

[Letters between DHSC and Imperial Tobacco UK](#)

Correspondence between Imperial Tobacco UK and the Department of Health and Social Care, published under Article 5.3 of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control.

[Accident involving an aircraft south of Taunton – 12 August 2021](#)

News story

The AAIB have sent a team to investigate an accident involving an aircraft that occurred near the south of Taunton on 12th August 2021



This morning, the AAIB was notified of an accident involving an aircraft which occurred south of Taunton. An investigation has been launched and a team of inspectors are on site examining the aircraft, accident site and making enquiries.

Published 12 August 2021

[Up, up and away... can human jet suits be used to capture criminals?](#)

Among the science displayed to senior officials from the National Police

Chiefs' Council and the Home Office was Gravity, a human jet suit system.

The pilot swooped in to amaze the invited guests, then presented a fictitious scenario, flying rapidly through the air and tracking down a would-be assailant.

Those watching the event included Assistant Commissioner Martin Hewitt and Professor Paul Taylor, the Police Chief Scientific Advisor.

[Police with jet suits?](#)

Martin chairs the National Police Chief Council and coordinates the operational response across the police service to the threats the UK faces, including terrorism, organised crime and national emergencies. He said:

Seeing a human flying is really impressive. To see something that feels like you're watching science fiction took all those watching by surprise.

It is clear the Gravity system has lots of potential and we are fascinated to see how it will develop and if there are any possible uses in a policing environment in years to come.

Richard Browning is the founder and test pilot of Gravity, and said:

It's always the same reaction – almost disbelief that you could see a human being moving in that way when your only real reference point is probably a Marvel superhero film.

However, the application of Gravity is endless, to be able to move specialist personnel in an urban environment very quickly in a three dimensional space, be it onto a rooftop, over a river or difficult terrain to potentially contain a roving threat is really powerful.

Following the recent [Integrated Review \(IR\)](#) and the release of the MOD Science and Technology (S&T) strategy, there has been huge investment for science and technology for defence. There is similar investment for policing.

Martin added:

The science and technology has so much cross-application with Defence and Homeland Security. Being here at Dstl is a real opportunity to look at what's being developed and identify where that could be used in the policing world.

Having our own requirements placed into the same environment where the science has been pushed as far as it can be pushed, really does present some important and exciting opportunities.

The group were also able to witness the latest research in knife crime, where scientists are working on knife detection systems that could mean fewer body searches and better protection for police officers and the public.

Dstl's Head, Counter-Terrorism and Security, said:

Dstl is all about the future, and it is important we explore what others are doing to develop novel systems. It is with great pride that we were able to show some of the incredible science being developed to protect UK citizens to senior policing officials.

[COVID-19: concerns about price, reliability and quality of PCR testing](#)

News story

Concerns have been raised about the price and reliability of PCR travel tests and the quality of the service people are getting from PCR test providers.



The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Sajid Javid, wrote to the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) on 6 August asking the CMA to consider these issues .

There are 3 areas that the CMA is currently exploring:

1. Whether individual PCR providers may be breaching their obligations under consumer law and should be subject to enforcement action
2. Whether there are structural problems in the market for PCR tests, affecting price or reliability
3. Whether there are any immediate actions that the Government could take in the meantime

George Lusty, CMA Senior Director for Consumer Protection, said:

It is essential that people paying for PCR tests are treated fairly, get what they pay for and that their rights are respected when things go wrong. We will not hesitate to take enforcement action if we find evidence that PCR providers are breaching consumer law.

We are also working closely with DHSC to get the data we need to identify the cause of any wider problems in the PCR testing market, and to ground our advice on what action may be needed.

This is a particularly pressing issue just now for families hoping to enjoy a well-earned holiday after such a difficult year, and for those reuniting with friends and relatives overseas. That is why we are also providing ongoing support to DHSC, including on steps that could be considered in the interim, before the rest of our work on the PCR testing market is concluded.

Published 12 August 2021

[Appeal for local knowledge to achieve tree planting ambitions in York](#)

The Environment Agency is appealing for help from York residents to decide where new trees should be planted as part of the city's flood defence scheme.