

[Readout of AUKUS Joint Steering Group Meetings](#)

News story

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Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America recently held meetings of the AUKUS Joint Steering Groups, which were established as part of the governance structure of the AUKUS partnership in September 2021. The delegations discussed the intensive work under way and the progress that has been made since the announcement of AUKUS. Both meetings were held at the Pentagon, with additional sessions at the White House where the delegations met with National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan.

The Joint Steering Group for Australia's Nuclear-Powered Submarine Program met on July 25-28, continuing its progress on defining the optimal pathway to provide Australia with conventionally-armed, nuclear-powered submarines at the earliest possible date while ensuring the highest standards of nuclear stewardship, including the responsible planning, operation, application and management of nuclear material, technology and facilities.

The participants took stock of ongoing progress to deliver on our leaders' commitment to set the highest possible non-proliferation standards, including through continued close consultation with the International Atomic Energy Agency. [They welcomed the publication of the working paper on 'Cooperation under the AUKUS partnership'](#) for the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The paper details our proposal to provide complete power units to Australia, Australia's commitment that it will not conduct enrichment, reprocessing or fuel fabrication in connection with its nuclear-powered submarine program, and our engagement with the IAEA to find a suitable verification approach. [They noted the introductory remarks of the IAEA Director General to the June Board of Governors in which he expressed](#) "satisfaction with the engagement and transparency shown by the three countries thus far" and noted that he plans

to present a report on AUKUS to the September Board.

The Joint Steering Group for Advanced Capabilities met on July 28-29, reviewing progress across critical defense capabilities. The participants decided to bolster combined military capabilities, including by accelerating near-term capabilities in hypersonics and counter-hypersonics, as well as cyber. They also recommitted to deepening cooperation on information-sharing and other previously agreed working groups. As work progresses on these and other critical defense capabilities, we will seek opportunities to engage allies and close partners.

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[Ukrainian and UK governments thank public for 'largest offer of help to people fleeing war since 1945'](#)

- Ukrainian Ambassador to the UK Vadym Prystaiko and Refugees Minister Lord Harrington will send letters to sponsors and families this week thanking them for their generosity and goodwill
- Since March, more than 104,000 Ukrainians have arrived under the Ukraine Family Scheme and Homes for Ukraine Scheme
- The Homes for Ukraine Scheme recently expanded further to consider new applications from children not travelling with or joining their parent or guardian, provided they have parental consent

The Ukrainian and UK governments this week will send thank you letters to sponsors and families across the UK who have welcomed Ukrainians into their homes and communities.

Signed by Ukrainian Ambassador Vadym Prystaiko and Refugees Minister Lord Harrington, the letters will praise the collective national effort that has driven the scheme forward,.

They are expected to say: "Together you and your fellow hosts, and the Ukrainian diaspora community, have given 104,000 people safe refuge across the UK. You have saved lives, given hope, and offered sanctuary to people in desperate need. This represents the UK's largest offer of help to people fleeing war since 1945."

Since March more than 104,000 Ukrainians have arrived in the UK under the Ukraine Family Scheme and Homes for Ukraine Scheme, showcasing the best of British hospitality and compassion, continuing the country's proud history of stepping forward in the hour of need. Families and hosts do not just provide

housing but welcoming homes, warm friendship and local advice for planting roots in an unfamiliar community.

Ukrainian Ambassador Vadym Prystaiko said:

As Russian tanks started rolling over Ukrainian borders and the first cities were bombarded, tens of thousands of British families have offered their homes to Ukrainians.

I know it is not easy to host displaced people from a different culture, an unfamiliar background, speaking a foreign language and most importantly deeply troubled and hurt. Yes, we are different in so many ways but we have in common an acute sense of injustice and readiness to stand up against evil. We are fighting fearlessly until our land is free but with the same intensity, we are remembering kindness and friendship. As Ukrainians return back to rebuild our nation they will cherish this chance to learn about your culture, your way of living, even your cuisine. Although here I guess both sides will be able to enrich each other.

The ties between our nations, our governments have never been closer. This is because of each and everyone of you, your generosity, patience, kindness.

I am humbled and honoured to serve for the goodness of both of our people.

Refugees Minister Lord Harrington said:

I cannot thank the British public enough for their steadfast goodwill opening their doors to people from Ukraine and integrating them into their local communities.

Families are having to make difficult decisions to leave their homes and we understand behind 104,000 arrivals are stories of pain. From the moment the first tanks rolled across the border into Ukraine, this Government promised to do all we could to help people. And thanks to the limitless generosity and compassion of the public, we are delivering on that promise.

As the war rages on longer than anyone would have hoped, the governments of Ukraine and the UK have united to thank all those for giving people sanctuary in their time of need. The letters will praise sponsors and families for their "continuing efforts...making a difference, and that [they] have our heartfelt thanks and the thanks of the people of Ukraine."

From day one, Ukrainians have the right to work and to access benefits and public services, including education and healthcare, on the same-footing as UK nationals. This will continue to be the case for those who wish to remain

in the UK.

[UK tightens links with Finland and USA during high readiness exercise](#)

The deployment follows the UK's [joint security declaration](#) with Finland signed in May.

More than 750 troops from the UK, USA and Finland gathered this week in Niinisalo, western Finland, to participate in the four-day high-readiness exercise. Partner nations practised interoperability between air and land forces ahead of Finland's accession to NATO. This type of international training is critical in preparing allies to operate alongside one another should NATO need to deploy in the future.

Minister for the Armed Forces James Heapey MP said:

Exercise Vigilant Fox has demonstrated the strength and interoperability of our Armed Forces with our US and Finnish allies and reaffirms our commitment to the defence and security of the Baltic Sea region.

British troops [based in Estonia](#) as part of [Project Unified Stance](#) swooped into Finland in Royal Air Force Chinook helicopters. The troops from C Company, 2 Rifles Battlegroup, were inserted into Niinisalo to join Finland's high readiness forces from the Jaegar, Karelian and Pori Brigades. The exercise also included soldiers, armoured fighting vehicles and helicopters from the US 3rd Armoured Brigade Combat Team (The Iron Brigade).

Units from all three nations undertook a series of demanding training events, conducting offensive and defensive operations including helicopter assaults, covert landings and short-notice raids using American Black Hawks, Finnish NH-90s and UK Chinooks.

Such training improves integration between air and land forces, as well as interoperability between partner nations, and is crucial to ensuring that NATO forces can work together effectively on operations and in war.

As well as air-land integration, the exercise focused on developing command and control procedures and tactical drills using a combination of live and blank firing drills and urban operations.

Colonel Jukka Nurmi, Deputy Chief of Training, Defence Command Finland, said:

Training events like Vigilant Fox are a great opportunity to learn from each other and Finland is most grateful for participation of international partners. For Finland, the exercise is an effective way to demonstrate the competence of our conscripts and to verify and develop the international compatibility of our own troops. The training and exercise activities carried out with close partners, such as the United Kingdom, are a continuation of long-term close cooperation.

Wing Commander Stephen Boyle, Defence Attaché, British Embassy Finland, said:

Our soldiers, sailors and aviators have received a warm welcome in Finland over the last few months. Exercise Vigilant Fox is the latest activity in an ongoing series of events across the domains.

As Finland moves towards full NATO Membership, we will continue to seek opportunities like this to show solidarity with Finland, learn from each other and improve our ability to operate together.

This exercise comes just two weeks after [RAF fighter aircraft deployed to Finland and Sweden for joint training](#).

Construction begins at revolutionary first secure school

- New world-leading approach to youth custody takes shape
- Education placed at heart of new 'school within prison walls' to cut crime and keep our streets safe
- Young people supported into training and jobs upon release

The school – based on the site of the now closed Medway Secure Training Centre in Kent – will see young offenders go straight from the courtroom to the classroom, with every single pupil enrolled in formal education or training and encouraged into further learning or employment on release.

It will be run by education provider Oasis Restore rather than the Prison Service, and inside it will be laid out like a school inside the prison walls. Staff will be trained to offer a broad curriculum and offer one-to-one

learning support, and they will set challenging targets in core academic subjects such as English and mathematics. Ofsted inspectors will hold the establishment to the same standards as all other schools nationwide – ensuring the education on offer is of the best possible standard.

Young people will also participate in a weekly programme of rigorous physical education and have the opportunity to work towards sports and leisure qualifications. This will teach important life skills and provide an invaluable asset towards independence and employability.

Since 2012 the number of children in custody has fallen from around 2,000 in 2012 to around 500. These young offenders are around 50 percent more likely to reoffend than adult offenders.

Though wider youth reoffending rates for children who received custodial or community sentences have fallen from 38 percent in 2012 to 34 percent in 2022 they stubbornly remain nearly 9 percentage points higher than adult reoffending.

They are also much more likely to have had a disrupted a disrupted education. 60 percent are not engaged in education before entering custody due to truancy, suspension, or expulsion, meaning they have lost out on months' or years' worth of learning which would have given them the opportunities to steer clear of a life of crime.

Around eight in 10 prolific adult offenders begin committing crimes as children, with the estimated cost to the taxpayer around £17 billion per year.

Deputy Prime Minister, Lord Chancellor & Secretary of State for Justice, Dominic Raab MP, said:

This secure school is a first. It's effectively a school with prison walls around it that will give the stubborn hard core of young offenders, who need to be in custody, the tailored curriculum and mental health support they need to turn away from crime and get into training and work.

It's the right thing to do for them and the public, driving down reoffending, and making our streets safer.

The design of the new school is based on international, peer-reviewed research which shows that smaller settings, high-quality education and healthcare provision, and a specialised workforce of teachers and youth workers are vital to successfully rehabilitating young people in custody.

The old prison-style features at Medway have been stripped out and the finished site will look like a residential school rather than a custodial facility, within secure prison walls.

It will house 49 children when full, and will include state-of-the-art, bar-less windows as well as the latest secure in-room technology which will allow children to continue homework and projects in their rooms, organise their routines and contact their families in a safe and secure way.

Construction work will continue until autumn 2023 when the site will be handed over to specialist education provider and operator Oasis Restore, with the first pupils expected to arrive in 2024.

The Rev Steve Chalke MBE, Founder of Oasis, said:

For too long society has bought into the idea that punishing young people will somehow benefit them. All the research shows this does not work. You can't help a child by harming them. You can't take children who have been wounded psychologically and somehow hope that punishment will heal them. Then, when you release them, wonder why so many reoffend.

Oasis is not trying to ignore a young person's crime, or to minimise the pain of their victim and family. But, it's time for a revolution in youth justice. And, we're excited that Oasis Restore – the country's first secure school – with an emphasis on therapeutic care, education and positive settlement into life beyond our gates, which enables them to thrive – will be that revolution.

The school's core focus on getting troubled young people into jobs or further education is part of the Government's ambitious plan to further drive down reoffending – following a five per cent fall over the last decade.

The construction of the new school builds on the Government's commitments under the Prison Strategy White Paper to drive up standards of adult education in custody, while also tackling drug and alcohol addiction and ensuring offenders are ready for work on release.

Notes to editors

- Read more about the [Prisons Strategy White Paper](#)
- Since 2012 reoffending rates have decreased from 30.9% to 25.6%.
- Reoffending among children has fallen by around 4 percentage points (from 38.3% to 34.2%).
- The number of under-18s in custody has gone down from 1,966 in the year ending March 2012 to 454 in the year ending March 2022.
- The latest annual figures from 2019/20 show that young people have a 63.7% risk of reoffending when they leave custody compared to 42% of adult prisoners.
- Learn more about Oasis Restore by visiting www.oasisrestore.org or via Twitter at www.twitter.com/OasisRestore
- Apply to become a teacher or youth worker at [Oasis Restore](#)

[Border Force and French Police Aux Frontières joint statement](#)

News story

Joint statement from UK and French agencies on the management of the shared border.



The Director General of Border Force, Phil Douglas and the Deputy Director General of the French Police Aux Frontières, Brigitte Lafourcade, have made a joint statement today on the management of the shared border.

Statement by UK Border Force and French Police aux Frontières

France and the UK have been working closely together over recent days to prepare for the management of our shared border through the current period of increased passenger traffic.

Both Police Aux Frontières and UK Border Force, in partnership with the port operators, have put plans in place at the juxtaposed controls on both sides of the Channel this weekend to maximise passenger flows.

France and the UK will continue to work together intensively to support fluidity of freight and passengers across the Channel through the summer period and beyond.

Communiqué de la Police Aux Frontières et de la Border Force Britannique

La France et le Royaume-Uni ont travaillé en étroite coopération au cours des derniers jours afin de planifier la gestion de notre frontière commune au cours de la période actuelle marquée par une augmentation du nombre de

passagers.

La Police aux Frontières française et la « Border Force » britannique ont, en partenariat avec les opérateurs portuaires, pris les mesures nécessaires aux points de contrôles juxtaposés de chaque côté de la Manche afin d'optimiser les flux de passagers au cours de ce week-end.

La France et le Royaume-Uni continueront à mettre en œuvre tous les efforts pour assurer la fluidité du trafic des passagers et des véhicules de fret à travers la Manche tout au long de la période estivale et à l'avenir.

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