

Press release: Pensions Ombudsman reappointed



The Pensions Ombudsman is independent and impartial. He has legal powers to make binding decisions enforceable by the courts.

The service is free and funded by grant-in-aid from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

More particularly, the Ombudsman investigates complaints and disputes about personal and occupational pension schemes; reviewable matters and complaints about the Pension Protection Fund and appeals about the Financial Assistance Scheme.

Guy Opperman, Minister for Pensions and Financial Inclusion, said:

I am pleased to confirm that Anthony Arter will continue as Pensions Ombudsman and Pension Protection Fund Ombudsman. Anthony has brought a wealth of knowledge and experience of pensions to this vital role and has displayed great leadership and judgement. I look forward to Anthony and his team continuing to provide a high-quality service.

Mr Arter, who took up the role in May 2015, will continue in post until 31 July 2021. He is a solicitor and former Head of Pensions and London Senior Partner at Eversheds LLP.

The Pensions Ombudsman and Pension Protection Fund Ombudsman are public appointments made by the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions. The appointments follow an open competition regulated by the Office for the Commissioner of Public Appointments.

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Press release: UK aid to provide emergency food to 62,000 Palestinian refugees in Gaza

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Refugees in Gaza are extremely vulnerable following recurrent bouts of conflict, restrictions on access and movement, high poverty rates, high unemployment levels and rising costs of living. According to the UN, around 80 per cent of Gazan households are dependent on food aid.

To meet their emergency and basic needs UK aid is providing essentials including flour, rice, sugar, chickpeas, sunflower oil, whole milk, lentils and canned sardines to counter food supply problems affecting refugees who are unable to afford rising food prices in Gaza.

Minister for the Middle East Alistair Burt said:

I am deeply concerned about the worsening situation in the Gaza strip, and once again UK aid gives a message to the people of Gaza that we have not forgotten them or their plight.

It is right that we act to make sure that refugees in Gaza know where their next meal will come from and improve the dignity of their lives.

We have been clear that a political settlement is the only way to ensure lasting peace for Palestinians and Israelis alike. All parties must redouble their political efforts and return to the negotiating table, not only to address the deteriorating conditions

in Gaza, but to ensure tragedies of the past months are not repeated.

The package is part of wider support to Gaza through the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), through which UK aid is providing healthcare and education to 1.3 million people in Gaza, as well as more than 800,000 refugees in the West Bank.

Notes to editors

- £5 million of emergency UK aid funding will go to UNRWA to provide food to refugees in Gaza
- £60.5m of UK aid has already been given to UNRWA to support vulnerable Palestinian refugees in Gaza, the West Bank, Syria, Jordan and Lebanon to meet their basic education and health care needs and humanitarian needs as a result of the Syria crisis.
- This package is new humanitarian funding to UNRWA's Emergency Appeal in Gaza.

News story: UK aviation industry set to prosper as UK prepares to leave the EU

- Transport Secretary Chris Grayling in Switzerland to sign agreement ensuring continued flights between the 2 countries
- aviation strategy green paper launched outlining government's long term ambition for aviation success after we leave the EU
- route to future sustainable aviation growth with proposals to reduce emissions and noise levels

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling will today (17 November 2018) fly to Switzerland to sign an agreement that ensures air services will continue operating between the UK and Switzerland after Brexit.

The new bilateral deal guarantees the terms of the current EU-Switzerland agreement on air services, safeguarding the route that carried 6.8 million passengers by air in 2017 as the UK prepares to leave the European Union.

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling said:

The UK aviation sector is the biggest in Europe and will play an even more crucial role as we further develop as an outward looking global nation.

These agreements will ensure Britain continues to prosper as we leave the EU and I'm confident the UK will reach a mutually beneficial deal, whilst we continue to prepare for all eventualities.

Alongside this, the government is today launching the [Aviation 2050 consultation](#) – a long-term plan for sustainable growth to ensure the industry's continued success.

It proposes new measures to ensure the UK's aviation sector continues to bring significant benefits to the UK economy and citizens up to 2050 and beyond, including a new passenger charter, practical requirements to reduce emissions and noise levels and more use of innovative technology.

[Aviation 2050](#)

Aviation is worth more than £22 billion to the UK economy through creating jobs, boosting growth and connecting regions. As passenger and freight demand increases, the consultation proposes a partnership for future sustainable growth.

This will ensure the UK continues to benefit from a world class choice of connections and airlines while tackling the environmental and community impacts of flights.

The consultation also sets out how the government plans to modernise our airspace, ensuring journeys are quicker, cleaner and more efficient in the future, reducing congestion, noise and emissions and helping avoid future delays.

Aviation Minister Liz Sugg said:

Our aviation sector is world-leading and the Aviation 2050 strategy will promote success in the coming decades.

Our ambition is to expand our international connections, boost trade and investment and strengthening domestic links to support businesses and travelling passengers.

By working with industry we will drive sustainable growth, ensuring the next generation will continue to benefit from the growing number of opportunities this exciting and innovative sector offers.

Proposals to support aviation growth in the consultation include:

- setting out a framework for future sustainable growth
- commitments to signing further liberal air service agreements with countries around the world to boost trade and tourism
- measures to encourage greater competition and more choice for passengers
- modernised UK airspace to improve efficiency and reduce delays

Building on the positive steps already taken by the industry in balancing further growth with action to address environmental and community impacts, the document outlines new practical requirements to reduce emissions and noise levels for local communities alongside tougher enforcement measures.

It includes plans to embed noise exposure levels into the planning approval process, the introduction of noise caps which will be regularly reviewed and enforced, along with the appointment of a Chair of the new Independent commission on civil aviation noise.

Tackling climate change will be a key requirement of future growth, with a proposal for negotiating a long-term global emissions target for international aviation to incentivise industry to adopt cleaner technologies.

Plans include that applications for growth must also demonstrate they will not prevent the UK's ability to meet its Climate Change Act 2008 targets.

Tim Alderslade, Chief Executive of Airlines UK, said:

We welcome the next stage in the government's aviation strategy. Airlines look forward to continuing to work with Ministers to create a strategy that helps to deliver sustainable growth in our sector. To connect UK families and businesses domestically and to the world, deliver value for money, and further improve the travelling experience for all passengers.

The consultation follows parliamentary approval for a new runway at Heathrow earlier this year, which will provide new routes and support businesses across the country, supplemented by a world class package of compensation and mitigation measures for local communities.

The strategy will seek to further maximise benefits to regional growth and connectivity by encouraging efficient use of infrastructure beyond Heathrow, delivering greater capacity at UK airports and driving competition between airlines to deliver better value for money for customers.

[Press release: Change of Her Majesty's Ambassador to Eritrea in February 2019](#)

Mr Alisdair Walker has been appointed Her Majesty's Ambassador to the State of Eritrea.