

News story: Government outlines strengthened plans to tackle child abuse

The Government has today (5 March) set out plans to strengthen information sharing between police, social workers and healthcare professionals to tackle child abuse and neglect, and to improve joint working and decision-making.

Building on the ambitious programme of reform to the children's social care system, the Home Office and Department for Education have responded to a joint consultation, 'Reporting and acting on child abuse and neglect', which sought views on how to best protect vulnerable children from abuse and neglect in all its forms.

Minister for Crime, Safeguarding and Vulnerabilities, Victoria Atkins said:

Child sexual exploitation and abuse are sickening crimes which this Government has done more than any other to tackle. In the past we have seen vulnerable children let down by the very people who should have protected them from harm. We are clear that this must never be repeated.

We have set a clear expectation on the police by giving child sexual abuse the status of a national threat, set up joint inspections of health, police, and children's social care, and introduced a national whistleblowing helpline with the NSPCC for any employee who wants to raise a concern about how their organisation is dealing with a concern about a child.

The consultation sought views on issues relating to the child protection system, specifically proposals to introduce additional legal duties for professionals and organisations working to protect young people. These proposed changes to the law included mandatory reporting of any concern relating to child abuse by practitioners, and a duty to act, whereby individuals could face professional or criminal sanctions for failing to take appropriate action where child abuse was known or suspected. The consultation received a response of more than 760 responses from social workers, police officers, local government, children's charities, educators and health professionals, victim support groups, and other members of the public.

Of these responses, the majority disagreed with introducing new statutory requirements. Nearly 70% felt mandatory reporting could have an adverse impact on the child protection system and 85% said it would not in itself lead to appropriate action being taken to protect children. Only 25% were in favour of a duty to act, and less than half that number (12%) supported introducing mandatory reporting.

The evidence received does not demonstrate that either of the proposals would sufficiently improve outcomes for children. Rather, feedback suggests that these additional measures could risk creating unnecessary burdens, divert attention from the most serious cases, hamper professional judgement, and potentially jeopardise the vital relationships between social workers and vulnerable families in their care.

England already has a higher rate of reporting than countries where such duties are in place, and the evidence from serious case reviews, Ofsted inspections and the consultation responses does not suggest there is a systemic problem.

Instead, the majority of respondents (63%) were in favour of allowing the Government's existing programme of child protection reforms time to embed before considering additional statutory measures. Reflecting on considering the current child protection system, respondents called for better joint working between different local agencies, further work to encourage new and innovative practice, and better training for practitioners.

Children and Families Minister, Nadhim Zahawi, said:

We owe a huge debt of gratitude to the social workers and other professionals who support the most vulnerable in our society, especially those who have been victims of abuse.

The response to this consultation shows the strength of feeling among the sector on this extremely important issue, and it's vital that we work directly with people on the ground, supporting them to carry out their work sensitively and efficiently.

Decisions we make as a government should be with the ambition of improving outcomes for as many in society as possible, which is why we must listen to the views and experience of the sector as we progress further with our reform agenda.

National Police Chiefs' Council Lead for Child Protection, Chief Constable Simon Bailey said:

I'm pleased that the Government has listened to the views of frontline professionals by promising to work with us to improve coordination between agencies as they work to tackle child sexual abuse.

Teachers, social workers and other professionals can and do play a vital role in keeping children safe from harm but our research suggests imposing additional legal requirements on them could be counterintuitive – with forces finding themselves inundated with reports that shouldn't ever have been made.

Key to tackling this horrendous crime is ensuring these dedicated

professionals are well trained in how to spot the signs of abuse and act on them, and that agencies are truly coordinated.

Chief Social Worker for Children and Families, Isabelle Trowler, said:

The Government has listened to the views of social work leaders who know the system best and understand the unintended consequences that introducing mandatory reporting could produce.

Our focus should be to continue building public confidence in our first-class child protection system which holds a door wide open for vulnerable children and also provides support for families.

In direct response to sector feedback, the Government has today confirmed that it will:

- prove coordination between agencies involved in keeping children safe through better information sharing – implementing stronger safeguarding arrangements locally, as well as clearer, stronger national statutory guidance;
- publish revised Working Together to Safeguard Children statutory guidance to make clear the roles and responsibilities of the agencies involved in protecting children from abuse and neglect;
- build on its successful campaign, [Together, we can tackle child abuse](#), a new phase of which launched in February 2018;
- continue to boost the professional development of social workers and practitioners by improving training, accreditation and regulation, supporting them to better protect children and promote their welfare; and
- consider the current legal framework to assess whether it is sufficiently robust in terms of criminal offences for concealing child abuse and neglect.

The government's consultation is the latest in an active and broad reform agenda, which includes a £200 million investment in innovation, legislation and cross-governmental working.

[Press release: Minister gives Brexit update to the Channel Islands and Isle of Man](#)

The meeting was the fifth quarterly meeting between the Minister and the

Chief Ministers of the Crown Dependencies as part of an extensive engagement programme on the UK's exit from the EU. The main themes from the latest inter-ministerial meeting are captured in a joint statement published today.

The Minister updated the group on the progress being made in the negotiations ahead of the March European Council, reiterating the Government's commitment to reaching agreement on the terms of the implementation period by then. He also reiterated the vision set out by the Prime Minister in her speech to deliver for the whole of our United Kingdom and our wider family.

The joint-statement agreed by all present read:

We welcome progress made in negotiations so far, both reaching the December agreement and in the Commission's specific reference to the Channel Islands and Isle of Man in the publication of their draft Withdrawal Agreement on 28 February.

The regular engagement between the governments of the Crown Dependencies and the UK has been constructive and demonstrates our joint commitment to the strengthening of our historic relationship. We look forward to continuing to engage closely together as the negotiations continue and remain committed to ensuring a deal which works both for the UK and for the extended British family.

The Crown Dependencies were represented by the Chief Minister of Jersey, Senator Ian Gorst, the Chief Minister to the Bailiwick of Guernsey, Deputy Gavin St Pier, and the Chief Minister of the Isle of Man, Howard Quayle MHK.

On the UK side, in addition to Minister Walker, the meeting was joined by senior officials from across Whitehall whom have been leading policy level engagement with the Crown Dependencies through a series of technical roundtables dedicated to specific Exit concerns.

[Press release: Foreign flagged ships detained in the UK during February 2018](#)

During February, there was one new detention of foreign flagged vessels in a UK port, six vessels remained under detention from previous months. A total of four vessels remain under detention at the end of February.

1. In response to one of the recommendations of Lord Donaldson's inquiry into the prevention of pollution from merchant shipping, and in

compliance with the EU Directive on Port State Control (2009/16/EC as amended), the Maritime and Coastguard agency (MCA) publishes details of the foreign flagged vessels detained in UK ports each month.

2. The UK is part of a regional agreement on port state control known as the Paris Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control (Paris MOU) and information on all ships that are inspected is held centrally in an electronic database known as THETIS. This allows the ships with a high risk rating and poor detention records to be targeted for future inspection.
3. Inspections of foreign flagged ships in UK ports are undertaken by surveyors from the Maritime and Coastguard Agency. When a ship is found to be not in compliance with applicable convention requirements, a deficiency may be raised. If any of their deficiencies are so serious they have to be rectified before departure, then the ship will be detained.
4. All deficiencies should be rectified before departure if at all possible.
5. When applicable, the list includes those passenger craft prevented from operating under the provisions of the EU Directive on Mandatory Surveys for the safe operation of regular Ro-Ro ferry and high speed passenger craft services (1999/35/EU).

Notes on the list of detentions

- Full details of the ship. The accompanying detention list shows ship's International Maritime Organization (IMO) number which is unchanging throughout the ship's life and uniquely identifies it. It also shows the ship's name and flag state at the time of its inspection.
- Company. The company shown in the vessel's Safety Management Certificate (SMC) or if there is no SMC, then the party otherwise believed to be responsible for the safety of the ship at the time of inspection.
- Classification Society. The list shows the Classification Society responsible for classing the ship only.
- Recognised Organisation. Responsible for conducting the statutory surveys: and issuing statutory certificates on behalf of the Flag State
- White (WL), Grey (GL) and Black lists (BL) are issued by the Paris MoU on 01 July each year and shows the performance of flag State.

SHIPS DETAINED IN FEBRUARY 2018

Vessel Name: SOUTHERN BREEZE

GT: 4109

IMO: 9437763

Flag: Malta (White List)

Company: Sonata D00

Classification Society: BV

Recognised Organisation: BV Recognised Organisation for ISM Doc: BV

Recognised Organisation for ISM SMC: BV

Date and Place of Detention: 28th February 2018 at Fowey

Summary: Eight deficiencies with one ground for detention

Defective item	Nature of defect	Ground for Detention
18203 – Wages	Missing	Yes
18203 – Wages	Missing	No
18204 – Calculation and payment of wages	Not according to SEA	No
01220 – Seafarers' employment agreement (SEA)	Not properly filled	No
18199 – Other (Minimum requirements)	Not as required	No
15150 – ISM	Not as required	No
02103 – Stability/strength/ loading information and instruments	Not as required	No
11102 – Lifeboat inventory	Not properly stowed	No

This vessel was still detained on 28th February 2018

DETENTIONS CARRIED OVER FROM PREVIOUS MONTHS

Vessel Name: YASEMIN

GT: 4355

IMO: 9136836

Flag: Malta (White List)

Company: 1st Denizcilik Ltd

Classification Society: NKK

Recognised Organisation: NKK Recognised Organisation for ISM Doc: NKK

Recognised Organisation for ISM SMC: NKK

Date and Place of Detention: 31st January 2018 at Southampton

Summary: Four deficiencies with two grounds for detention

Defective item	Nature of defect	Ground for Detention
18313 – Cleanliness	Signs of vermin	Yes
05105 – MF/HF Radio installation	Not as required	Yes
07420 – Means of escape	Blocked	No
16105 – Access control to the ship	Not as required	No

This vessel was released on 6th February 2018

Vessel Name: GEORGIY USHAKOV

GT: 6204

IMO: 9210335

Flag: Russian Federation (White List)

Company: JSC Maritime Trade Port of Khatanga

Classification Society: RMRS

Recognised Organisation: RMRS

Recognised Organisation for ISM Doc: RMRS

Recognised Organisation for ISM SMC: RMRS

Date and Place of Detention: 30th January 2018 at Grimsby

Summary: Sixteen deficiencies with two grounds for detention

Defective item	Nature of defect	Ground for Detention
04114 – Emergency source of power – Emergency generator	Not as required	Yes
01316 – Cargo information	Missing information	No
10127 – Voyage or passage plan	Not as required	No
10117 – Echo sounder	Inoperative	No
10115 – GNSS receiver/Terrestrial radio navigation switch	Inoperative	No
11101 – Lifeboats	Not ready for use	No
04103 – Emergency lighting, batteries and switches	Inoperative	No
11117 – Lifebuoys incl. provision and distribution	Light missing	No
18407 – Lighting (working spaces)	Missing	No
07199 – Other (fire safety)	Other	No
07105 – Fire doors/openings in fire resisting divisions	Not as required	No
18432 – Risk evaluation, training and instructions to seafarers	Not as required	No

18324 – Cold room, cleanliness, cold room temperature	Not as required	No
10101 – Pilot ladders and hoist/pilot transfer arrangements	Missing	No
04106 – Emergency steering position communications/compass reading	Inoperative	No
15150 – ISM	Not as required	Yes

This vessel was released on 9th February 2018

Vessel Name: DEEPSEA WORKER

GT: 3345

IMO: 7905285

Flag: St Vincent & Grenadines

Company: Seaway Offshore LLC

Classification Society: DNV GL

Recognised Organisation: DNV GL

Recognised Organisation for ISM Doc: DNV GL

Recognised Organisation for ISM SMC: DNV GL

Date and Place of Detention: 19th January 2018 at Sunderland

Summary: Fifteen deficiencies with one grounds for detention

Defective item	Nature of defect	Ground for Detention
16105 – Access control	Not as required	No
01214 – Enforcement by flag state	Missing	No
01137 – Civil liability for oil pollution damage cert	Missing	No
10127 – Voyage or passage plan	Lack of information	No
10116 – Nautical publications	Missing	No
18399 – Other (Accommodation, recreational facilities)	Other	No
07122 – Fire control plan	Not updated	No
15150 – ISM	Not as required	Yes
07109 – Fixed fire extinguishing installation	Not as required	No
18302 – Sanitary Facilities	Not as required	No
18324 – Cold room, cold room cleanliness, cold room temperature	Inoperative	No
14499 – Other (Marpol Annex IV)	Other	No

07114 – Remote means of control (opening, pumps, ventilation etc.) Machinery spaces	Inoperative	No
03108 – Ventilators air pipes, casings	Corroded	No
14108 – 15ppm alarm arrangements	Inoperative	No

This vessel was still detained on 28th February 2018

Vessel Name: DOLLY C

GT: 652

IMO: 7222310

Flag: St Vincent & Grenadines (Grey List)

Company: No Information

Classification Society: No Information

Recognised Organisation: No Information

Recognised Organisation for ISM Doc: No Information

Recognised Organisation for ISM SMC: No Information

Date and Place of Detention: 29th November 2017 at Falmouth

Summary: Eight deficiencies with eight grounds for detention

Defective item	Nature of defect	Ground for Detention
01209 – Manning specified by the minimum safe manning doc	Missing	Yes
01214 – Endorsement by flagstate	Missing	Yes
07111 – Personal equipment for fire safety	Missing	Yes
01199 – Other (Certificates)	Other	Yes
11116 – Distress flares	Missing	Yes
05103 – Main installation	Missing equipment	Yes
10105 – Magnetic compass	Not as required	Yes
14103 – Segregation of oil and water ballast	Not as required	Yes

This vessel released on 20th February 2018

Vessel Name: SEA TRIDENT

GT: 964.

IMO No: 7393169.

Flag: PANAMA (white list)

Company:

Classification Society: Expired

Recognised Organisation: Expired

Recognised Organisation for ISM DOC:

Recognised Organisation for ISM SMC:

Date and Place of Detention: 17 June 2016, West Cowes

Summary: Seventeen deficiencies with seventeen grounds for detentions

Defective item	Nature of defect	Ground for Detention
01101 – Cargo ship safety equipment cert	Expired	Yes
01102 – Cargo Ship safety construction cert	Expired	Yes
01104 – Cargo ship safety radio cert	Expired	Yes
01108 – Loadline cert	Expired	Yes
01117 – IOPP (International Oil Pollution Prevention cert	Expired	Yes
01119 – International Sewage Pollution Prevention cert	Expired	Yes
01124 – International Air Pollution Prevention cert	Expired	Yes
01137 – Civil liability for bunker oil pollution damage cert	Expired	Yes
01199 – Other certs (Certificate of class)	Expired	Yes
01201 – Certificates for master and officers	Missing	Yes
10111 – Charts	Not updated	Yes
10116 – Publications Nautical	Not updated	Yes
11108 – Inflatable liferafts	Expired	Yes
11116 – Distress flares	Missing	Yes
07109 – Fixed fire fighting extinguishing installation	Not as required	Yes
07110 – Fire fighting equipment & appliances	Not as required	Yes
01140 – Declaration of Maritime Labour Compliance	Missing	Yes

This vessel was still detained on 28th February 2018

Vessel Name: CIEN PORCIENTO (General Cargo)

GT: 106.

IMO No: 8944446.

Flag: Unregistered.

Company: Open Window Inc.

Classification Society: Unclassed.

Recognised Organisation: Not applicable.

Recognised Organisation for ISM DOC: Not applicable.

Recognised Organisation for ISM SMC: Not applicable

Date and Place of detention: 4 March 2010, Lowestoft

Summary: Thirty deficiencies including seven grounds for detention

This vessel was still detained on 28th February 2018

Notes to Editors

- The MCA is a partner in the Sea Vision UK campaign to raise awareness and understanding of the sea and maritime activities. Sea Vision promotes the importance and economic value of the sector and works to highlight the exciting range of activities and career opportunities available to young people within the UK growing maritime sector at www.seavision.org.uk

- Follow us on Twitter: @MCA_media

For further information please contact Maritime and Coastguard Agency Press Office, on: +44 (0) 2380 329 401 Press releases and further information about the agency is available [here](#).

Press release: Safeguarding Summit: Statements by the International Development Secretary and DFID's Permanent Secretary

Penny Mordaunt at the Safeguarding Summit. Picture: Jo Harrison/DFID

At a landmark Safeguarding Summit today (Monday 5 March 2018), co-hosted by the Department for International Development (DFID) and the Charity Commission, Penny Mordaunt challenged UK-based international development charities, regulatory bodies and independent experts to drive up standards and to agree practical tools, processes and protocols to ensure the aid sector protects the people it serves.

As part of this, Ms Mordaunt announced that:

- DFID will put in place new, enhanced and specific safeguarding standards for the organisations the department works with. These standards will

include an assessment of codes of conduct, how organisations identify and respond to incidents, and how their risk management places safeguarding and beneficiaries at its very core. New funds to organisations will not be approved unless they pass the new standards.

- All 179 UK-based charities that work overseas and receive UK aid have responded to the letter from the International Development Secretary giving DFID their statement of assurance on four key areas, including their safeguarding environment and policies, their organisational culture, their clarity and transparency, and their handling of allegations and incidents.
- DFID is following up with 37 organisations to gain further clarity on their assurance.
- Of the 179 charities that have provided returns, in response to assurances sought by DFID, 26 have made serious incident reports to the Charity Commission. 19 of those 26 charities have made reports, among others, relating to incidents that occurred in previous financial years, prior to April 2017, and are therefore classed as historic. In total, the 26 charities have reported 80 incidents broadly related to safeguarding issues.

DFID's Permanent Secretary, Matthew Rycroft, also announced the conclusion of DFID's internal review into sexual harassment and misconduct allegations involving DFID staff, which includes the following information.

Based on currently available records since 1995:

- There have been 14 closed cases where claims that DFID staff were responsible for misconduct of a sexual nature have been substantiated.
- The majority of these closed substantiated cases relate to sexual harassment between staff members. Sexual harassment could include a range of actions such as complaints of inappropriate language and threatening behaviour.
- None of these closed substantiated cases include proven allegations of DFID staff paying for sex. There is no information to suggest misconduct of a sexual nature involving DFID staff and under 18 year olds or of sexual exploitation in exchange for aid.
- The 14 closed substantiated cases involve DFID staff in the UK and abroad.
- There were fewer than five closed substantiated cases in 2017.

On the basis of information available to the review:

- Action was taken in each of these 14 cases in line with DFID policies at the time. This includes informal action at the request of the complainant and disciplinary action.
- DFID does not currently hold any information on historic closed substantiated cases that we should have passed on to the prosecuting authorities.

In addition to the 14 closed substantiated cases identified: • There are fewer than five cases that are open or have been newly reported to DFID relating to past events that we are currently investigating.

DFID cannot give any further details on these cases. This is to safeguard individual personal data under data protection legislation.

If any new information comes to light through DFID's continued efforts the department will ensure appropriate action is taken.

The Cabinet Office is assessing DFID's internal review and we are looking at how best to report cases like these in the future.

International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt said:

Thank you for being here on this important day. Today we will start the vital change this sector needs.

Your task is to start laying the foundations to rebuild the credibility of the aid sector on this issue, both here and overseas.

Today, I want you to come up with the ideas and initiatives we can take forward the practical tools, processes and protocols to ensure we protect the people we are here to serve.

Unless, we do all we can to prevent wrongdoing, and unless we can hold all those who do wrong to account, we will have failed in our duty to protect the most vulnerable.

As you know, I wrote to every UK charity, which receives UK aid directly, asking that they provide me with a statement of assurance on four key areas:

Their safeguarding environment and policies, their organisational culture, their clarity and transparency, and their handling of allegations and incidents.

I also asked them to confirm that they have referred any and all concerns on specific cases and individuals to the relevant authorities, including prosecuting authorities.

All 179 organisations have given me their statement of assurance, and many gave additional details on reporting and allegations.

We are following up with 37 organisations to gain further clarity on their assurance, or reporting, and will issue a summary of all our analysis when this work is complete

But this exercise is not just about receiving assurances. It marks the starting point from which we must now build.

Across the returns, we saw important examples of good practice, but overall, there was too little evidence in the areas of robust risk management, comprehensive reporting, responsibility being taken at the highest level for safeguarding, and of beneficiaries always being put first.

So if we are to meet our duty, then the sector must raise standards.

I am determined that DFID will play its full part in this. So, from today, DFID will put in place new, enhanced and specific safeguarding standards for the organisations we work with.

These standards will include an assessment of codes of conduct, how organisations identify and respond to incidents, and how their risk management places safeguarding and beneficiaries at the very core.

That assessment will set the bar at a level of the very best – a bar that we will continue to push higher – from our work here today and in the time to come.

Our standards will be world-leading. They will be tough and exacting. Organisations should not bid for new funding unless they are prepared to meet these tough new standards.

We will not approve funds to them unless they pass our new standards.

We will also start to apply these new standards to organisations we have ongoing work with.

And will ensure that all those standards can apply to all our partners, big and small.

DFID is holding itself to these high standards we expect of others and today, I can also confirm that DFID's internal review into historic allegations involving DFID staff has concluded.

Our Permanent Secretary Matthew Rycroft will say more on this later, but I think it was vital that we went back through every record we have, since they began, to check action has been taken. And if any new information comes to light through our continued efforts we will ensure appropriate action is taken on this.

The sector must do the same, and pay particular attention to the issue of reviewing and reporting historic cases. We expect all who wish to work with us, and indeed any organisation that works on development, to take this issue as an urgent priority.

Why? Because only by reporting can we identify and bring to justice predatory individuals.

And it is those predatory individuals who concern me most.

My message to those who have sought to exploit this sector and the human tragedy in which it operates, is this – we will all share information we have with law enforcement.

We will find you. We will bring you to justice. Your time is up.

This summit is a critical moment to learn lessons and drive up standards across the entire aid sector.

Now is the time for action and for the British aid sector to take a lead. To set standards, a template and an example, for the rest of the world to follow.

To keep people safe we need to find a way staff can be properly vetted and monitored as they move between organisations and countries.

We need to find a way to hear the voices of the people we serve, so we can respond when they tell us they are being mistreated.

Would the Oxfam case, or the abuse of women in Syria, have persisted if those victims' voices were listened to?

And we must have thorough assurance and auditing of the sector.

We must share our ideas and learn how to keep on improving our safeguarding measures. We need continuous training and professional development.

And we must ensure smaller organisations – who are such an asset to the sector- are supported and able to meet these standards too.

These are the outcomes I want to see. Now begins your task of finding the solutions.

Your plans will be put into action. Our partners will sign up to them. Other nations will follow our lead.

Let us ensure that the world's poorest and most vulnerable people are always our first priority.

Let us ensure that there is no hiding place for those who wish to exploit the vulnerable in our sector.

Let us ensure that the British public can take pride in everything that is done in their name, in the lives you save, in the hope you bring, and in the immense good you do in this sector.

Let us put this right. Thank you.

Permanent Secretary at the Department for International Development, Matthew Rycroft said:

I have been struck today by the collective will of speakers to ensure that between us we improve safeguarding standards.

Earlier, the Secretary of State Penny Mordaunt offered a clear message – organisations that cannot offer assurances, organisations that cannot demonstrate in practice that they have safeguards in place, and organisations that cannot show that they are effectively managing the risks around safeguarding, will not receive funding from DFID.

That is a new standard we are setting. It is an entirely reasonable standard to set. We have a duty to do no harm as an absolute minimum. Donors expect

that, the public demand it, and beneficiaries deserve it.

We are not saying that we don't expect to see safeguarding incidents being reported. In fact, as standards of reporting improve and the cultures of organisations shift, it is inevitable that we will see increases in the number of cases coming to light.

As that happens, we need to turn it into a positive – bringing damaging and abusive behaviour out of the shadows and into the light where it can be addressed.

The focus here today is on UK international development charities. But it is clear that safeguarding is, and should be, on the agenda right across the aid sector both in the UK and abroad.

To ensure that DFID now remains at the forefront of tackling exploitation and abuse, I instructed our new Safeguarding Unit, and DFID's internal HR experts, to review urgently our own existing policy and procedures within the department.

This includes reviewing our approach to the whole employment life cycle: from selection, vetting and induction; to performance management, training and development; right through to departure and references – and beyond.

This work includes reviewing our conduct and discipline policy, and our departmental code of conduct – to ensure all our policies and processes are robust, suitably explicit and clear to all our staff.

DFID is also reviewing our approach to learning and development and induction to ensure that our staff have the training and confidence to identify and report any concerns, and that line managers are equipped to support their teams.

So we are determined to hold ourselves to the high standards we expect of the sector. As part of that determination, we have conducted an internal review into sexual harassment and misconduct allegations involving DFID staff. We have completed the review and I can report the conclusions.

Based on currently available records since 1995, there have been 14 closed cases where claims that DFID staff were responsible for misconduct of a sexual nature have been substantiated.

Most of these relate to sexual harassment. None of these cases include proven allegations of DFID staff paying for sex or of sexual exploitation in exchange for aid.

On the basis of information available to the review, action was taken in each of these 14 cases in line with DFID policies at the time.

Since a number of these cases occurred, some of DFID's procedures have been tightened up and strengthened.

We do not currently hold any information on historic, closed substantiated

cases that we should have passed on to the prosecuting authorities.

In addition to those closed cases, there are a number of live cases that relate to past events, on which I am unable to comment.

I continue to encourage all staff to report any concerns historic or present to our confidential whistle blowing hotline.

If any new information comes to light through our continued efforts we will ensure appropriate action is taken.

We can go further. I want us to seize this moment to ensure a shift in culture across our whole sector. That is the way to ensure we bring some lasting good out of this crisis. We all in this room have the opportunity – and the obligation – to raise the bar. By that I mean three things: tougher standards; greater meeting of the standards and stricter consequences when the standards are not met.

So, as I said before, I encourage anyone with concerns – historic or present – to share these. If we all encourage full and frank transparency we can root out exploitation and abuse.

As I said, I think DFID should be holding ourselves to as high a standard as we hold all of you. If any of your organisations are going further, please share your best practice today so we can all set higher benchmarks and learn from each other.

That is what today is all about: us coming together, collectively as a sector, to agree a way forward. I hope that we can all agree a statement based on five principles.

Firstly, echoing what the Secretary of State has said, we need to put beneficiaries first. But this should also more widely include a duty to our staff, volunteers and the communities in which we work.

Accountability to beneficiaries and survivors, including staff and volunteers, is essential. Prioritising those who have suffered and survived exploitation, abuse and violence should be at the front of our minds.

Secondly, we have to commit to shifting organisational culture to tackle power imbalances. If we can't do this in our own organisations, we can't hope to do it in society more broadly.

As a first step we need to ensure that breaches are challenged and that those who report incidents are taken seriously, treated with care and dignity and given redress.

More widely, and this is especially pertinent given that DFID is launching its gender equality strategy on Wednesday, we need to make sure that we position all our work to “do no harm” within our wider conviction to gender equality.

Third, I think it important that we take a holistic approach ensuring that

safeguarding is integrated throughout the employment cycle. We need to make sure that, from recruitment and induction through to dismissal or voluntary exit, strong checks are in place.

Fourth, it is vital that when things do go wrong, we take all the actions at our disposal to ensure that incidents are investigated, and reported to the relevant authorities, and ultimately that perpetrators are held accountable.

We must ensure that there is rigorous reporting and there are complaints mechanisms for any misconduct that occurs under the banner of our organisations. And we must commit to seeing investigations through to their conclusion. This should ensure that we no longer find ourselves in a situation where a minority of individuals are able to move from one organisation to another with impunity.

Finally, we need to take whistleblowing extremely seriously. We need to see those who raise incidents not as trouble makers but as critical friends who are able to identify and weed out problems.

I am sure most already do, but our systems need to reflect this better. That means actively promoting the whistleblowing process, showing that it is anonymous and impartial and providing feedback on the outcome.

All of this will require sustained effort and leadership from all of you and it will require resources. It is legitimate, in fact essential, activity in any partnership with DFID.

Over and above these broad principles, we need to set about defining concrete actions.

I know you have all already begun work on the task in hand, following the commission sent out from the Secretary of State last month.

There is a great deal of expectation on us outside of this room. After lunch, it will be time to deliver.

Sheila will be explaining your task in more detail but put simply: your job is to set an agenda which moves us away from a narrative of scandal and recrimination, and towards a positive vision for a charity sector that promotes equality and respect.

By the end of today we will have all come together and agreed a set of concrete actions which will enable us to move towards this vision.

It is important that we set ourselves actions which are ambitious. That we commit to meeting minimum standards now and to exploring how we can build on those in the future.

Please come back after lunch ready to roll your sleeves up and get down to work.

Notes to Editors:

[PHOTOS: International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt speaking at the Safeguarding Summit this morning](#)

International Development Secretary Penny Mordaunt has tasked the delegates at the Safeguarding Summit to come up with a series of actions to address the shortcomings in the aid sector. Some of the ideas to be discussed at the summit include:

- Introducing new standards for vetting and referencing across the sector.
- Ensuring whistle-blowers and survivors of exploitation and abuse get the counselling and support they need.
- Creating an independent body to promote external scrutiny and ensure the highest possible standards across the aid sector.
- Changing organisational culture to tackle power imbalances, encourage reporting, take allegations seriously and hold people to account.

This summit will build upon the action already taken by DFID in response to allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse in the aid sector, including:

- Establishing a new Safeguarding Unit in DFID to urgently review safeguarding across all parts of the aid sector and catalyse further action to ensure everything is being done to protect people from harm, including sexual exploitation and abuse.
 - Appointing Sheila Drew Smith, a recent member of the Committee on Standards in Public Life, to bring her expertise to support DFID's ambition on safeguarding. She will report to the Secretary of State directly and will Chair the Safeguarding Summit.
 - Writing to every UK charity that receives UK aid insisting that they set out the steps they are taking to ensure their safeguarding policies are fully in place and confirm they have referred all concerns they have about specific cases and individuals to the relevant authorities, including prosecuting authorities. A similar request has been sent to non-UK charities and other DFID suppliers, including those in the private sector.
 - Agreeing with Oxfam that they will withdraw from bidding for any new UK Government funding until DFID is satisfied that they can meet the high standards we expect of our partners.
 - Continuing to work with UN Secretary-General António Guterres to stop abuses under the UN flag and we have introduced specific clauses in our funding agreements with a number of UN agencies to take every action possible to prevent all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse and take robust and prompt action in response to any allegations.
 - Reviewing any allegations of sexual harassment and misconduct involving DFID staff.
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News story: UK drives progress on gender equality in the Middle East

Foreign Office Minister of State Lord Tariq Ahmad of Wimbledon, the Prime Minister's Special Representative on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict, visited Turkey and Iraq between 1 and 4 March 2018 to mark the recent launch of the UK's [National Action Plan](#) (NAP) on Women, Peace and Security.

Launched in January in London, the plan sets a bold new direction, putting women and girls at the heart of Britain's work to prevent and resolve conflict for the next five years. As part of this, a series of priority countries, including Iraq and Syria, have been identified as places where the UK will focus its efforts.

Lord Ahmad said:

Women and children are often the worst affected in conflict situations, which is why we have put women and girls at the heart of our foreign policy work.

One of my main priorities this year is to ensure that women and girls are able to fully participate in all areas of life, including ensuring all girls receive a quality education.

It is vital that women, in Iraq, Syria and worldwide, see all barriers removed so that they can participate fully in political processes, conflict resolution and mediation, and to secure justice and accountability against perpetrators of sexual violence. That is the only way we can build a more sustainable, peaceful world.

Whilst in Turkey, the Minister met with female Syrian politicians and activists, to discuss protecting women's rights in conflict. Women and girls in Syria are disproportionately affected by the war, facing sexual and gender-based violence, forced prostitution and early marriage. The UK supports organisations working with survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, providing education to girls and ensuring a stronger role for women in political negotiations. The Minister announced £1.5 million of UK funding to empower women in Syria's political processes.

The Minister also met with female Turkish human rights advocates, politicians and business figures at the NAP launch, expressing the UK's support for women's political participation and empowerment around the world. He also hosted an inter-faith roundtable with Turkish faith leaders.

In Iraq, Lord Ahmad met with faith leaders, including Yezidi and Christian leaders, where he sought their views on challenges following Daesh's defeat and reiterated the UK's commitment to freedom of religion or belief across Iraq.

Lord Ahmad had meetings with parliamentarians, ministers from the Iraqi government, KRG Prime Minister Nechirvan Barzani, and civil society, with discussions on women's participation in the upcoming Iraqi elections, supporting survivors of sexual violence, and girls' education.

Lord Ahmad visited Mosul, which was devastated during Daesh's time, and a women's centre at a camp for people internally displaced by the years of conflict. UK aid funding through the Iraq Humanitarian Pooled Fund and other projects has helped to provide support against gender based violence, specialist protection and rehabilitation for escapees of Daesh, and counselling. The Minister confirmed nearly \$1 million for the UN Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund to support women's grassroots organisations in Iraq.

Visiting Camp Hasansham, Lord Ahmad said:

This Women's Centre is providing vital support to women and girls, a space where they can meet, learn new skills, and above all be safe.

UK aid has provided desperately needed assistance here. The UK remains committed to supporting the urgent needs of the 2.4 million displaced people in Iraq, whilst also supporting the Government of Iraq's efforts to stabilise the country and help those who have returned to their homes.

Meeting with the Iraqi Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Education and KRG Prime Minister Barzani, the Minister also raised counter-terrorism and counter-violent extremism efforts, exploring how best to defeat Daesh's ideology in schools, and maintaining momentum on efforts to hold Daesh to account for its crimes.

Further information