

Written evidence submitted by Capita plc.

About Capita:

Capita is a leading provider of business process services, driven by data, technology and people. Every day, Capita's 43,000 colleagues help millions of people, by delivering innovative, digitally enabled solutions to transform and simplify the connections between government and citizens, businesses and customers. Capita partners with our clients to provide the insight and technologies that give time back, allowing them to focus on what they do best and making people's lives and jobs easier and simpler.

Capita's work in defence includes:

- **Project Selborne:** Project Selborne is delivering a new, transformed and modernised training system for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines. Capita is using technology to offer immersive experiences of real-life situations, improving scheduling of courses with the goal of getting better trained people to the front line faster.
- **DFRP:** Capita provides the primary firefighting and rescue service for critical defence sites and properties across the UK and in Cyprus. In partnership with the Royal Air Force Rescue and Firefighting Service, we form the Ministry of Defence Fire Services. Our work includes hiring and training the next generation of firefighters, creating targeted fire safety campaigns, and improving people's awareness and understanding of fire so they know what to do in the event of a fire happening.
- **Recruitment Partnering Project (RPP):** in partnership with the British Army, Capita is recruiting tomorrow's Army today. Working in collaboration with the army every step of the way, Capita is attracting and sourcing both regular and reserve soldiers and officers through our effective and inclusive recruitment process.

Context and opportunity:

Capita welcomes the Defence Select Committee's inquiry into Developing AI Capacity and Expertise in UK Defence.

The Committee will be aware that huge strides are being made in the application of artificial intelligence across the public and private sector. Along with other strategic suppliers to HM Government, Capita sees the application of AI and automation as a significant opportunity for defence – and the wider public sector. In particular, we believe that further application of advanced analytics, artificial intelligence and machine learning, can drive better decision-making and resource allocation. Proper amortisation of these technologies will improve military capability and help the UK maintain an advantage in an increasingly challenging and unstable geo-political environment.

We believe the top AI-enabled opportunities for defence are:

1. **Enhanced Decision Making:** AI can process and interpret vast amounts of data in real-time, providing actionable insights and recommendations. This can enhance strategic decision-making, through the levels of command from the Grand Strategic through to the tactical levels.
2. **Predictive Maintenance:** AI can predict equipment failures before they happen, reducing unscheduled downtime and saving costs. It can analyse patterns in machinery data to identify potential issues, allowing for proactive maintenance.

3. **Autonomous Vehicles:** AI can already control and manoeuvre small autonomous vehicles in real time. These vehicles can perform tasks such as reconnaissance or mine detection, reducing risk to personnel, while operating within controlled rules based parameters to ensure safety. We can safely say that this area of Military R&D will continue to attract high levels of expenditure.
4. **Cybersecurity:** AI can bolster cybersecurity defences. It can anticipate, detect and respond to threats faster than human operators, protecting critical infrastructure and information.
5. **Training and Simulation:** AI can create realistic training simulations, in real time helping personnel prepare for a variety of scenarios. This leads to improved decision making, readiness and performance.

Implementing AI in our defence work:

Capita has been working with the Ministry of Defence to apply some of the above opportunities into elements of our current contracts to deliver better outcomes, cost savings and services advances. This includes areas such as machine learning, automation, problem solving and voice recognition, adding new capabilities and efficiencies to existing services.

Key examples include:

Recruitment Partnering Project natural language processing:

- **Government Challenge:** Each year around 130,000 people apply to join the military. As part of the army recruitment partnership, around 20,000 applicants currently undergo rigorous medical assessment to determine if they meet the service's standards for the role for which they are applying, including submitting their whole medical record. Each applicant's record consists of between 50-100 pages of medical information.
- **AI solution:** In 2023, Capita's AI team worked with the Army to build a natural language processing solution. This is helping scrutineers reduce the manual handling time by 40%. This has made the medical assessment process quicker, cheaper and more efficient over 2023 which we expect to continue in future years of the contract. Capita's Solution was designed and built in accordance with the MOD's 5 Ethical Principles for AI in defence: Human Centricity, Responsibility, Understanding, Bias and Harm Mitigation, and Reliability. The solution also received accreditation for its adherence to the MOD's data privacy and security standards.

Recruitment Partnering Project -- marketing:

- **Government Challenge:** The Recruitment Partnership Project (RPP) has access to multiple modes of data associated with processes across the entire army recruitment project. However, these were not being used to their greatest advantage to effectively attract recruits, and ensure they carry through the full recruiting process as often as possible.
- **AI solution:** Capita optimised the Army's marketing pipelines and campaign strategies through three key initiatives:
 1. Analysed candidate feedback data to understand factors influencing progress and drop-offs (considered demographics & various marketing channels).
 2. Addressed insight gaps in RPP's marketing dashboards by introducing "Marketing Health Indices" to provide a more holistic view of marketing campaign success.

3. Evaluated the registration-to-application process and automated the pipeline for this evaluation.

Drone alert prototype

- **Challenge:** The Ministry of Defence were looking for a multimodal solution that could identify any drone in a given air space, i.e. through image and audio data as along with self-reported information.
- **AI solution:** Capita has developed a prototype to allow watch centres to identify, categorise, and securely share drone intelligence with other departments and partner agencies.

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