

News story: UK boosts cyber links after tri-nation visit to Central America

As the cyber threats we face evolve and intensify, it is vital we deepen our international partnerships to stay one step ahead of those who would wish to do us harm, a Defence Minister has stated.

Armed Forces Minister Mark Lancaster signed a letter of intent between the UK and Chile on cyber co-operation ensuring closer links in that sphere, during a visit that also took in Mexico and Belize.

He also attended a British-led cyber defence workshop that was jointly supported by the Ministry of Defence, Department for International Trade, National Cyber Security Centre and Government Communication Headquarters. He also visited a Chilean Peacekeeping School.

Armed Forces Minister Mark Lancaster said:

Information technology provides a new and unconventional battlefield, with cyber-attacks increasing as modern warfare evolves and adapts. The UK will play a leading role in countering these threats, but I am delighted to see like-minded partners across the globe sharing this belief and taking steps to keep our people safe.

In Mexico, Mr Lancaster was a special guest at the country's independence celebrations, before meeting Mexico's Defence Minister and Navy Secretariat, Admiral Vidal Francisco Soberon Sanz, reinforcing our strong defence relations and discussing the role of Latin American nations working alongside NATO and the UN.

He also met Commander of the North American Aerospace Defense Command and United States Northern Command, General Terrence J. O'Shaughnessy, reaffirming the special relationship and exploring how the UK and US can collaborate further in these fields.

In Belize, Mr Lancaster spent the day visiting the 2nd Battalion of the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment, to understand the benefits to the Army from training in a jungle environment as well as tour touring the British Army Training and Support Unit Belize.

Mr Lancaster also signed a treaty and memorandum of understanding concerning the status of UK forces in Belize, deepening the longstanding defence co-operation between the two nations.

Mr Lancaster met the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Wilfred Elrington; Minister

of National Security, John Saldivar, and Commander of the Belize Defence Force, Brigadier General Steven Ortega.

[News story: Defence Secretary announces extension of support to Ukraine's Armed Forces](#)

In his first visit as Defence Secretary to Ukraine, Gavin Williamson announced that the UK will be extending its military training operation there for a further two years until 2020.

Mr Williamson met with Defence Minister Stepan Poltorak and General of the Army, Victor Muzhenko, to discuss the threats faced by Ukrainian Armed Forces. He also announced the expansion of the UK Defence Section in Kyiv and introduction of a permanent Naval Attaché to help build Ukrainian naval capability.

The Defence Secretary also met President Poroshenko reaffirming the UK's commitment to their country. He also discussed the Russian security forces continuing to disrupt merchant vessels trying to access Ukrainian ports in the Sea of Azov, posing negative effects on Ukraine's economy.

He also travelled to Marinka in the east of Ukraine to see the effects of the four-year conflict in the Donbas region, and received an operational update from the Joint Force Operation Commander Lt Gen Serhiy Nayev. The visit to Marinka highlighted the severity of the ongoing conflict, including its humanitarian and environmental impacts, driven by Russian aggression.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

I witnessed first-hand the suffering caused by the brutal conflict in eastern Ukraine – a conflict that is being prolonged by the Russian-backed separatists.

By extending and expanding our training programmes, we are sending a clear message – we support the people of Ukraine and are firmly committed to its sovereignty as it faces down blatant Russian aggression.



In his first visit as Defence Secretary to Ukraine, Gavin Williamson announced the UK will extend its military training operation for a further two years. Crown copyright.

The training, delivered through Operation Orbital, has been expanded in 2018 to include anti-armour, infantry skills, counter-sniping and mortar planning. This is in addition to the defensive skills programmes such as the identification of mines and improvised explosive devices (IEDs), medical care and logistics that UK personnel have been delivering since early 2015.

British personnel have trained over 9,500 of the Ukrainian Armed Forces since the start of Operation Orbital in 2015. The coming year will see a continuing growth in joint training activity with our Canadian allies as well as initiatives between UK personnel and other nations who have also committed themselves to supporting Ukraine.

[News story: UK fighter jets intercept Russian bombers approaching UK airspace](#)

Today (20 September), RAF Quick Reaction Alert (QRA) Typhoon fighter aircraft

scrambled from RAF Lossiemouth to monitor two Russian planes approaching UK airspace. The Russian Blackjacks long-range bombers were not talking to air traffic control, making them a hazard to all other aviation.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

Russian bombers probing UK airspace is another reminder of the very serious military challenge that Russia poses us today.

We will not hesitate to continually defend our skies from acts of aggression. Once again the rapid reactions of our RAF have demonstrated how vital our Armed Forces are in protecting Britain.

The RAF worked closely with NATO partners to monitor the jets as they passed through a variety of international airspace before they were intercepted by the RAF over the North Sea. Subsequently, our fighters escorted the Russian Blackjacks north, out of the UK's area of interest. At no time did the Russian bombers enter UK sovereign airspace.

RAF QRA was launched today because the Russian Military aircraft were not talking to air traffic agencies. The RAF routinely intercept, identify and escort Russian aircraft that transit international airspace within the UK's area of interest and continue to be on call; 24/7, 365.

News story: Facilities management suppliers invited to bid for places on new framework

The Future Defence Infrastructure Services (FDIS) contracts will provide FM services across the UK defence estate, replacing existing arrangements when they come to an end.

The contracts are being procured as part of the Crown Commercial Service's (CCS) Workplace Services Facilities Management Marketplace framework. This is a new way of working for the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) and enables access to a more diverse supplier base, while improving value for money for the taxpayer by leveraging government buying power.

This phase of the FDIS programme will procure new Hard FM arrangements for 4 Regional Prime contracts and five contracts that will replace the current National Housing Prime. The contracts have a collective value of £2.9 billion, excluding additional works. A later stage of the process will procure a National Training Management contract to replace the current

National Training Estate Prime.

DIO's Commercial Director Jacqui Rock said:

DIO is not only one of the largest providers of housing in the UK, with a stock of nearly 50,000 homes, it is also responsible for managing land and buildings across hundreds of diverse MOD sites.

We are pleased to be working with CCS to procure these contracts. We want to make DIO easier to do business with and adopting this route to market is one of the ways that we hope to achieve this, while enabling us access to a wider, more diverse and increasingly resilient supply base.

CCS Strategic Category Director – Buildings, Sam Ulyatt said:

This procurement is a part of the FM Marketplace, which is changing the way in which central government and the wider public sector procure their FM deals, delivering great value for the taxpayer. We are proud to be working in partnership with DIO and supporting delivery against their commercial strategy for common goods and services.

The initial phase of the procurement process will see suppliers qualifying onto each of the lots in the framework, enabling them to participate in subsequent call-off competitions. The award of places to suppliers on each of the framework lots is expected to be completed by the end of February 2019, with call off competitions starting soon afterwards.

Each DIO call off contract will be 7 years in length, with options to extend up to a further 3 years, subject to satisfactory performance and other considerations.

An advertisement inviting supplier participation has been released in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) and can be accessed via [Crown Commercial Service](#)

[News story: Grave of courageous World War 2 pilot has been rededicated 77 years after his death](#)

The grave of 26 year old Flying Officer (FO) David Stein who served in the

Royal Air Force (RAF) volunteer reserve, has been rededicated in France at a cemetery where he lay as an 'unknown' for many years. The moving service took place on Wednesday 19 September at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) Brest (Kerfautras) Cemetery, Brittany in France.

The service, organised by the MOD's Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC), part of Defence Business Services was attended by F0 Stein's cousin, Carol Taylor who was accompanied by her husband, Stuart Taylor and son, David Taylor. It was led by The Reverend (Squadron Leader) Rachel Cook, RAF. Members of the RAF including the RAF Exchange Officer Wing Commander Yves Gagnon, RAF Exchange Officer French MOD and local dignitaries were also in attendance.



Sergeant Mark Windsor MBE RAF, The Reverend Rachel Cook, F0 Stein's cousin, Carol Taylor, son David Taylor and husband, Stuart Taylor, Wing Commander Yves Gagnon, RAF Exchange Officer French MOD, Crown Copyright, all rights reserved

F0 Stein's cousin, Carol Taylor of Rotherham, South Yorkshire said:

Our family know that David's mother, father and sister would have been very grateful, as are we, that his final resting place has been found, and that so many people have joined us in honouring him.



Cousin, Carol Taylor accompanied by son, David Taylor and husband, Stuart Taylor at FO Stein's graveside, Crown Copyright, all rights reserved

Tracey Bowers, JCCC said:

This has been a fascinating case to work on and I would like to thank all those who have helped. It is a privilege to have arranged the ceremony for this daring young man who paid the ultimate sacrifice.

FO Stein was killed on 30 October 1941 flying a Westland Whirlwind plane on a low-level ground sortie on an aerodrome in Brittany, France. He was brought down by ground anti-aircraft fire and last seen flying away from the target with one engine on fire.



Wing Commander Yves Gagnon, RAF Exchange Officer French MOD presenting the Union Flag to FO Stein's cousin, Carol Taylor, Crown Copyright, all rights reserved

Although FO Stein was buried alongside other Allied airmen in Brest (Kerfautras) Cemetery, his identity remained unknown until research, which was later analysed and verified by the JCCC, proved a connection with the site where his aircraft was found.

David Stein was born on 23 December 1914 in Lassodie, Dunfermline, Scotland. Prior to enlistment in 1939 he was a tobacconist living in Edinburgh; his service records note he was a keen footballer and golfer, enjoyed the "occasional beer" and his hobby was motor engineering.

David was commissioned as a pilot officer in 1940, promoted to flying officer in July 1941 before being posted to No 263 Squadron in Grangemouth, Scotland.

Reverend Rachel Cook said:

Today, we formally honour the memory of FO David Stein in the presence of military colleagues and family. It is a real privilege to be able to do this. FO Stein gave his life in the service of others, we now come together to recognise this and to remember him before God. This brave airman now has a named resting place. May he rest in peace.

Steve Arnold, CWGC said:

Today, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission are honoured to mark the grave of Flying Officer Stein with a new headstone bearing his name and a personal inscription chosen by his family. We will ensure that the graves of David, his brother John and all those who served and fell are cared for in perpetuity.