



CASE STUDY

## General Dynamics

Having made Wales a major hub of its UK operations, General Dynamics UK is now moving onto an exciting new stage of its evolution: establishing a unique centre of excellence which will stimulate new research and enable collaborative working throughout the defence supply chain.

A leading high-tech British defence contractor, General Dynamics UK is part of the General Dynamics Corporation, one of the world's top six defence companies employing over 84,000 people worldwide. General Dynamics UK employs some 1,700 highly skilled staff, over half of whom are based in Wales, generating world-class solutions in military communications, battlespace management, mission systems and information management applications for its customer base around the world.



**GENERAL DYNAMICS**  
United Kingdom Limited



## Primary contracts led from South Wales include:

- **Bowman:** General Dynamics UK is the Prime Contractor and Systems Integrator for the Bowman tactical C4I system, a key capability of the British armed forces.
- **C4I exports:** Tactical Voice/Data communications to other markets overseas.
- **Armoured Vehicles:** harnessing its UK experience from delivering Bowman together with global capability as the world's leading supplier of Armoured Vehicles, General Dynamics is now a leading contender to supply the next generation of Armoured Fighting Vehicles for the British Army
- **Defence Information Infrastructure Project (DII):** consortium partner in this £4 billion, ten-year programme to develop and deliver a wide range of services to MoD personnel across the globe. The company provides Digitised Training Solutions and Services.
- **DIF DTC:** General Dynamics UK Limited is the prime contractor for the Defence Technology Centre in Data and Information Fusion, leading an innovative research consortium in partnership with the Ministry of Defence which involves leading technology companies and major UK universities such as Cambridge, Imperial, and Cardiff.

General Dynamics came to Wales in 2001 on the back of the winning the Bowman contract. "This is a massive, long term contract," said President and Managing Director Sandy Wilson, "for a system that will undergo continual evolution – this work demands a lot of very skilled people."

## Recruit, retain and grow

"With grant aid assistance from the Welsh Assembly Government and significant support from Team Wales, we established our new base at Oakdale, near Newport – and our UK work force has increased spectacularly – from 500 in 2000 to around 1,700 today."

Recruiting this number of people has meant not only finding the best people in Wales with the specialist skills required, but from right across the UK – and even into Europe. "Sometimes you have to persuade prospective employees that Wales has moved on significantly from the old coal tip days; but coming here, seeing the facilities and quality of life on offer, and meeting our other staff who love being in Wales are powerful arguments."

## Successful academic collaboration

The company also works closely with Cardiff University – sponsoring scholarships, funding prize bursaries in data and information fusion and financing post-graduate communications-based research projects. In this way, the company attracts a flow of talented graduates and postgraduates as well as generating new ideas. General Dynamics UK is also continually upskilling its workforce, supported by training grants provided through the Welsh Assembly Government, helping staff to keep pace with the new technologies being developed.

## Innovation, Innovation, Innovation!

The next stage in the company's evolution in Wales is the creation of a unique innovation centre, "The EDGE™ UK", launched earlier this year and designed to bring high-technology advances together in collaborative environment and enable rapid testing of new advances in technology by the MoD, Britain's leading universities, and high-tech SMEs.

By providing an environment where new equipment and software can be joined to existing defence communications and IT systems, The EDGE™ UK will facilitate speedy assessment and refinement of emerging capabilities for the armed forces and security services. The EDGE™ UK will build on General Dynamics' experience in the US, where the original EDGE has provided a physical and virtual environment for collaboration projects between industry, academia and the US Government.

"This sort of concept is new to the UK," says Sandy Wilson, "and will act as a springboard for new IP and exciting new collaborations – bringing together the best of the ideas out there, generating novel applications of existing technology and maximising the knowledge in our universities and smaller companies."

Having such a centre of excellence in Wales – with a physical as well as virtual infrastructure – is certain to act as a stimulus throughout the supply chain for the country's knowledge-based SMEs as well as encourage new research. Equally importantly it will further promote Britain's global position in the defence sector as a world-class innovator.

For more information on how our specialist team can help support your business contact us on:

Tel (UK): 0845 010 3300 / Tel (Overseas): +44 (0) 1443 845500

Email: [ibw@wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ibw@wales.gsi.gov.uk) [www.ibwales.com/aerospace](http://www.ibwales.com/aerospace)

