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Angle: The use of Hi-Point to deliver Project SLAM

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In 2001, our political leaders pledged £1 billion of new funding to raise the standard of single living accommodation in Britain's barracks over a 10-year programme. David Cottrell, Technical Director at Corus Building Systems, outlines the importance of Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) in realising the Ministry of Defence (MoD) refurbishment ambitions by the target year of 2013.

Despite making a valued commitment to serve the country as part of the Armed Forces, many UK soldiers find themselves living in quarters that are both cramped and decaying – far removed from the modern quality of living they deserve. This, combined with a short fall in annual recruitment targets, means that the MoD is now pro-actively looking to attract new recruits and retain existing troops for further service. Raising the standard of residential accommodation on offer can contribute to bolstering incentive and is the motivation behind the MoD's ambitious programme aimed at modernising more than 16,000 bed spaces in barracks across the UK.

The first five-year phase of work – Project Slam – is already underway and is being pioneered by specialist contractor, Debut Services. The programme of work includes demolishing and re-building the current single person living quarters to provide entirely new accommodation. Other more serviceable buildings will be stripped, reconfigured and re-fitted.

Project SLAM's second five-year phase is due to start in January 2008. However, this will be subject to the satisfactory delivery of phase one - on time and on budget. With over 50 military bases to be serviced and public sector money on the line, the £1 billion budget must be put to the best possible use and make life more comfortable for service personnel sooner rather than later. This challenge requires rigid cost, quality and programme control. MMC and

off-site systems are considered essential to achieve this and are already being put to effective use.

Help from Hi-Point

Corus Building Systems, part of the leading metal producer, is a key element of delivering Project SLAM. Its off-site roofing system, Hi-Point, has been used on more than 20 buildings, with each covering around 800 square-metres. Recognising the MMC benefits and suitability to fast-track building projects, Debut Services is continuing to specify Hi-point across the project.

The system is designed and manufactured at the dedicated Haydock site in Merseyside – home to the Kalzip range of products - to ensure consistency, quality, reliability and fewer defects. Factory-controlled conditions are generally warm, dry and well lit in comparison with the exposure to unknown elements associated with working on-site. By manufacturing off-site, less on-site waste is also created – up to 90 per cent less compared to traditional roofing – and it limits the inconvenience to the surrounding community caused by site traffic, deliveries and waste clearance.

The pre-fabricated system is transported to site as a kit of factory-manufactured parts for 'just-in-time' delivery, where the modules are assembled on the ground before being craned into place. The roof can be installed in just one day in comparison to six or seven weeks for a traditional roof. This significantly reduces costs as fewer workers and less scaffolding are needed on-site. The roof sections can also be assembled at the same time as the main structure – taking a significant amount of work out of the critical path.

In terms of health and safety, assembly at ground level means that practices are enhanced as the risks associated with working at height are significantly reduced. These best practice techniques result in the provision of successful, value for money, construction solutions that benefit entire build schedules.

Meeting Modern Standards

The increased standard of living that Project SLAM is delivering will make a significant contribution to the forces retention and demonstrate the Government's appreciation of their services. Bed spaces will continue to be upgraded on a 'worst-first' basis, together with the provision of utility, common areas and other ancillary accommodation. The speed and quality of the Hi-Point roofing system catapults the project significantly closer to completion and - subsequently – the increased quality of life is felt sooner by the people themselves.

David Cottrell is the Technical Director at Corus Building Systems. For more information please visit [www. Kalzip.com](http://www.Kalzip.com).

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