

Press release: UK fighter pilots fly F-35 for the first time following training

Flt Lt Liam taxiing the F-35B Lightning before his first flight.

Flight Lieutenant Liam and Lieutenant Chris became the first Royal Air Force and Royal Navy pilots respectively to proceed straight from flying training in a Hawk to fly the multi-role combat aircraft.

Speaking after his flight, Flt Lt Liam said:

It was a sensational experience and, as the culmination of many years training, was certainly the highlight of my time in the RAF so far. I was astonished at the jet's performance and at how well the simulator had prepared me for taking the Lightning flying.

Much of the first flight is about exploring the aircraft's performance envelope and breaking the sound barrier was a particular highlight. It is easy to see why every pilot here loves flying the aircraft and I am eager to press on and get stuck in to operating the Lightning and exploring it's potential.

Fellow pilot Lt Chris added:

To fly a Lightning for the first time is almost indescribable. After over seven years of training in the Royal Navy, to finally get into the real aircraft and take it airborne was one of the proudest and most exciting experiences of my life so far.

The computer systems, helmet display, and sensors are at the cutting edge of what is currently possible and I'm extremely excited to work on exploiting this potential as well as being part of its integration with HMS Queen Elizabeth and HMS Prince of Wales over the coming years.

With no two seat variant of the F-35 the first flight for any pilot in a Lightning is always solo.

Commenting on the flights Air Commodore Linc Taylor, Senior Responsible Owner for the UK's Lightning Programme, said:

I am delighted that our first two ab initio pilots have flown Lightning and joined the rapidly expanding cadre of UK Lightning

pilots. For any military pilot the first time you fly a front line aircraft is something you never forget, but to be the first to progress straight from training to fly F-35 is something to be especially proud of.

I wish both pilots every success in their future careers and look forward seeing them both in the UK this summer when 617 Squadron returns to RAF Marham.

The training of UK Lightning pilots is currently undertaken as part of a much larger UK Detachment at Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort, South Carolina. This 'pooling' arrangement with the United States Marine Corps (USMC) facilitates the high training rate necessary for build the essential numbers of personnel qualified and experienced to form the first operational UK squadron, No. 617 Squadron (the 'Dambusters') in 2018.

To date the cadre of UK Lightning pilots have all transitioned from other aircraft and both new Lightning pilots were accompanied on their first flights by an instructor in a second aircraft.

The F-35 Lightning is an advanced, next generation aircraft procured to operate alongside the RAF's Typhoon. It will be jointly manned by the RAF and Royal Navy, and will form an integral part of Carrier Strike operating from the Queen Elizabeth Class aircraft carriers.

[News story: Crime news: amended 2017 standard crime contract for prison law](#)

We are making available for download updated 2017 Standard Crime Contract documents as a result of recent changes to the scope of prison law.

The documents have been updated following consultations with representative bodies.

The amended regulations will come into effect on 21 February 2018. Guidance and forms are also being updated.

Further information

[Standard Crime Contract 2017](#) – to download amended contract

[Criminal Legal Aid \(Amendment\) Regulations 2017](#)

[News story: Accelerator themed competition webinar: regenerative medicine at the front line](#)

[Registration for this webinar is now open.](#)

The webinar will take place from 12:30pm to 1:30 pm online.

It's an easy way for you to get more information about this £500,000 (phase 1) themed competition, for those who couldn't make it to the [main networking event on Thursday 1 February 2018.](#)

You'll hear a summary of the challenges and have the opportunity to submit questions to technical experts for this [regenerative medicine at the front line themed competition.](#)

Proposals for this competition must be [submitted to the Accelerator submission service](#) and received by Wednesday 11 April 2018 at midday.

[Speech: Matt Hancock's speech in Davos on Reimagining Policy-Making for the Fourth Industrial Revolution](#)

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Thank you for the introduction and for inviting me here today.

It's a real honour to have been asked to close this session on 'Reimagining policy making for the fourth industrial revolution'.

We are in the midst of fundamental change, as the cost of storing and transmitting information plunges, perhaps faster than at any time since the invention of the printing press.

Technology is constantly changing how we live, how we work and how we vote and campaign.

Governments now have an opportunity to create an environment that supports

digital businesses and creates appropriate norms and rules for the online world.

My case is that responding to populist concerns can't be done by neglecting technology but only through harnessing it for the good of citizens.

I want to set out three proposals which I believe will apply to governments who want to do this successfully across the world.

1. Adopt digital transformation

Firstly, Governments that put technology at the heart of all their interactions with citizens will thrive.

I worked at a tech business before I became an MP and then a minister. So I've long seen how technology can help provide solutions to long-standing policy issues.

In the last decade, getting services online was critical to government efficiency and serving citizens in a way that worked for them.

Our award winning Government Digital Service set the standard for usability online, which was then replicated by other governments across the world.

It transformed the relationship between citizen and state, whilst the digitisation of government has saved billions for taxpayers.

The lesson was loud and clear – put the user journey first and encourage people to adopt technology that will make their lives easier.

Now the task is the next generation of emerging technologies, like the Internet of Things, artificial intelligence and Blockchain.

You could call it the fourth industrial revolution for Government and it will be those that adopt this digital technology that will thrive.

1. Make smarter regulations

My second proposition is that economies that make sure regulations are fit for the digital age will also thrive.

Digital transformation cannot take place with outdated legislation, written when if you wanted to tackle 'trolls' you'd need to look underneath a bridge.

Just ask startups, who can often find their early years difficult due to compliance requirements written long before the digital age.

Modern businesses require modern regulation – and the UK is leading the way in embracing change.

Our Financial Conduct Authority has adopted what they call a 'regulatory sandbox'. This allows businesses to test products with real consumers without them having to meet usual requirements for compliance.

This provides a space to do real world trials and engage regulators from the start of development.

It's win-win; start-ups benefit from better market testing whilst consumers benefit from the safeguards that are built into new products. It is one of many reasons why the UK has now established itself as a FinTech world leader.

Our Information Commissioner is adopting the same approach for big data, and so is our Civil Aviation Authority for drones. The CAA has been engaging with private sector firms on autonomous drone testing and have even been praised by Amazon for their pioneering approach.

We've brought in a Regulators' Pioneer Fund, to incentivise regulators to develop more approaches to support emerging technologies.

This is about innovation friendly regulation. Regulation must support innovation right across the board; this should be a mantra for any Government or regulator.

Only then can a country harness the opportunities of new technology and therefore thrive.

1. Get ethics right

The third and final principle that I want to talk about is the importance of developing strong ethical frameworks.

Because societies that have strong ethical frameworks will thrive.

Digital technology is a powerful force for good. Combined with new technologies such as artificial intelligence, it is set to change society perhaps more than any previous technological revolution – growing the economy, making us more productive, and raising living standards.

But as we all know, alongside these new opportunities comes new challenges and risks.

The internet can be used to spread terrorist material; it can be a tool for abuse and bullying; and, it can undermine civil discourse, objective news and intellectual property.

The digital revolution has changed the way that people behave and interact.

Instead of a piecemeal response to each issue separately, our response is the Digital Charter, which the Prime Minister will be setting out in her speech later today.

This is a rolling programme of work to agree a consistent set of norms and rules for the online world and put them into practice.

In some cases this will be through shifting our expectations of behaviour; in others we may need new laws or regulations.

Our starting point will be that we will have the same rights and expect the same behaviour online as we do offline.

The Charter's core purpose is to make the internet work for everyone – for citizens, businesses and society as a whole.

It will move the philosophy we apply to the Internet from libertarian to liberal values – to cherish freedom, but not the freedom to harm others.

The Charter brings together a broad, ongoing programme, with priority areas including protecting people from online harms, sorting out platform liability and leading on data ethics.

And I want us to practise what we preach about agile governance. It will be a 'living' document that sits online – and as technology changes, the Charter will evolve too.

Conclusion

The Governments that thrive will themselves harness the best new technologies.

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The economies that thrive will have innovation friendly regulations for the digital age.

And the societies that thrive will have strong ethical frameworks to make the internet a force for good.

Now our task is to get on with it and make it happen.

Thank you very much.

[Press release: Car breaker given £3,952 penalty for waste documentation offences](#)

Yesterday (Wednesday 24 January 2018), Paul Tranter of Turnings, Knighton, pleaded guilty at Merthyr Tydfil Magistrates' Court to a charge of failing to produce waste transfer notes for his business.

The 49-year-old was fined £2,000, ordered to pay £1,782.68 in costs along with a £170 victim surcharge.

Circumstances of the offence

As part of a wider investigation into Mr Tranter's activities in relation to end of life vehicles at the Peugeot Breakers site in Knighton, Environment Agency officers served a notice on him on 7 September 2016. This notice required Mr Tranter to produce waste transfer notes or written records relating to the transfer of all controlled waste to and from the site between 10 September 2014 and 7 September 2016.

A waste transfer note is used to record the transfer of waste between different holders. This can be between the producer of the waste and a waste carrier, or a waste carrier and a disposal site or transfer station. There is a requirement to produce these notes under the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

No documentation was received by the Environment Agency from Mr Tranter and so a letter was sent to him on 12 October 2016 stating that the requirements of the notice had not been complied with. A fixed penalty notice for the failure to comply with the notice, served on him in September 2016, was issued on 19 January 2017, requiring payment of the penalty within one month. To date the Environment Agency has still not received the documentation required and Mr Tranter has failed to pay the fixed penalty notice.

Speaking after the case, an Environment Agency officer in charge of the investigation said:

Waste transfer notes allow everyone involved in the transfer to know what they are dealing with so they can manage it properly. Waste, if not managed properly, can damage the environment and blight local communities so these transfer notes allow us to check that waste has been disposed of safely and lawfully.

During sentencing the magistrates commented that Mr Tranter had been foolish to ignore the notices and noted that this was not his first incident with the Environment Agency (warning letter in 2011).

In mitigation Mr Tranter stated that he didn't understand the requirements around waste transfer notes, runs a small business and wants to 'keep going'. He also stated that the waste did always go to permitted facilities, although there were no transfer notes to show this.