

National Aeronautical Academy

World Class Training for Business

Introduction



Ours is a shared geography where enterprise and innovation have long provided economic vitality and growth; we are the birth

place of industry and represent the beating heart of evolutionary progress. Coming together in 2010 Local Enterprise Partnerships have been embraced locally and championed as a real opportunity to create the conditions for success. Individually we have created powerful partnerships combining the strengths of the public and private sectors with a real appetite to deliver the scale of growth needed to rebalance the local economy and to meet specific and shared needs on our terms, rather than having solutions passed down from national or regional QUANGOs.

It is this entrepreneurial spirit that has brought our three partnerships together to unlock the potential of the private and educational sectors in a commercially significant way, working with the Ministry of Defence, on a project that has huge potential to create employment and wealth and begin growing, restructuring and sustaining our local and national economies. What is more, the NAA represents a renewed opportunity to inspire more young people to pursue careers in engineering and technology, allowing business to recruit more STEM skilled employees.

Working constructively between neighbouring partnerships in this way, has clear mutual benefit and everyone gains. Localism in action isn't about the steps of individuals it is about our collective effort to remove barriers to growth and deliver on ambitious goals for the wider national good.



Dr Geoffrey Davies, OBE DL

Chairman Marches LEP

Chief Executive and Managing Director of Alamo Group Europe Ltd.



2020 Vision

Our Vision, to be followed by a business case, is to provide training excellence to the Aeronautical sector, centred here in the Midlands, the home of engineering, but with national and global outreach capability. We will do this by harnessing the growth potential of the Defence College of Aeronautical Engineering (DCAE) and other technical training operational units at RAF Cosford and combining this with Industry and Academia to create a National Aeronautical Academy to serve, local, national and international aeronautical sector training and support needs; providing huge opportunity in terms of export led growth trading for UK PLC.

Local Enterprise Partnership Backing

This is the shared vision of a consortium of three Local Enterprise Partnerships in the Midlands charged with a mandate of bringing key decision-making on economic issues closer to local business communities. We share one objective: the creation of sustainable private sector jobs to support economic growth. We are doing this by facilitating the development of new business opportunities, encouraging the growth of existing business enterprises and supporting the movement of public sector workers into the private sector.

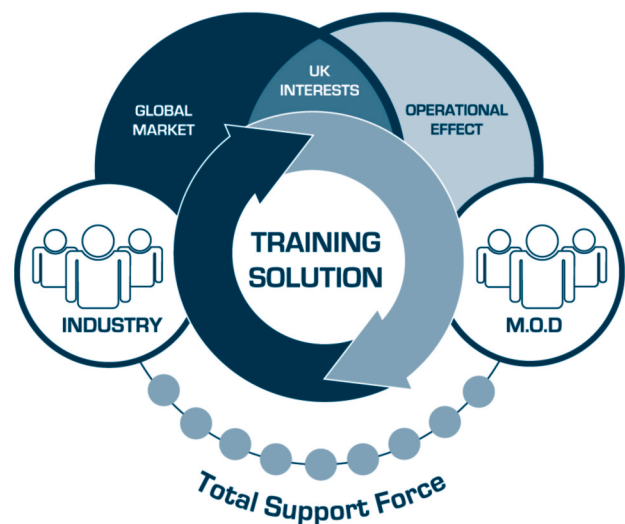
As businessmen, first and foremost, and voluntary leaders of Local Enterprise Partnerships, it is our role to think outside of the box and to shine a light on innovative opportunities, which in this case means turning an existing, well-located economic asset, which already punches its weight for Britain, into an even greater one with international reach based upon brand alliance that is synonymous with technical excellence.

Academic Alliance

The development of a National Aeronautical Academy is a truly ground-breaking, partnership initiative built around the existing MoD infrastructure here in the West Midlands. An education and training consortium, led by the University of Wolverhampton, is taking a fully collaborated approach, involving the Universities of Keele and Staffordshire from the Higher Education Sector, and Telford College of Arts and Technology and City of Wolverhampton College from the Further Education sector, to provide a world class education and training centre of excellence at Cosford. The Academy, which could have an interim programme in place as early as 2014, would foster creative collaborative working between the Ministry of Defence, education community and private industry providing innovative and affordable, sector focussed, wrap-around skills solutions and through life training. As an employer-led collaboration it would change employer and education/training provider relationships, moving them to a collaborative framework where industrial skill needs are clearly articulated, co-developed, commissioned and delivered. The RAF is recognised as one of the top three apprenticeship providers in the UK with 1923 personnel currently on Aeronautical Engineering Apprenticeship frameworks; 70% of whom are on advanced programmes.

Total Support Force

The Strategic Defence Review Provides a clear vision for the armed forces which points to greater synergy with the defence industry moving towards an integrated and sustainable workforce, the Total Support Force Concept. This makes absolute sense as both MoD and Industry are faced with similar affordability challenges for their training, but in our Vision the NAA would exploit linked opportunities for increasing income generation through support to defence sales, maximising reputational and technical synergy and cost management. Greater levels of commercial collaboration would enable and support sustainable Military, Civil Service and contractor support forces, optimising the characteristics and strengths of each to deliver total defence support.



Synergy in Engineering Excellence

The creation of shared or common career paths between the defence industry and the MoD in certain key engineering branches and trades will facilitate 'hybrid' or flexible career models. Under emerging European Defence Agency regulations, these maintenance personnel will need to hold relevant aviation authority licenses. A National Aeronautical Academy could manage through-career training for maintenance personnel for both Defence Industry and MoD, ensuring availability of Suitably Qualified and Experienced Personnel – the “right person, in the right role, at the right readiness, with the rights skills at the right cost” – delivering a workforce that is scalable, fit for purpose and capable of supporting UK and overseas operations as and when they arise; including relevant Aviation Authority licenses and internationally recognised vocational qualifications. The synergy is simple: Affordable and value-for-money training for MoD and industry, through shared access to the intellectual property, state-of-the-art technology and modern learning methods.

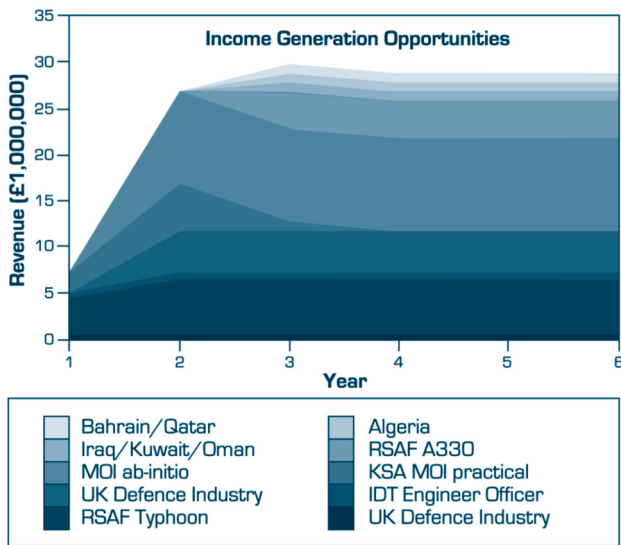


A Skills Divergence

Whilst defence industry capability is improving, there are currently only a limited number of experienced staff who can be deployed in support of availability contracts; for Typhoon alone there is a potential export market for circa 150 aircraft by 2020 which equates to 1500 aircraft technicians and a similar number of support staff. These industry stresses are exacerbated by a concurrent reduction in MoD trained personnel.

This training capacity shortfall could be addressed through our NAA proposals and enhanced sector collaboration, supporting UK Export whilst meeting head on the introduction of robust maintenance training regulations. If disregarded, this shortfall would compromise the UK Defence industry's ability to supply contractors on deployed operations (CONDO) to support operational capability .

A Commercial Opportunity



In the face of growing international competition, the MoD has trained over 1200 international graduates from 16 different countries since 2005, here in the West Midlands, generating £36M. We know there are already requests for £130M worth of aircraft maintenance training business for the MoD, the majority of which is generic (not type-specific) training. As Middle Eastern and North African states continue to expand their aircraft fleets, their need for suitably trained maintenance personnel increases. Any UK aircraft export sales will generate significant demand to train aeronautical technicians, for both UK Industry and International customers. The NAA will provide both the residential and in-country outreach training, essential to support capability or GFX buy-out contracts. The proposed joint MoD/Commercial capacity offered by the NAA will ensure that UK PLC. is well placed to realise this.

We believe that further collaboration centred on the NAA could significantly enhance the 'UK Security Brand' developing a healthy export market from International Defence Training and related equipment sales allowing industry to prosecute opportunities in the global market place. Our proposition would generate £Billions of revenue for UK industry and Treasury.

Sector Support

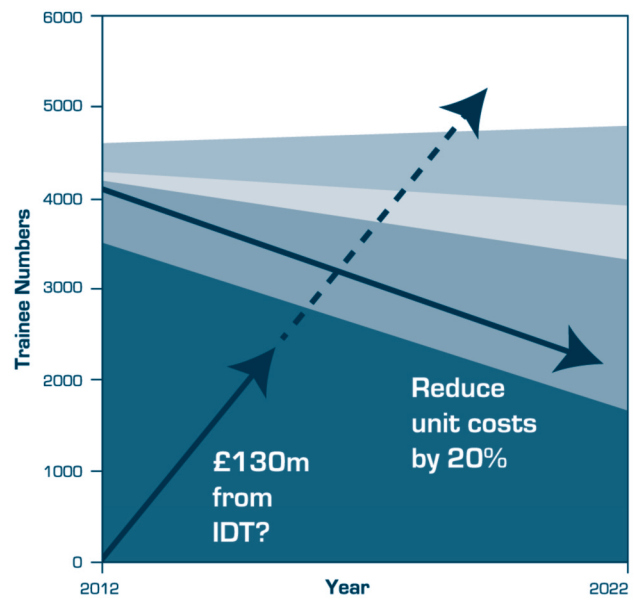
The Midlands Aerospace Alliance (MAA) supports our Vision for an Aeronautical Academy confirming the relationship between delivery and delivery agents, but what is more important are the expressions of support received from the industry itself that are being pursued and will form part of an enhanced business case.

According to MAA chief executive Dr Andrew Mair: "The Midlands aerospace cluster is well positioned to take advantage of growth in emerging markets, in Asia in particular. Our region's industry focuses on making aero-engines and mechanical systems that go into the big Airbus and Boeing civil airliners for which demand is high across the world."

Playing to Locational Strengths

The West Midlands is home to one of Europe's most significant aerospace industry clusters with an international reputation for highest quality design, manufacture and application of aerospace systems and a strong focus on growth markets in civil aerospace. The sector has a core competency in systems that power aircraft and its supply chain extends deep into a world-renowned advanced engineering economy with several hundred specialist suppliers. The National Aeronautical Academy will deliver highly regarded, full and part time, technically-oriented courses of study taking students from a wide geographical area specialising in aeronautical subjects requiring technical and modern equipment. Typically these will include specialist aspects of Aircraft Maintenance, Aerospace Manufacturing and Aeronautical Engineering, whilst being able to build on and exploit the thriving engineering heart of the Midlands employing 22,000 people in 300 companies in the sector.

The National Aeronautical Academy would be centred at the fulcrum of the Wolverhampton to Telford Technology Corridor, already a focal point for the knowledge economy and advanced engineering sectors and the epicentre of one of the largest pools of skilled labour in the UK whilst also delivering outreach, Nationally and Globally.




World Class Facilities and Room to Grow

The Cosford site offers first class accommodation and facilities including Training Airspace and has sufficient capacity for potential for co-location of business. It is able to deliver both type and flight-line maintenance to Industry which does not have access to an operational environment for training. What is more the Marches LEP proposes to support this initiative by creating a Local Enterprise Area underpinned with Local Development Orders granting planning permission for training/aviation related business wishing to co-locate within the site underlining potential commercial synergies.

2020 Vision

To fly, our vision requires a commitment, or more precisely permission from Government and potential changes to current Treasury Policy Rules and Guidance. It seeks a coherent, fit for purpose and value-for-money solution for Defence training transformation within the aeronautical engineering sector, to allow it to “wash its own face” financially and, even, to become a real revenue-generator and job-building force in the future, both regionally and nationally, putting to maximum use its outstanding capabilities, assets and facilities:

- **Developing a National Aeronautical Academy with local academic expertise and private sector partners;**
- **Expanding RAF Defence work based on industrial collaboration and improved international commerciality;**
- **Broadening the regional locational role of the site as an Enterprise Area linked to regional engineering partners to develop the full potential of the base.**



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Local Enterprise Partnership



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