the duties required in line with the standards expected in public office.

## Security Clearance

Due to the nature of work that Dstl undertakes you will be required to undergo Developed Vetting security clearance. This process will commence once appointed to the role, you will not start in post until the required checks have been completed, please be aware these checks can take between three to six months to complete (and in some circumstances longer). More information about this process can be found at this [link](#)<sup>2</sup>.

## Confidentiality

You will be subject to the provisions of the Official Secrets Act and required to exercise care in the use of official information acquired in the course of official duties, and not to disclose information which is held in confidence.



## Who we are

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) is made up of 18 organisations: Head Office, four Military Commands, the Defence Nuclear Organisation and 12 Enabling Organisations (including Dstl). Head Office provides the Department of State function and political and military strategic direction for the Department.

There are four Military Commands that generate military capability and operate in accordance with Defence policy objectives as directed by Head Office. These are the Royal Navy, the British Army, the Royal Air Force and Strategic Command.

The Defence Nuclear Organisation manages the portfolio of Defence nuclear programmes. There are 12 Enabling Organisations that deliver activities to support Defence. Further information can be found on [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk).

## Purpose

The Defence Purpose is to protect the people of the United Kingdom, prevent conflict, and be ready to fight our enemies. To **Mobilise** to make the most of existing capabilities; **Modernise** to embrace new technologies to assure our competitive position and **Transform** to radically improve the way Defence does business.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/united-kingdom-security-vetting-applicant>

## The Role of Dstl

Dstl is one of the principal government organisations dedicated to science and technology in the defence and security field.

Dstl supplies specialist services to MOD and wider government, working collaboratively with external partners in industry and academia worldwide, providing expert research, specialist advice and invaluable operational support. We are innovative, collaborative and impactful.

### Our responsibilities include:

- Supplying sensitive and specialist science and technology services for MOD and wider government.
- Providing and facilitating expert advice, analysis and assurance on defence procurement.
- Leading on the MOD's science and technology programme.
- Understanding risks and opportunities through horizon-scanning.
- Acting as a trusted interface between MOD, wider government, the private sector and academia to provide science and technology support to military operations by the UK and her allies.
- Championing and developing science and technology skills across MOD.
- International work such as coordinating the UK's involvement in [NATO science and technology activity](#).

Further information about Dstl can be found on [our web page](#), the [ARAC terms of reference](#) and in the [Dstl Framework Document](#).

### The Role of the Dstl Board

The Dstl Board (in an advisory capacity) exercises strategic oversight of Dstl and provides assurance to MOD, of Dstl in the delivery of its objectives. Its key roles are to:

- advise on the development of Dstl's organisational strategies and business plans
- advise on Dstl's risk appetite and the controls in place to manage risks and threats to Dstl achieving its objectives, and to address opportunities
- monitor organisational performance and seek assurance around the effectiveness of mitigations required
- advise on the health of Dstl's capabilities and the quality of the S&T
- advise on, and endorse, investment proposals in support of Dstl's business plans that are above the delegation of the Chief Executive, before submission to MOD
- seek assurance that Dstl is operating in compliance with relevant policies and standards.

The Board comprises:

- An independent Non-Executive Chair.
- Chief Executive of Dstl.
- Independent Non-Executive Members (NEMs). The role of the NEMs is to provide expert advice, guidance and challenge to the Dstl Executive team.
- The Ministry of Defence's formal NEM, representing the Ministry of Defence on the Board, who is consulted on matters that have consequences for the wider Department or Government. The Ministry of Defence NEM will also advise the Dstl Sponsor (the MOD Chief Operating Officer) on the strategic direction and performance of Dstl and the effectiveness of the Chair.
- Dstl Chief Operating Officer .
- Chief Technical Officer.
- Other members of the Executive as agreed between the Chair and Chief Executive.

The Board is supported by an Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, chaired by a NEM.

### **The Role of the Dstl Audit and Risk Assurance Committee**

The Dstl Board has established an Audit and Risk Assurance Committee as a sub-committee of the Board to support them in their responsibilities for issues of risk, control and governance by reviewing the comprehensiveness of assurances in meeting the Board and Accounting Officer's assurance needs, and reviewing the reliability and integrity of these assurances.

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee does not have any executive responsibilities nor is it charged with making or endorsing any decisions. It takes care to maintain its independence.

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee advises the Board and the Chief Executive on:

- the strategic processes for risk, control and governance, taking into account related ethical standards, and the Governance Statement
- the accounting policies, the accounts, and the Annual Report, including the process for review of the accounts prior to submission for audit, levels of error identified, and management's letter of representation to the external auditors
- the planned activity and results of both internal and external audit
- adequacy of management response to issues identified by audit activity
- assurances relating to the management of risk and corporate governance requirements for Dstl
- proposals for tendering for external audit services or for purchase of non-audit services from contractors who provide audit services
- anti-fraud policies, whistle-blowing processes, and arrangements for special investigations
- its own effectiveness through periodic review, and reporting the results of those reviews to the Board.



## The Recruitment Process

- The Assessment Advisory Panel (AAP) will sift and assess each application against the criteria, to produce a shortlist to invite to interview.
- Subject to Ministerial agreement, the AAP will then conduct interviews to ascertain which candidates are appointable to the role.
- Interviews are expected to take place in Ministry of Defence, Main Building, London, SW1A 2HB. Further details about the format will be provided to you in advance.
- The AAP's composition along with the indicative timetable for the recruitment is below.
- The decision to appoint to this role rests with the Minister for Defence Procurement.
- Candidates considered appointable by the AAP may be invited to meet with the Minister before a final decision is made. As a result, there may be a delay in informing candidates of the outcome of the competition.
- The successful applicant will be required to sign the Official Secrets Act and go through the appropriate security checks for this position.

### Indicative Timetable

Please note that these dates may be subject to change.

Closing date	10 <sup>th</sup> November 2023
<i>Longlist meeting</i>	<i>w/c 13<sup>th</sup> November</i>
Longlisted Candidate Interviews	w/c 13 <sup>th</sup> -w/c 27 <sup>th</sup> November
<i>Shortlist meeting</i>	<i>w/c 4<sup>th</sup> December</i>
Candidate interviews	w/c 11 <sup>th</sup> /18 <sup>th</sup> December-w/c 8 <sup>th</sup> January 2024
Start/provisional date:	29 January 2024

### Advisory Assessment Panel Composition

Chair	Adrian Belton, Dstl Board Chair
Member	Tara Usher, MOD Non-Executive Member of Dstl Board
Independent	Paul Boyle OBE, Non-Executive Member of UK Hydrographic Office

## How to Apply and Submit your Application

The recruitment process is being undertaken by Russell Reynolds Associates on behalf of Dstl. Please submit your full application by email to [responses@russellreynolds.com](mailto:responses@russellreynolds.com). Please quote the role title and assignment code **P2306-171L** in the subject heading of the email. All applications will be acknowledged. **The closing date for applications is 23:59 on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2023.**

### Your submission should include:

- A **CV** setting out your career history, with key responsibilities and achievements. Please ensure you have provided reasons for any gaps within the last two years.
- A **Statement of Suitability** (no longer than two pages) explaining how you consider your personal skills, qualities and experience provide evidence of your suitability for the role, with particular reference to the criteria in the person specification.
- A completed [Diversity Questionnaire](#). We're committed to implementing and monitoring our equality and diversity policies with the aim of recruiting, retaining and promoting staff regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation. Data will be reported anonymously, in an aggregate format, and will not be seen by anyone assessing your application.
- Contact details for two referees (by providing their details you are giving consent for us to contact them should you be successful at the shortlisting stage) and any conflict of interest (see further information below and Annex B). *References will only be taken up if candidates are successful at shortlisting. You should ensure that they have given you their permission to share their names with us and for us to contact them.*

If you are applying under the Disability Confident Scheme you will need to meet the minimum criteria for the role as determined by the AAP at sift. This will guarantee an invite to an interview. To ensure fairness, the AAP will not be informed of who has applied under the DCS until they have set the minimum criteria at the start of the sift meeting.

If you have a disability and require reasonable adjustments to enable you to attend for interview, please advise us when you return your application.

Please note: it is your responsibility to ensure we receive your application by the closing date.

### Further Information

If you have queries about any aspect of this role or the recruitment process, please contact [responses@russellreynolds.com](mailto:responses@russellreynolds.com)

### Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for consideration the candidate(s) will need to be a UK National. All posts at Dstl are considered 'Reserved' which means at this time we do not accept applications from candidates who hold dual-nationality status. The candidate(s) is/are expected to inform the Minister Defence Procurement if they intend to accept a prominent position in any political party and to understand that the appointment may be terminated if it is felt that the position is incompatible.

There are circumstances in which an individual may not be considered for appointment. If:

- you have received a prison sentence or suspended sentence of three months or more in the last five years
- you are the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order, or a debt relief order or interim debt relief order under Schedule 4ZB to the Insolvency Act 1986

- you are disqualified from acting as a company director under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986
- you have been removed from trusteeship of a charity.

### **Conflict of Interest and Due Diligence**

If you have any interest that might be relevant to the work of Dstl and which could lead to a real or perceived conflict of interest if you were to be appointed, please provide details in your application. (Annex B in this information pack should help you to evaluate whether you have a potential conflict.) This includes other MOD Boards and Committees on which you are already appointed. If you have queries about this and would like to discuss further, please contact [responses@russellreynolds.com](mailto:responses@russellreynolds.com)

Given the nature of public appointments, it is important that those appointed as members of public bodies/committees maintain the confidence of Parliament and the public. If there are any issues in your personal or professional history that could, if you were appointed, be misconstrued, cause embarrassment, or cause public confidence in the appointment to be jeopardised, it is important that you bring them to the attention of the AAP and provide details of the issue(s) in your application. In considering whether you wish to declare any issues, you should also reflect on any public statements you have made, including through social media.

As part of our due diligence checks we will consider anything in the public domain related to your conduct or professional capacity. This will include us undertaking searches of previous public statements and social media, blogs etc. Any information found may be made available to the AAP who may wish to explore further with you should you be invited to an interview. The information may also be shared with Ministers and the Cabinet Office.

### **Russell Reynolds Data Protection and Privacy Notice**

We strive to be as transparent as possible in how we use candidate, client, and employee data. Privacy is essential to our business, which is why we are at the forefront of driving and adopting industry standards and best practices and ensuring compliance with applicable regulations such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

### **RRA Global Privacy Principles**

1. Follow the rules (**global privacy laws**).
2. Be **transparent** and **inform** individuals about what personal information we collect, how and why we use it, and who we share it with.
3. Give individuals **choices** about how we use their data and seek and record their **consent** where legally required.
4. **Collect only data we need** for a specific purpose; use and retain it only for that same purpose.
5. Ensure that data gathered is **accurate** and can be accessed, fixed, or deleted upon request.
6. **Support the information security team** by securing and protecting the data we process against inappropriate use, disclosure, or destruction.

### **Dealing with your concerns**

We aim to process all applications as quickly as possible and to treat all applicants with courtesy. If you feel that you have any complaints about the way your application has been handled, in the first instance, please contact [responses@russellreynolds.com](mailto:responses@russellreynolds.com)

## Annex A: The Seven Principles of Public Life

The candidate is expected to adhere to and understand the standards of probity required of public appointees outlined below in the “Seven Principles of Public Life” drawn up by the Committee of Standards in Public Life.

### **Selflessness**

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

### **Integrity**

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

### **Objectivity**

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

### **Accountability**

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

### **Openness**

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

### **Honesty**

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising, in order to protect the public interest.

### **Leadership**

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

The candidate is also expected to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for board members of public bodies](#).

## Annex B: Conflict of Interest

### **Q1. What is a conflict of interest?**

Public Appointments require the highest standards of propriety, involving impartiality, integrity and objectivity, in relation to the stewardship of public funds and the oversight and management of all related activities. This means that any private, voluntary, charitable or political interest which materially might be relevant to the work of the public body concerned should be declared.

There is always the possibility for real or perceived conflicts of interest to arise. A perceived inference of a conflict may, on occasions, be as damaging as the existence of a real conflict. It is important, therefore, that you consider your circumstances when applying for a public appointment and identify any potential conflicts of interest, whether real or perceived.

### **Q2. Surely a perceived conflict is not a problem, as long as I act impartially at all times?**

The integrity of the individual is not in question here. However, it is necessary for the standing of the individual and the Board that members of the public have confidence in their independence and impartiality. Even a perceived conflict of interest on the part of a Board member can be extremely damaging to the public body's reputation and it is therefore essential that these are declared and explored, in the same way as an actual conflict would be. The fact that a member acted impartially may be no defence against accusations of potential bias.

### **Q3. If I hold another Ministry of Defence appointment will it be considered a conflict of interest?**

It will depend on the nature of the role you have and the one you are applying for. In some circumstances the relationship between the two may make it too difficult to put in place arrangements to manage the conflicts. In such circumstances you would have to decide which role you would want to step away from. To allow the Advisory Assessment Panel (AAP) to consider fully you should provide details of other MOD roles you have or may be applying for.

### **Q4. What should I do if I think I have a conflict of interest?**

If you are unsure if your circumstances constitute a possible conflict, you should note these in your application in order to give the AAP as much information as possible. You might also find it helpful to discuss it with Russell Reynolds, in the first instance.

### **Q5. If I declare a conflict, does this mean I will not be considered for appointment?**

No, each case is considered individually. If you are shortlisted for interview, the AAP will explore with you how far the conflict might affect your ability to contribute effectively and impartially on the Board and how this might be managed, if you were to be appointed. For example, it may be possible to arrange for you to step out of meetings where an issue is discussed, in which you have an interest. However, if, following the discussion with you, the AAP believes that the conflict is too great and would call into question the probity of the Board or the appointment they may ask you to withdraw your application from the competition.

### **Q6. What happens if I do not declare a known conflict, which is then discovered by the Department after my appointment?**

Again, each case would be considered on its merits, but the Department may take the view that by concealing a conflict of interest, you would be deemed to have breached the Seven Principles of Conduct of Public Life and we may terminate your appointment.

### **Q7. What happens if I do not realise a potential conflict exists?**

This situation may arise where the applicant is not familiar with the broad range of work which a Body covers and therefore does not realise that a conflict might exist. In some cases, the AAP, with their wider knowledge of the public body, might deduce that there is a potential conflict issue, based on the information on employment and experience provided by the candidate in the application form. They will then explore this at interview with the candidate.

### **Q8. What happens if a conflict of interest arises after an appointment is made?**

This could arise for two main reasons. The first is that the member's circumstances may change, for example, they may change jobs and in doing so, a conflict with their work on the Board becomes apparent. The second is where a member is unfamiliar with the range of the work of the public body, but after appointment, it becomes clear that a conflict exists where none had been envisaged during the appointment process.

In both cases, the issue should be discussed with the Chair of the Board and the Chief Executive of the public body (if applicable) concerned, in consultation with the Department, to decide whether or not the member can continue to carry out their role in an appropriate manner and each case would be considered individually.

It may be that the conflict is such that it would be impractical for the member to continue on the Board, if they would have to withdraw from a considerable amount of the public body's routine business. In such cases, the member may be asked to stand down from the public body.

### **Q9. Areas where a conflict could arise**

There are five main issues, which could lead to real, or apparent, conflicts of interest. These are:

- Relevant pecuniary or other interests outside the organisation.
- Relationships with other parties/organisations which could lead to perceived or real split loyalties.
- Pending Government policy could give unfair personal advantage to people with allied business interests – for example, access to privileged information – trade secrets.
- Perception of rewards for past contributions or favours.
- Membership of some societies or organisations.