

News story: Royal Marines Future “Secure” in Scotland

From:

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The Defence Secretary said today that the future of the Royal Marines in Scotland is secure.

Sir Michael’s announcement came as he watched a battle demonstration at Arbroath as 45 Commando begin training to play a lead role in NATO’s Very High Readiness Group from 2018. This will see them working and training with allies, and place them at the forefront of an international emergency should any arise.

Defence Secretary, Sir Michael Fallon said:

Our Royal Marines are at the heart of Britain’s global role as we do more to support our NATO allies. Their future in Scotland is secure, with those based at Arbroath deployed on ships all around the world as well as working with our European partners to tackle illegal immigration in the Mediterranean, which helps save lives and keep our United Kingdom safer and more secure.

On the visit, Sir Michael Fallon awarded two Royal Navy ranks serving with 45 Commando their Long Service and Good Conduct Medals (LSGC). Petty Officer (Chef) Ian Dixon and Petty Officer (Medical Assistant) Jamie Jackson received their medals in recognition of having maintained perfect military records for 15 years. The men are originally from Lancashire and Derbyshire.

Earlier this month 45 Commando led 400 of their fellow commandos from the Royal Marines’ three main fighting units into the snow and sub-zero temperatures of the Scottish Highlands as they honed winter warfare skills ahead of deploying to northern Norway. In Scandinavia, the Marines can expect temperatures as low as -30°C, much colder than the -12°C experiences on the slopes of the Highlands.

The other Royal Marine presence in Scotland is 43 Commando who are based at Her Majesty’s Naval Base (HMNB) Clyde where they protect the UK’s independent nuclear deterrent. Both units are part of the Royal Navy’s elite amphibious infantry who are ready to deploy at short notice both at home and overseas.

45 Commando

- In addition to 650 commandos, 45 Commando employs 30 MOD civilians.
- The unit moved to Arbroath and RM Condor in 1971 after spending much of the 1950s and 60s deployed.
- Their 1982 Falklands Campaign saw major action with the capture of Two Sisters Mountain, which shaped modern Commando, mountain and cold weather warfare.
- The Unit deployed to Iraq in 2003 on Operation TELIC 1, and to Afghanistan on various Operation HERRICK deployments in 2006, 2008, 2011 in Sangin, Nad Ali and Helmand Province.

Defence Budget

- The UK is investing £178bn in a decade long equipment programme.
- The UK Defence budget has a “double lock” which ensures that it will rise every year by at least 0.5% annually, above inflation and always exceed 2% of GDP.

UK

- The UK Government is firmly committed to the future of Defence in Scotland and its continued vital role in Defence.
 - Scotland is home to military bases that provide essential capabilities for the Defence of the UK as a whole.
 - By 2020, Scotland will be home to all of the Royal Navy’s submarines, one of the Army’s engagement and resilience Infantry Brigades, one of three RAF fast jet main operating bases and new P8 Poseidon Maritime Patrol Aircraft.
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[News story: Changes to licensing public register bring greater transparency](#)

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Part of:

More of the information provided by consultees in response to marine licence applications is to be published.

From the end of February 2017 the Marine Management Organisation will routinely publish information and documents it receives from advisors, organisations and the wider public in response to marine licence consultations.

The MMO is writing to the affected organisations which provide advice and comment on marine licence applications to explain the development in greater detail and public notices will be amended to make clear to those wishing to make a representation that their comments will be published.

Why additional information is being published

The MMO is not legally required to proactively publish the additional information but is doing so as part of its commitment to openness and transparent decision-making. It already uses [the selected cases section](#) of its website to release information where cases are of significant public interest, or when details have been requested under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and/or the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIRs).

This new approach is also in line with the actions of local planning authorities in relation to land-based developments.

The public register of marine licence applications

Where people or organisations want to carry out development in the marine area they may need prior permission from the Marine Management Organisation under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. Such activities [may include construction, dredging, deposits or removal](#). This consent is referred to [as a marine licence](#).

The [online public register](#) holds details of marine licence applications and relevant documents. It also lists marine licence applications which are open

for public consultation.

[News story: Recruitment drive – Attorney General’s London Panel of Civil Counsel](#)

Applications will soon be open for counsel wishing to join the Attorney General’s London A and B Panels of the Civil Counsel.

This will be a fantastic opportunity for advocates with more than five years experience. Being a panel member gives advocates exposure to some of the most important and high profile cases of the day and the chance to represent the government in various courts including the Supreme Court.

Those interested are encouraged to attend an event on Monday 6 February at the Government Legal Department offices, which will give more information about the application process, and demystify the application process. You will have the chance to hear from the Vice Chairman of the Bar Council, and a current member of the A Panel among others.

Event details

Why apply to the panel counsel and how best to do it

Date: Monday 6 February 2017

Time: 5:30pm

Address: Government Legal Department, One Kemble Street, London, WC2B 4TS

For further information and to reserve a place, please contact Anna Rickard on 020 7210 1506 or email anna.rickard@governmentlegal.gov.uk by 5pm on Friday 3 February 2017.

Background

What is the Panel Counsel?

The Attorney General maintains 5 panels of junior Counsel to undertake civil and EU work for all government departments. He has 3 London Panels (A, B and C), a Regional Panel, and a Public International Law (PIL) Panel.

Who can apply?

This recruitment drive is only for Panel A and B.

Members of the A Panel deal with complex government cases. They will often appear against QC's. Those previously appointed to the A Panel have generally had in excess of 10 years advocacy experience.

Members of the B panel deal with substantial cases but these are not as complex as those handled by the A panel. They will generally be instructed where knowledge and experience of a particular field is required. Those previously appointed to the B panel have generally had between 5 and 10 years advocacy experience.

What do potential candidates have to do?

Anyone considering making an application to join either the A or B Panel should register an expression of interest by emailing

panelcounsel@governmentlegal.gov.uk

The competition opens on Tuesday 21 February 2017. On or after that date everyone who has registered an interest will be sent details of how to access the online application form.

Government response: Government responds to agreement reached between Aslef and GTR

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The Department for Transport welcomes the news of the agreement between Aslef and Southern Rail.

Government responds to agreement reached between Aslef and GTR.

A DfT spokesperson said:

The DfT welcomes the news that an agreement has been reached between Aslef and Southern Rail.

We are grateful to all parties for their efforts to find a positive way forward.

Speech: Greg Hands speech on smart cities

I would like to thank Mark [Prisk] for inviting me here today, and take this opportunity to recognise the important work of the APPG on smart cities.

You are a vital voice in a necessary debate, and I look forward to working with you and your members in my role as Minister of State at the Department for International Trade.

As recently as 20 years ago, the term smart cities would not have registered with most people – myself included!

It would have been incredulous to think of a city where every person could access real time information on where there was a free car parking space; a city where refuse collectors know exactly when your recycling bins are full; and where urban parks are designed to promote biodiversity, reduce CO₂, and give you free wi-fi connection throughout.

But the pace of change has been astonishing.

This is all happening right now!

In London, Manchester, Milton Keynes, and other cities across the UK – services like these are becoming commonplace.

Though using data to understand and ultimately alleviate social problems is nothing new.

In the 19th Century, John Snow created the cholera maps, which located the source of London's cholera epidemic in Soho.

At a similar time, Charles Booth's surveys of working class life in London created the famous poverty maps which etched a street by street depiction of income levels across the capital.

We now live in a world where technology is ubiquitous and the ability to collect and access data is easier than ever before.

We also live in a world of finite resources, coupled with a population set to reach almost 10 billion by 2050, according to the UN.

This presents many challenges but also a golden opportunity to use technology to enhance economic development, sustainability and quality of life for people in urban environments from Manchester to Mumbai.

So, my commitment to you today is simple. The UK will seize this opportunity and this government will pull out all the stops to ensure British business

leads the way in making the cities of the UK and the world smarter.

UK capability

There are 3 ways we will do this. First, we will continue building our domestic capability.

[Innovate UK](#) – the government's innovation agency – has, over the last 5 years, invested nearly £100 million in projects to help our cities prepare for a sustainable future.

£32 million has been spent on the UK's internet of things (IoT) programme, including [Cityverve](#) in Manchester – a smart city demonstrator that will help improve public services for local citizens, such as transport, energy, health and culture.

Bristol and Milton Keynes are internationally recognised as leaders in smart city technology. They are making use of sensors to monitor air pollution levels, energy usage, water consumption, and even living patterns at home to detect early signs of illness.

These examples are testament to the simple truth that open data requires open minds.

We must continue to see technology as a key that unlocks the potential of our cities – making them more responsive to their inhabitants.

Opportunities overseas

Whilst we build our domestic capability around smart cities, we must also be alive to the opportunity overseas, which brings me onto my second point.

Arup estimates that the global market for smart cities could be worth \$400 billion per year by 2020.

The UK has internationally recognised strengths in integrating city-wide systems around transport, energy and security networks; as well as in data and spatial analytics.

Our excellent engineering and architectural firms have already used their urban planning and design expertise to create smart cities around the world.

And standards set by the [British Standards Institute](#), on smart cities and the internet of things, are used the world over.

The possibilities are endless. These exportable capabilities can make the transport infrastructure of world cities more efficient, their healthcare providers more dedicated, and their emergency systems more responsive.

The Department for International Trade's smart cities team will support UK companies in taking advantage of these overseas opportunities, as well as attracting inward investment for UK smart city projects.

The team and I will be in Barcelona for Mobile World Congress, where we will be showcasing British expertise in cloud technology, sensors and artificial intelligence all on the UK stand.

British firms are already thriving abroad.

[Space Syntax](#), our sponsors this evening, are working with [AECOM](#) on designing the growth of Saudi Arabia's port city, Jeddah; over 30 countries have implemented Essex-based [Telensa's](#) smart street lighting technology; and Finnish telecoms giant Nokia is investing in the [Bristol is Open](#) smart city initiative, which is being led by the local council and the University of Bristol.

In November, I accompanied the Prime Minister on her visit to India, where she and Prime Minister Modi announced an Anglo-Indian Partnership on smart cities and urban development, which could unlock £2 billion worth of business.

Running parallel to the visit, my department led a trade mission of UK companies to the India Tech Summit, before taking them onto Pune and Kochi to see the smart city opportunities first hand.

India's ambition to create 100 smart cities provides UK firms with a huge opportunity.

In cities across Asia and Africa, smart cities aren't a 'nice to have', but a social necessity. With India's urban population expected to reach 590 million by 2030, the problems of resource depletion and demographic change are both immediate and acute.

This government will ensure our smart city capability is evolving to meet the needs of urban populations the world over.

Ways of working

My final point on how the UK can continue to lead the world in smart city capability, involves a change in how government and industry work together.

If individual UK companies are already garnering success overseas, imagine what we can achieve with greater levels of co-operation.

I would like to see our urban planners working with our security, transport and e-health specialist companies, so we can present a single UK smart city offer to the world.

This requires a step up in the co-operation between government and industry. A step we should look to take.

For if we are to lead the world in smart cities, our approach too has to be smart.

Conclusion

Before I close, I want to reiterate that the UK can be recognised as the global hub of smart city technology.

We should be bold in our thinking and use our already enviable capability in this area to make the world's cities more sustainable, responsive and smart.

Our aim should be to make people's lives easier and more enjoyable.

Indeed, it was Shakespeare who said, 'What is a city but the people?'

It is an exciting challenge. But one that the UK is more than ready to accept.

Thank you.