

Heat Wave Response – Oral Statement

Mr Speaker, I would like to make a statement on this week's heatwave.

Coningsby, in Lincolnshire, broke records yesterday when it registered a provisional reading of 40.3 degrees Celsius.

According to the Met Office, no fewer than 34 locations around the United Kingdom exceeded the country's previous highest temperature of 37.8 Celsius, set in 2019.

We have seen a collective national endeavour to prepare for and manage the effects of the heat – from town hall to Whitehall and across various industries, to keep people safe and infrastructure functioning.

From water companies and rail engineers to public servants right across the land, everyone has pulled together – with members of the public responding in a way that was responsible, and took the pressure off vital public services.

Our national resolve has been exemplified by our Fire & Rescue Services – for many of whom, yesterday was their busiest day since World War 2. They were undoubtedly stretched but coped magnificently and the systems put in place to make sure that the fire service can operate on a national basis as well as locally worked well.

In tinderbox conditions they have dealt with dozens of wildfires around the country over the past 24 hours. Fifteen Fire & Rescue Services declared Major Incidents and handled emergency calls the length and breadth of the country.

Sadly, at least 41 properties have been destroyed in London, 14 in Norfolk, five in Lincolnshire, and smaller numbers elsewhere. On behalf of the Prime Minister and the Cabinet, I would like to pass on our sincere condolences to those who have lost their homes or business premises and I know my Right Honourable friend the Secretary of State is working closely with local authorities on this.

Throughout recent days, the Prime Minister has monitored our work and has been specifically briefed on a number of occasions – we did so again this morning. The Prime Minister was briefed during the wildfires by Mark Hardingham, Chair of the National Fire Chiefs Council, and the Civil Contingencies Secretariat; and he has passed on his thanks to all the brave firefighters who have sought to control the flames in such debilitating conditions.

I would also like to pay tribute to the fire control staff, officers and support teams for their essential work; and the other agencies that have made such tremendous efforts in recent days – the NHS, our emergency call handlers, Police and Maritime & Coastguard Agency among many others.

Honourable Members will be relieved to know that some pressure on services

will ease now that the fiercest heat has subsided. Many incidents are now being scaled back.

Thunderstorms are likely this afternoon but for much of the country, more clement dry conditions are the pattern in coming days. The Met Office, however, stresses that the summer is likely to bring further hot weather and wildfire risk will remain elevated.

That is why we are treating this heatwave as an exacting test of our national resilience and contingency planning.

As always, there is no room for complacency.

Mr Speaker, we have seen what you can achieve when you prepare properly and then work closely together.

Owing to the technical expertise of the weather forecasters, who predicted with admirable precision the peak of the heatwave and how high the temperatures would be, the Government was able to launch an advance campaign of comprehensive public advice.

And our early data shows how, well before the heatwave arrived, people were taking on board this advice from the UK Health Security Agency, the NHS, the chief and deputy chief medical officer, emergency services, and key agencies on the ground.

And because of our established local networks and colleagues in the Devolved Administrations, we had people spread across the UK ready to step in when it mattered.

I am particularly grateful to the cooperation and support we received from the Scottish Government, Welsh Government and Northern Ireland Executive. We need to manage these national events together.

Mr Speaker, I would like now to give some examples of how people taking the right action helped to mitigate the effects of the extreme weather.

Starting with heeding advice: fully five times as many people accessed NHS England internet pages on how to manage the symptoms of heat exhaustion, in the critical week beginning July 11.

Moving on to our vital 999 call services, we had feared that they would come under untold pressure. Yet as the mercury climbed inexorably on July 18, fewer 999 calls were made than the week before; and more 111 calls – again suggesting the public had heeded the advice, this time to avoid using 999 unless in emergencies.

On to travel, and once again people were playing for the team. The public stayed at home to avoid the heat, not venturing far. The data bears this out: on Monday, footfall at major London stations was around 35% of normal post-pandemic levels. Yesterday [TUES], Network Rail reports, passenger train numbers were around 40% down on the previous week.

We did not forget those who cannot easily leave their homes, asking people to look out for elderly and vulnerable family members and neighbours.

Tragically however, 13 people are believed to have lost their lives after getting into difficulty in rivers, reservoirs and lakes while swimming in recent days – seven of them teenage boys. I would like to pass on our sincere condolences to the families of the victims for their terrible loss.

Of course we still have to work through the longer-term consequences of the heatwave.

The true picture will not come until all incidents are analysed, all emergency teams are debriefed, and all incident logs and data reconciled.

There is a great deal of data yet to come in from colleagues in the devolved administrations, and from the local authorities and agencies around the country.

We do recognise that we are likely to experience more of these incidents: and that we should not underestimate their speed, scope and severity.

Britain may be unaccustomed to such high temperatures but the UK, along with our European neighbours, must learn to live with extreme events such as these.

The Government has been at the forefront of international efforts to reach Net Zero, but the impacts of climate change are with us now. This is why we have a National Adaptation Programme under the leadership of the Environment Department.

As we have seen in recent days, we will continue to face acute events driven by climate change. It is the responsibility of Cabinet Office Ministers to coordinate work across Government when these events take place.

This government will continue to build our collective resilience. To this end, the National Resilience Strategy about which I was asked about on Monday, will be launched at the earliest possible opportunity by the incoming administration.

In the meantime, I will continue to coordinate work of teams across government in building resilience, to make sure the country is ready to meet the challenges of the autumn, the winter and beyond – and it is in that spirit that I commend this Statement to the House.

[Accident involving a light aircraft,](#)

Newtownards, County Down 19 June 2022

News story

The AAIB has sent a team to Newtownards, County Down.



An accident involving a light aircraft which occurred last night near Newtownards, County Down has been notified to the AAIB. An investigation has begun and a team of inspectors are on their way to the accident site.

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Significant fee rise for criminal barristers confirmed in law

- legislation laid to increase barrister fees by 15 percent from the end of September 2022
- the typical criminal barrister will receive £7,000 extra a year
- fifteen percent increase for solicitors' work in magistrates' courts and police stations

The 15 percent fee increase will see a typical criminal barrister earn £7,000 more a year while criminal solicitors will also receive a 15 percent fee rise across a range of their work, including that undertaken in police stations, magistrates' courts and youth courts.

The legislation has been fast-tracked so legal professionals can see the pay rise before the end of the year with the new fees introduced at the end of September.

Justice Minister Sarah Dines said:

We are creating a sustainable legal aid system that is fit for the future and the typical criminal barrister will get a generous pay rise of £7,000 following a 15 percent fee increase.

The £135 million extra investment in legal aid will also help ensure that solicitors and other legal professionals are better paid for the important work they do to ensure victims get timely justice.

The remaining proposals in the recent consultation on criminal legal aid will be responded to later this year, with potential further increases for solicitors and other legal professionals as part of longer-term reforms, with £20 million set aside for this work.

Up to £74 million extra has been allocated to criminal legal aid per year over the last 4 years and the proposal to increase investment by £135 million a year is the biggest rise in a decade.

The Independent Review of Criminal Legal Aid found that, before expenses, the median fee of a criminal barrister in 2019-20 was £79,800 and that 80 percent earn at least £45,000 after expenses. While junior barristers earn much less in their first couple of years of practice, by their third year of practice the average criminal barrister will earn £65,000 before expenses.

The government is also investing £477 million into the justice system to reduce backlogs in the courts caused by the pandemic and has also removed the cap on how many days courts can sit for a second year. The investment means more trials can take place and the same decision last year meant that nearly 17,000 more days were sat in the Crown Court than the year prior to the pandemic.

Video technology has been rolled out to over 70 percent of all courtrooms and 3,265 virtual court rooms have been opened so that more hearings can take place.

Since May, magistrates have been able to sentence offenders to up to a year in prison, doubling their previous powers, helping to free up an estimated 1,700 extra sitting days of Crown Court time each year.

[Vacancy for a Deputy Chief Inspector of Marine Accidents, Southampton](#)

News story

We are looking for an individual with marine industry knowledge and

experience that can manage the main operational activities at all stages of our investigations.



Key accountabilities of the role include:

- providing direction for the timely conduct of high-quality marine accident investigations
- ensuring the highest standards of governance and commercial management in relation to the procurement of the equipment, facilities, site management and technical support, as required for investigations and ongoing operational activities
- validating causal analysis conducted during investigations, overseeing the formulation of well-founded recommendations and quality assuring investigations and investigation reports
- developing and maintaining strong relationships with a wide range of industry stakeholders, including the sharing of good practice in the field of marine accident investigation
- deputising, as necessary, for the Chief Inspector to perform the legal and governance duties of that role and to represent the branch when engaging with senior stakeholders in the government, industry and overseas

For further information about this position and how to apply see [Civil Service Jobs, Deputy Chief Inspector – Marine Accident Investigation Branch, Ref: 223527](#)

Closing date: 7 August 2022.

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[UK launches Israel talks to boost trade between services superpowers](#)

- Negotiations launched in London to upgrade trading relationship already

worth £5 billion and supporting 6,600 UK businesses.

- UK services and digital sectors in line to reap the rewards of a fresh, modern agreement.
- Deal will put innovation at its heart, creating new opportunities for tech firms and professional services.

UK tech firms and services companies are set to benefit from a [future UK-Israel trade deal](#), that will seek to establish a modern, revamped trading relationship between two of the world's services superpowers.

International Trade Secretary Anne-Marie Trevelyan will launch negotiations today [20 July] between the UK and Israel for a new, innovation-focused Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

Israel has one of the fastest growing economies in the world and their demand for digital products and services is expected to grow rapidly. The UK's existing bilateral FTA with Israel contains no specific provisions on services, creating a huge opportunity to enhance the agreement.

This includes boosting UK services exports to Israel by up to £78 million, from insurance to computer and technology services, supporting jobs and growing high-tech industries by reducing barriers to trade.

A new upgraded deal would expand a trading relationship already worth £5 billion a year. It could benefit 6,600 UK businesses, including 5,600 small and medium-sized enterprises, employing over 1.7 million people in 2020, who are exporting their goods to Israel by reducing trade barriers.

International Trade Secretary, Anne-Marie Trevelyan said:

The UK and Israel are both modern, hi-tech services superpowers, but our current trading relationship is based on an agreement from 1995, before smartphones, the internet, and digitally delivered services transformed the global economy.

We want a deal that will play to British strengths, while stimulating innovation and increasing opportunities for small and medium-sized enterprises across the UK. Combining the power of our economies in a revamped trade deal will boost trade, support jobs and help take our economic relationship to the next level.

The Secretary of State will meet Israel's Ambassador to the UK Tzipi Hotovely to launch the talks in London.

A bold new modernised deal could also provide greater economic opportunities for exporters across the UK regions and nations, including LEVC's iconic electric black cabs in Coventry, Tomatin Distillery in Scotland, and Concrete Canvas in Wales.

Trade Strategy Partner for EY, Sally Jones said:

EY welcomes the intention to upgrade the Free Trade Agreement between the UK and Israel. This is an opportunity to put services, digital technology and innovation at the heart of the UK and Israel's already-strong trading relationship. Both the UK and Israel are known for their vibrant tech and fintech sectors, which will both benefit from this new deal.

The UK's world leading professional and business services sector is an unrivalled ecosystem which boosts competitiveness and facilitates international trade. With the opening-up of new trade and investment opportunities, businesses need to be looking at their trade strategies now to be able to seize these opportunities and drive economic prosperity.

Head of Tax and Trade Policy for Deloitte UK, Amanda Tickel said:

We welcome negotiations between the UK and Israel on an enhanced FTA, which could take our bilateral trade and investment relationship to a new level.

Both the UK and Israel are services-led economies with highly successful tech sectors, yet the existing terms of trade contain only limited provisions in these areas. This negotiation represents an exciting opportunity for UK services exporters, making it easier to trade across borders, to travel and work in each economy and support our digital innovators.

UK Managing Director at eToro, Daniel Moczulski said:

We are immensely proud of the journey that eToro has been on over the past 15 years, from an ambitious start-up in Tel Aviv to a thriving global brand and the world leading social investment network, with over 27 million registered users in more than 100 countries. A crucial part of this journey was eToro's arrival in the UK, a market which has always encouraged innovation in the financial sector.

The UK market has become incredibly important to eToro's business, and we are lucky to have a very talented team in London serving a large number of UK retail investors – we welcome the launch of UK-Israel trade talks to create more opportunities for innovators in both the UK and Israel.

Notes to editors

- In 2020, around 325 Israeli-owned businesses operating in the UK employed more than 7,000 people across the country. Its services sector has grown by over 45% in the last decade, and Israel's total imports are expected to double by 2035.
- In the Northwest alone, over 1,300 businesses exported goods to Israel in 2020, with regional exports totalling £125 million in 2021. London exported goods to Israel worth £265 million in the same year, while Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland exported £92 million, £66 million, and £24 million of goods respectively.
- In 2020 the size of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) from the UK in Israel was £1bn. Over the past 10 years 80% of UK outward FDI projects in Israel were in financial services, professional services and ICT & electronics.
- The FTA will complement the new UK-Israel Bilateral Roadmap, which promises to transform our relationship in the years ahead. We have agreed to work together on a new strategic plan spanning many areas of mutual interest such as science, innovation, defence, health, development, and climate change.
- Israel is also the global leader in R&D expenditure as a proportion of national income, spending almost 5% of GDP on it. And more international money than ever is flowing into UK tech – £29 billion in 2021.
- By the end of last year, the UK boasted no fewer than 115 tech unicorns, while Israel's 53 tech unicorns and start-ups secured £18.5 billion of new funding in 2021. This has helped companies such as tech unicorn eToro to thrive in British markets.