

£26.7 million engine support contract for Oxfordshire company

News story

A £26.7 million contract has been awarded to supply and maintain outboard and inboard motors fitted to the MOD's small boats fleet.



Two of the craft covered under the £26.7 million contract. Crown copyright.

Oxfordshire-based EP Barrus secured the seven-year contract for the upkeep, update and supply of engines fitted to more than 1,100 craft.

The contract covers boats within the current MOD in-service fleet for craft under 25m, including Rigid Inflatable Boats (RIBs), the Mexeflote landing-raft system powered by the Thrustmaster propulsion unit, workboats, and planned future craft.

Defence Minister Jeremy Quin said:

Our maritime industry continues to grow from strength to strength. This contract will secure an essential capability for our Armed Forces and support over 40 quality engineering jobs in Bicester plus many more throughout the UK.

The contract will support operations in the UK and overseas involving the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, British Army, Ministry of Defence Police, and Cadets.

The contract will directly support 40 jobs within Barrus's Engineering Centre, as well as a further 80 jobs across the UK supply chain that will benefit from the contract. In addition, this contract secures EP Barrus's graduate programme in Oxfordshire and the future roles for its young engineering students.

James Melia, Project Manager for DE&S Boats Team, said:

Boats are an essential capability of the UK Armed Forces and are used for many different operations around the world ensuring that our Navy has the reach it needs to protect our interests around the globe.

We are committed to ensuring that engines are effectively managed through every stage of their life cycle and our partnership with EP Barrus will provide critical support to this.

DE&S is proud to maintain excellent working relationships with EP Barrus, a valued industry supplier and we look forward to continuing to work together to support our front line with the equipment they need while also maintaining vital British skills and jobs.

Published 17 June 2020

[Change of Her Majesty's Ambassador to Georgia: August 2020](#)

Press release

Mr Mark Clayton has been appointed Her Majesty's Ambassador to Georgia in succession to Mr Justin McKenzie Smith.



Mr Mark Clayton has been appointed Her Majesty's Ambassador to Georgia in succession to Mr Justin McKenzie Smith who will be transferring to another Diplomatic Service appointment. Mr Clayton will take up his appointment during August 2020.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Full name: Mark Clayton

Married to: Helen King

Children: Two

2018 to present	Cabinet Office, Deputy Director, European Security and Defence
2017 to 2018	Moscow, Minister Counsellor (Political), and FC0, Eastern Europe and Central Asia Directorate
2014 to 2017	Dhaka, Deputy High Commissioner
2010 to 2014	FC0, Deputy Head, Counter-Terrorism Department
2008 to 2010	Home Office, Head, International Team, Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism
2005 to 2007	FC0, Head, G8 Team
2004 to 2005	FC0, Head, EU-Former Soviet Union relations Team
2003 to 2004	Kabul, Head, Counter Narcotics Team
1998 to 2002	Moscow, Second Secretary (Foreign Policy)
1997 to 1998	FC0, Desk Officer, Baltic States

Further information

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[Health and Social Care Secretary's statement on coronavirus \(COVID-19\): 11 June 2020](#)

Good afternoon and welcome back to Downing Street for the daily coronavirus briefing.

I am delighted to be joined by the Baroness Dido Harding, the executive chair of NHS test and trace. Before we turn to test and trace let's go through the daily slides. If we have the first slide, please.

This slide shows testing and the number of new confirmed cases of coronavirus.

And the figures show that as of yesterday there were 197,007 tests, bringing the total number of tests that have been done in this country to more than 6,240,801.

And the number of confirmed cases as of yesterday was 1,266, bringing the total number of confirmed positive test results to 291,409.

And you can see that despite the vast increase in the number of tests that have been carried out, the number of positive cases continues to fall, and has been falling on that 7-day rolling average, a little bit up from the very low figure yesterday of 1,003, but nevertheless continuing overall to fall.

Next slide, please. This matches the data from hospitals, which shows that the number of new admissions with COVID-19, excluding Scotland, was 462 on the 8 June and this is down from 658 a week earlier on the first of June and down from a peak of over 3,000 in late March.

Likewise, the number of those people on ventilator beds, mechanical ventilators, is down to 440. Down from 604 a week ago, and again, that was over 3,000 at the peak so it's very good progress to see both of those numbers continuing to fall over recent days.

If we turn now to the next slide, which shows the regional breakdown. Again, as it has throughout this crisis, this shows that the shape is broadly the same in most regions of the country and the downward trend persists everywhere, which is obviously very good news.

If we turn now to the number of deaths, the final slide. The latest figures show that yesterday 151 people died with coronavirus, that's the reported number, bringing the total to 41,279.

Again, we can see this downward trend continues to come down and in fact the number of deaths over the past week is the lowest since the week ending on the 28 of March and this is good progress but clearly, clearly there is more to do.

And these data show that this virus is in retreat.

In summary, we're working through our plan and the plan is working and that means we're able to restore some of the freedoms that people hold so dear.

And from the beginning of lockdown the challenge has been not just how to get the virus under control but how then to be able to ease the lockdown measures.

I was really delighted by the announcement that the Prime Minister was able to make yesterday, allowing these bubbles so that single parents or those who live alone will be able to form a support bubble with one other household.

I think this is a big step forward. It's very difficult to imagine the impact if you haven't lived on your own for 12 weeks and so I'm really pleased that we've been able to restore that human contact and the support that so many have been missing.

And I know the Prime Minister's announcement has given such hope and comfort to so many and I'm really pleased at the very positive reception that it's got.

To help us take more measures to come out of lockdown of course, the Prime Minister tasked Dido and I with delivering a test and trace system.

Testing for the virus and tracing how it's spread is critical to containing it locally so that we can ease the national lockdown.

And it's by isolating the virus that we can control it and we can stop it spreading through our communities.

In this plan to lift lockdown test and trace is our radar if you like: it helps us identify where the virus is and trace how it's spreading through the community.

And you have your part to play.

If you have symptoms, you must immediately self-isolate and get a test. It's easy to get a test on NHS.UK or by dialling 119.

If you test positive you must work with NHS test and trace to identify who you've been in close contact with and if you are asked by NHS test and trace to isolate, you must do so to break the chain of transmission and to stop the spread of the virus.

I would even go so far as to say that participation with NHS test and trace is your civic duty.

Please, do it to protect your loved ones, do it to protect your community, do it to protect the nation, and do it to protect the NHS.

Today we're able to publish some of the initial statistics about the first week of operation of NHS test and trace.

Baroness Harding will take as through these figures in a moment, but I just wanted to put them in a bit of context. They paint a positive picture as we will see when we go through the figures.

Firstly, remember that they represent just the first 7 days of this service and yet it's already had a huge impact. The system is working well and as we both said at the start, we will keep improving it.

It will keep getting better and I think you'll see from these figures why we are confident that it will be world class.

And I'm also delighted to say we still have spare capacity, and long may it remain so. This is a good thing. It's a sign of the team's success.

And I just want to take this moment before I hand over, on behalf of us all, to thank Dido and her team, to thank the army of contact tracers, thank you, to thank the NHS and Public Health England who are playing such an important role, to thank the private companies without whom this would be impossible, including Boots and Amazon and Serco and Sitel.

And finally, I want to thank you for your participation. It is brilliant that

the vast majority of people have done their civic duty.

And as we work through our plan and as we keep driving this virus down let us maintain that spirit and fortitude that has helped us throughout this pandemic.

And that of course includes not attending large gatherings, including demonstrations, of more than 6 people.

Now, I understand that people want to show their passion for a cause they care deeply about but this is a virus that thrives on social contact, regardless of what your cause may be.

So please, for the safety of your loved ones, stay alert, control the virus and save lives. I am now going to hand over to Baroness Harding to take us all through the test and trace statistics.

Statement on launch of Australia-UK FTA

Today we are very pleased to announce the launch of free trade agreement (FTA) negotiations between Australia and the United Kingdom. An FTA between our two nations, close allies with deep historical and people-to-people ties, will support the economic recovery from COVID-19 and take our bilateral trade and investment relationship to the next level.

The FTA will be ambitious and comprehensive. It will contribute to economic growth and job creation, drive increased two-way trade in goods and services worth £18.1bn in 2019, and encourage two-way investment. The UK was the second largest direct investor in Australia and the second largest recipient of Australian Foreign Direct Investment in 2019. UK FDI in Australia was £35.6bn and Australian FDI in UK was £15.9bn in 2018. It will be a modern agreement with best-practice trade rules on emerging and increasingly important issues, including digital trade and innovation, and will include outcomes that benefit the small and medium-sized enterprises who already sell goods and services between our countries, as well as encouraging more to do so.

In responding to the impact of COVID-19, it is more important than ever to support open trading arrangements based on global trading rules that underpin mutual growth and prosperity. Increased protectionism can only hinder the world's recovery from COVID-19, slowing the necessary return of economic and employment growth. We will continue to work closely in multilateral fora including the G20, the Commonwealth and the WTO. The Australia-UK FTA is a top priority and will be an important part of our post-COVID strategies, making it easier for businesses to export, and access goods, services and

capital to fuel economic recovery.

Minister Birmingham said:

The Australian Government looks forward to negotiating an ambitious and comprehensive free trade agreement with the United Kingdom, a close friend and an important trading partner.

We will pursue a deal that opens up new opportunities for our farmers, businesses and consumers, supports job creation and strengthens our economies as we recover from the impacts of COVID-19.

As like-minded champions of free trade, the FTA will also signal our shared commitment to global trade liberalisation and the rules that underpin it.

International Trade Secretary Liz Truss said:

This is a chance for both our nations to make history. Despite our long friendship and the common values that unite us, our two great countries have never before had a free trade agreement. That can change now the UK has left the EU and become an independent trading nation once again.

An ambitious, wide-ranging deal will renew and strengthen our bond of friendship, help bring greater prosperity to our peoples, and send a clear signal to the rest of the world that like-minded democracies are prepared to stand up for free trade and the rules underpinning international trade.

Increasing trade will strengthen our supply chains and create new opportunities for our businesses recovering from the economic impact of COVID-19. The FTA will serve as a framework for an even closer economic partnership as the UK seeks to strengthen its engagement in the Indo-Pacific region. Together, the UK and Australia will promote a liberal free trading agenda that helps maintain an environment for long-term prosperity. To that end, Australia, as a member of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), welcomes the UK's intention to join this group of committed free trading nations. Collectively CPTPP members represented 13% of global GDP in 2018. The UK is determined to turbocharge its economic activity through membership.

In these challenging times, we are all looking for new ways to continue to

work and communicate with each other. The first round of negotiations will begin on 29 June in a virtual format. We will work flexibly and creatively to conclude a high-quality agreement as quickly as possible, consulting closely with all interested stakeholders. We remain committed to upholding our high health, environmental, labour, food safety and animal welfare standards in these FTA discussions.

Alongside negotiations, we will also explore ways to build on our deep and historic people-to-people links to ensure the benefits of deeper Australia-UK economic cooperation are distributed as widely as possible.

The Australian FTA negotiating team will be led by Elisabeth Bowes, Chief Negotiator, Regional Trade Agreements Division, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade; and the UK negotiating team will be led by Vivien Life, Director, Asia & Australasia Negotiations Directorate, UK Department for International Trade.

[Liz Truss kick-starts trade negotiations with Australia and New Zealand](#)

The UK has today (Wednesday 17 June) published its negotiating objectives for free trade agreements (FTAs) with Australia and New Zealand, with talks for each agreement beginning shortly.

The UK, Australia and New Zealand are already important economic partners. UK businesses traded a significant £21bn worth of goods and services in total with both countries last year.

Drinks companies, the automotive industry and professional services firms are among those expected to benefit from removing barriers to trade with Australia and New Zealand.

Government analysis published today shows that the value of UK exports to the two countries could increase by around £1 billion as a result of the deals. Expanding free and open trade in this way is essential to helping businesses and the whole of the UK overcome the economic challenge of Coronavirus.

Trade agreements with Australia and New Zealand will help boost our economic recovery by opening up new markets for businesses, creating jobs and supporting a range of industries across the UK. In the long term, UK workers' wages could increase by £400m and £200m respectively, while consumers are expected to benefit from a greater choice of goods and lower prices.

Opportunities for UK businesses include additional access for UK services and

investment, the removal of tariffs and other barriers to trade, and the chance to shape the future of digital trade.

Both agreements will include chapters on digital trade to maximise opportunities for businesses to trade digitally. They will also include dedicated SME chapters to help more small businesses to sell their goods and services to Australia and New Zealand for the first time.

These talks are also a logical step towards membership of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), one of the world's largest free trade areas accounting for 13% of global GDP in 2018.

The Government has today reaffirmed its interest in joining the group and is stepping up engagement with its members. UK membership would increase and diversify the UK's £110 billion trade relationship with its members and create opportunities in the world's most dynamic economies. Both Australia and New Zealand support the UK joining CPTPP, and trade agreements with them could facilitate the UK's accession.

International Trade Secretary Liz Truss said:

Our new-found status as an independent trading nation will enable us to strengthen ties with countries around the world.

Ambitious, wide-ranging free trade agreements with old friends like Australia and New Zealand are a powerful way for us to do that and make good on the promise of Brexit.

Pivoting towards the Asia-Pacific will diversify our trade, increase the resilience of our supply chains and ensure the UK is less vulnerable to political and economic shocks in certain parts of the world.

Stephen Phipson, CEO of Make UK, commenting on the start of trade negotiations with New Zealand and Australia, said:

New trade opportunities and an emphasis on digital trade to boost business as we come out of the current COVID crisis will be welcomed by British industry.

The emphasis on helping the UK's smaller businesses access the opportunities of international trade particularly in liberalising access for UK manufacturing services will be good news for some of our most innovative companies, which sometimes struggle to navigate the intricacies of breaking into new markets.

Business looks forward to being directly and closely involved in the ongoing programme of trade negotiations to ensure the best possible outcomes.

Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) National Chair Mike Cherry said:

The UK is embarking on an ambitious new era of independent trade and these new deals are critical to the success of small businesses as well as the wider economy.

Of the small businesses that export, 38 per cent already do so with Australia while 30 per cent are trading with New Zealand, which highlights the potential to build on these existing strong trading links via trade deals with both countries. A comprehensive small business chapter is equally important to ensure that the needs of SMEs are fully catered for in the years to come.

Both nations are in the top 10 most important destination export markets for small firms over the next three years, making these deals vitally important.

The UK already has a common connection with these nations as members of the Commonwealth and that is why businesses are looking forward to engaging with these trade negotiations in the weeks and months to come.

New Zealand and Australia rank among our closest friends. We share a language, head of state and a system of common law. We have a proud shared history and today we are guided by a common set of values.

Like the UK, both nations have always stood up for what is right and maintained a fierce belief in the merits of free trade, the rule of law, international cooperation and democratic government.

Free Trade Agreements with Australia and New Zealand need to work for the whole of the UK. We have been clear that any future agreement with Australia and New Zealand must benefit British consumers, producers and companies. We remain committed to upholding our high environmental, labour, food safety and animal welfare standards in our trade agreements with Australia and New Zealand.

On the UK side, talks will be overseen by DIT Chief Trade Negotiation Advisor Crawford Falconer.

Background

- Our negotiating objectives for all proposed agreements are also underpinned by one of the biggest consultations ever undertaken with the UK public, businesses and civil society on new FTAs.
- We will continue to speak to businesses and interest groups in every

part of the UK to ensure their views are taken into account.

- Negotiations with Australia and New Zealand will be carried out by video conference, ensuring that talks can progress during the Coronavirus pandemic.
- The first round of talks with Australia and New Zealand are expected to take place in the coming weeks

The UK's overall negotiating objectives for a free trade agreement with Australia are:

- Agree an ambitious and comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Australia that strengthens our economic relationship with a key like-minded partner, promoting increased trade in goods and services and greater cross-border investment.
- Strengthen our economic partnership focusing on technology, innovation and research and development (R&D). An FTA with Australia provides an opportunity to enhance co-operation on shared global and economic challenges, including supporting innovation and R&D across our economies. We will seek to set a new precedent with Australia by establishing an ambitious framework for co-operation in these areas, focusing on the role of trade policy in facilitating innovation.
- Increase the resilience of our supply chains and the security of our whole economy by diversifying trade.
- Futureproof the agreement in line with the Government's ambition on climate and in anticipation of rapid technological developments, such as Artificial Intelligence.
- The Government has been clear that when we are negotiating trade agreements, the National Health Service (NHS) will not be on the table. The price the NHS pays for drugs will not be on the table. The services the NHS provides will not be on the table. The NHS is not, and never will be, for sale to the private sector, whether overseas or domestic.
- Secure an agreement which works for the whole of the UK and takes appropriate consideration of the UK's constitutional arrangements and obligations.
- Throughout the agreement, ensure high standards and protections for UK consumers and workers and build on our existing international obligations. This will include not compromising on our high environmental protection, animal welfare and food safety standards.

The UK's overall negotiating objectives for a free trade agreement with New Zealand are:

- Agree an ambitious and comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with New Zealand that strengthens our economic relationship with a key like-minded partner, promoting increased trade in goods and services and greater cross-border investment.
- Work together to reinforce our mutual interest in sustainable and inclusive trade policy.
- Supporting both Governments' Net Zero commitments on climate change, we will seek provisions that maintain the right to regulate for each party and support opportunities for global growth in low carbon sectors and associated research and development.

- Increase the resilience of our supply chains and the security of our whole economy by diversifying trade.
- Futureproof the agreement in line with the Government's ambition on climate and in anticipation of rapid technological developments, such as Artificial Intelligence.
- The Government has been clear that when we are negotiating trade agreements, the National Health Service (NHS) will not be on the table. The price the NHS pays for drugs will not be on the table. The services the NHS provides will not be on the table. The NHS is not, and never will be, for sale to the private sector, whether overseas or domestic.
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- Throughout the agreement, ensure high standards and protections for UK consumers and workers and build on our existing international obligations. This will include not compromising on our high environmental protection, animal welfare and food safety standards.