Request for Military Aid to the Civil Authorities (MACA 20-287)					
Consult guidance notes whilst completing this form					

TIMING[1]: URGENT/ROUTINE*Delete as applicable

Requesting Agency	DCMS - Counter Disinformation Cell (CDC)		Operation Name	Op RESCRIPT	
Department of State	DCMS		JMC/RPoC	JMC(L)	
Requesting Point of Contact	Name	Oscar Tapp-Scotting	MOD LO	Name	▮▮▮▮▮▮▮
	Role	Deputy Director, Security and International		Role	MSE LO
	Tel	▮▮▮▮▮▮		Tel	▮▮▮▮▮
	Email	▮▮▮▮▮		Email	▮▮▮▮▮▮
DTG of request	301100JUN20		JRLO Aware	▮▮▮▮▮	

PART 1 – REQUESTING AGENCY TO COMPLETE SUPPORTED BY MOD LO

1) Headline summary of situation

This request seeks military support to the DCMS Counter-Disinformation Cell (CDC), to ensure HMG coverage of the mis/disinformation threat and information environment, as further incidences of disinformation are anticipated in relation to key events, including the launch of a vaccine.

To note, Defence analysts joined the CDC wider structure as part of a wider MACA tasking, which attached them to the Cabinet Office's Rapid Response Unit on 23 Mar. This team provided mis/disinformation analytical capability during the first three months of the COVID crisis under Op RESCRIPT. This agreement with the Cabinet Office ended on 5 Jul. Following this, DCMS and Ministry of Defence agreed a new MACA, which resourced 77 Brigade analysts from 5 July to 3 August, and RAF analysts from 3 August to 31 August.

2) What is happening? – NOT initially required for URGENT MACA

Background: DCMS CDC current capabilities and gaps
The DCMS CDC function is to bring together cross-government monitoring and analysis capabilities, to provide a comprehensive picture of the extent, scope and reach of dis/misinformation on Covid-19, and to ensure appropriate action is taken.

Multiple analytical units feed into this unit:

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- Foreign Office Open Source Unit (OSU) - focus on monitoring hostile state disinformation activity
- Consultancies: GDI (fringe platforms)
- Defence (RAF) - focus on rapid analytical response and open source social media data (until 31 August)

Despite Covid-19 crisis response standing down in some areas, the CDC continues to identify harmful misinformation and disinformation narratives. This is a live threat, and the CDC's assessment of future trends such as potential for anti-vaccination narratives, shows that there is a need to continue to fill a capability gap that will be lost from 31 August, as described by the requirement.

3) Why must action be taken? – NOT initially required for URGENT MACA

Impact of support being declined:

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[1] As defined in 2018DIN03-028: **Urgent**: There is time to consult but a rapid decision is required. Abbreviation of this form is acceptable for initial submission. **Routine**: All other requests. Include the timing for the requested effect if appropriate. Annotate if a major incident has been declared.

- Without this capability, the CDC will be limited in its ability to monitor and assess disinformation narratives on social media platforms. Other analytical units monitor other information sources - ██████ ████████████████████████, and Foreign Office OSU cover hostile state backed media and social media. The CDC will therefore be limited in its coverage of the information environment, making the UK exposed to what could be harmful narratives with real world impact.
- In addition, the CDC will lack a unit that can provide reactive analysis, with a 1-2 hour turnaround, making it more difficult to identify and respond to harmful incidents of disinformation at pace and thus limits its reach
- This rapid analysis was vital in informing our initial response to the critical incidents of misinformation that led to the burning of 5G towers. This analysis informed our early comms interventions, and helped us flag this narrative to platforms and inform their response. If the request for support were declined, it would be impossible to mitigate future mis/disinformation narratives in the same rapid timeframe. This would increase the risk of real-world harm from COVID-19 related mis/disinformation.

4) What is the task required?

Requirement:
Military open source analytical support is required to inform HMG's understanding of the Covid-19 disinformation threat picture, and inform early interventions to limit the reach and spread of harmful narratives. This operation would include monitoring open source social media data, to fulfil the following functions:
- Daily reporting of key COVID-related disinformation & misinformation narratives, giving initial assessment, engagement and risk of content
- Weekly analysis of emerging and enduring narratives, giving recommendations on approaches to counter them
- Reactive analysis (1-2 hour turnaround) to emerging threats, to inform decisions on early inventions such as rebuttal which are time critical, following tasking from the CDC
- Identifying content that breaches social media platforms' Terms of Service to minimise impact of harmful narratives

CDC would act as the coordinating function for this unit, as it does with other analytical units including FCO OSU and ██████.

Impact:
- Provide HMG understanding of disinformation and misinformation about COVID-19 which has the potential to pose a real world impact in four main areas: damaging public health, damaging UK reputation, targeting ethnic minorities or poses risk to public order. We have seen instances of all of these during the Covid 19 crisis.
- Provide analysis that underpins response options, including communications and operational responses, that mitigate the effect of harmful dis/misinformation.
- In both of these provisions provided to HMG, Defence uniquely give insight into immediate threats and those that are identifiable on social media platforms, as these functions do not exist elsewhere in the Counter Disinformation Unit.

Conduct Open Source Media monitoring and analysis to IDENTIFY and REPORT on DISMIS related to COVID-19 in the UK. Working hours would be 0800-1800 Mon to Fri, but also on call outside of those hours. Reporting would include FLASHREPS, Daily Reports, weekly reports, ad-hoc reporting, and indication of breaches of CSPs ToS. Currently the Army are providing 2x Liaison Officers and 2x Monitoring Teams (1 Team Cmd and 3 x Operators per team).

5) What alternatives have been considered?

Mutual Aid: External contractors are already employed and will continue to provide additional skills. DCMS has a contract with the Global Disinformation Index (GDI), who monitor and assess disinformation narratives on fringe platforms.

Commercial Alternatives: Home Office and FCO Analysts are already engaged in the Cross-Whitehall disinformation response. They do not have capacity to provide further support on specific areas of analytics, including rapid assessment and identification of social media trends.

Existing capabilities provided by mutual aid and contractors are therefore not sufficient in themselves to cover HMG's response to the threat of disinformation, because they do not cover reactive analysis with a short turnaround to inform communication responses, and do not monitor social media open source data.

DCMS is actively seeking a commercial solution to the capability gap outlined above and has had a number of meetings with third parties to ascertain capability and costs. However the financial costings that have been proposed to DCMS would require a formal tendering process that cannot be completed before 31 August.

Other: DCMS are currently mapping existing capabilities and exploring a set of alternative options to fulfil this function. This will not be in place before the end of August.

6) Liabilities and charges (delete where applicable)		
6.1) Requesting Authority accepts responsibility for own risk assessment?	6.2) Requesting authority accepts own indemnity against loss, damage, injury or death while on MOD estate	6.3) Requesting authority aware that costs may be recovered by the MOD?
Yes ~~No~~ ~~N/A~~	~~Yes~~ ~~No~~ N/A	Yes ~~No~~

Requesting Officer[2]	Name	Signature	Date

PART 2 – MOD LO TO COMPLETE
MOD Resource Assessment

7.1) Task	7.2) Suggested Assets	7.3) Timings	7.4) Locations - Report RV/Task Locn:
INDENTIFY, REPORT As para 4	2 x LOs 2 x Teams (1 Team Cmd and 3 x Operators per team) 10 Pax in total	~~5 Jul – 31 Aug~~ 1 Sep 20 – 31 Oct 20	Permanent Duty Station. This task can be done remotely.
MOD LO	*Name* ▓▓▓	*Signature* ▓▓▓	*Date* 15 Jul 20

PART 3 – MOD LO TO COMPLETE – NOT REQUIRED FOR URGENT MACA
Risk Statement

8.1) Risk to Defence Outputs	The current sS solution comes at a cost of operators being used out of role and additional training burden. A wider defence solution should be incorporate Navy (HMS SULTAN), RAF (RAF WYTON) and Army (77 Bde) who have operators trained to conduct this work.
8.2) Risk to Defence Personnel and Equipment	
8.3) Reputational Risk	Little, if any. There could be potential presentational risk of Defence 'spying' or conducting 'PSYOPs' on the UK but highly unlikely. If Def does not carry this out until the civilian option is established and disinformation is spread, it could result in harmful misinformation and disinformation narratives

PART 4 - COMMENT BY HQ SJC(UK)
To include a Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) costing

TO BE COMPLETED BY HQ SJC(UK)

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Summary of Cost Estimate

Cost Category	Total Full Cost	Total Marginal Cost
Personnel	£115,391.36	£0.00
Personnel Allowances	£0.00	£0.00

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[2] Empowered to agree spend.

Accommodation & Catering	£7,625.00	£7,625.00	
Transport	£0.00	£0.00	
Air Assets	£0.00	£0.00	
Infrastructure	£0.00	£0.00	
Equipment	£0.00	£0.00	
Miscellaneous Costs	£0.00	£0.00	

Marginal ROM cost for ext 1 Sep 20 – 31 Oct 20 = £7625.00

HQ SJC(UK) lead	*Name*	*Signature*	*Date*
PART 5 – MOD APPROVAL (COMPLETED BY HQ SJC(UK))			
MOD Approval date	ACTORD	Remarks	

PART 6 – MACA CLOSURE – MOD LO TO COMPLETE			
MACA Completed as planned	MACA completed with the following variations:		MACA Cancelled
MOD LO	**Name**	**Signature**	**Date**

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR THE COMPLETION OF ANNEX B

Part 1

Ser 1 – A single sentence outlining the current situation. Example: "Flood defences failing in Wainfleet, Lincolnshire threatening 550 properties."

Ser 2 – Detailed description of the situation including predicted/expected developments. This section is not required for the initial submission of an URGENT MACA if the MOD LO has conducted a verbal brief with HQ SJC(UK). This section must be updated/completed once time allows.

Ser 3 – An explanation of the clear need to act and an explanation of the consequences of not acting. This section is not required for the initial submission of an URGENT MACA if the MOD LO has conducted a verbal brief with HQ SJC(UK). This section must be submitted once time allows.

Ser 4 – A clear description of the task that the requesting agency needs delivering. This should not be focussed on Defence; more an explanation of what needs to be achieved.

Ser 5 – Details of mutual aid and commercial alternatives that have been considered and why they were discounted must be provided. Annotate if no commercial alternative exists.

Ser 6 – This confirms that the requesting agency is aware of their responsibilities and liabilities.

Part 2

Ser 7 – MOD LO should make an initial assessment on the likely assets/resource required to deliver the requested task. One line to be used per task. For example:

7.1) Task	7.2) Suggested Assets	7.3) Timings	7.4) Locations - Report RV/Task Locn:
Plug breach in flood defences	Chinook or other SH variant as location inaccessible by ground	ASAP for 24hrs	Initial RV at RAF Coningsby.
Warn and inform at 550 houses	1 x subunit	ASAP for 36hrs	RV at Prince William of Gloucester Barracks

Part 3: This is not required for the initial submission of an URGENT MACA but must follow on when time allows.

Ser 8 – MOD LO is to outline risks. This will help inform RSOI and identify risks that require mitigation:

> Ser 8.1 – any known risks to Defence Outputs.

> Ser 8.2 – Any risk to personnel or equipment that is presented by the situation is to be identified to inform RSOI, to make deploying force elements aware of risks and to inform Duty Holders of the risks involved.

> Ser 8.3 – MOD LO is to identify potential reputational risk to Defence throughout the task or through a failure to act.

Part 4: To be completed by HQ SJC(UK) providing comment on compliance with policy, precedent, charging regime, impact on concurrency, areas of risk, media, concurrency etc.

Part 5: To be completed by HQ SJC(UK) on receipt of OSW from SPO CT&UK Ops.

Part 6: To be completed by MOD LO no later than 5 working days from the completion of the MACA.