

How GAD helped when staff transferred to Defra

The Government Actuary's Department (GAD) provided advice and assistance when around 1,000 Environment Agency staff transferred to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) in November 2017. The transfer took place because the corporate services functions of both organisations were being centralised in Defra.

This transfer was covered by the Cabinet Office policy on staff transfers in the public sector. This policy protects pension arrangements for people who are compulsorily transferred to other public sector employers.

Future benefits

GAD advised Defra on several, complex areas around the pension provision transfer to make sure that members' future benefits were protected. We carried out an assessment confirming the new pension arrangements were 'broadly comparable' to those available to staff before the transfer. We helped ensure that people involved in the transfer were kept up to date about their future pension arrangements by supplying information for written communications and input for webinars.

Past benefits

We advised Defra on the benefits the members would receive in the Civil Service pension arrangements if they decided to take part in a bulk transfer exercise and helped support further webinars. We advised Defra on the financial implications of the transfer to them. Once the bulk transfer options were completed, we provided further support and calculations to Defra, Cabinet Office and HM Treasury.

Communications and information

GAD staff transfer experts also provided information which was included in the member option packs. These packs gave people the opportunity to transfer their past pension benefits under the bulk transfer arrangement. They included an information pack and Q&A document informing the members of their bulk transfer option.

East London crook charged with meds

crimes

Mile End man sent down for involvement in the illegal supply and sale of potentially dangerous unauthorised and prescription-only medicines and Class C drugs.

Published 25 July 2019 From: [Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency](#)



Leonard Cosgrove, 56, was yesterday sentenced to 2 years and 9 months after being found guilty of conspiracy to supply unauthorised medicinal products, the supply of prescription only medicines and Class C drugs.

Yesterday's sentencing follows an in-depth investigation by enforcement officers from the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) into a network suspected to be involved in the illegal importation and supply of medicines such as Tadalafil, Sibutramine, and Sildenafil.

Supplying medicines from sources outside the regulated supply chain represents a significant public health risk as they may contain dangerous ingredients that can have devastating consequences for the people who use them. As such the criminal group responsible showed a complete disregard for the public's safety and well-being.

Tariq Sarwar, MHRA Head of Operations, said of the conviction:

"Our message is clear: illegally supplying prescription only and unlicensed medicines and Class C drugs is a serious criminal offence.

"Medicines sold this way cannot be guaranteed to be safe and can present a real risk to public health. Some may contain dangerous ingredients that can have devastating consequences for the people who use them.

"Criminals selling medicines illegally show a blatant disregard for your

health, and only care about making money. If you have any concerns about your health please contact a GP or a healthcare professional.”

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Office hours are Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 5pm. For real-time updates including the latest press releases and news statements, see our Twitter channel at <https://www.twitter.com/mhrapress>

[Sophie Holmes held in contempt of court](#)

Today at the Royal Courts of Justice Sophie Holmes admitted to being in contempt of court.

Published 25 July 2019 From: [Attorney General's Office](#) and [The Rt Hon Geoffrey Cox QC MP](#)



A 25 year old woman from Leeds has been found in contempt of court, after she interrupted a trial at Bradford Crown Court in October 2018.

In the early hours of 20 October 2017 Sophie Holmes and her boyfriend Paul Serrant were together at his home when the property was attacked and hit with 20 military grade bullets from an assault weapon. No one was injured in the attack.

A police investigation took place and 3 individuals were charged with possessing a firearm and ammunition with intent to endanger life.

When speaking to police Holmes stated she had been approached by another man, who had threatened to have her house attacked. He was not charged in relation to the attack, however during the trial Holmes shouted from the public gallery that he was the shooter. She then fled the court. As a result, the Judge overseeing the proceedings had to discharge the jury.

Today at the Royal Courts of Justice Sophie Holmes admitted to being in contempt of court. She was committed to prison for 6 months, suspended for 2 years.

Following the decision, the Attorney General Geoffrey Cox QC MP said:

“Ms Holmes’ outburst impeded the course of justice and not only resulted in the jury being discharged and the extra cost of another trial, it also led to the prolonging and disruption of a delicate case. It is therefore appropriate that Ms Holmes has been found in contempt of court.”

[**A Joint Effort: collaboration space news story**](#)

The Defence and Security Accelerator (DASA) is anticipating the launch of ‘A Joint Effort’ phase 2 competition later this year.



A Joint Effort

It is anticipated that phase 2 of 'A Joint Effort' competition will launch later this year. This Defence and Security Accelerator (DASA) and Next Generation Technologies Fund competition is looking for innovative joining technologies that enable the use of advanced materials and/or designs on military platforms in land, sea and air environments.

We are keen to encourage suppliers to collaborate in the next phase to strengthen bids. In order to help facilitate this we have set up a closed LinkedIn group to allow current suppliers and those interested in applying to phase 2 (either independently or as a consortia with successful phase 1 suppliers) to interact, get to know each other and form mutually beneficial collaborations. If you are interested in applying to join the group, please fill out this [DASA collaboration form](#) (MS Word Document, 15.7KB) .

Phase 1 of A Joint Effort launched in November 2018 as a parallel call between the UK (Materials for Strategic Advantage programme within the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory) and Australia (Defence Science and Technology Group, Next Generation Technology Fund and Small Business Innovation Research for Defence) and was managed by DASA.

Many different materials are within scope, including joining combinations of composites, metals, ceramics and polymers. Potential joining solutions should provide enhanced capability through one of the following:

- improved performance through use of new material combinations or structural designs
- improved durability of structures through better joints
- improved ability to maintain joints through the life of the military platform

The full phase 1 competition document can be found [here](#).

[Alister Jack appointed as Secretary of State for Scotland](#)

MP for Dumfries and Galloway, Alister Jack, has been appointed as Secretary of State for Scotland

Published 25 July 2019 From: [Office of the Secretary of State for Scotland](#) and [Alister Jack MP](#)



Following his appointment as Secretary of State for Scotland, Alister Jack said:

“I am honoured to have been appointed Secretary of State for Scotland at a time when we face very significant challenges as a country.

“We need to leave the EU in a way which works for Scotland and the whole of the UK. We can, and will, leave the EU, and in doing so open up new opportunities for Scottish businesses.

“We need to continue to defend the Union against those who would seek to tear it apart. In 2014, the people of Scotland voted to remain part of a strong United Kingdom. We will stand up for their decision against those who would try to impose unwanted and divisive constitutional change.

“At the same time we need to work with the Scottish Government in boosting Scotland’s economy, which continues to lag behind that of the rest of the UK, in large part due to the Scottish Government’s anti-business and high tax ideology. The UK Government will continue to invest across Scotland, including through city and growth deals and supporting our oil and gas industry.

“There are challenges ahead of us, but I am confident that we will meet them successfully, building a path to a more prosperous country.”