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## Our Mission:

The UK Government Decontamination Service increases resilience by providing advice and guidance to those responsible for dealing with decontamination following a CBRN or major HazMat incident.

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## Welcome from the chief executive

Welcome to the very first GDS newsletter.

This has been produced in the response to requests and suggestions from you, our stakeholders. The aim is to keep you informed as to what is going on in GDS. I would very much welcome your comments on the newsletter, the contents, and upon the type of information that would be useful to your future editions.

This publication has been delayed due to operational deployments, news of which will follow in this and in future editions. The intention is to publish on a quarterly basis and we will share with you our progress with various decontamination and related issues.

I do hope that you enjoy reading the letter and find the contents useful in your work.

**Robert Bettley-Smith**

## GDS Operational Deployment

GDS has been operationally engaged and as a result has been deployed to incidents in Scotland and London.

From these incidents, GDS has gained its first practical experience, and lessons have been learnt, which will help us develop our strategic direction and business plans.

We expect to develop some useful information from these incidents. This information will be shared, where possible, with our stakeholders and suppliers to improve our readiness for future events.



*"I found the conference very useful and informative. It was very well run."*

*"The syndicate sessions were an opportunity to have input in the development of GDS which I am sure will further develop the capability to support local responders facing future decontamination challenges."*

## 2006

At the end of 2006 we held our first supplier and stakeholder conferences. Presently, we are working through the feedback we received following these events to see how we can further improve what we do, although initial results from participants suggest that the events added value and knowledge. Internally, we have also recently completed our annual staff survey and held a strategic event focused on planning what we want to do next and how we intend to do it. Results from all of these activities will then be fine tuned and incorporated into our business plan 2007/2008. One suggestion we have received has resulted in this newsletter.



## Framework Agreement

An extensive EU tendering agreement, under the control of OGC Buying Solutions has produced the first framework agreement with suppliers. These suppliers have been assessed and exercised, and have worked on incidents. We have extended the arrangements for those who are already on our framework to October 2008. However, we are continuing to research and evaluate what is needed and how it is provided. A further tender exercise will be started towards the end of 2007 in order to have another framework in place by the end of 2008.

## GDS Teams – Science

Our science team has been developed over the year. We are now managing a number of research and development projects aimed at developing a range of new technologies for the remediation of CBRN releases; we continue to work closely with learned societies, and colleagues in other central government departments to ensure that our science is properly coordinated with the wider scientific community; we are working with specialist suppliers to develop technical resilience.

## GDS Teams – Liaison

Our liaison teams are also continuing to evolve. During our first year the liaison teams have concentrated on a heavy program of presentations across the UK to raise awareness of GDS, provide information on its role and establish GDS within regional contingency plans. In addition we have taken part in a number of CBRN exercises to test the effectiveness of existing emergency arrangements. GDS has already learnt a great deal about the UK's capability to respond to a CBRN incident and its focus over the next year will be to continue to explore and develop capability to improve this.

This first newsletter is very much by way of introduction. We will consult with you, our readers, to produce further information that may assist you in your planning and preparation for a CBRN event.

***GDS would like to thank its stakeholders for their cooperation and any feedback they have provided this year. We take your views and ideas seriously. We would also like to thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter and hope you have found it interesting. We look forward to the next edition.***