

16 August 2007

Heading up Defence Science New Chief Executive appointed at Dstl

Dr Frances Saunders has been selected as the new Chief Executive for the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl). She will be accountable to the Minister for Defence Equipment and Support, who acts as the Owner of Dstl.

Frances will ensure that Dstl, as MOD's in-house centre of science and technology expertise, continues to deliver the highest quality advice to all its customers, creating innovative solutions to their problems and helping to save the lives of our Armed Forces and protect civilians against emerging security challenges.

In her role as Chief Executive, Frances will also liaise closely with governments, academia and industry, both nationally and internationally. In particular, she will work with colleagues in the MOD and Other Government Departments, ensuring Dstl adapts to the world's changing defence and security threats.

Richard Maudslay, Chairman of Dstl, said:

“Frances was selected after an extensive process involving a strong field of external and internal candidates. Frances’ wealth of scientific knowledge and experience and her background in defence will continue to drive Dstl forward, allowing it to sustain the range of world-class technical capabilities that its customers will demand in the future. This will ensure that Dstl is ready and able to support its customers when it really matters.”

Ends

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Notes to Editors:

Dstl

The Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) is a centre of scientific excellence for the Ministry of Defence (MOD). Its 3,500 strong workforce includes some of the nation's most talented and creative scientists with the brief to ensure that the UK Armed Forces and Government are supported in-house by the very best impartial scientific and technological advice. Dstl's position at the heart of the MOD means that its advice is trusted by governments, academia, industry and international partners. It offers timely and accurate advice at all levels of military planning and operations, both overseas and on the home front. For more information please visit www.dstl.gov.uk.

Biography: Dr Frances Saunders

Following her graduation from Nottingham University, Frances worked as an Electronic Engineer in the motor industry before joining the Civil Service at the Royal Signals and Radar Establishment (RSRE) at Malvern. During the next 10 years she was a research scientist in the Liquid Crystal Device team at Malvern, from where she moved into a variety of research and technology management roles within the Ministry of Defence (MOD) laboratories and establishments.

From January 2000, Frances spent four years in the Office of Science and Technology at the Department of Trade and Industry, taking the lead for the management of the interface with the seven Research Councils.

Frances has been a member of Dstl's executive committee since November 2003, when she joined Dstl as Technical Director, moving on to become Operations Director. Following the departure of Dstl's Chief Executive in May 2006 Frances was appointed acting Chief Executive of Dstl.

Frances enjoys cycling, motorcycling, paragliding and playing the guitar. She also has an adventurous streak, having flown a Harrier and abseiled into a frozen crevasse in Antarctica.