

Bristol scientists show off Drone Mine Technology



New drone technology which could save millions of lives has been demonstrated by Bristol University scientists.

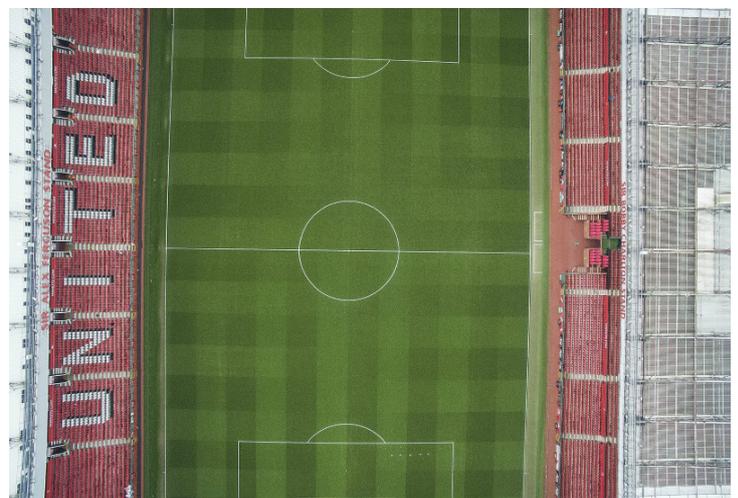
There are an estimated 110 million active landmines in the world today. Using current technologies clearing all of these would take over 1,000 years and cost \$30 billion.

However, researchers from the University of Bristol's School of Physics have been showing how drone technology has the ability to detect unexploded mines over large areas, as well as mapping out the potential hazards.

The research is funded by Find a Better Way, a charity founded by Manchester United's Sir Bobby Charlton. The technology was demonstrated with a flight over Old Trafford.

Project researcher, *John Fardoulis* said: "Flying over the Manchester United pitch will demonstrate that we can map a football pitch-sized area of land in two hours or less.

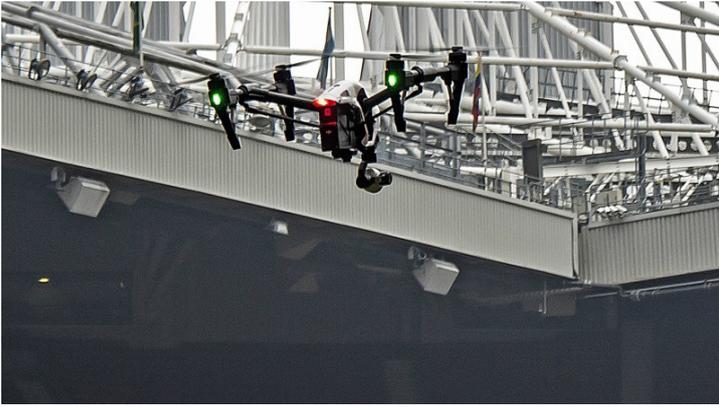
"Clearing a minefield that size can currently take months, and the maps our drone will generate should help deminers focus on the places where mines are most likely to be found. This will speed the process up and make the demining significantly safer."



The technology could be used with cheaper, commercially available drones which are affordable in less developed parts of the world, where most of the

active landmines are located.

By flying these drones over potential minefields, the drones can obtain high-resolution images that show both the terrain and objects visible on the surface.



The project will last for two years and hopes to develop images that detect different colours of light. If successful these images could identify mines by the effect the explosive chemicals have on the surrounding vegetation.

Dr John Day explained how the technology could work: "Living plants have a very distinctive reflection in the near infrared spectrum, just beyond human vision,



which makes it possible to tell how healthy they are.

"Chemicals in landmines leak out and are often absorbed by plants, causing abnormalities. Looking for these changes might be a way of discovering the whereabouts of mines."

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