

News from Saab 5th October 2026

Saab UK and Kraken collaborate on pioneering autonomous ‘drone seeker’ vessel

Saab UK and Kraken today announced the development of an experimental autonomous “drone seeker” surface vessel, designed to help protect shipping and critical infrastructure from emerging aerial threats.

The prototype capability integrates Saab’s industry-leading Giraffe 1X radar with Kraken’s K3 Scout autonomous platform, to create a rapidly deployable counter-UAS seeker system for maritime environments.

The K3 Scout is a low-signature, high-performance uncrewed surface vessel that can be operated entirely autonomously. Designed to support the delivery of a ‘hybrid navy’, it can be deployed independently or alongside conventional surface vessels. When equipped with the Giraffe 1X radar, the system is expected to provide early warning of potential drone incursions, detecting even small airborne targets at significant range.

Saab’s Giraffe 1X is a lightweight, 3D radar designed to detect and track airborne threats in real time. Proven in demanding operational environments around the world, its integration onto an autonomous maritime platform is a step toward realising the concept of a hybrid navy – as outlined in the UK Government’s Defence Investment Plan - where autonomous vessels operate seamlessly alongside conventional assets.

Saab and Kraken believe the system – currently in the experimental stages - has significant potential to strengthen protection of shipping, ports, offshore energy assets and national infrastructure against increasingly frequent drone threats.

Teams from Saab UK and Kraken have taken the concept from the drawing board to being a working prototype in just a matter of months, time which includes a series of sea trials to understand radar performance in maritime conditions.

Andy Fraser, Managing Director of Saab UK, said:

“This is a pioneering, UK manufactured, deployable capability, that together with Kraken we’ve developed in less than seven months. This reflects the strength of our partnership, the maturity and flexibility of our respective technologies, and our ability to respond at pace to the evolving threat landscape and needs of our customers.”

Mal Crease, CEO and Founder, Kraken Technology Group, said:

“Kraken and Saab UK’s prototype “drone seeker” vessel is exactly what the K3 SCOUT was designed to do: integrate with mission-relevant payloads to then operate in austere maritime environments.”

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Saab UK Ltd, a legal entity of Saab AB, is a leading defence and security company. With over 600 employees and a presence in the UK for more than 30 years, Saab operates 8 major facilities across the country, including training and simulation in Wiltshire, Seaeye underwater robotics and sensor systems in Fareham, Public Safety Solutions in Hull, the Software Technology Centre in Farnborough, and its headquarters in London.

The UK is a key country of operations for Saab. Over 60% of the NLAW anti-tank missile comes from UK supply chain and 35% of the Gripen fighter jet is sourced from UK companies, creating thousands of jobs.