

GAD helps with modelling and analysis in 'test and trace'

News story

Experts from GAD have been using their analytical skills to support the NHS's 'test and trace' programme.



The Government Actuary's Department (GAD) continues to use its skills to support clients during the coronavirus pandemic.

Under the government's Civil Service COVID redeployment programme, two people from GAD are using their analytical expertise to support the new [NHS test and trace service](#). This ensures quick testing and helps facilitate fast identification of close recent contacts of people who've tested positive.

Modelling and analysis

Effective modelling and analysis will be vital to the success of all areas of the programme. Modelling can be used to assess operational needs such as future demand for tests and contact tracers. It can also be used to ensure early detection of local outbreaks and support policy decisions.

The data and analytics team is responsible for maintaining a single source for data across the programme and providing system-level modelling and analysis.

Data science

Reflecting on his contribution to the project, actuary Rich Haines said: "We provide modelling on policy questions and the work is incredibly fast paced. Everyone's drive to ensure the success of the programme is palpable as the scheme gets into its stride. There's further hard work ahead, but I can't wait to see what the coming months will hold!"

Trainee actuary Comfort Ajoku added: "The NHS test and trace team consists of

a varied mix of individuals from both within government and outside, including analysts, data scientists and data engineers. I'm working in the data and analytics team where we model the need for test kits, contact tracers and people in isolation.

"Working in NHS test and trace is a great opportunity for me to use my skills in the fight against coronavirus and to help any way I could."

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[Appointment of 3 Commissioners and the reappointment of 5 Commissioners to the Judicial Appointments Commission](#)

The appointment of the three Commissioners and reappointment of five Commissioners to the Judicial Appointments Commission (JAC), are each for a term of 3 years. Details of the appointees and their start dates are below.

Appointments:

- Judge Greg Sinfield as a Senior Judicial Commissioner whose appointment commenced on 9 June 2020;
- Rt. Rev. Dr Barry Morgan as the Lay Commissioner with responsibility for Welsh matters; and
- Christa Christensen as the Judicial (Tribunal Judge) Commissioner.

Both Dr Morgan and Judge Christensen commenced their roles on 6 July 2020

The following Commissioners have been reappointment whose tenures will commence on 1 September 2020:

- Mathangi Asokan (District Judge), Judicial Commissioner;
- Emir Feisal (non-legal judicial), Judicial Commissioner;
- Jane Furniss, Lay Commissioner;
- Andrew Kennon, Lay Commissioner; and
- Sir Simon Wessely, Lay Commissioner.

JAC is an independent body that selects candidates for judicial office in courts and tribunals in England and Wales, and for some tribunals with UK-wide jurisdiction. Candidates are selected on merit, through fair and open competition.

JAC Commissioners are appointed, under Schedule 12(1) of the Constitutional Reform Act 2005, by Her Majesty the Queen on the recommendation of the Lord Chancellor.

Commissioner appointments and re-appointments to the JAC comply with the Governance Code on Public Appointments and are regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

Senior Judicial Commissioners are regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments in accordance with Regulation 10 and 11 of the Judicial Appointments Regulations 2013.

Biographies

New Appointments

Greg Sinfield – Senior Judicial Commissioner:

Greg was appointed as President of the First-tier Tribunal (Tax Chamber) in October 2017.

Greg was called to the Bar in 1981. Between 1983 and 1987, Greg worked in the Solicitor's Office of HM Customs and Excise. He returned to private practice in 1988 with a firm of solicitors now known as Hogan Lovells International. He was admitted as a solicitor in 1989 and became a partner in the tax group of the firm in 1993.

Greg was appointed as a salaried Judge of the Upper Tribunal, assigned to the Tax and Chancery Chamber, in February 2012 and regularly sat in the First-tier Tribunal as well.

Christa Christensen – Judicial (Tribunal Judge) Commissioner:

Christa was appointed as a fee paid Employment Judge in 1995. She became a salaried Employment Judge in 2003, assigned to sit in the Employment Tribunal in Exeter and then Bristol. She was Director of Training for Tribunals for the Judicial College, Editor of the Tribunals Journal between 2016 and 2020 and Deputy Director of Training for the Employment Tribunals (E&W) between 2009 and 2016.

Christa continues to sit as an Employment Judge and was also assigned to sit in the Mental Health Tribunal in the Health, Education and Social Care Chamber in 2020.

Christa qualified as a solicitor in 1984 and specialised in company and commercial work. She combined work in private practice and as a lecturer at the University of Bristol and the University of the West of England until her appointment as a salaried judge in 2003.

Rt. Rev. Dr Barry Morgan – Lay Commissioner with responsibility for Welsh matters:

Barry is a Welsh Anglican Bishop and academic from Neath in Wales. He held both parish and university posts before becoming Bishop of Bangor in 1993, Llandaff in 1999 and was Archbishop of Wales from 2003 – 2017. During his time in office it became possible for women to be ordained as priests and bishops, and for prayers to be offered for same sex couples in public

services in the Church in Wales

As well as being Pro Chancellor of the University of Wales, Barry is a Fellow of five Welsh Universities, a Fellow of the Learned Society of Wales and a Knight of the Order of St. John. He has published a number of articles in books and journals, as well as a book on the poetry of R S Thomas. Barry also chaired a Commission on Homelessness in Wales in 2007 on behalf of Shelter Cymru.

Reappointments

Mathangi Asokan – Judicial (District Judge) Commissioner:

Mathu started her career as a solicitor, progressing quickly to partner and to head the defendant insurance department at her firm. She was appointed a Deputy District Judge in 1999 and combined sitting days with a busy practice until her appointment to the Bench in 2002. Mathu sits full-time at Birmingham Civil Justice Centre and deals with children and Court of Protection cases. Her roles have included Diversity and Community Relations Judge for the West Midlands area and Family and Children Tutor Judge for the Judicial College. Mathu was also a committee member of the UK Association of Women Judges since its inception and remained so for a period of 12 years.

Emir Khan Feisal – Judicial (non-legal) Commissioner:

Emir is a chartered accountant, specialising in transformational change and has been a magistrate since 2005. Most of his career was spent at The Sunday Times as Associate Managing Editor, where he was responsible for the organisation's finances.

Emir is a board member of the Serious Fraud Office, Audit Chair of the Lambeth Clinical Commissioning Group, the Honours Committee, The Queen's Award for Voluntary Services, and is a Trustee of The Henry Smith Charity. He sits on appeals at the Crown Court, and was previously a lay member of the Council of the Inns of Court and of the Bar Tribunal Adjudication Service.

Jane Furniss CBE – Lay Commissioner:

Jane is a Trustee of the leadership college, Cumberland Lodge, and provides mentoring support and advice to chairs and senior executives through Critical Eye. Jane also chairs the Capital Appeal Board for Overgate Hospice in West Yorkshire. She was a non-executive director on the Board of the National Crime Agency until March 2019, and was Senior Independent Director of the Solicitors Regulation Authority until December 2017.

Until 2013, Jane was Chief Executive of the Independent Police Complaints Commission. She was Deputy Chair of homelessness charity Crisis from 2005 to 2016. Earlier in her career, she held senior roles in HM Inspectorate of Probation and the probation service and as a Director-General at the Home Office where she led a strategic change programme to reform the way the criminal justice system works.

Andrew Kennon – Lay Commissioner:

Andrew worked for 39 years as a Clerk in the House of Commons, retiring in 2017 after five years as Clerk of Committees. He has advised on governance and constitutional law, and has written and lectured on parliamentary and constitutional issues throughout his career. He has worked on all aspects of parliamentary reform and was closely involved in the internal governance of the House of Commons.

Sir Simon Wessely – Lay Commissioner:

Sir Simon is Regius Professor of Psychiatry at the Institute of Psychiatry and Neuroscience at King's College London. He is an honorary consultant Psychiatrist at King's College Hospital and the Maudsley Hospital, a civilian consultant advisor in psychiatry to the British Army and Director of the King's Centre for Military Health Research. He is President of the Royal Society of Medicine and a former President of the Royal College of Psychiatrists. Simon is also a Trustee of Combat Stress and has campaigned to improve the understanding and image of mental health. He was awarded a knighthood for services to military healthcare and to psychological medicine.

[The Secretary of State has reappointed Mel Young as the Scotland Member of UK Sport.](#)

News story

Mel Young has been reappointed by the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport as the Scottish Member of UK Sport for three years from 1 December 2020 to 30 November 2023.



Mel Young is the president and co-founder of the Homeless World Cup, an organisation established to use sport as a mechanism to create change. He is

a globally recognised social entrepreneur who co-founded The Big Issue in Scotland in 1993, the International Network of Street Papers (INSP) in 1995 and Social Entrepreneurs Network Scotland (Senscot) in 1999.

This role is remunerated at £218 per day. This reappointment has been made in accordance with the [Cabinet Office's Governance Code on Public Appointments](#), the process is regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments. The Government's Governance Code requires that any significant political activity undertaken by an appointee in the last five years is declared. This is defined as holding office, public speaking, making a recordable donation or candidature for election. Mr Young has not declared any activity.

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[Negotiations on the UK's future trading relationship with Australia: Update](#)

News story

Trade negotiators from the UK and Australia held the first round of negotiations for a UK-Australia Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between 29 June and 10 July 2020.



We are now one step closer to an ambitious, wide-ranging free trade agreement with one of our oldest friends. An FTA with Australia can bring investment, better jobs, higher wages and lower prices just when we need them the most.

Both teams of negotiators recognised the unprecedented circumstances we find ourselves in and reiterated that more global trade is essential to support post-Covid economic recovery.

Negotiations were conducted virtually and covered discussions on all areas of a comprehensive trade agreement. The discussions covered the following areas:

- Anti-Corruption and Transparency
- Competition
- Cross-cutting general provisions
- Customs
- Digital/e-commerce
- Environment
- Financial Services
- Trade in Goods and Trade Remedies
- Good Regulatory Practice
- Intellectual Property
- Investment
- Labour
- Procurement
- Rules of Origin
- Services, including Movement of Natural Persons and Professional Business Services
- Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
- State Owned Enterprises
- Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures
- State to State Dispute Settlement
- Technical Barriers to Trade
- Telecommunications

We also had positive exploratory discussions on Clean Growth, Development, Women's Economic Empowerment, and Innovation.

Discussions between negotiators were productive and reflected our shared ambition to secure a comprehensive deal to boost trade and investment between our like-minded economies.

Teams discussed their respective objectives and agreed a forward plan for future talks. Our positive discussions in round one have laid the groundwork for the UK and Australia to achieve high-quality outcomes across the agreement.

The UK and Australia are aligned in many areas which will enable us to make quick progress across many chapters. In discussions, both countries emphasised a desire to be particularly ambitious in areas including services, digital trade and in supporting Small and Medium-sized Enterprises to benefit from the opportunities that increased trade provide.

The Government is committed to negotiating a comprehensive agreement with Australia and we look forward to making further progress. We will explore the option of face-to-face negotiations when it is safe to do so. The Government will make its next statement on progress following the second round of talks, currently planned for September.

£11 billion boost for taxpayers facing difficulty due to coronavirus (COVID-19)

Anyone who has difficulty paying their second 2019 to 2020 Self Assessment payment on account can take advantage of automatically deferring the payment until 31 January 2021, HMRC is reminding taxpayers.

The second Self Assessment payment on account for 2019 to 2020 is ordinarily due at the end of July, but the government previously announced it is supporting the self-employed and others by allowing them to defer this payment.

This option to defer is on top of additional support for the self-employed through £7.8 billion in grants paid through the Self Employment Income Support Scheme.

The payment on account deferral will give immediate support to businesses and individuals by keeping cash at their disposal during this extraordinary time of uncertainty.

To make this as hassle-free as possible customers will not need to contact HMRC to defer their payment on account – they opt into the deferral by simply not paying their tax bill due by 31 July 2020.

If no payment is received, HMRC will automatically update their systems to show payment has been deferred and no interest or penalties will be incurred, providing it is paid in full by 31 January 2021.

The only action customers may need to take is to cancel their direct debit if they have one set up for their payments on account.

Angela MacDonald, HMRC's Director General of Customer Services, said:

We want to support taxpayers as much as possible as they face uncertainty and difficult circumstances. That's why we want to remind those who may struggle to pay a tax bill right now that they have the option to defer their Self Assessment payment.

They don't need to do anything to take advantage of this deferral. By simply not paying, HMRC will know they have deferred and we will do the rest.

A projected estimate based on 2019 to 2020 Self Assessment receipts suggests that the July payment deferral will provide up to a £11.8 billion cash flow

boost to taxpayers. Around 2.7 million taxpayers are eligible for deferral.

Self Assessment taxpayers should think carefully about whether deferral is right for them. It's important to remember that the deferred amount will be due on 31 January 2021, the same date that any 2019 to 2020 balancing payment and first 2020 to 2021 payment on account will be due. This could mean 3 separate payments are due all at once.

They may wish to contact HMRC about paying these combined amounts in installments if they have difficulty in paying them all in full at once.

Payments on account are payable by Self Assessment taxpayers by 31 January and 31 July each year, unless:

- their last Self Assessment tax bill was less than £1,000
- they have already paid more than 80% of all the tax they owe at source, for example through their [tax code](#).

Each payment on account is estimated, based on 50% of the previous year's Self Assessment tax bill and they are advance payments towards the current year's tax bill.

[Guidance on deferring your Self Assessment payment on account](#) is available on GOV.UK.

Payments on account include Income Tax, Class 4 National Insurance contributions where applicable, but not student loan repayments or Capital Gains Tax.

The July 2020 payment on account deferral applies to all those businesses and individuals who have registered for Self Assessment and who make payments on account – no sectors or businesses are excluded from applying the deferral.