



From Customer Problem Sets to Products:
The Expansion of the Defence
Holdings Product Studio

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Defending
Tomorrow, Today

From Customer Problem Sets to Products: **The Expansion of the Defence Holdings Product Studio**

When Defence Holdings set out its Operating Model, the Product Studio, delivered in partnership with Whitespace, was positioned as a core part of the Company's strategy to build a portfolio of sovereign software products with both strategic relevance to UK defence and the potential for commercial adoption.

Its mandate was to stay close to customers, understand the problems they need to solve, identify where existing capabilities fall short, and build sovereign software against those requirements.

Over the past four months, Defence Holdings has engaged with a growing number of stakeholders across UK Government, defence and national security. This access is giving the Company an increasingly detailed understanding of customer requirements and, critically, where gaps remain between those requirements and the solutions currently available.

At the same time, the first three capabilities within the Product Studio continue to progress. As detailed in the Company's recent Operational Update, Ixian has progressed through MVP development, security testing and end-user evaluation; Project Strong is being developed through the Company's first UK Ministry of Defence customer contract, with delivery identifying further customer problem sets; and the ROTI/ROVI capability is being developed around an identified operational policing requirement, extending the application of the Product Studio into the wider law enforcement market.

Alongside this progress, the companies continual process of engaging with existing and potential customers have identified and validated further unmet needs. These are now directly informing what Defence Holdings builds next.

As a result, the Product Studio is expanding to five products, with Solus and Picket becoming the fourth and fifth additions to the portfolio.

Their development provides further evidence of the model beginning to repeat: customer access deepens the Company's understanding of where gaps exist, validated requirements inform new product development, and Defence Holdings invests in building sovereign software to address them.

Introducing Solus and Picket

Solus and Picket respond to two distinct requirements identified through this process and extend the Product Studio into new areas of sovereign software development. While each addresses a different customer problem set, both reflect requirements becoming increasingly important as defence becomes more digitally enabled, data-driven and reliant on AI.

Solus

Secure access to mission-critical data

Modern defence is increasingly dependent on the ability to access, use and share data across complex operational environments. But that information is often distributed across different systems, organisations and levels of classification. The challenge is not simply securing classified data, but enabling it to be used, ensuring information can reach the people who need it, while protecting the elements they are not authorised to access.

Solus is being developed to address this challenge by enabling users to access and manage data within mission-critical systems across multiple levels of classification. Data can be obfuscated at source, while verified user credentials and clearance levels determine what information an individual is able to view, edit and use. This is designed to make classified data more accessible and operationally useful without weakening the security controls that protect it.

Solus can be integrated with Project Strong, adding a further capability to the integrated analytical environment being developed elsewhere within the Product Studio. It is also being developed to operate independently, giving the product potential application across a broader range of systems and use cases.

Picket

Sovereign AI at the edge

Picket addresses a different capability gap and represents an entirely new capability within the Product Studio.

As AI becomes increasingly embedded within defence systems, access to the computing infrastructure required to run it becomes an operational consideration in its own right. Centralised data centres and cloud infrastructure provide enormous computing capacity, but deployed forces cannot always assume persistent connectivity to them- particularly in contested, degraded or disconnected environments.

Modern conflict is making that constraint increasingly visible.

The proliferation of drones and autonomous systems in Ukraine has demonstrated both the growing importance of software and AI at the tactical edge and the need for systems that can continue to operate when communications, navigation and supporting infrastructure are disrupted. The UK Government has explicitly identified lessons from Ukraine as a driver of its approach to autonomous systems and the Digital Targeting Web, including the requirement to operate across contested cyber and electromagnetic environments.

NATO is moving in the same direction. Its 2026 Alliance Digital Strategy specifically calls for cloud infrastructure to be integrated with **tactical edge computing**, enabling mission-critical operations in degraded, contested and denied environments. It also identifies the deployment of AI inference at the tactical edge as a means of improving situational awareness, real-time decision-making and operational autonomy.

This is the environment Picket is being developed for.

Picket is designed to aggregate edge CPU devices to create a **secure, resilient and offline sovereign AI mesh network**. Rather than relying exclusively on centralised computing infrastructure, available edge devices can be brought together to create a distributed processing resource that can be configured around the requirements of a mission.

The network can be managed by the user and utilised both as an AI processing resource and as a communications solution, reducing reliance on expensive or unavailable data-centre infrastructure.

The scale of investment now being directed towards technologies dependent upon this kind of resilient digital infrastructure is significant.

Unlike Solus, Picket is entirely separate from the existing products within the Product Studio. Its development therefore extends Defence Holdings into a new capability area, addressing a requirement that is becoming increasingly important as AI and autonomous systems move from centralised infrastructure towards the operational edge.

An expanding sovereign software portfolio

Solus and Picket take the Defence Holdings Product Studio to five products, broadening the portfolio across information intelligence, decision support, operational policing, secure data access and distributed AI infrastructure.

The expansion also marks an important point in the development of the Product Studio. Defence Holdings' portfolio is being shaped by what the Company is learning through increasing access to customers, end users and the wider defence ecosystem, identifying where requirements are changing, where capability gaps remain and where sovereign software can provide an answer.

As set out in the Company's Operating Model, this approach requires Defence Holdings to take calculated development risk. The Company does not expect every product it develops to progress to commercial adoption. Operating at the leading edge of defence technology means being prepared to invest ahead of contracted demand, build against validated customer problems and accept that some development paths will not progress. That is an intentional part of the model: taking disciplined risk where credible customer need exists, learning quickly and concentrating further investment behind the capabilities that demonstrate the strongest potential.

That creates a model designed to compound. Each customer engagement provides greater insight into the problems defence and national security users are trying to solve. Those insights inform what the Company builds next, while an expanding portfolio creates further opportunities for customer engagement, validation and development.

With **five products** now in development, the Product Studio is beginning to demonstrate that cycle at increasing scale.

