Airbus Group and De Montfort University Join Forces to Protect Critical National Infrastructure from Cyber Attacks

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Research Programme to improve protection of UKs infrastructure from cyber-attacks
Computer systems to monitor critical national infrastructure
Programme includes a 3 year position for a postdoctoral research associate at Airbus Groups cyber security research facilities in South Wales
De Montfort University Leicester ("DMU) has launched a research programme with Airbus Group to develop a new digital forensic capability for the Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition ("SCADA) industrial control systems that underpin the UKs critical national infrastructure.
Given their frequent use in monitoring industrial processes including oil and gas pipelines, transportation networks, power grids and water distribution, SCADA systems are prime targets for cyber-attacks. Attacks on systems of this size and importance are categorised as a Tier 1 threat to national security. However current cyber forensic technologies for SCADA systems do not provide investigators scientific evidence about a cyber-attack on these critical systems.
This research programme, aimed at developing new methods and tools to support these investigations, will significantly improve the response from the UKs critical national infrastructure to cyber-attacks and help bring cyber criminals to justice.
As part of the programme, a postdoctoral research associate from DMU will work full-time for the next three years at Airbus Groups cyber security research facilities in South Wales.
The programme is an enhanced Knowledge Transfer Partnership ("eKTP"), supported by Innovate UK, the new name for the UK Governments Technology Strategy Board which seeks to fund, support and connect businesses to accelerate economic growth, and the Welsh Government, in which academics and researchers work together with businesses to solve strategic issues.
The programme is DMUs first eKTP and, in addition to their time at Airbus Group, the research associate also will spend time working at renowned research centres in the USA. This will further enhance the programme through the incorporation of global research and knowledge sharing.
Helge Janicke, Head of Software Technology Research Laboratory and the Cyber Security Centre at DMU, said: "This project will now drive forward our collaboration in the digital forensic area and lead to new applications of our research that can help secure our national infrastructures. Therefore, I am very excited about this programme. As an Airbus Group Centre of Excellence we are already working closely with them on SCADA cyber security."
Kevin Jones, Head of The Cyber Operations Research Team at Airbus Group Innovations, commented: "This eKTP programme is an excellent opportunity for Airbus Group and De Montfort University to develop ground breaking and highly innovative technologies that will directly benefit the cyber security analysis of our most critical infrastructures."
About Airbus Group
Airbus Group is a global leader in aeronautics, space and related services. In 2014, the Group - comprising Airbus, Airbus Defence and Space and Airbus Helicopters - generated revenues of ? 60.7 billion and employed a workforce of around 138,600.
About De Montfort University Software Technology Research Laboratory ("STRL)
DMUs Software Technology Research Laboratory and the Cyber Security Centre have the ability to examine industrial SCADA systems, analyse threats and find traces of attacks which cyber criminals think they have covered up. DMU was chosen for the eKTP because of the expertise of its STRL department and its reputation as a centre of excellence for forensic research and education.

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