TDI•VANGUARD

Shaping the future of Defence

What is TDI Vanguard?

TDI Vanguard empowers early-career professionals across the UK Defence sector to drive strategic innovation by contributing fresh perspectives, diverse thinking, and collaborative solutions to real Defence challenges through volunteer-led workstreams that directly inform UK MOD policy and Industry practice.

What is TDI Vanguard?

TDI Vanguard provides an environment for people early in their defence careers to offer fresh perspectives to the industry.

- **Vision:** To bring new ideas and perspective; Strengthening existing ways of working by capitalising on diversity of thought and fresh ways of thinking.

- **Strategy:** To support the common and strategic aims of Team Defence Information (TDI) & MoD and work collaboratively to:
  1. Harness Diversity of Thought
  2. Challenge the Norm
  3. Push for Progress

- **Member benefits:** A friendly and supportive network, opportunity to upskill and develop competencies, exposure to the wider Defence community, a raised profile, opportunity to effect real change.

We are dedicated to changing the landscape of the UK Defence enterprise and bringing fresh perspectives to today's problems

An Introduction to TDI

TDI (Team Defence Information) Members work in close collaboration with our MOD stakeholders to help define requirements and develop Support solutions that truly meet the objectives of MoD and Industry.

- TD-Info provides a trusted environment for MOD and the UK Industry to collaboratively work together and share the output from projects; TD-Info Member companies and MOD gain mutual benefit from these research and innovation activities which invariably lead to a multiplier effects and knowledge sharing that helps drive pace in solution development and delivery within a trusted, commercially neutral environment.

- TD-Info address this significant challenge as part of a trusted Defence community, enabling Members to be well-informed and ready to support MOD in developing resilient and cost-effective solutions that support the DJIC (Defence Joint Industrial Council) strategic objectives. This is achieved by actively leading a programme of Research and Innovation pilot projects through various specialist Working Groups (WGs).

Members of TDI - Diversity as an Asset

**Over 150 defence company members including
35 Lead Sponsors and over 50 Small to Medium Enterprises**

Lead Sponsors

Corporate Members

Vanguard Strategy

Our aims
- Bring new ideas & perspectives into the sector
- Offer empirical, analytical research & data driven solutions
- Push for progress across key strategic areas
- Develop a new generation of leaders for UK Defence

Our methodology
- Leverage diversity of thought across our membership
- Harness lateral, 'unencumbered' thinking
- Employ 'outsider' knowledge
- Utilise TDI as a trusted, commercially neutral forum & network of expertise

Our offer to members
- Exposure to the wider community of ideas
- Raised profile & engagement with senior stakeholders
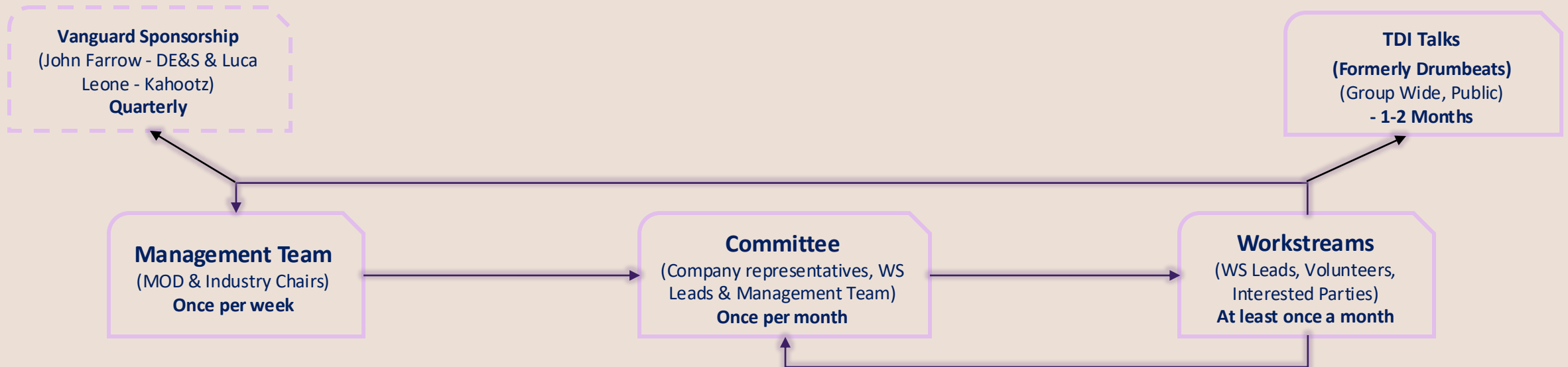- Opportunities to platform your work through events & publications
- Learn & develop skills while driving real sector change

Vanguard Activities

- **Workstreams** - At the core of what we do. Vanguard runs several workstreams, reflecting topics of strategic significance across Defence. These topics align with sponsorship across the wider portfolio of TD-Info. Members can join workstreams by contacting the respective Workstream Lead - detailed in later slides. Meetings Monthly.

- **Projects** - Each workstream is pursuing an outcome, sponsored and platformed by MoD. Volunteers from Vanguard work together in collaboration with a commercial or government sponsor to achieve this outcome. We utilize TD-Info and our various networks to platform this work. The rhythm of project meetings depends on the status of the project.

- **Events & Socials** – There are many events that we encourage Vanguard members to be involved in - such as, but not exclusively, the TD-Info conferences. Vanguard always has a presentation slot for the TD-Info conferences, to report on the outcome of projects. At these conference we'll also have a Vanguard stand for members to meet up. We offer free tickets to Vanguard members for TD-Info events - up to a limit of 15 people (people actively involved in projects get first priority.) We also..

- **Comms** - Vanguard members will receive a monthly update to inform of events and opportunities, as well as quarterly Newsletter, which will offer updates on workstreams and more.

- **Kahootz** – We utilize the Kahootz secure online collaboration platform as our hub of work. All project documents will be shared on our Kahootz site, as well as news and events. Members receive an invitation to access upon joining Vanguard.

- **TDI Talks** – A call every 1-2 months for members to hear from expert speakers on topics ranging from career development & defence wide issues, to specific topics such as digital twins or additive manufacturing.

- **Committee** – A call every 1-2 months (occasionally in-person), with Vanguard member representatives and workstream leads, to discuss the 3-4 month plan for Vanguard activities, workstreams and events. Discussion of Vanguard membership – how we can offer the most benefit. Drumbeat and Committee meetings tend to be on Fridays, 12:00 – 13:00.

Governance & Meetings

Vanguard Sponsorship
(John Farrow - DE&S & Luca
Leone - Kahootz)
Quarterly

TDI Talks
(Formerly Drumbeats)
(Group Wide, Public)
- 1-2 Months

Management Team
(MOD & Industry Chairs)
Once per week

Committee
(Company representatives, WS
Leads & Management Team)
Once per month

Workstreams
(WS Leads, Volunteers,
Interested Parties)
At least once a month

Committee and Drumbeat planning

Resource allocation

Onboarding and integrating new joiners

Management of workstreams

Engaging with sponsors and stakeholders

Workstream and event updates

Guest speakers

Involvement / Requirements

Vanguard mailing list – Anyone can join the Vanguard mailing list to read our monthly newsletter & updates (around 70 people currently subscribed).

Vanguard members/contributors – those recognised as being actively involved in Vanguard through workstreams, committee or adjacent contributions (around 30 people currently involved)

- Vanguard opts on a voluntary basis with work completed around individual workloads and schedules
- The day job will always take priority, however it is desired that an individual who has signed up to a project aims to commit to an agreed number of hours per month, depending on the project and their proposed role
- If consistent attendance and involvement is not possible then it is still possible to attend monthly drumbeats and receive updates via our newsletter & bulletin.
- Whilst there are currently 3 active workstreams, Vanguard is always open to new ideas and tasks to pursue, never be afraid to contribute an idea – it may be that others have a keen interest and it develops into a sponsored project
- We tend to ask that members have been involved in Defence for less than 4 years and/or be between the ages of 18-35.
- **Vanguard contributors: 2+ hours commitment per month minimum – see more on next page**

Vanguard Roles

There are many roles available for members looking to contribute. Members may opt to contribute via a workstream or project, but there are also opportunities for those looking for management experience – to play an active role in the running and development of the group:

- **Management Team** – Oversees overall strategy, coordination, and planning (2 hrs per month + time of management role).
- **Chairs** – Lead strategic direction, liaise with sponsors, host meetings, and attend key events (1 hr/week + quarterly events).
- **Workstream Coordinator** – Directs workstream strategy, liaises with leads and sponsors, and updates management (1 hr/week).
- **Workstream Leads** – Manage workstream activities, coordinate with sponsors, lead meetings, and handle documentation (2 hrs/week).
- **Workstream Contributors** – Support projects through research, discussion, and content delivery (1–2 hrs/month, varies).
- **Membership Manager** – Promotes Vanguard and manages member onboarding and engagement (1 hr/week).
- **TDI Talk Host/Organiser** – Plans topics, liaises with speakers, and hosts monthly sessions (1 hr/week).
- **Events Coordinator** – Plans social and professional events and arranges annual away day (2 hrs/month).
- **Representative** – Attend meetings, onboard members, and support organisational engagement (2 hrs/month).
- **Comms Lead** – Manages internal/external communications including social media and branding (1 hr/week).
- **Newsletter Editor** – Produces and edits quarterly newsletter (3 hrs/quarter).
- **Newsletter Contributor** – Writes content for the newsletter (1 hr/quarter).
- **Social Media Manager** – Manages LinkedIn content and reposts member updates (1 hr/month).

Further detail of roles can be found here.

Benefits of Vanguard

- Exposure to a wider view of the UK Defence Industry – engagement with diverse community from across MoD & Industry, from the largest of Defence primes through to the smallest (but most pioneering) SMEs
- Various platforms to engage with important senior sponsors and players across the defence
- Opportunities to collaboratively learn through Workstreams, Conferences, Events, Socials
- Develop competencies related to certifying/chartership organisations (IMechE, IET, APM etc.)
- The freedom to ask 'stupid' questions, express yourself, and be amongst a group of peers at a similar point in their career
- Vanguard 'Contributors' (Involvement in the committee and/or projects have:
  - the opportunity to freely attend TDI conferences (normally £300+ per ticket)
  - first access to events and opportunities (i.e. speaking slots, socials)
  - the ability to shape our activities & strategy
  - exposure and opportunity to exchange ideas with senior members of industry and the MOD
- Fun!

Workstreams

Ethics in AI   **Space**   **Sustainability**   **People & Skills**   **Future Technologies**

People & Skills

Sponsor: TBD

Vanguard Lead: Eleanor.perry118@mod.gov.uk

Theme: People & Skills

Summary

- Recruitment and retention of young people is a growing problem across Defence, with both government and industry struggling to meet the rapidly growing demands for resource.

- The People and Skills workstream is currently identifying the next steps for work following a report pertaining to the pains and gains of the sector, and how Defence can solve its retention problem.

Future Objectives:

- Exploration of the findings of the report, using the main thematic areas as a handrail.

- Exploration of the notion of living in a 'pre-war' era, and the 'why' behind the existence of Defence and what it means to be working in the sector.

- Scrutiny piece on the Strategic Defence Review.

People & Skills

Expected Time Commitment:

- 1 hour a week on average.

Benefits of Involvement:

- Wider understanding of the People and Skills elements of the sector, with large levels of engagement with wider stakeholders across the sector.

- Opportunity to potentially contribute to wider Defence reforms in the outputs that we offer.

Next Meeting:

- Thursday 8th May @ 14:00. Meetings will take place every **other** Thursday to begin.

- Expectation is for everyone to have read the recent report found here.

Sustainability

Sponsor: Zoe Wardle & Daisy Wise (MOD)

Vanguard Lead: Khadijah Khatun – Khadijah.KHATUN@uk.thalesgroup.com

Theme: Digital Climate Change and Sustainability (CC&S)

Task:

- Assess and understand the **culture** required to deliver CC&S change within the Digital Function;

- Evaluate and understand Digital CC&S **best practice** across Defence (could cover both MOD and industry);

- **Horizon-scanning** of emerging and disruptive technologies which could support digital CC&S agenda (similar to the above);

- Evaluate and understand **circular economy** best practice, barriers, enablers across Defence (could cover both MOD and industry).

Output: Conduct research and produce a **communications strategy for existing innovative projects.** To be broadcasted via Def Net, Leadership Bulletin, MOD Sharepoint (Intranet), Weekly News update and LinkedIn.

Action: Decide on either dripfeed / all in one distribution and draft ready for DD for mid-May.

Space

Sponsor: Shaun Lamb – UK Space Command, Ansys

Vanguard Lead: Mark Perkins – mark.perkins@sii-group.uk

Theme: Space

Task:

- Vanguard to assemble an initial workstream Team and assess commercial strategy documents, supporting documents provided by space command and meeting notes from scoping Team from the 7th May meeting at Space Command.

- Build scope of White Paper (GSE, use of commercial assets, UK launch, programme methodologies (agile, MBSE etc), small/medium class payloads, general global coverage or considerations of specific observation/theatre sites (Ukraine, Russia, China, middle east etc), blueprint on how to deliver 2, 5, 10-year capability independently and collaboratively.

- Help as a neutral party build Space Command an agile buying customer rather than the endgame operator, understand the risk versus reward at different capability levels (CubeSats versus Geostationary Observation/PVT)

- Review the UK Space Strategy and see how applies/benefits Space Command, with a mirror exercise for the US post Farnborough

Output: Deliver a presentation showing UK capability in line with the space strategy as a framework for the White Paper.

Space

Team size: 15, covering 8 companies

Past Achievements: Acceptance of mandate by space command confirming scope of work and agreed deliverables

Meeting between sponsors Ansys and SC at 2024 Farnborough air show with Vanguard attendance

Work scope: Research project, summarisation of space sub-system topics and an industry analysis of UK companies (or NATO adjacent if not applicable) that operate in that domain

Future Scope?   Specific supplier research to support bid development of a future mission/programme

Benefits   Space is a notorious industry to get into if not done at gradate/entry level, experience working with major industry figures is a major CV boom.

Expected commitment: **Hours:**   3-4 per Calander month

meetings: flexible to meet in task groups bi-weekly due to differing locations of volunteers, digital tools (slack/kahootz) used to mitigate, full house meetings in live with task deliverables

Milestones: internal presentation for May/June covering work done, DI presentation July, SC presentation late summer

Future Technologies

Sponsor: Brigadier Mike Morton (MOD – Head of Digital Strategy) / Jeremy Poulter (Palantir)

Vanguard Lead: Edward Gunning - Ed.gunning@akkodis.com

Theme: Industrial Strategy – Requirement for MilTech/DefTech

Task:

- There are numerous recognised sectors that end with the term 'tech' e.g. FinTech, AgriTech, MedTech... there is no equivalent for Defence related products and services. Why is that?

- What are they advantages of being part of 'xTech community'?

- If MilTech/DefTech was created how would we about it – what would membership look like?

- Consider Pros and Cons of creating such a community and make a recommendation

Output: Opposing arguments to be presented at DI25 – attendees to then vote with online poll?

Action: Team to be set up and coordinate with David Hawken Hawken for more information.

How to get involved

- Our mailing list for all comms and events is managed through Team Defence website – subscribe to email updates via the following link- https://www.teamdefence.info/learning/team-defence-vanguard/

- Follow us on LinkedIn - https://www.linkedin.com/company/94237878/admin/feed/posts/

Contact jack.thompson@teamdefence.info and eleanor.perry118@mod.gov.uk to learn more.

Contact workstream leads if you're interested in getting involved:

- Space: mark.perkins@sii-group.uk

- People & Skills: eleanor.perry118@mod.gov.uk

- Future Technologies: ed.gunning@akkodis.com

Join the growing network