

News story: Home Secretary visits Spain and Germany

Home Secretary Sajid Javid this week (25 and 26 September) visited Spain and Germany where he stressed the need for continued co-operation with European partners on security issues.

Speaking at EFE press in Madrid, the Home Secretary told an audience of journalists and parliamentarians that the UK and Spain had a shared history of fighting terrorism and that it needs to be as strong and as effective once the UK leaves the EU.

In a meeting with his Spanish counterpart Interior Minister Fernando Grande-Marlaska, they both agreed that the close relationship between the countries must continue.

The Home Secretary also paid tribute to those who had been victims of terror at the Garden of Remembrance in Madrid where he had the opportunity to meet with the parents of Ignacio Echeverría, a Spanish national who died in the 2017 London Bridge attack and who was posthumously awarded the George Medal for his bravery.

In Germany, the Home Secretary met with leading German government officials and opinion formers at a policy meeting at the not-for-profit think tank Körber Stiftung to discuss the future security partnership.

He also discussed the issue with Interior Minister Horst Seehofer in a meeting that also covered co-operation on migration and serious organised crime.

The systems and rules to facilitate a continued strong security relationship between the UK and Germany were the focus of talks with the President of the German Bundespolizei Dieter Romann. To conclude his visit, Sajid Javid spoke about the mutual value of close security co-operation with Bundesminister Helge Braun.

Home Secretary Sajid Javid said:

My visits to Spain and Germany this week showed me once more how closely our countries work together to keep our citizens safe.

We face many of the same threats from terrorism, serious organised crime and hostile states.

In my meetings with counterparts in both countries there was a shared belief that we must continue to work together because these threats do not respect our borders.

News story: Scientists move away from the keyboard to beat cyber attackers at their own game

Scientists at the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) have developed a cyber card game which helps staff identify and learn about some of the key open source techniques a cyber aggressor might use to gain insight, access and control over industrial and commercial infrastructures.

Extensive testing of the game and positive stakeholder feedback has shown a very rapid initial learning curve compared to conventional training alone and this contributed to the game winning the 2018 Dstl 'Innovator of the Year' award.

The UK government and commercial sectors face a growing challenge in the form of cyber-attacks and information warfare from criminals and state actors. Such attacks take various forms and are often very sophisticated, meaning they may go unnoticed. Training staff to recognise and counter common information warfare attack strategies can be difficult, time-consuming and expensive

The key benefits of Dstl's cyber card game are that it:

- Provides a rapid upskilling in understanding high level, open-source cyber-attack techniques and enhances learning on possible defensive strategies
- Offers a more enjoyable approach to cyber training – staff have the option to continue playing in their own time
- Is adaptable across a range of audiences and knowledge levels- the game can be tailored to various scenarios, ranging from a rapid two hour session for corporate management through to an extended campaign for cyber professionals
- Avoids using classified information, and therefore does not need security clearance to play

The cyber card game is available for license on a non-exclusive basis through Dstl's Easy Access IP (EAIP) licencing framework. The EAIP framework allows companies to develop Dstl's work at no cost, facilitating commercialisation of products that will benefit the economy and society.

Dstl has signed their first cyber card game licencing agreement with Coruscant Productions LLC who plan to develop and market the cyber card game training approach further.

The lead scientist who developed the game at Dstl said:

It is exciting to see the cyber card game being developed externally for the benefit of both security and commercial environments.

Tomas Owen, founder of Coruscant Productions added:

We are delighted to have the opportunity to license such unique intellectual property from Dstl. The cyber card game fundamentally alters the way cyber is thought about, taught and employed.

We're proud to be chosen as the first licensee, and look forward to working with cyber training providers across the world with the goal of ensuring all organisations are better able to understand and defend against cyber criminals and digital attacks.

For more information, visit Dstl's [Easy Access IP page](#)

[News story: Appointment of the Chair of the Criminal Cases Review Commission](#)

Helen Pitcher has been appointed as Chair of the Criminal Cases Review Commission (CCRC) from 1 November 2018 for 3 years. Helen will initially commence as a Commissioner, on a Chair Designate basis from 1 October 2018.

CCRC's role is to investigate and review cases where it is alleged that a miscarriage of justice may have occurred in relation to conviction, sentence or both. Publicly appointed Commissioners are the Commission's decision makers, playing a central role in casework by being directly responsible for deciding whether or not particular convictions or sentences should be referred to the courts.

Appointments to CCRC are made by Her Majesty the Queen on the recommendation of the Prime Minister.

Appointments and re-appointments to CCRC are regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments. This appointment has been made in line with the Governance Code on Public Appointments.

Helen Pitcher is an experienced Board member, Chairman, Board facilitator and Coach. She works across the range of Professional Service firms, FTSE 100, Private Equity and Family firms. In addition to her Advanced Boardroom Excellence role which consults on Board effectiveness, other Board roles are:

- Chairman Pladis (United Biscuits, Godiva, Ülker Bisküvi)
- Chairman of KidsOut a National Children's Charity
- President of INSEAD Directors Network Board (IDN)
- Board member CIPD
- Chairman of a number of Committees across these Boards (Audit, Remuneration, Nominations)

Helen is on the Advisory Board for Leeds University Law Faculty and was also Chairman of the Queen's Counsel Selection Panel for 8 years until February 2017.

[News story: Appointment of a Civil Procedure Rule Committee Barrister member](#)

The Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice has appointed Dr Anja Lansbergen-Mills as a barrister member of the committee from 12 October 2018 for 3 years.

The Civil Procedure Rule Committee (CPRC) is a non-departmental public body which makes rules of court, for the Civil Division of the Court of Appeal, the High Court and the County Court. CPRC is chaired by the Master of the Rolls and comprises 16 members – 8 judicial (of which 6 are appointed by the Lord Chief Justice) and 8 non-judicial (appointed by the Lord Chancellor in consultation with the Master of the Rolls).

Biography

Dr Lansbergen-Mills practices in commercial and chancery work and is a tenant at Exchange Chambers. She is a committee member of both the Northern Chancery Bar Association and the Northern Circuit Commercial Bar Association. Dr Lansbergen-Mills works to promote social mobility and diversity at the Bar, to which end she has participated in a 'Law Futures Day' organised by the Social Mobility Foundation and in the 'Pathways to Law' initiative developed by the College of Law and the Sutton Trust (delivered by Eversheds Sutherland as 'Eversheds Unlocked'). She is helping to organise the Chancery Bar Association's forthcoming 'Women at the Chancery Bar' conference and has spoken as a panellist in a discussion of the experience of women in the legal sector. Before she was called to the Bar Dr Lansbergen-Mills completed a PhD at the University of Edinburgh School of Law, during which time she was employed by the University in various research posts and taught law EU Law to both undergraduate and master's students.

Dr Anja Lansbergen-Mills has declared no political activity.

[News story: UK Asset Resolution sale of an £860 million mortgage portfolio](#)

The sale of an £860 million equity release mortgage portfolio, owned by Bradford & Bingley (B&B) and NRAM Limited (formerly part of Northern Rock), has been authorised by the Chancellor.

These mortgages were acquired by the taxpayer during the financial crisis and their sale simplifies the books of both B&B and NRAM, bringing the government closer to the final wind-down of these companies. It also marks a milestone in the plan to recover taxpayers' money – ten years on.

Following a highly competitive auction, these mortgages will be sold to Rothesay Life, a Financial Conduct Authority and Prudential Regulation Authority regulated firm.

There will be no changes to the terms and conditions of the mortgages sold. Borrowers do not need to take any action.

UK Asset Resolution (UKAR), the holding company for B&B and NRAM, will also at the same time terminate interest rate swaps, which hedge the risk of changes in interest rates, held against these mortgages. These swaps were taken out by B&B and Northern Rock more than 10 years ago when the loans were issued, in line with good risk management practice. Due to the fall in long term interest rates, there is a substantial cost for terminating the swaps which is expected to exceed the profit on the sale of the loans, resulting in a net overall accounting loss on the two transactions.

The assets will be sold for a price above their book value. Proceeds from this sale will be used to pay down the national debt. However, given the unwinding of the swaps, national debt will be reduced by an amount which is less than the sale proceeds. These figures are subject to an adjustment mechanism and will be known when the transaction completes in the next few weeks, and subsequently disclosed to Parliament.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Philip Hammond said:

We're continuing to recover the money the taxpayer committed during the financial crash, and the sale of these loans moves us one step closer. The proceeds of this sale will go towards reducing our national debt.

B&B's and NRAM Limited's closed loan books are managed by UKAR on behalf of the taxpayer. Following this transaction, UKAR now owns c.£13 billion worth of assets, down from £21 billion in September 2017 and from £116 billion in

2010.

As a result of this transaction UKAR expects to repay approximately £1 billion of the government loan which is made up of a number of components in addition to the actual sales proceeds. Following repayment, UKAR will have repaid 94% of its loans from the government.