Today the UK Treasury announced that two projects were being suspended pending urgent review.

1. Successor deterrent extension to concept phase long lead items £66 million. Its future will be included in the Trident value for money review.

2. The biggie - the joint MoD/Department of Transport Search and Rescue (SAR) helicopter, announced with some fanfare a few months back. Cost (lifetime cost?) £4676 million from MoD, £2338 million from Department for Transport. This single project makes up the bulk of the £8 billion suspensions. Its review is said to be a matter of urgency.

The consequences of not resourcing a new SAR craft are unclear but most likely means a cut in capability (SAR coverage), as the existing Sea King won't stay in service much longer - it's knackered, to use a technical term. Arguably this should come from the Home Office anyway, not defence, unless the idea is that the capability is there for fishing ejected fighter pilots out of the North Sea. How often this has happened in the last decade is unclear, and any scenario in which there would be dogfights over Europe is on the highest shelf of the remotest cupboard.

Part of the solution could be doing what most other countries, billing the rescued party with the costs - insurance is relatively cheap and it might stop the numpties walking up Snowdon in high heels or T shirts from taking stupid risks!