

New legal powers to support Armed Forces families and Veterans

- Defence Ministers have backed a new legal Duty that supports Armed Forces personnel, their families and Veterans.
- The Duty, introduced today, puts legal responsibility on local services to embody the Armed Forces Covenant, a key mechanism that helps the UK Armed Forces and Veterans.
- The Covenant itself has existed for more than a decade, has nearly 10,000 signatories, and helps ensure a wide range of support for those who serve their country.

Defence Ministers have backed a stronger legal requirement on local services to support Armed Forces personnel, their families, and the Veterans community.

From today (22 Nov), councils, NHS Trusts and other local bodies across the UK providing services to the Forces community, will be required to adhere to a new legal Duty that reflects the key values of the Armed Forces Covenant.

This means that authorities must now consider how their decision-making impacts upon members of the Armed Forces community. For example, schools should consider if a parent is a member of the Forces community and give due consideration to their requirement for flexible leave depending upon the requirements of their military career.

The services covered include healthcare, housing and education, and the newly appointed Minister responsible for supporting the people of Defence has given his personal backing.

Minister for Defence People, Veterans and Service Families, Dr Andrew Murrison, said:

Armed Forces men and women do extraordinary things and put themselves in the way of danger. We must always do the right thing by them and their families.

Today we build on progress over the past ten years in mainstreaming the Armed Forces Covenant, increasing its legal strength and obliging service providers to make it work.

The introduction of the Covenant 'Duty of Due Regard' further reinforces Defence's unwavering commitment to support our world-class Armed Forces, and their families, as well as those who have served their country previously.

The Duty, which also honours the broader Government commitment to the UK Forces community, was included in the Armed Forces Bill of 2021, enshrining it in law.

In addition to personnel and veterans living in England, the Duty will also apply to those in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, ensuring that all are supported and face no disadvantage, wherever they choose to live.

Draft Legislation: Ship Safety – the Merchant Shipping (Fire Protection) Regulations 2023

The Merchant Shipping (Fire Protection) Regulations 2023 were today (22 November 2022) published as a draft, along with an accompanying draft explanatory memorandum.

The draft regulations revoke and replace the Merchant Shipping (Fire Protection: Large Ships) Regulations 1998 (SI 1998/1012) ('the 1998 regulations'), the Merchant Shipping (Fire Protection) Regulations 2003 (SI 2003/2950) ('the 2003 regulations') and makes other consequential amendments to implement the most up to date requirements of chapter II-2 in the annex to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974 ('the convention'), relating to safety measures for fire protection on ships.

The draft regulations are being published for 28 days. Following the conclusion of this period, and once any observations on the draft regulations have been taken into account, they will be laid for approval by each House of Parliament. This procedure is required under paragraph 14 of schedule 8 to the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 because these regulations revoke an instrument, the 1998 regulations, that was made under section 2(2) of the European Communities Act 1972.

Statutory statements explaining the steps taken to publish the draft regulations and the reasons for the revocation of the provision made by section 2(2) are contained in the annex to the draft explanatory memorandum.

The draft regulations implement requirements for fire protection on ships in chapter II-2 of the annex to the convention, including previously unimplemented requirements to improve fire detection and suppression on cabin balconies for tanker ships to carry an oxygen measuring meter and portable gas detector and other measures.

The updated measures in chapter II are in force internationally, but the measures must also be incorporated into our national legislation to enable them to be enforced effectively, most notably to discourage non-compliance by non-UK flagged ships in UK waters, which would be detrimental to the safety of shipping in UK coastal areas.

The draft regulations will ensure that UK law includes increased safety

standards for fire protection on both UK flagged ships and non-UK flagged ships within the scope of the convention operating in UK waters.

The draft regulations also include an ambulatory reference provision to ensure that future amendments to chapter II-2 referred to in the draft regulations will automatically become UK law when they enter into force internationally.

As described in the accompanying draft explanatory memorandum, a ministerial statement will be provided to both Houses of Parliament ahead of any amendment to chapter II-2 referenced in the draft regulations, prior to it coming into force in UK law by way of the ambulatory reference provision.

The draft regulations and the accompanying draft explanatory memorandum can be found on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

[Authorisation application deadlines for Christmas period 2022](#)

News story

Validation during the Christmas period 2022 for an application for a MA, ManA, WDA, Batch Release, Specific Batch Control and Export Certificate.



Our offices will be closed on Monday 26, Tuesday 27 December and Monday 2 January.

Contact via telephone will be limited during the Christmas period but please continue to send enquiries to postmaster@vmd.gov.uk.

Validation during the Christmas Period 2022

Marketing Authorisation applications

The last validation meeting to discuss applications for new Marketing Authorisations (MAs) will take place on 15 December. New applications to be considered for validation must be received on or before 12 December. Weekly validation meetings will resume from 3 January 2023.

All other applications must be received by 19 December to ensure they are dealt with during the Christmas period. Any applications received after this date will be dealt with from 3 January 2022.

For further information contact the team at s.response@vmd.gov.uk.

Manufacturing and Wholesale Dealer Authorisation applications (new and variations)

The last day for validation of applications for Authorisations for Manufacturers, Blood Banks, Equine Stem Cell Centres and Wholesale Dealers (new and variations) will be on 16 December. To be considered for validation by this date, please ensure that your application reaches us by 12 December. The validation discussions will resume from 3 January 2022.

For further information contact the team at inspections@vmd.gov.uk

Export Certificates

Your application for an export certificate must be received by 16 December to ensure it is dealt with during the Christmas period. Any applications received after this date will be dealt with from 3 January 2022.

For further information contact the team at exportcert@vmd.gov.uk.

Specific Batch Control-PVMP

Your application must be received by 19 December to ensure it is dealt with during the Christmas period. Any applications received after this date will be dealt with from 3 January 2022.

For further information contact the team at s.response@vmd.gov.uk.

Batch Release Requests-IVMP

Your batch release request must be received by 19 December to ensure it is dealt with during the Christmas period. Any requests received after this date will be dealt with from 3 January 2022.

For further information contact batchr@vmd.gov.uk.

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Pupils discuss climate change

News story

Climate change risk was the topic of conversation at a recent discussion between GAD actuaries and pupils at a Merseyside school.



Actuaries from the Government Actuary's Department (GAD) have discussed climate change risk with students from a school in Merseyside.

This was part of GAD's support for the Department for Education's (DfE) Schools Commercial Programme Board.

Climate change risk

The Board met at Rainhill School in Merseyside. Two of GAD's actuaries Matt Kirkpatrick and Sara Joslin joined them for their discussions, with Sara being there on the day.

They spoke to members of the school's 'Eco Committee' about GAD's work to help DfE consider climate change risk within its Risk Protection Arrangement. This is an alternative to commercial insurance for public sector schools.

The day's events were part of wider work which the government is doing as part of its climate and sustainability strategy. GAD has been part of this work by supporting DfE with other climate-change related issues such as, for example, [decarbonising the school estate](#).

Cars caught in floodwater (stock image)

Future improvements

GAD actuary Sara Joslin who attended the school said: “The students asked thought-provoking questions and spoke about their own initiatives to improve their school’s environmental footprint. “It was great to see how engaged the students are on this issue which is so vital for their future.”

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[Reappointments made to the Marine Management Organisation Board](#)

Press release

Peter Judge MBE and David Lyall have been reappointed to the Board of the Marine Management Organisation



**Marine
Management
Organisation**

Environment Secretary Thérèse Coffey has confirmed the reappointment of Peter Judge MBE and David Lyall to the Board of the Marine Management Organisation (MMO).

Peter Judge has been reappointed for four more years until 31 October 2026 and David Lyall has been reappointed for three more years until 31 October 2025. Peter and David were both initially appointed to the MMO on 1 February 2019.

The reappointments have been made in accordance with the Ministerial Governance Code on Public Appointments published by the Cabinet Office. All appointments are made on merit and political activity plays no part in the selection process. Marine Management Organisation Board members receive

remuneration of £11,804 per annum, based on a time commitment of three days per month.

There is a requirement for appointees' political activity (if significant) to be declared. Neither of the re-appointees has declared taking part in any significant political activity in the past five years.

The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) is an Executive Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) established in April 2010 and given powers under the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009. The MMO has a wide range of responsibilities, which include implementing plan-led marine management, licensing marine works and managing UK fishing fleet capacity and UK fisheries quotas.

Biographical details

Peter Judge MBE

- Peter is a solicitor with considerable executive leadership experience, including as Chair of the South Atlantic Environmental Research Institute (SAERI) and Senior Independent Governor of Northumbria University.
- He is also the Group Chief Legal Officer of the Tees Valley Combined Authority and previously held a similar role for the North East Combined Authority.
- Previously, Peter was the Attorney General of the British Overseas Territories of the Falkland Islands, South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands from 2014 to 2017.
- He was awarded an MBE for services to Economic Development and the North East region in 2012.

David Lyall

- David is the Chair of Trustees at the Action Foundation and is part of the Senior Leadership Team at City Church, Newcastle.
- David is also a Board member of North Star Housing Association.
- He is the former Chief Information Officer at Homes England, part of the Homes and Communities Agency.

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