

**The
Government Decontamination Service
(GDS)**

Dr Dudley Hewlett

Head of Science



GDS Background

- Defra agreed in March 2003 to lead a cross Govt study into the need for a national decontamination service.
- Report submitted to ministers December 2003
- Defra agreed to take forward. Two target dates; -
 - From April 2004 – Interim Service
 - July 2005 – Establish GDS as permanent agency

GDS Concept

- Decontamination is a specialist area. Expertise available in private sector (CCA: ERnR recognises the role of Private Sector)
- Government recognised a central “brigading” of expertise would be more efficient than **Responsible Authorities** each carrying out the same work
- GDS has UK- wide remit.
- GDS framework is provided to assist: use is not mandatory

GDS Primary Functions

1. To provide advice, guidance and assistance on decontamination related issues to responsible authorities in their contingency planning for, and response to, CBRN (and HAZMAT) incidents;
2. To maintain and build on the GDS Framework of specialist suppliers and ensure that responsible authorities have access to their services if the need arises;

GDS Primary Functions

3. To advise central Government on the national capability for the decontamination of buildings, infrastructure, transport and open environment, be a source of expertise in the event of a CBRN incident or major release of HAZMAT materials.

All include our desire to work with others to improve decontamination technologies and capabilities (HO S&T programmes) (managed by GDS science team)

GDS Procurement Process – Brief Details

- Official Journal of the European Union
- Tenders assessed by multi-disciplinary panel
- 2 sets T's & C's (GDS/Supplier & Supplier/RA)
- Initial 1 year contract – extended to 3 years
- Agreed pricing schedule
- No retainers, Specialist suppliers to receive finance from the GDS for participation in exercises and other activities
- Aim is for Specialist Suppliers to deliver a complete decontamination service to a Responsible Authority, not simply constituent parts
- Remits - **Sampling/monitoring, site clearance and waste**

Suppliers

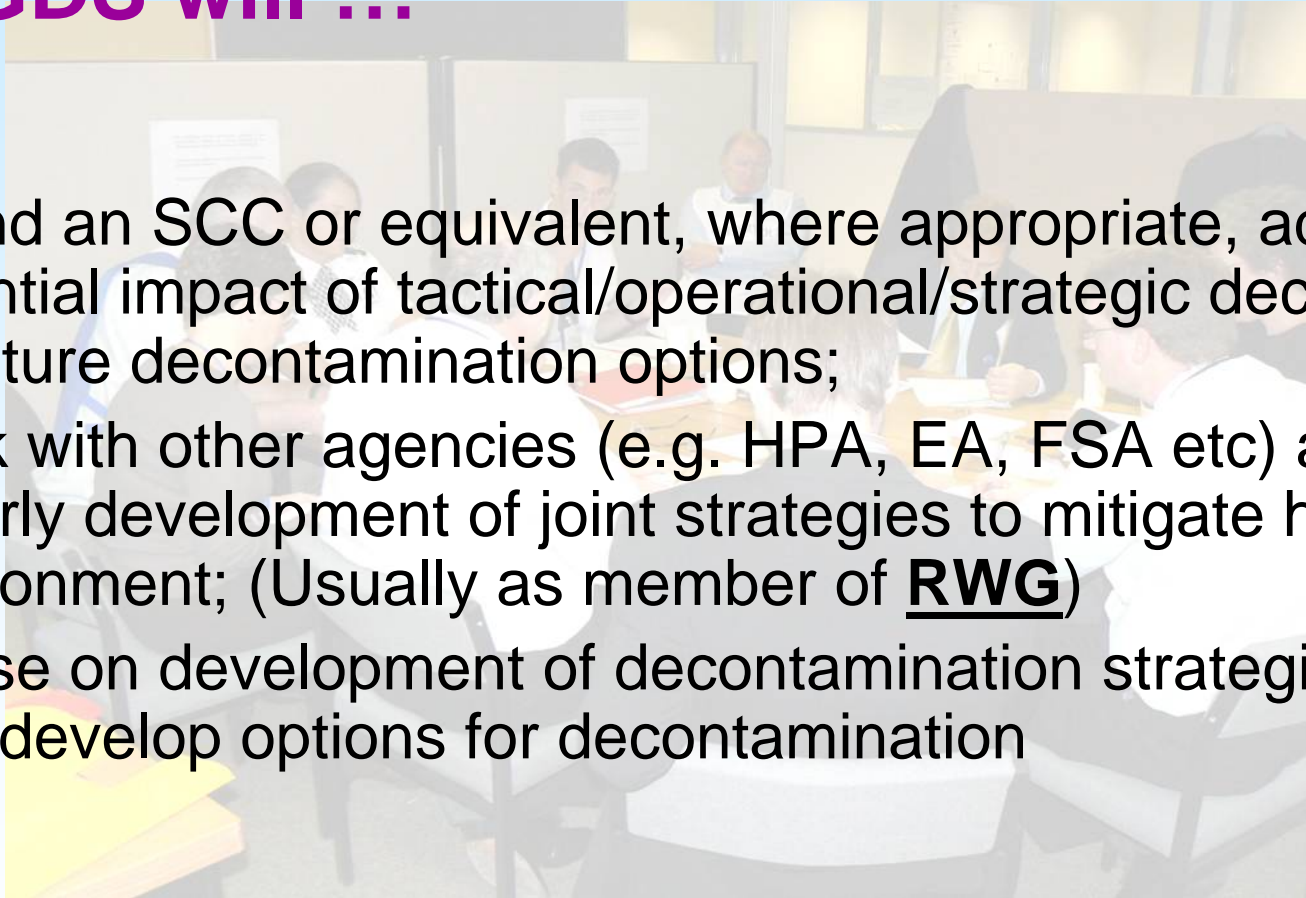
- **10** Specialist Suppliers with capabilities across the CBR spectrum;
- Proven techniques and technologies routinely deployed in commercial use
- Experience of working to contractual obligation e.g. within timelines and cost limitations
- Robust Health and Safety policies & systems
- 24 / 7 emergency response
- Security clearance (Company specific)
- Working knowledge of specific legal requirements (e.g. Ionising Radiation Regs 1999), Construction (Design and Management) Regs

Liaison Teams

- 3 Liaison Teams covering specific Regions (and DA's, Crown Dependant Territories plus National Liaison
- **Team 1** – Scotland, NW, NE, Y&H, Gibraltar
- **Team 2** – N Ireland, E, WM, EM, IOM
- **Team 3** - Wales, SW, London, SE, Channel Isles
- **National Liaison** – OGD's, law enforcement etc

The GDS will ...

- Attend an SCC or equivalent, where appropriate, advise of potential impact of tactical/operational/strategic decisions on future decontamination options;
- Work with other agencies (e.g. HPA, EA, FSA etc) at SCC in early development of joint strategies to mitigate harm to environment; (Usually as member of **RWG**)
- Advise on development of decontamination strategies and help develop options for decontamination



Response



GDS Framework Companies all have
24/7 response arrangements

Summary

- UK wide remit
- Executive agency of Defra
- No charge for advice, guidance and facilitation
- GDS willing to participate in National, Regional and local exercises subject to resource availability
- Specialist Supplier have capability across the CBR spectrum
- Supplier capabilities shared with Recovery Working Group
- Decon takes far longer than expected

