

## [News story: Successful workshop on allergen detection in spices organised by GC](#)

A joint Defra, FSA, FSS and Government Chemist workshop was held at LGC on 28 February 2018. The event focused on the detection of allergens in spices and herbs using a multi-discipline approach. The workshop was attended by over 20 delegates from Public Analyst laboratories, industry and regulating bodies.

The event was organised by the Government Chemist team as part of a cross government (BEIS, FSA, FSS and Defra) knowledge transfer project that will deliver knowledge from government programmes to stakeholders to help enforce current regulations and prevent future disputes. By pooling funds from each of the four government departments, knowledge transfer events can be planned and coordinated according to priorities received directly from the stakeholder community delivering greater impact.

The workshop was opened with a talk by Dr Chun-Han Chan from the FSA's Allergen team and followed by Greg Corbishley from Barts Spices, who gave the industry perspective into the challenges posed for manufactures by cross contamination. There were also three sessions covering the complementary techniques developed in response to the [cumin](#) and [paprika](#) cases in 2015. Malvinder Singh (LGC) talked about the immunoassay tests which initially detected allergenic contamination (initially believed to be almond) in cumin and the subsequent preparation of reference materials needed for further investigation. Christopher Hopley (LGC) gave an overview of mass spectrometry and expanded on methods developed for the detection of close species. Timothy Wilkes (LGC) talked about the real-time PCR and melting curve approaches used for these cases. These sessions provided practical information required to enable participants to carry out or commission similar analytical tests. Michael Walker, from the GC team, provided a final overview on result interpretation and reporting on allergen cases.



Dr Walker from the GC team presenting on interpretation and reporting

Feedback from participants was very positive:

First of all many thanks to you all for a very enjoyable course on Wednesday. The content was very useful and I feel the chance to network with such a diversity of people and disciplines that attend these courses is invaluable

Very informative and enjoyable. Always good to have access to a large pool of experts. Confident now to use melt curve analysis in future

If you would like to know more about the techniques covered in this workshop, or the work of the Government Chemist, contact

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## **Press release: CEO Sir Alan Massey retiring after four-decade maritime career**

Sir Alan joined the MCA in July 2010 after a 33-year career with the Royal Navy, where he left as Second Sea Lord.

During his eight-year tenure, Sir Alan has successfully steered the MCA through changes to modernise Her Majesty's Coastguard, new arrangements for the UK's search and rescue helicopter capability, a transformed survey and inspection capability and a more commercially-responsive approach to how the UK Ship Register operates. Sir Alan will continue his role until late 2018, to allow the appointment process for a successor to take place.

Bernadette Kelly, Permanent Secretary of the Department of Transport said: "I want to thank Sir Alan for his leadership of the MCA and his tireless commitment to improving safety at sea for all and supporting the UK's maritime interests. I know that he will continue to make an exemplary contribution to the MCA and its ambitious plans until he leaves his post later this year."

Sir Alan said: "It has been an immense privilege to work for the MCA and serve the public. I am extremely proud of what we have achieved. Whilst this has been a difficult decision for me to make, I feel that now is the right time for a new Chief Executive to bring a fresh perspective, new ideas and initiatives to the Agency. I'm confident that the MCA will continue to successfully deliver its objectives under new leadership. I will continue to lead the MCA with my full commitment and energy until my successor is found and is ready to take over towards the end of this year."

The Department of Transport will launch a competition to recruit a new Chief Executive on Monday 19 March.

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## **News story: Daz beats bullies to lead**

# England's boxers at Commonwealth Games

Sick of unpleasant comments and the threat of violence hanging over him, 10-year-old Daz Chapple took up the contact sport at his local gym in Saltash, Cornwall so he could look after himself.

Now, almost 40 years later, Daz, who is based at Defence, Equipment and Support (DE&S), the government's procurement agency based at MOD Abbey Wood in Bristol, has been selected as Team Leader of Team England.

At the Gold Coast next April he will lead out 12 of the country's most talented amateur boxers, fully expecting them to bring back a haul of medals.

Daz, who lives in Bristol, said:

I came from a tough background, was bullied at school and decided I needed to protect myself.

I saw an advert at my school, which happened to have a national schoolboy champion at the time, and I decided there was no reason I couldn't follow in his footsteps.



Daz recently met the Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson

As soon as he started training, Daz fell in love with the sport and went on

to make several national semi-finals in the 51kg division.

At 18 he joined the RAF as an aerial erector and walked straight into the RAF boxing team.

After being posted to Germany for four years he returned to the UK and to the ring but, such was his love for the sport, soon found himself juggling being a boxer, coach and team manager as well as having to fulfil all his commitments in his role with the Armed Forces.

Daz, who recently met the Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson during a visit to DE&S, said:

The military has been very good to me. I put in a lot of extra hours but there are not many places you can work that would allow you the time or flexibility to be able to do this role.

In 2007 Daz applied successfully for a role of England Boxing Team Manager and is now Director England Boxing, (Director of Talent and Performance and GB Talent Commission).

Over the years Daz has witnessed hundreds of bouts – one of which he particularly remembers.

He said:

I actually managed Tyson Fury's first fight as an amateur which took place in the Officers' mess hall at RAF Wyton in Cambridgeshire. He was so tall and had such a long reach the other guy could not get near him. He was fast too which singled him out. He has done well for himself.





Daz Chapple (left) in a boxing match in his youth

For Daz the single moment that stands out is being given the prestigious appointment of Team Leader and being asked to lead out Team England Boxing at the forthcoming Commonwealth Games.

He said:

It is an absolute honour for me. I have dedicated my life to boxing and to be asked to lead the team out in Australia is incredible. It just doesn't get any better.

We have an incredibly strong team and I believe we will be very successful.

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## **[Press release: PM hosts Business Advisory Council meeting: 15 March](#)**

A Downing Street spokesperson said:

“This afternoon the Prime Minister hosted a further meeting of her Business

Advisory Council at Downing Street.

“The Prime Minister opened the roundtable with a summary of key moments in the past few weeks, including progress in the Brexit negotiations, the Chancellor’s Spring Statement and the Industrial Strategy.

“On the UK’s withdrawal from the EU, the Prime Minister spoke about the need to reach agreement with the EU on the terms of the implementation period ahead of the March European Council next week, which the attendees agreed would be vital in providing certainty to businesses and people across the UK.

“She then reiterated the themes from her Mansion House Speech which set out an ambitious partnership with the EU, one driven by principled practicality rather than ideology. The business leaders welcomed the detail provided in the speech and gave their support.

“The Prime Minister and business leaders also discussed the government’s Industrial Strategy, agreeing on the importance for government and business to work together on all aspects of the plan, particularly investing in the infrastructure and skills needed to support UK productivity growth and the ambition of the government’s “Grand Challenges”.

“The meeting was also attended by the Chancellor of the Exchequer who provided an update on the Spring Statement, the Business Secretary, Greg Clark, who discussed the Industrial Strategy and Brexit Minister, Suella Fernandes, who spoke about Ministerial engagement with European Member States.”

## **Attendees**

Ivan Menezes, CEO, Diageo

Constantin Cotzias, Director of Bloomberg Europe, Bloomberg

António Horta-Osório, CEO, Lloyds Banking Group

Jan du Plessis, Chairman, BT

Moya Greene, CEO, Royal Mail

Sir Charlie Mayfield, CEO, John Lewis Partnership

Ian Davis, Chairman, Rolls Royce

Mike Cherry OBE, National Chairman, FSB

Dr Adam Marshall, DG, BCC

Stephen Phipson CBE, DG, EEF

Carolyn Fairbairn, DG, CBI

Jayne-Anne Gadhia CBE, CEO, Virgin Money plc

Dame Helena, Head of Personal Investing, Legal & General Group plc

Oliver Benzecry, Chairman and Senior Managing Director, Accenture, UK and Ireland

Dame Carolyn McCall, CEO, ITV

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## [Press release: Celeb-led travel trends prompt FCO warning this Easter](#)

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) is warning young Brits following in the footsteps of globe-trotting celebs not to fall foul of lesser-known local laws and customs, which could land them in serious trouble.

New research from the FCO shows that one third of 18 – 24 year olds (33%) will be influenced by celebrities when preparing for their holiday this Easter, with nearly one in three (30%) saying stars inspire their travel destination.

However, many of these destinations have more unusual and surprising rules than UK travellers are used to.

As most young Brits don't have A-listers' concierge support when planning trips abroad, the FCO is urging British people to be aware of local laws and customs in the destinations they are travelling to by reading up on Travel Advice – something that fewer than two fifths of young people (38%) currently do – if they want to avoid getting into trouble abroad.

FCO analysis of ONS data has found a significant increase in Brits travelling further afield than the traditional European trips, often to popular celebrity destinations that have stricter laws and customs than the UK. Visits to Sri Lanka are up more than a fifth (22%) and the UAE up more than a sixth (17%).

Jack White, celeb content director at Now magazine said:

We've all felt the pang of envy that comes from scrolling through a celebrity's luxury holiday snaps on social media, but if you're ever lucky enough to end up in Dubai or St Lucia it's worth remembering different countries have different rules – and sometimes even the stars seem unaware of this.

It's easy to get caught up the moment on holiday, so it's worth researching the local laws beforehand to make sure your dream trip doesn't end in disaster. After all, there's definitely nothing glamorous about ending up behind bars!



The FCO recommends Brits making trips abroad this Easter join the 16 million people a year who check its Travel Advice before they travel. All sorts of local laws and customs are covered in the travel advice, including the 10 listed below:

1. UAE: Swearing and making rude gestures (including online) are considered obscene acts and offenders can be jailed or deported.
2. Thailand: You can't bring vaporisers, such as e-cigarettes, e-baraku or refills into Thailand. These items are likely to be confiscated and you could be fined or sent to prison for up to ten years if convicted.
3. Greece: Indecent behaviour, including mooning, isn't tolerated and could result in arrest and a fine or a prison sentence.
4. Sri Lanka: The mistreatment of Buddhist images and artefacts is a serious offence and tourists have been convicted for this. British nationals have been refused entry to Sri Lanka or faced deportation for having visible tattoos of Buddha. Don't pose for photographs standing in front of a statue of Buddha.
5. Japan: The use or possession of some medicines like Vicks Inhalers or painkillers containing Codeine is banned in Japan and can result in detention and deportation
6. Turkey: It is an offence to insult the Turkish nation or the national flag, or to deface or tear up currency. If you are convicted of any of these offences, you could face a prison sentence of between six months and three years.
7. Caribbean: Many Caribbean countries, such as Barbados, St. Vincent, and St. Lucia ban the wearing of camouflage clothing, including by children.
8. Spain: Causing a forest fire is treated as a criminal offence in Spain even if unintentional.
9. Australia: Australia has strict quarantine rules to keep out pests and diseases that could affect plant, animal and human health. Breaches of quarantine regulations can result in large fines.
10. Ukraine: Smoking and drinking alcoholic drinks in public places (including transport, bus stops, underground crossings, sports and government establishments, playgrounds and parks) is officially banned.

Julia Longbottom, FCO Consular Director said:

It's great to see the British people being inspired to travel to new and exciting places. This makes it all the more important to follow our Travel Advice and respect local laws and customs to avoid unnecessary trouble. For instance, e-cigarettes are banned in Thailand and can result in a prison sentence of up to ten years.

Even in places closer to home, disrespecting local laws can have serious consequences – in Greece indecent behaviour, such as mooning, can be punishable with a fine or even a prison sentence. We see many cases each year of people breaking local laws and customs.

It is important that our travellers understand that the UK Government can't give legal advice or get them out of prison. Instead, we want to do all we can to help British people stay safe when they are travelling, and avoid ending up in these difficult situations.

For more information and to find out about local laws and customs in destinations around the world, visit the [FCO's travel advice pages](#).

## **Further information**

- Follow the Foreign Office on Twitter [@foreignoffice](#) and [Facebook](#)
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