

UKEF support helps secure £10 million worth of orders for Welsh tech exporter

About the transaction: Excelerate

Region	Cardiff
Sector	Technology – emergency services
Project location	Qatar
UKEF support	Export working capital

Cardiff-based tech company, Excelerate, specialises in providing major incident ground technology for emergency service customers around the world.

When the company secured an order to supply multiple incident command vehicles to Qatar, Excelerate turned to UKEF for support. The company spoke to UKEF's export finance manager for Wales, Christian Syme, who arranged a working capital loan with Barclays.

Once Excelerate received the loan, they successfully completed the order and managed to retain the funds it needed to grow. With the company's exports increasing significantly year on year, Excelerate expects that exporting will eventually be responsible for over 90% of its business.

David Savage, Group Chairman & Chief Executive said:

Businesses who want to export need to know that they have right finance in place, particularly with long sales and fulfilment cycles such as ours. UKEF's support means we can afford to pay our supply chain and manage cash flow while continuing to grow the business. I am delighted with the performance Internationally with both UKEF and Barclays.

Amy Wilson, Trade Director, Barclays, said:

The success of Excelerate demonstrates how Barclays' partnership with UKEF can play such a vital role for exciting companies such as this looking to secure overseas buyers for their goods and services. We're proud to continue working with the UK government, and in doing so helping clients access export finance facilities in support of their growth ambitions, quickly and efficiently.

Putting the right finance and insurance in place can give you the exporting edge, helping you to win contracts, fulfil orders and get paid.

[Landmark Pension Schemes Bill proceeds to House of Commons](#)

The landmark Pension Schemes Bill, bolstering protections for savers and furthering the government's progress towards net zero greenhouse gas emissions, has cleared its first hurdle in the House of Lords.

The Bill will be taken through the House of Commons later this year.

A headline measure in the Bill is mandating pension schemes to adopt and report against the recommendations of the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD).

This will ensure occupational pension schemes take climate change into account as both a risk and an opportunity, and compel trustees to disclose how they have done so to their members and the public.

Recent government amendments to the Bill take this further, adding a requirement for schemes to take the government's net zero targets into account, as well as the Paris Agreement goals of limiting the rise of average global temperatures, for the purposes of managing their own climate risk.

Minister for Pensions and Financial Inclusion, Guy Opperman said:

With this Bill, we're pushing ahead with our innovative and ambitious pensions agenda, one that delivers for the record numbers of people saving for retirement.

This government has already taken a leading global role in tackling climate change and cutting emissions. The measures introduced through this Bill will help towards protecting the planet and contribute to long-term member outcomes.

The Pension Schemes Bill is a milestone in bringing pensions into the digital age. I am looking forward to guiding it through the House of Commons.

Through the introduction of pension dashboards and steps to protect savers from scams by tightening the rules and guidance required around transfers, the Bill will advance the government's goal of ensuring that savers are provided with the necessary support and information they need to make informed choices about their financial futures.

It will strengthen protections for pension savers by extending the Pensions Regulator's sanctions regime, introducing the power to issue civil penalties of up to £1 million and three new criminal offences, including a new sentence of up to seven years in prison for bosses who run pension schemes into the ground or plunder them to line their own pockets.

These new measures will deter employers from making reckless decisions with their defined benefit schemes and strengthen the Regulator's powers to take efficient and timely actions to protect members' pension pots.

The Bill will also legislate for the creation of a new style of pension scheme. Collective Defined Contribution (CDC) schemes have the potential to increase returns for millions, while being more sustainable for workers and employers.

These details are:

- The Pension Schemes Bill was introduced into the House of Lords on 7 January 2020
- It completed its passage through the House of Lords on 15 July 2020 (today) and will now be introduced into the House of Commons
- We anticipate second reading to be scheduled in due course

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Information latest information on coronavirus (COVID-19) Action extra funding for free school meals in further education (FE) Action new subcontractor declaration window – including nil returns Reminder closing date for 16 to 19 Bursary Fund COVID-19 business cases Information update to apprenticeships COVID-19 guidance Information updated apprenticeship funding policy Information updated apprenticeship funding rules Information raising on the number of reservations from 3 to 10 on the apprenticeship service Information revised deadline for providing external assurance on subcontracting controls – return of assurance certificate for 2019 to 2020 Information funding paid and retained for subcontractors Information the National Careers Service Virtual Jobs Fair returns Information new support offer for 16 to 17 year olds from the National Citizen Service

UN Human Rights Council 44: Interactive Dialogue on the High Commissioner's Report on Venezuela

Thank you, Madame President.

We welcome the High Commissioner's work on the human rights situation in Venezuela. We urge the Maduro regime to follow all recommendations and facilitate the establishment of an OHCHR office in Venezuela.

Our deep concern about the political, human rights and humanitarian situation remains. The degraded justice system is used as a weapon to imprison and intimidate as well as to strip political rights from the National Assembly and any opposition to Maduro. The Defence Minister declared on 5 July that the military would never allow any opposition to gain power in Venezuela. The report details continued systematic violations of human rights by Venezuelan police, pro-government civil armed groups, security services and military intelligence bodies. We urge the Maduro regime to dismantle the FAES Special Police, suspected of extrajudicial killings, and to guarantee victims access to justice.

The World Food Programme assesses that one in three Venezuelans is food insecure. This has been caused by hyperinflation, food scarcity and a failure in public services, which all pre-date the sanctions to which the country is now subject. With the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbating the humanitarian crisis, what steps does the High Commissioner think are needed to ensure unimpeded access for all humanitarian actors, and to facilitate the work of non-governmental organisations?

Government bans old coach, bus and lorry tyres from roads in new measures to improve road safety

News story

Tyres aged 10 years and older will be banned.

Improving Road Safety

Tyres aged 10 years and older will be banned from lorries, buses and coaches on roads in England, Scotland and Wales.



- tyres aged 10 years and older to be banned to help improve road safety
- clearly visible date of manufacture mandatory on each tyre, ensuring older tyres are easy to spot
- latest action follows years of work by the government and determined efforts of campaigners

Tyres aged 10 years and older will be banned from lorries, buses and coaches on roads in England, Scotland and Wales in a boost to road safety, Roads Minister Baroness Vere announced today (15 July 2020).

The ban follows an extensive investigation, including [research](#) commissioned by the Department for Transport, which indicates ageing tyres suffer corrosion which could cause them to fail.

The move will make it illegal to fit tyres aged 10 years or older to the front wheels of lorries, buses and coaches, and all wheels of minibuses.

The secondary legislation will be laid in the autumn and will also apply to re-treaded tyres – with the date of re-treading to be marked – making the age of the tyre clearly visible.

Roads Minister Baroness Vere said:

In the same way that you wouldn't drive a car with faulty brakes, ensuring your tyres are fit for purpose is crucial in making every journey safer.

Taking this step will give drivers across the country confidence their lorries, buses and coaches are truly fit for use – a safety boost for road users everywhere.

This change is in no small way the result of years of campaigning, particularly from Frances Molloy, to whom I thank and pay tribute.

Frances Molloy's son Michael died in a coach crash in 2012 when the vehicle had a 19-year-old tyre fitted to the front axle. Since the accident, Mrs Molloy has campaigned to see the law changed.

Drivers, owners and operators are responsible for the safety of their vehicles. This will also now include ensuring vehicle tyres meet the new

requirements. The government will also be asking DVSA to continue checking tyre age as part of their routine roadside enforcement activities and adding an additional assessment to the annual test scheme (MOT test).

Today's announcement is the latest step taken to improve road safety, following the launch last year of the [Road Safety Statement](#) and two-year action plan, which set out more than 70 measures to reduce the number of people killed or injured on roads around the country.

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