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## UK MoD extends satcom services contract with NSSL

### NETWORK-CENTRIC WARFARE

The UK Ministry of Defence (MoD) has awarded a contract extension worth more than GBP200 million (USD405 million) to satellite communications (SATCOM) provider NSSL for commercial satcom services.

The contract falls under the umbrella of the Skynet 5 private finance initiative (PFI).

As part of the latest contract, NSSL will supply handsets, Broadband Global Area Network (BGAN) and DVB services and integration support until 2020.

While the MoD sources secure military SATCOM from Paradigm Secure Communications under the Skynet 5 agreement, the contract with NSSL will cover SATCOM for support and administrative purposes, personal and some strategic communications.

NSSL also provides troops stationed in parts of Afghanistan suffering from poor terrestrial coverage with a means to communicate with family members more easily.

Dubbed 'Bluey' owing to the blue paper that the messages are printed on, the satcom system enables three types of communications to be converted into a letter: e-mail via web portal; scanned copy of a fax; and text and photo via web portal.

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