

Press release: British Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson visits Kuwait

British Secretary of State for Defence Gavin Williamson visits Kuwait today, Wednesday 3 January 2018, for the first time since his appointment in November 2017. During his visit he called on His Highness the Amir Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and the Prime Minister His Highness Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al-Sabah. He also called on the First Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and congratulated him on his recent appointment.

This visit is an important opportunity to build on the excellent defence co-operation between the State of Kuwait and the United Kingdom as part of the close and cordial bilateral relations which exist between our two countries. The United Kingdom welcomes the important role which Kuwait is playing in the region – as a key partner in the Counter-Daesh Coalition, as a major humanitarian donor and as a mediator in regional disputes – and more widely as Kuwait joins the United Nations Security Council for 2018-2019

News story: Independent doctors to be rated by the Care Quality Commission

New changes mean that, for the first time, all healthcare organisations in England that offer regulated care will be rated by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). Organisations will have to display their inspection ratings so patients can clearly see safety standards.

The CQC's current ratings programme – which covers hospital care, social care and GPs – will be extended to include more than 800 additional providers. This includes independent doctors that offer primary care online.

The CQC will require providers affected by these changes to publicly display their rating, for instance on their website or business premises. This will allow patients to make an informed choice when deciding which care service they want to use.

The ratings scheme has been 'future-proofed' to cover services that may develop in the future. It will ensure that new services are also given a rating.

The changes will bring the services in line with the rest of the NHS. It will

reassure patients who use digital GP apps provided by independent doctors about the quality and safety of the service they are choosing.

The CQC will now develop an approach for how it will rate the additional services. The CQC will continue to inspect these services and publish its findings in the meantime.

Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt said:

With our NHS now in its 70th year, we are planning ahead to guarantee safer and better care for patients in the years to come. These changes are a world first for patient safety, modernising our tough Ofsted-style inspection scheme so we keep pace with the changing landscape of healthcare, as well as helping tech-savvy patients to make informed decisions about their care.

Sir David Behan, Chief Executive of the Care Quality Commission, said:

CQC's ratings of health and care services are helping people to make informed choices about their care as well as supporting providers to improve. Never before has the public had such clear information about the quality and safety of their health and care services.

CQC already inspects and publishes reports for these additional services. The ability to award ratings to them will bring increased transparency for the public about the quality and safety of their healthcare.

We look forward to taking this work forward in the new year.

[Collection: Bilateral and multilateral treaties published in the Treaty Series 2018](#)

Agreements that have completed all necessary procedures and now are in force for the UK (hence published in Treaty Series) and various non-treaty command papers.

Click on the links to access the texts of the treaties: those pages include both the published titles and publication references.

The reference before the title i.e [TS] is for internal purposes.

Notice: CM0 7HP, Magnox Limited: environmental permit application advertisement (EPR/ZP3493SQ/V006)

The Environment Agency consults the public on certain applications for Radioactive Substances Activities. The arrangements are explained in its [Public Participation Statement](#)

These notices explain:

- what the application is about
- which Environment Agency office you can visit to see the application documents on the public register
- when you need to comment by

The Environment Agency will decide:

- whether to grant or refuse the application
 - what conditions to include in the permit (if granted)
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Press release: Shoppers could face higher prices due to soft drink merger

The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has been carrying out an initial investigation into Refresco's proposed \$1.25 billion (about £935 million) purchase of Cott's worldwide beverage manufacturing business.

In the UK, Refresco and Cott manufacture, package and distribute soft drinks for a number of well-known brands, supermarkets and shops.

Each business produces a range of different soft drinks, which are then packaged in a variety of formats and sizes. The CMA's initial investigation into the merger did not find any competition concerns for the majority of these products.

However, both companies supply juice drinks using a special aseptic production process that allows them to be sold preservative-free and without

refrigeration.

Only one other competitor in the UK currently supplies third parties with juice drinks using this production process. The CMA is therefore concerned that, after the merger, the combined business might be able to increase prices or lower quality standards.

Rachel Merelie, CMA Acting Executive Director and decision maker in this case, said:

These companies supply well-known UK shops and brands with soft drinks, who in turn sell these to thousands of people daily. It is therefore important that we address any issues to ensure that shoppers do not lose out.

We have looked at all aspects of this merger and have concerns that the merger could lead to reduced competition in the manufacturing and packaging of certain juice drinks. This may result in higher prices or quality standards slipping for stores and brands, with potential knock-on effects to end-consumers.

The CMA will now refer the merger for an in-depth investigation unless Refresco offers acceptable undertakings to address competition concerns.

All information relating to the merger is available on the [case page](#).

Notes for editors

1. The CMA is the UK's primary competition and consumer authority. It is an independent non-ministerial government department with responsibility for carrying out investigations into mergers, markets and the regulated industries and enforcing competition and consumer law.
2. Enquiries should be directed to the Press Team, on 020 3738 6191 or press@cma.gsi.gov.uk.
3. For information on the CMA see our [homepage](#), or follow us on Twitter [@CMAgovuk](#), [Facebook](#), [Flickr](#) and [LinkedIn](#). Sign up to our [email alerts](#) to receive updates on merger cases.