

News story: New National College for the nuclear industry launches

A new college that will train thousands of technicians and engineers to support Britain's future nuclear programmes, create cleaner energy and provide a highly skilled workforce has opened its doors today (7 February).

The National College for Nuclear has hubs in Cumbria (Lakes College) and Somerset (Bridgwater & Taunton College), and state of the art facilities that include virtual, simulated laboratories. The college will help thousands of young people and learners gain the knowledge and skills they need to work in the growing nuclear sector, that provides vital low carbon power to businesses across the country.

The facility is one of five National Colleges being established by the government. The colleges are a key part of the Industrial Strategy, the Government's plan to develop the technical skills of young people, provide industry with a skilled workforce across a range of sectors and support the country's long-term economic growth. Other colleges already open include the College of Creative and Cultural Industries; Digital Skills and High Speed Rail.

The growing nuclear sector will see the development of twelve new reactors across five sites in the future, and with approximately 6,000 people each year needed for technical and professional roles, the National College for Nuclear will key part of producing the workforce and expertise required.

Apprenticeships and Skills Minister Anne Milton said:

I am thrilled to announce the launch of the National College for Nuclear.

This College will provide our nuclear industry with the highly skilled engineers, scientists, technicians it needs to grow – as well as giving more people the opportunities they need to get on in today's competitive job market.

The impressive training facilities in Somerset and Cumbria demonstrate what can be achieved when Government, employers and providers work together to deliver high-quality education. I wish all the trainees and apprentices the very best of luck for the future as they embark on this exciting journey.

Leading nuclear industry experts Sellafield Ltd and EDF Energy will work alongside the University of Cumbria and the University of Bristol to train up to 3500 learners by 2020.

Stuart Crooks, EDF Energy's Hinkley Point C Managing Director, said:

EDF Energy is proud to be a partner in the National College for Nuclear. It will support the new nuclear renaissance in Britain and is a prime example of industrial strategy in action.

The southern hub in Somerset will stand alongside the excellent training facilities at Bridgwater & Taunton College which are already helping to provide essential skills needed for Britain's economy. Together they show the big and positive impact new nuclear is having on jobs, skills and industrial capacity.

Chairman of the National College for Nuclear Colin Reed said:

It is with pride and expectation that we open the Northern and Southern hubs of the National College for Nuclear today. The journey to this point has been challenging and rewarding. We have students in place at both hubs benefiting from high level vocational education in state of the art facilities that were funded through Government vision.

From this start we are poised to grow to meet the challenge of nuclear skills in the years to come, both in student numbers at the existing hubs and also as we add further training deliverers at other locations to support the National demand.

Business Minister Richard Harrington said:

This is a pivotal moment for the future of nuclear energy in the UK. Through our Industrial Strategy, we are building a Britain fit for the future. These new learning hubs will give young people a fantastic opportunity to enter a highly skilled and well paid industry.

Press release: FOREIGN FLAGGED SHIPS UNDER DETENTION IN THE UK DURING JANUARY 2018

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

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 JANUARY 2018

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 still detained on 31st January 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
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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 still detained on 31st January 2018

Vessel Name: LIVA GRETA

GT: 851

IMO: 8801072

Flag: Latvia (White Flag)

Company: Aquarius Ship Management Co

Classification Society: RINA

Recognised Organisation: RINA

Recognised Organisation for ISM Doc: RMRS

Recognised Organisation for ISM SMC: RMRS

Date and Place of Detention: 16th January 2018 at Troon

Summary: Eleven deficiencies with one grounds for detention

Defective item	Nature of defect	Ground for Detention
18425 – Access/structural features (ship)	Damaged	Yes
10111 – Charts	Missing	No
10129 – Navigation records	Not as required	No
01201 – Certificates for master and officers	Not as required	No
11116 – Distress flares	Expired	No
18401 – Medical equipment, medical chest, medical guide	Expired	No
01310 – Signs, indications	Missing	No
18416 – Ropes and wires	Damaged	No
03103 – Railings, gangway, walkway and means of safe passage	Damaged	No
03110 – Bulwarks and freeing ports	Damaged	No
15150 – ISM	Not as required	No

This vessel was released on 20th January 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 31st January 2018

Vessel Name: NAS PATHFINDER

GT: 224

IMO: 7312402

Flag: Panama (White Flag)

Company: Hakvoort Transport Shipping BV

Classification Society: QRS

Recognised Organisation: QRS

Recognised Organisation for ISM Doc: N/A

Recognised Organisation for ISM SMC: N/A

Date and Place of Detention: 16th January 2018 at Dover

Summary: Twenty three deficiencies with eleven grounds for detention

Defective item	Nature of defect	Ground for Detention	
01214 – Endorsement by flagstate	Missing	Yes	
01220 – Seafarers' employment agreement (SEA)	Missing	Yes	
10111 – Charts	Not updated	Yes	
10116 – Nautical publications	Not updated	Yes	
10127 – Voyage or passage plan		Not as required	Yes
01108 – Load lines (including exemption)	Missing	Yes	
11116 – Distress flares	Expired	No	
11117 – Lifebuoys inc. provisions and disposition	Not as required	No	

18417 – Anchoring devices	Not properly maintained	No
18399 – Other (Accommodation, recreational facilities)	Other	No
13101 – Propulsion main engine	Not as required	No
02113 – Hull – cracking	Cracked	No
11104 – Rescue boats	Not ready for use	Yes
07199 – Other (fire safety)	Other	Yes
04102 – Emergency fire pump and its pipes	Not as required	Yes
07110 – Fire fighting equipment and appliances	Not as required	Yes
18404 – Electrical	Unsafe	Yes
04103 – Emergency lighting, batteries and switches	Inoperative	No
18299 – Other (conditions of employment)	Other	No
11113 – Launching arrangements for rescue boats	Not as required	No
07113 – Fire pumps and its pipes	Not as required	No
06199 – Other (cargo)	Other	No
07118 – International shore connection	Not as required	No

This vessel was released on 25th January 2018

Vessel Name: A2B ENERGY

GT: 3999

IMO: 9183427

Flag: Netherlands (White flag)

Company: Holwerda Shipmanagement BV

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: 11th January 2018 at Blyth

Summary: Seventeen deficiencies with two grounds for detention

Defective item	Nature of defect	Ground for Detention
10138 – BNWAS	Inoperative	No

03106 – Windows, sidescuttles and deadlights	Not properly maintained	No
10109 – Lights, shapes, sound signals	Not properly maintained	No
18407 – Lighting (working spaces)	Damaged	No
18425 – Access/structural features (ship)	Not as required	No
02114 – Bulkhead – corrosion	Holed	No
10105 – Magnetic compass	Not readable	No
07106 – Fire detection and alarm system	Not as required	No
18416 – Ropes and wires	Not as required	No
03108 – Ventilators, air pipes, casings	Damaged	Yes
18399 – Other (accommodation, recreational facilities)	Other	No
13103 – Gauges, thermometers, etc.	Not as required	No
18420 – Cleanliness of engine room	Not as required	No
04103 – Emergency lighting, batteries and switches	Not as required	No
14105 – Pumping, piping and discharge arrangements	Not as required	No
15150 – ISM	Not as required	Yes
07105 – Fire doors/opening in fire resisting divisions	Not as required	No

This vessel was released on 14th January 2018

DETENTIONS CARRIED OVER FROM PREVIOUS MONTHS

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
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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 was still detained on 31st January 2018

Vessel Name: MALAVIYA SEVEN

GT: 3001

IMO: 9087312

Flag: India (Grey List)

Company: GOL Offshore Ltd

Classification Society: IRS

Recognised Organisation: IRS

Recognised Organisation for ISM Doc: IRS

Recognised Organisation for ISM SMC: IRS

Date and Place of Detention: 5th October 2016 at Aberdeen

Summary: Five deficiencies with five grounds for detention

Defective item	Nature of defect	Ground for Detention
07105 – Fire doors/openings in fire resisting divisions	Not as required	Yes
07113 – Fire pumps and its pipes	Not as required	Yes
18203 – Wages	Missing	Yes
01220 – Seafarers employment agreement (SEA)	Invalid	Yes
18204 – Calculation and payment of wages	No records	Yes

This vessel was released on 27th January 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 31st January 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 31st January 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: Ministers welcome protection of 1 million more from high energy prices

- Ministers welcome move by regulator to protect more vulnerable consumers
- Move will now see a total of 5 million consumers protected by safeguard cap this winter
- Government's new energy price cap legislation will be introduced later this year

Energy and Clean Growth Minister Claire Perry today (7 February) welcomed the protection that 1 million more vulnerable consumers will get this winter from the extension of the energy regulator's safeguard tariff cap.

With the cap in place, these consumers will only see an increase of around 3.7% in their bills compared to an average 8% increase of dual-fuel standard

variable tariffs of the Big Six last year.

Ofgem's extension of the current prepayment meter cap to those who receive the Warm Home Discount means 5 million people are now protected from unfair energy price rises.

The move comes as the government's own energy Tariff Price Cap Bill is expected to be introduced to Parliament shortly. The Bill will extend the price cap to the highest tariffs.

Energy and Clean Growth Minister Claire Perry said:

It is a positive step that a million vulnerable consumers are now being protected from unfair energy price rises through the energy cap.

But energy tariffs are still too high – customers of the Big Six energy suppliers are overpaying by up to a staggering £1.4 billion a year. This is totally unacceptable and why government will continue to go further – including by bringing in new laws in the forthcoming energy Tariff Price Cap Bill to put an end to rip-off standard tariffs.

Notes to Editors:

1. More information on Ofgem's safeguard tariff cap can be found [here](#)
2. Based on Ofgem's current typical domestic consumption values the new prepayment meter dual fuel cap will be £1089 from April 2018 compared to £1050 in April 2017, an increase of 3.7%. All figures include VAT.
3. In 2017 the six largest energy suppliers increased their standard variable tariffs by an average 8% (based on a simple unweighted average).
4. The latest figures from Ofgem show that 57% of the ten largest energy firms' domestic customers were on standard variable tariffs and that the average customer could save over £300 by switching to a cheaper deal.
5. The energy Tariff Price Cap Bill will give delegated powers to Ofgem to amend industry licences for the purposes of implementing and managing the price cap. The Bill will require Ofgem to place a price cap on all poor value standard variable tariffs.
6. The government is committed to an energy market that works for all which is why we have put in place a series of measures, in addition to the planned introduction the Tariff Price Cap Bill. These include:
 - The rollout of smart meters, which will put consumers in greater control of their energy use and will save £300 million off bills in 2020 alone
 - ECO: Help to Heat which was launched in April 2017 will upgrade the energy efficiency of more than 300,000 homes a year, tackling the root cause of fuel poverty. This includes installing measures like including

solid wall, cavity wall and loft insulation

- Under the Warm Home Discount Scheme, 2 million low income and vulnerable households will be provided with a £140 rebate off their energy bill each winter
- These proposals combined will see £770 million of support for low income and vulnerable households each year in 2017-2018.

[Press release: Millions to benefit from enhanced rights as government responds to Taylor review of modern working practices](#)

- millions of workers to get new day-one rights with sick and holiday pay to be enforced for vulnerable workers for the first time
- reforms will ensure employment law and practices keep pace with modern ways of working created by rapid technological change
- for the first time the government will be accountable for good quality work as well as quantity of jobs – a key ambition of the UK's Industrial Strategy

Millions of flexible workers will receive new rights under major government reforms as the UK becomes one of the first countries to address the challenges of the changing world of work in the modern economy.

Today's 'Good Work plan' comes in response to the [independent Taylor Review](#), published last year, which investigated what impact modern working practices are having on the world of work. The review found that the strength of the UK's labour market is built on flexibility but that a clearer focus is needed on quality of work as well as the quantity of jobs.

The reforms are a vital part of the [Industrial Strategy](#), the government's long-term plan to build a Britain fit for the future by helping businesses create better, higher-paying jobs in every part of the UK.

Delivering on the Prime Minister's pledge to not just protect but build on workers' rights, the government today (7 February 2017) set out proposals to ensure workers know their rights and receive the benefits and protections they are entitled to, and that action is taken against employers who breach workers' rights.

In some cases the government plans to go further than the review's proposals, including:

- enforcing vulnerable workers' holiday and sick pay for the first time
- a list of day-one rights including holiday and sick pay entitlements and a new right to a payslip for all workers, including casual and zero-hour workers
- a right for all workers, not just zero-hour and agency, to request a more stable contract, providing more financial security for those on flexible contracts

The Prime Minister said:

We recognise the world of work is changing and we have to make sure we have the right structures in place to reflect those changes, enhancing the UK's position as one of the best places in the world to do business.

We are proud to have record levels of employment in this country but we must also ensure that workers' rights are always upheld.

Our response to this report will mean tangible progress towards that goal as we build an economy that works for everyone.

Matthew Taylor recognised that the UK's employment law and tax law can fail to provide the clarity that employers and individuals need. The Government is also launching a detailed consultation examining options, including new legislation, to make it easier for both the workforce and businesses to understand whether someone is an employee, worker or self-employed – determining which rights and tax obligations apply to them.

Business Secretary Greg Clark said:

The Taylor Review said that the current approach to employment is successful but that we should build on that success, in preparing for future opportunities.

We want to embrace new ways of working, and to do so we will be one of the first countries to prepare our employment rules to reflect the new challenges.

We will take forward Matthew Taylor's recommendations and commit to pursuing the quality of work as well as number of jobs.

The 'Good Work plan' puts the UK at the front of the pack in addressing the challenges and opportunities of modern ways of working, it is an important part of the Industrial Strategy and will enhance our business environment as one of the best places to work, invest and do business.

The government will seek to protect workers' rights by:

- take further action to ensure unpaid interns are not doing the job of a worker;
- introducing a new naming scheme for employers who fail to pay employment tribunal awards
- quadrupling employment tribunal fines for employers showing malice, spite or gross oversight to £20,000 and considering increasing penalties for employers who have previously lost similar cases

The government will ensure workers are paid fairly by:

- providing all 1.2 million agency workers with a clear breakdown of who pays them and any costs or charges deducted from their wages
- asking the Low Pay Commission to consider the impact of higher minimum wage rates for workers on zero-hour contracts
- considering repealing laws allowing agencies to employ workers on cheaper rates

The government will increase transparency in the business environment by:

- defining 'working time' for flexible workers who find jobs through apps or online so they know when they should be being paid
- launching a task force with business to promote awareness and take-up of the right to request flexible working introduced in 2014
- making sure new and expectant mothers know their workplace rights and raise awareness amongst employers of their obligations
- launching a new campaign to encourage more working parents to share childcare through Shared Parental Leave – a right introduced in 2015

Quality work will also be considered by the government when agreeing new sector deals with industry, encouraging employers to show how they are investing in their workforces to improve productivity.

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy will work with labour market experts, trade unions and the business community to measure the standards of quality work established in the Taylor Review.

The [UK's Industrial Strategy](#) is a long term plan to build a Britain fit for the future through a stronger, fairer economy. Through this we will help businesses to create better, higher-paying jobs – setting a path for Britain to lead in the high-tech, highly-skilled industries of the future.

Today's 'Good Work plan' comes in response to Matthew Taylor's Review: [Good work: the Taylor review of modern working practices](#) in which he outlines the "7 principles for good quality work for all".

The review found that:

"maintaining the flexible and adaptable approach to labour market regulation that has benefitted the UK so far, but focusing more closely on the quality of work as well as the number of people employed, will take us in the right direction". (p.31)

“determining employment status must be simpler, clearer, and give individuals and employers more information, a greater level of certainty and an understanding of which rights and responsibilities apply. We feel it is time that the government takes a fresh look at the legislation”. (p.35)

Today the government will launch the following consultations to inform what the future of the UK workforce looks like:

- Consultation on enforcement of employment rights recommendations
- Consultation on agency workers recommendations
- Consultation on measures to increase transparency in the UK labour market
- Consultation on employment status

These are complex issues and the government will consider the impacts of these reforms on business and other groups before implementing changes.

Over the coming months the government will work with industry to consider ways of encouraging the development of online tools for self-employed people to come together and discuss issues that are affecting them.

The government has acted on all but one of Matthew Taylor’s 53 recommendations. It rejected his proposals to reduce the difference between the National Insurance contributions of employees and the self-employed following Budget 2016 and subsequently have no plans to revisit the issue.

The employment status consultation makes very clear that changes to the rates of tax or NICs for either employees or the self-employed are not in scope.

The government has acted on all but one of the joint Work and Pensions and Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Select Committees’ 11 recommendations.

Their report [‘A framework for modern employment’](#) echoed many of the recommendations in the Taylor Review including greater clarity around employment status, better upfront information to workers and increased enforcement of employment rights.

The government is determined workers receive their rights and pay:

- this year we are spending a record £25.3 million on minimum wage enforcement
- last year we recovered a record £11 million in back pay for 98,000 workers – a 70% increase
- since 2013, through our naming and shaming scheme we have named 1,500 employers for underpayment of minimum wage and recovered £8 million for 58,000 of the UK’s lowest paid workers

Our National Minimum and Living Wage Campaign seeks to drive awareness and compliance. The government research ‘The experiences of individuals in the gig economy’ to be published today found that gig workers enjoyed the flexibility and freedom to choose when they worked.

[Press release: Alun Cairns brings Welsh to Westminster in Welsh Grand first](#)

Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns will open the Welsh Grand Committee debate in the House of Commons in Welsh for the first time later today (7th February).

It follows a UK Government decision last year to support the use of Welsh in parliamentary debates.

Addressing the Welsh Grand Committee in his first language in Westminster today, Mr Cairns will take the opportunity to highlight the UK Government's commitment to delivering for Wales, and the decisive action it is taking to put the nation's economy on the path to long-term prosperity.

Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns said:

I am proud to be using the language I grew up speaking, which is not only important to me, my family and the communities Welsh MPs represent, but is also an integral part of Welsh history and culture.

This is a historic day for Parliament and for Wales, and I pay tribute to those in the committee who have campaigned for this change over many years.

In his speech the Welsh Secretary will outline the UK Government's priorities to strengthen Wales' economy through cross-border growth, including the milestone announcement to abolish the Severn Crossing tolls by the end of this year – a decision set to save the average commuter £1,440 per year.

He will highlight how last year's Autumn Budget sets out a powerful package of measures which will help shape Wales' economy into one that is fit for the future.

The commitment to formally enter into negotiations over a growth deal for North Wales to secure its position as part of the Northern Powerhouse – as well as kick starting early discussions for a growth deal for Mid Wales are significant pan-Wales announcements, he will say.

He will also say that the opportunities of cross border growth between England and Wales will be further bolstered by planned rail infrastructure investments.

Improvements on the Wrexham to Bidston line, as well as £16m of investment in the Halton Curve which will introduce direct services from North Wales to Liverpool.

People in west Wales will also benefit from new IEP trains and infrastructure upgrades to provide direct services from Pembroke Dock to London via Carmarthen.

As well as budgets and cross-border growth, the parliamentary debate is expected to focus on the UK Government's commitment to working closely with the Welsh Government and urge it to use the levers at its disposal to deliver economic growth for Wales.

Alun Cairns added:

I know that Wales is in a strong position to capitalise on the economic opportunities presented to us as we leave the European Union.

But we can't act alone to deliver the changes Wales needs. I look forward to further discussions with the First Minister as we negotiate a successful exit for Wales from the EU, and call on the Welsh Government to be ambitious for the Welsh economy so that prosperity is felt by all.

The Secretary of State will be joined in the debate by the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Wales Stuart Andrew MP, who takes part in his first Welsh Grand debate as a Wales Office Minister.

UK Government Minister for Wales Stuart Andrew said:

I welcome the opportunity to discuss the future opportunities available to Wales, and the UK Government's budget is an example of how we are delivering growth and prosperity through a range of commitments.

In my role I will use every opportunity to make sure the whole of Wales contributes and benefits from these commitments. The North Wales Growth Deal is one example which will transform the way North Wales' towns and villages govern themselves, shifting powers to local leaders who are better placed to take decisions that affect their communities.

From these initiatives it is clear that Wales remains an attractive destination to work, invest and do business, and the UK Government will work collectively to ensure this continues.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

- The Welsh Grand Committee, formed of 40 Welsh MPs and five invited members meets to discuss issues relevant to Wales, and provides MPs the opportunity to question ministers, debate current matters and for ministers to make statements.
- The Committee last met in 2016, but MPs have spoken in Welsh when the Committee has previously met in Wales.
- The UK Government [brought forward a motion February last year enabling MPs to speak in Welsh](#) when the Welsh Grand Committee meets in Westminster.