

News story: MOD to review Armed Forces exemption from UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

The exemption means that the armed forces are not required by law, to recruit or retain personnel with a condition that may be disabling under UK law.

Disability is defined as a person with 'a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.' In a practical sense, this includes a broad range of physical and mental conditions, including cancer and multiple sclerosis, to arthritis and mental health.

As part of the UK's obligations to the UN's Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, every five years it must look again at the armed forces' exemption and review whether it is still appropriate.

The review will look at how the exemption affects the operational capability of the armed forces and our personnel and will examine if alternative options could better support personnel without any negative impact on operational effectiveness.

To achieve this, the review will look at how the military compares with the blue light services, to understand how being part of the Convention affects their workforces. The MOD will also work with other nations to share perspectives and best practice.

Personnel with a disability already serve in a variety of roles across the Armed Forces, and while the MOD does not currently hold exact figures on military personnel with a disability, the department plans to enable better data collection in the future.

Minister for Defence People and Veterans Tobias Ellwood said:

In an ever-changing world, we need to ensure that the armed forces maintain their operational effectiveness, while at the same time looking after all of our personnel who serve.

This review demonstrates that we are taking the issue of disability seriously and that we are open-minded in our approach.

The MOD has recently established a number of initiatives to support disabled personnel as they serve their country, including appointing an Armed Forces Disability Champion and establishing a network for Service personnel, Carers and some veterans with a life-changing or life-limiting condition or a disability.

The review will start early in 2019.

[News story: Batches of Durex Condoms recalled: people urged to check their batch numbers](#)

Reckitt Benckiser Group plc (RB) has announced that they are recalling specific batches of Durex condoms after they did not pass their required safety standards. This means there is a risk that the condom might tear or leak reducing its protection from sexually-transmitted diseases and pregnancy.

People are advised to check if they have any of the affected batches, which are listed in the table below.

If anyone finds an affected batch, they are advised to stop use and return the product for a full refund. For more information, please visit the [Durex website](#).

John Wilkinson, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA)'s Director of Medical Devices said:

Our highest priority is making sure that all medical devices are acceptably safe and work effectively. It's important that you check the batch numbers to see if you have a product from an affected batch.

If you have any questions, please speak to your healthcare professional or sexual health provider.

We strongly encourage anyone to report any issues with this product, or more generally with any medical device, to our Yellow Card Scheme.

Description	SKU Code	Batch Number	Expiry Date
Durex Latex Free 12 Pack	3014272	1000444367	Feb-2021
	3014272	1000433145	Jan-2021
Durex Real Feel 6 Pack	3040039	1000438054	Jan-2021
Durex Real Feel 12 Pack	3014278	1000444370	Feb-2021
	3014277	1000419930	Jan-2021
	3014277	1000444367	Feb-2021
	3014277	1000416206	Dec-2020

	3014277	1000474804	Feb-2021
Durex Real Feel 18 Pack	3030444	1000434066	Jan-2021
	3030444	1000430479	Jan-2021
Durex Real Feel 18 Pack (RF Tag)	3030445	1000430479	Jan-2021

[Press release: Sunshine lights up A38 in East Midlands](#)

Highways England has installed more than 4,500 innovative solar road studs that harness sunlight in the daytime and light up the road at night, helping drivers stay safe.

The beauty of these road studs is that they are also effective in heavy rain, mist or fog and a four-hour charge from daylight can power the devices for over 200 hours.

The studs have been introduced as part of £8.5 million worth of improvements to journeys along the A38 between Ripley and junction 28 of the M1 near Mansfield – a stretch that is used by more than 23,000 vehicles every day.

The improvements also include high visibility lane markings that make it easier for drivers at night or in adverse weather conditions, and coloured high friction surface that reduces the risk of skidding.

Highways England project manager, Matthew Carruthers, said:

We're always looking for new ways to further improve journeys and safety for drivers and this is a great example of that.

This section of carriageway has no street lighting so the solar road studs and improved lane markings make a real difference.

At the same time the new technology is more durable, meaning less disruption for motorists in the long term thanks to fewer roadworks.

Standard road studs require car headlights to illuminate their reflective surface – typically this means that the headlights can be seen up to 90 metres away, giving drivers travelling at 60mph around three seconds to react to conditions on the road.

The new road studs are powered by solar energy, with a panel absorbing power during the day. Throughout the night they generate their own light through a battery powered LED and can be seen up to 900 metres away, giving drivers travelling at 60mph more than 30 seconds to react.

The new studs are also more durable, lasting up to five years longer than standard studs, require less maintenance during their lifetime and at only 4mm in height means are they safer for motorcycles.

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

[News story: Home Secretary launches and doubles the early intervention youth fund](#)

More projects to steer young people away from serious violence will be supported by the government after the Home Secretary announced the doubling of the [early intervention youth fund](#).

The scheme, which opens for bids today (Monday 30 July), is a key commitment in the Serious Violence Strategy, and will allow communities to intervene early in the lives of more vulnerable young people.

The government will double the funding, which was originally set at £11 million. Now £22 million of Home Office money will be made available to support vital early intervention work in England and Wales over the next two years.

Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) who work in partnership with Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) or the equivalent can bid for funding to deliver projects which steer young people away from violent crime.

It is a prime example of the public health – or multiple strand – approach set out in the strategy, which is aimed at addressing the causes of violence. Robust policing remains very important, but the Home Office is also working in partnership with a range of key sectors, such as education, local government, health and social services, to tackle serious violence.

Home Secretary Sajid Javid said:

Intervening early in the lives of vulnerable young people can help

focus their talents on positive activities and steer them away from the dangers of serious violence.

This is why we are doubling our Early Intervention Youth Fund to £22 million. The fund will support groups at the heart of our communities who educate and interact with youths – and provide them with an alternative to crime.

We all need to work together to tackle this worrying issue and our Serious Violence Strategy is helping this joined-up approach.

Doubling the funding will allow successful PCCs and local partners to plan their work over the two years and maximise its impact in expanding existing programmes, developing innovative new schemes or drawing in additional funding.

The early intervention youth fund is one of 61 commitments which are already being delivered from the Serious Violence Strategy.

Last week the Home Secretary chaired the third serious violence taskforce, where it was announced that teachers in England would receive anti-knife crime lesson plans as part of the #knifefree campaign to teach young people the dangers of carrying knives.

Another commitment – the Offensive Weapons Bill – is currently passing through Parliament.

[News story: UK-Australia Trade Working Group joint statement](#)

The Australia-UK Trade Working Group met in London on 25 and 26 July 2018. This was the group's fourth meeting since it was established in September 2016 by the Rt Hon Dr Liam Fox MP, the United Kingdom's Secretary of State for International Trade and President of the Board of Trade and the Hon Steven Ciobo MP, Australia's Minister for Trade, Tourism, and Investment.

Delegations were led by officials from the UK's Department of International Trade (DIT) and Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT). It was attended by representatives from a range of UK and Australian government departments.

Discussions continued to focus on the UK and Australia's future trade and investment relationship; a recognition of the shared ambition, after the UK leaves the European Union, to start bilateral FTA negotiations. Conversations built upon the previous Trade Working Groups, with officials continuing to

develop a deep and shared understanding of each other's domestic systems and trade policy across a number of areas.

The Trade Working Group also provided an opportunity for the UK to set out the work under way to establish its independent trade policy. Officials discussed the recently announced UK consultations on future free trade agreements, of which Australia is one of 3 prospective bilateral deals where the public's views are sought.

Finally, the Working Group affirmed the UK and Australia's shared desire to promote and continue to champion free trade and a robust multilateral trading system.