

Speech: PM press conference with Italian Prime Minister Gentiloni: 9 February 2017

It is a great pleasure to be able to welcome Prime Minister Gentiloni to Downing Street. Just as I chose to visit Italy shortly after coming into office, Prime Minister Gentiloni has made the UK one of his first trips – and I think that underlines the importance that we both place on the long-standing relationship between our 2 countries.

As I have said before, Britain is leaving the European Union – but we are not leaving Europe – and a global Britain that stands tall in the world, will be a Britain that remains a good friend and ally to Italy and to all our European partners.

So we have had important discussions today on the future of our bilateral relationship as the UK leaves the EU; and on a number of areas at the heart of Italy's Presidency of the G7. And we have agreed to establish a regular bilateral summit between the UK and Italy.

First, the UK remains committed to triggering Article 50 by the end of March and last night we moved a step closer with the successful passage of the Bill in the Commons. As I have said, the priority for the UK in the negotiations ahead will be to seek a new, comprehensive, bold and ambitious free trade agreement with the European Union today we talked about the importance we both place on our trade.

The UK is Italy's seventh largest export market for goods, worth over 22 billion euros a year, and we do vital business in agriculture, manufacturing, pharmaceuticals and defence. For example, already this year the UK government has signed a £271 million deal with Leonardo Helicopters to provide maintenance for our Wildcat helicopters, protecting hundreds of skilled jobs in Yeovil.

And together with other free trade deals we intend to do, I am determined that a global Britain will be a great champion of free trade in a way that can only be good for British and Italian businesses and jobs.

A global Britain will also be a leading partner in addressing the wider challenges that Prime Minister Gentiloni and his government have put at the heart of [Italy's G7 presidency](#) this year; including making the global economy work for everyone, finding better solutions to managing the huge population movements we are seeing, and keeping up the pressure on Russia in response to its actions in Ukraine.

Italy has been engaged in a long debate about how the benefits of prosperity can be shared by more people. And we are having a similar debate in Britain, where we have embarked on an ambitious programme of economic and social

reform to spread wealth and opportunity more fairly across our country. And I hope that this year's G7 can help us go further in working with all our international partners to shape a global economy that truly works for everyone.

That same co-operation is vital for our security too. And just as we do in Afghanistan and at the forefront of the international coalition against Daesh, Britain and Italy will continue to work together for the security of all our citizens. And global Britain will continue to play a leading role in Europe's security through the NATO alliance.

We will also continue to work together in tackling the migration crisis in the Mediterranean. Italy has become the main arrival point for illegal migration into Europe, with over 180,000 people arriving in 2016. But this is not just a problem for Italy, it is a problem for us all. And we need to work together to find better solutions to the huge population movements we are seeing, so refugees don't have to risk their lives on dangerous journeys and so we control the unmanageable economic migration that is neither working for migrants nor for our own populations.

We both strongly support the comprehensive and co-ordinated approach agreed at the [EU Summit in Malta](#) last week. This includes seeking an inclusive political settlement to stabilise Libya which will not only help to tackle migration flows but also counter terrorism. And I welcome the agreement that was signed between the Italian and Libyan governments last week on migration and on strengthening border security.

Britain and Italy will continue to work together closely and I hope that through Italy's G7 presidency we can shape a new approach to managing mass population movements that is in the interests of all those involved. We must also do everything possible to protect men, women and children from trafficking, sexual violence and labour exploitation. And I am grateful that Italy has put modern slavery on the G7 agenda for the first time and hope that we can enhance the joint working between our law enforcement agencies to cultivate a new radical, global and co-ordinated approach to defeat this vile crime that runs counter to our deepest values.

Finally, on the situation in eastern Ukraine, I emphasised the UK's continuing concern over Russia's aggressive and destabilising actions and the drastic deterioration in the humanitarian situation that we have seen recently. And it is vital that the international community continues to exert pressure and that we continue to maintain sanctions on Russia until the Minsk agreements are fully implemented.

I want to thank you Prime Minister for your visit and for the constructive conversations we have had.

I believe that today we have laid the foundations for continuing the strong and successful relationship between our 2 countries – and I look forward to working with you, Prime Minister, on your G7 agenda and on the UN Security Council this year, and on shaping a new partnership between Britain and the EU that is in the interests of us all.

Statement to Parliament: Ministerial cars, financial year 2015 to 2016

I am publishing today (9 February 2017) details of the [charges incurred by departments for the use of official government cars provided to ministers by the Government Car Service \(GCS\) during the financial year 2015-16](#), which are in the attached table.

Official transport is provided so that ministers can carry out their work effectively and securely, including working on sensitive and confidential government documents whilst travelling.

We are committed to continuing our focus on reducing the cost to the taxpayer of the provision of secure ministerial cars. The Government Car Service has reduced its running costs by three quarters since 2010. We continue to be committed to reducing the cost to the taxpayer of the provision of secure transport.

To assist public scrutiny, equivalent figures for the £6.7 million charges to each department under the last Labour Government can be found at [28 October 2010, Official Report, Column 23WS](#).

Department	No. of GCS Departmental Pool Car Services @ 31/03/2016	Departmental Pool Car Service	Pre-Booked Service	Total Charges (all services)
Attorney General's Office (formerly Law Officers' Department)	1	£82,221.67	£0.00	£82,221.67
Cabinet Office	3	£181,486.50	£6,172.25	£187,658.75
Government Chief Whip	0	£25,435.49	£3,076.25	£28,511.74
Leader of the House of Commons	1	£73,233.74	£0.00	£73,233.74
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	1	£84,797.79	£4,512.45	£89,310.24
Department for Education	1	£87,837.30	£24,899.33	£112,736.63
Department for Communities and Local Government	2	£172,334.20	£2,260.35	£174,594.55

Department	No. of GCS Departmental Pool Car Services @ 31/03/2016	Departmental Pool Car Service	Pre-Booked Service	Total Charges (all services)
Department for Culture, Media and 1 Sport		£82,449.30	£292.50	£82,741.80
Department for Energy and Climate 1 Change		£83,199.54	£1,907.25	£85,106.79
Department for Environment, Food 1 and Rural Affairs		£94,646.45	£9,689.11	£104,335.56
Department for International Development	1	£22,172.98	£6,052.50	£28,225.48
Department for Transport	2	£171,639.84	£4,472.05	£176,111.89
Department for Work and Pensions	0	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Department of Health	1	£84,353.29	£75.00	£84,428.29
Foreign & Commonwealth Office	0	£0.00	£705.00	£705.00
HM Treasury	2	£202,226.95	£37,397.27	£239,624.22
Home Office	2	£171,392.96	£27,703.94	£199,096.90
Ministry of Defence	0	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Ministry of Justice	0	£0.00	£1,555.00	£1,555.00
Northern Ireland Office	0	£0.00	£11,736.03	£11,736.03
Scotland Office	0	£0.00	£593.70	£593.70
Wales Office	0	£0.00	£3,342.76	£3,342.76
	20	£1,619,427.99	£146,442.74	£1,765,870.73

Methodological note:

The charges recorded in this statement reflect the service model which came into effect in April 2012 as part of the reform programme. This provides Departmental Pool Cars which are a shared resource for a department to use as efficiently as possible. In addition, the Car Service offers a small pre-bookable service utilising any spare capacity.

These charges do not necessarily reflect the total spend on car services as some departments have arrangements with other providers. The Treasury has 2 Cabinet Ministers. The former Chancellor used the Government Car Service to supply a driver and vehicle for his protection package whereas the PM, Home, Foreign, Defence and Northern Ireland Secretaries of State used the

Metropolitan Police. Such charges are not included in the table.

Guidance: Sewage sludge on farmland: code of practice

Updated: Added link to code of practice for Scottish users

The sewage sludge code of practice is for anyone who produces, supplies or uses sewage sludge, and anyone who owns or manages farmland where it is used.

It helps to make sure that when you produce, supply or use sewage sludge you:

- follow good agricultural practice
 - maintain the long-term viability of the soil
 - avoid public nuisance and water pollution
 - protect human, animal and plant health
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News story: War Pension Scheme payments increases from April 2017

From:

First published:

9 February 2017

New rates of pensions and allowances payable under the War Pension Scheme.

The new rates of pensions and allowances payable under the War Pension Scheme from 10 April 2017 have now been announced and are [available here](#).

The rates have been increased by 1%, in line with the September 2016 Consumer Prices Index figure.

Those currently getting a War Pension or War Widows(er)'s Pension will receive a letter confirming their new pension details before April.

For more information on the War Pension Scheme and other compensation payable for injuries, illnesses or disablement related to service, please see

[News story: MOD builds links with SMEs in North East](#)

The North East makes a key contribution to the UK's defence. A&P Tyneside delivered blocks used in the innovative modular construction of the Royal Navy's new Queen Elizabeth Class Carriers, which are being constructed in Rosyth; as well as manufacturing key parts for the Astute nuclear submarine programme in their shipyard at Hebburn, sustaining jobs and bringing work worth some £7 million to the region.

Today's event took place at Pearson Engineering's cutting-edge Armstrong Works. Alongside eight other defence companies based in the north and north east, Pearson Engineering is part of the extensive UK supply chain for the Ajax Armoured Fighting Vehicle programme, the biggest order of armour for the British Army in a generation. Ajax has substantially better firepower, mobility and protection than any of its peers worldwide. The Army will take delivery of the first production vehicles in 2017.

Partnerships between Defence and North East industry over the last year include:

- BAE Systems Global Combat Systems' construction and support of the Royal Engineers' Terrier armoured combat engineer vehicle.
- Cook Defence Systems Ltd's construction of armoured vehicle tracks and support.
- UK Docks Marine Services North Ltd's support for the UK's maritime capability across the world.

As the Ministry of Defence (MOD) is aiming to increase the share of its contracts with SMEs from 19% to 25%, the Minister led discussions with 12 companies in the Northern Defence Industries trade group (NDI) on how Defence and businesses of all sizes can work together. In particular, they looked at how to grow exports, drive innovation and support the UK supply chain.

Minister for Defence Procurement Harriett Baldwin said:

The North East makes an important contribution to our national security and economy. From the Ajax armoured vehicle to our new carriers, the companies I've met are delivering the equipment and services our Armed Forces need to keep Britain safe.

Here in Newcastle today, we looked at how the businesses based here can help make Britain one of the most innovative, most prosperous

countries globally, for an economy that works for everyone.

The Minister's SME roundtable was hosted at Pearson Engineering's cutting-edge Armstrong Works in Newcastle-Upon-Tyne. The Works, which reopened in 2015 following a £20 million refurbishment. It is a great example of the invaluable role that northern Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) are playing in the Defence supply chain.

Managing Director of Pearson Engineering and Chairman of NDI, Craig Priday said:

It has been a pleasure to welcome the Minister for Defence Procurement to Pearson Engineering today, particularly at a time when the MOD is in the process of renewing its industrial policy.

NDI's member companies make an enormous contribution to the capabilities of our armed forces and it is reassuring that the Department is taking the time to consider the views of the UK defence community right across the supply chain as it formulates its future intentions in this regard.

Andy Collier, NDI Director, said that:

This has been a great opportunity for MOD to engage further with the UK supply chain.

This sort of engagement is crucial to ensure that MOD can establish the means through which we, as an industry, can work ever more closely with the Department in the best interests of the UK economy.