

Press release: PM marks £1.7bn funding to help businesses export post-Brexit

- PM visits Alexander Dennis factory that will see iconic red double-deckers built for historic Mexico City route
- deal supports more than 2,000 jobs across the UK, including around 1,000 in Falkirk and 320 at Guildford site
- total of £1.7 billion in financial support provided by the Department for International Trade to help 137 British businesses fulfil their export potential

Prime Minister Theresa May will today [Wednesday, 23 August] visit bus manufacturer Alexander Dennis as it secures a £44 million finance deal to export iconic red double-decker buses to Mexico City.

She will tour the company's Guildford factory and meet staff constructing 90 low-emission buses that will reduce congestion and pollution on the Paseo de la Reforma, Mexico City's answer to The Mall. The buses will begin transporting passengers along the historic route from the end of this year.

Alexander Dennis' financial funding is part of £1.7 billion provided to businesses to help them win overseas contracts by UK Export Finance since it became part of the Department for International Trade. The financial support has helped 137 British companies expand their businesses, provide jobs and secure major global contracts since the department was created.

The figures, announced for the first time today, shows British business are making the most of opportunities outside of the EU and making their mark on the global stage.

Prime Minister Theresa May said:

We are building a truly global Britain by helping UK companies win multi-million pound contracts to export their products across the globe, and supporting high value jobs here in this country.

Since last summer, the government has provided over £1.7 billion of backing for contracts for goods and services and will continue to maximise investment in the UK and seek exciting new opportunities ahead.

From exporting iconic red double-decker buses to Mexico, cutting-edge MRI systems to Australia or rail equipment to Bangkok, each one is an example of a great British success story and shows the UK is leading the way as a great, global trading nation.

The contract announced today was secured with a 1 billion Mexican Pesos (£44 million) agreement by UK Export Finance (UKEF) to guarantee the deal. It was the first contract that UKEF has supported in Mexican Pesos after expanding its range of currencies to 40 last year – ensuring foreign buyers choose UK companies and products.

The deal helps support 320 jobs at the Alexander Dennis factory in Guildford, and an additional 1,000 at their Falkirk site, as well as throughout the supply chain and sites in Scarborough, Anston and Skelmersdale.

International Trade Secretary, Liam Fox, said:

As an international economic department, the Department for International Trade is putting export finance at the heart of trade promotion. The £1.7 billion in financial support since last summer has helped 137 companies secure deals around the world, in 40 local currencies including the Mexican Peso. This has made buying from the UK more attractive than ever.

There is global appetite for British goods and expertise, and UK firms such as Alexander Dennis are taking advantage of the opportunities in fast growing markets like Mexico, securing deals that will boost the UK's exports and safeguard jobs back home.

Colin Robertson, Chief Executive, ADL, said:

It is hugely exciting to know that ADL's signature red double-decker buses will soon be transporting Mexico City's residents in style and comfort. As a global double-decker leader with fleets of our vehicles across the world, we see the positive impact these vehicles can have in improving the transport infrastructure, congestion and air quality in the world's busiest cities.

Our ability to offer finance from UK Export Finance in Mexican Pesos was a significant benefit to our buyer, helping us win this major contract.

Background information:

- Mexico is currently the 15th largest market in the world and has a growing interest in a number of sectors of UK expertise such as energy, financial services and retail
- UKEF provided a “buyer credit” guarantee on a loan from Santander to the Mexican buyer, a private company operating a new route for the City of Mexico’s bus transport system. This government-backed guarantee ensures the buyer can access the finance to buy the buses, allowing Alexander Dennis to secure the contract
- the 90 low-emission “Enviro500” buses are being made at Alexander Dennis’s sites in Falkirk and Guildford. The buses are lightweight, fuel-efficient, cleaner and offer twice as many seats as the buses currently used, easing overcrowding in the city of 20 million people
- alongside this support, UKEF is doubling government support available to UK businesses looking to export to Mexico, meaning up to £5 billion will now be available
- following announcement in July of a new partnership with the five biggest high street banks, accessing finance from UKEF will now be even easier for exporters and companies in their supply chains
- 80% of companies supported by UKEF are small and medium-sized enterprises

Examples of other companies benefiting from UK Export Finance support

- iconic British motorcycle brand Norton Motorcycle was founded in 1898 and now employs 120 staff in the UK selling 1,000 motorcycles a year to Australia, North America, Japan and Europe. UKEF has provided Norton with bespoke working capital support to finance its export activity. The company is an Export Champion for the East Midlands, and has recently launched an ambitious apprentice programme
- based in Guildford, MR Solutions is world-leading developer of cutting-edge MRI systems and products. In 2017, it won a £1.2 million contract for the export of one of its MRI scanners to Sydney University thanks to UKEF providing a guarantee to secure the deal
- Hampshire engineering company Design and Projects received trade finance support from UKEF to export €12 million of rail equipment for a metro line in Bangkok

- burntIsland Fabrications Ltd (BiFab) is a Scottish manufacturer of high-quality steel fabrications for the oil and gas and renewable energy sectors. BiFab recently won a contract in excess of £100 million, backed by UKEF, to support an offshore wind farm
- distinction is a London-based company selling bespoke furniture to hotels all over the world. In 2016, Distinction won a \$7 million contract with the Palm Jumeirah hotel in Dubai. UKEF provided support worth \$1.2 million to enable Distinction to secure the finance it needed to fulfil the contract as well as almost doubling its UK office headcount