

Speech: Defence Secretary keynote speech at the Sea Power Conference 2019

Well, good morning.

I am delighted to be here. No, more than delighted to be here. I am honoured to be here. Not just to be able to thank RUSI for all it does, but to thank you, and particularly those in uniform for your service.

And of course to deliver the Sir Henry Leach memorial lecture...

For all his considerable achievements, he is perhaps best known for his unwavering resolve. He told Margaret Thatcher not only that the Falklands Islands should be retaken, but that they must be retaken, and not everyone agreed with him, but he had confidence in the quality of his personnel. That under-resourced, as even they were then, professionalism and belief in our cause would carry the day, and he wasn't wrong.

Maybe if it hadn't been Henry Leach, we would be a different nation today. Some people think we are. They're wrong. We still have the right stuff in the Royal Navy and for that matter the British Army and yes, even the Royal Air Force.

For him, and for his Prime Minister, in deciding that course of action, the principles were clear. Their confidence and resolve created a focus and an effort to assemble that famous task force and get the job done.

Those two great leaders – military and political – provided reassurance in those troubled times.

Political turmoil at home, a resurgent left wing, calls on other parts of the Exchequer, a distracted America, sound familiar?

In troubled times, we search for those great personal qualities in others to lead our nation and reconnect with the ambitions the people of this country feel so strongly and so intuitively.

Leach and his prime minister articulated a national mission hard-wired into the souls of their nation and the people.

How were they able to do that? To swell hearts? To focus minds?

To define what it is to be a patriot?

Did they use the power of their personal philosophy to mould our great institutions?

Actually it was the opposite.

They felt the values of the institutions of our nation so strongly, that their personalities were shaped by them.

They became the living embodiment of their nation's enduring values and they were a beacon of freedom to those under tyranny.

And they inspired courage in others.

They were moved by tolerance, respect, plurality of thought, justice, compassion and above all, a love of freedom. They clearly saw what Thatcher called: "the primacy of the heart" and they accepted no "makeshifts" as Sir Henry would have put it.

All of us can understand this because all of us – especially those in public service – have been shaped by those values. Why else would we wish to serve? And when I look round this room on this Spring morning, I wonder what your stories are?

What has this great nation stamped on your hearts?

Why do you find yourselves here?

Why is it that we serve?

Personally, I can still recall the sight of HMS Hermes leading that task force out of Portsmouth Harbour.

And as a nine-year-old, I didn't know much about that scene. But witnessing it, and Thatcher's resolve, and Leach's confidence, well I knew Britain stood up to bullies.

...and I knew it was important that we did.

It was important enough for some of those ships and my class mates' fathers not to return.

I'd encountered courage, I'd seen duty, and I'd seen sacrifice for something greater than ourselves.

And 37 years later, when I was asked by Major General Julian Thompson to address the San Carlos dinner, the reunion of that task force, well I saw it again.

And I can tell you the veterans remain to this day as uncompromising in their approach to the enemy as they towards their food and drink...

I'm going to talk to you today, and in the future about, ships, boats, cyber and all sorts of other things.

I want you to know however, from the outset, that I understand the business we're in is primarily about people, it's about heart and guts, it's about imagination and belief, vision and ambition.

And our country, at such a profound cross roads in its story, facing such

uncertainty and yes opportunity, needs the values Leach admired like never before.

Freedom, democracy, rule of law and the rules-based order...

Our citizens want the nation to be able to affect and improve the world.

They want us to go out and sort out problems.

And I know from my previous department, their generosity and their care for others around the world.

They hate that feeling of impotence when we can't protect people.

And they want us to be able to further our national interests.

And this means they want us to remain a nation with the inclination and the ability to act.

They want us to influence, to deter and to intervene. And they want us to be able to do this even when that means us standing alone.

Britons intuitively understand Global Britain and you do too because you're at its heart. You are the foundation of global Britain.

You're the ones with the reach, the connections, the platforms, the security and partnerships.

Without you, we cannot protect shipping. Without this, trade deals won't yield dividends.

Without you to guard peace and security, nations can't lift themselves out of poverty.

Without you to combat threats...whatever their shape and size... evil will prevail.

Global Britain is a protector, it's a wealth bringer, it's a problem solver, a life saver and a peace broker. And nothing symbolises our intent and ambition for global Britain and has captured the hearts of our citizens more than our new carriers.

They are a mighty symbol of our intent.

The most powerful ships Britain has ever built.

Nine acres of sovereign territory that will give us the ability to project power from anywhere in the world.

Whether as part of a discrete operation, in support of land operations or as part of a coalition of allies and partners. They are versatile and they are a global influence.

In 2010, when I made the case for the carriers, I just pointed to every

humanitarian crisis and brewing conflict situation we had ever experienced since we'd had carriers.

And I challenged people to name one situation in which that capability had not been instrumental in getting a good outcome.

Sir Henry had only two mini-carriers in his day and I'm sure he is looking down on us with envy.

Last year our mighty Queen Elizabeth tested out the F35b aircraft at WESTLANT.

This year it will be returning to the Eastern seaboard to conduct flight trials with our own F35b future fighter.

And when Prince of Wales joins her in the fleet in the near future...we will have one carrier available at very high readiness at all times...

And this will match our strategic nuclear deterrent with a conventional one.

I want to make sure that we make the most of this incredible sovereign capability.

And that's why today I can announce that we will develop a new policy that will set out how those ships will deliver for our nation in the years ahead.

The national carrier policy will lay the blueprint for how we use them to deliver global Britain's objectives around the world.

Our carriers are setting the tone for the future Navy that I want to see and they're instilling confidence, closing deals and protecting the rules-based order.

And projecting our intent in uncertain and a challenging world.

...a world that is becoming increasingly complex

... the challenge of China rising

...the threat from a Russia resurgent

...the ever-changing shape of violent extremism and terrorism

...the growth of cyber threats...and organised crime

The grey areas of new weapons and new theatres.

There are huge challenges ahead of us, and there will be many demands made of us.

So, we had better be prepared.

Like Sir Henry, when he gate crashed that emergency cabinet and Thatcher asked him what she could do for him.

He replied 'No, Prime Minister, it's what I can do for you',

So, what are we doing to stay ready?

In the past 12 months we've been... training in Norway's Arctic tundra

Drug busting in the Arabian Gulf...establishing field hospitals in the South Sudan

Helping enforce UN sanctions in South Pacific

And escorting Russian vessels off the premises

And, silent and undetected you're maintaining our continuous-at-sea deterrent/

In all that you do you carry the reputation of Great Britain with you

...because you influence and you shape the world around you

...you're the prototype that other seeks to emulate

...and partner of choice for our allies

And I'm proud that you're strengthening partnerships around the world at all times...

With HMS Defender supporting NATO while on Exercise Formidable Shield.

With HMS Montrose and our Mine Countermeasures Force now permanently in the Middle East and a Naval Support Facility in Bahrain – keeping vital shipping lanes open

With our Royal Navy soon to sail to the Baltic as part of the Joint Expeditionary Force – reinforcing partnerships with like-minded northern European allies

And with our development of the North Atlantic Joint Operating Area...that will soon guard mile after mile of vital waterway.

Our people are not just exceptionally brave but also enormously innovative and creative. Today they're doing everything

...from devising new environmentally-friendly ways to power headquarters in the field

...to delivering AI and robotics into every fighting arm

...courtesy of our new pioneering new Naval X accelerator

And at the very pinnacle of the pyramid you'll find the Royal Marines

...developing Future Commando Force

In a reimagined global Britain, Defence will continue to be the first duty of the nation

But it must up to our ambition:

...maintaining a ruthless focus on its mission

...becoming more forward deployed

...and going out of its way to work with friends and allies

But if our future fleet is to respond to the growing demands, we need to do much more:

Investment will remain critical

We have done a great deal to drive out inefficiencies in defence

But there is more for us to do.

And today you will hearing about the direction and innovation in the RN, about our new capabilities coming online and being planned.

But I think we need to get some fundamentals right too if we are going to match the Navy and the nation's ambition.

In 2015 we rightly committed to meet NATO commitment to spend 2% of GDP on defence. Understandably people focus on that number. Politicians point to it. And rightly encourage other nations to match it.

But that's not the whole story.

I just want us to briefly recap the headlines from the last three defence reviews. In 1997, the review pledged to deliver 32 destroyers and frigates and 2 Amphibious Assault Ships. In the event, we got the 2 Assault ship...but only six frigates and destroyers.

In 2010 SDSR, we said we would deliver 2 carriers and 19 destroyers and frigates ...of which 6 were Type 45s and 13 were Type 26s. Well we got the carriers. But the 13 Type 26s were reduced to 8 and we've ordered 3 of them.

And in SDSR 2015 we set out a shopping list of 8 T26s, 5 Type 31e, 2 OPVs and 4 ballistic missile submarines. I am determined that remains on track.

I ask you, what is the point of methodically reviewing threats and tasks, formulating capability and then not delivering it?

What's the point of building ships only to mothball them for lack of crew, spares or funds?

What is the point of costly design and innovation if we only intend to build a handful?

What is the point of running on old vessels and delaying new ones and running

up massive costs in the process?

If the RN and wider defence is to deliver on the ambitions of our country, then we must tackle both the funding and the political behaviours which constantly undermine it.

In the coming weeks, I'm going to be saying more about how we build on all the good work and lessons to date, most notably from the carrier alliance.

To how we ensure Defence sits at the heart of the prosperity agenda.

To end the vicious circle of unfulfilled SDSRs and more of the same.

To create a virtuous circle where we recognise that it's long order books and a steady drumbeat in our yards that strengthens our supply chain and brings down the overall cost of procurement. What's needed is a closer partnership with industry that gives them confidence to invest and build and us the confidence that we can and must buy British.

We must recognise that if Britain's armed forces don't use it, Britain's businesses will find it harder to sell it. We have to walk the walk, as well as talk the talk.

And we must do more to maximise the full value of our resources to build up Britain...not only is that necessary in terms of creating skills and resilience.

But it's vital in creating an environment where Defence gets the critical investment it needs.

Now as I stand before you today, I can't tell you that The Treasury is going to welcome that message. I cannot tell you that The Treasury will agree with all of my message.

What I can promise you though, is that The Treasury will hear this message.

We know that Defence must play a much greater role in the whole of government's prosperity agenda.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR INDUSTRY

What does all this mean for industry? It means we're looking to you to match our ambition. To get the ships we need, we need the shipbuilding. That means improving the relationship between industry and Government

A few years ago, Sir John Parker's report laid bare the challenges. The old days of changing requirements on a whim and being vague about what we need in the long-term, that must end our Recent Acquisition Review. Took a sample of live MOD programmes.

It found on average that the initial estimated cost of a project rose by 35 per cent and delivery time by 46 per cent. That's not just costing us time and money...that is damaging our operational effectiveness.

So my challenge to industry is to become more sustainable. To do more to deliver value for money. To stick to fixed project budgets and to innovate in the way you build. To up your competitiveness...building exportability in as standard and to deliver faster...the days of taking decades to build a ship are over.

I know you've been told this before, but what's different now is that both you and I recognise that the politics also needs to change.

And we have to continually learn.

Which is why I've commissioned work examining the lessons from the Mars tanker procurement, especially for our UK supply chain.

Britain already has incredible shipbuilding heritage but I think we should prepare for a fantastic future, too.

Aircraft Carrier Alliance showed that Britain has what it takes to produce first class fifth generation ships.

Just as the lessons of Type 26 is that we have the capability to design frigates that are the envy of the world.

We need to learn these lessons as we bring in our next generation of Fleet Solid Support Ships...our logistic backbone. So it's time for a sea change in industry as well. Let's replace Sir John's old vicious cycle with a virtuous circle.

And let's remember Sir Henry's favourite words:

The sea endures no makeshifts. Discipline, courage and contempt for all that is pretentious and insincere. These are the teaching of the ocean and the elements – and they have been the qualities in all age of the British sailor.

As we prepare the next chapter for the fleet...

As we go into the next CSR.

As we transform defence

Let's have some honesty about what it takes.

Let's have some honesty about what it costs.

Let's have some confidence about its value and some rigor in the planning.

Let's have some excellence in our partnership and some clarity in our mission.

As your Secretary of State all I ask is for your help in that task.

Press release: £500 bill for unlicensed waste carrier

A 42-year-old man from Derby has been ordered to pay £520 after pleading guilty to operating as an illegal waste carrier throughout the Midlands in a case heard at Lincoln Magistrates' Court on Tuesday 14th May.

Adam Varey of Woodyard Lane, Foston, Derby was successfully prosecuted by the Environment Agency after committing eight cases of transporting scrap metal without possessing the requisite Waste Carrier Licence.

On 14th May he was conditionally discharged for a period of two years and ordered to pay costs of £500 and a Victim Surcharge of £20. A licence would have cost just £154. Anyone caught transporting waste as part of their business, whether it is their waste or someone else's, has to have a Waste Carrier Licence.

Varey was warned by the Magistrates that, if he offends during the next two years, he will face punishment for these eight offences as well as penalties for his new offending.

The investigation into this case involved the Environment Agency working in partnership with the police on Operation Transporter – a multi-agency operation targeting road crime.

Police discovered one of the vehicles that Varey had used to transport waste when they were called to a restaurant in Lincoln on 15 July 2018.

On inspecting the vehicle, officers found a ticket confirming scrap metal had been delivered to a recycling centre in Sheffield on 14 July 2018. The recycling centre confirmed that Varey's account had also been used on the eight dates relating to his charges, between 14 July 2018 and 26 February 2019, at their branches which also included Nottingham and Birmingham.

Speaking after the case, Iain Regan, Waste Regulatory Specialist at the Environment Agency, said:

The case demonstrates how seriously we take illegal waste crime and how we take robust enforcement action against those who deliberately ignore the law to protect communities and the environment. We hope it makes it clear that, if you transport waste, you must register for a Waste Carrier Licence.

We also highlight to householders and businesses the importance of only using licensed waste carriers to ensure any waste will be properly and legally managed.

We thank our partners, Nottinghamshire Police and Lincolnshire Police for co-operating with us throughout this investigation and for providing crucial evidence and assistance which led to today's successful prosecution.

To report waste crime call the Environment Agency 24/7 on 0800 80 70 60 or report it anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111. You can also check [online](#) whether a waste carrier is genuine.

[News story: Ways improving your numeracy skills has become easier](#)

Today is [National Numeracy Day](#) a great opportunity to highlight the value of numeracy and encourage people to [take action](#) to improve their skills. From cooking, to working out your weekly shop or organising your mortgage or rent payments, numbers are hugely important in everyday life.

It is never too late to improve your numeracy skills, especially when being better with numbers can change your life. To help this, the Government has introduced several new changes which includes reforming the maths GCSE, Functional Skills Qualifications, and has set up a network of new maths hubs across the country.

These changes have helped make sure more people are leaving education with a good grasp of maths. In 2018, more than 75% of 19 year olds held a GCSE or equivalent qualification in maths. Maths is also now the most popular A Level chosen by students in England. Since 2010, entries have risen by quarter (up 25.4% to 87,531 in 2018).

To find out whether your numeracy skills are up to scratch, get involved by taking the National Numeracy Day challenge [here](#):

Here are just some of the things the Government is doing to help boost the nation's maths skills:

There are lots of opportunities to improve your maths skills

- We know students who leave education with a strong grasp of English and maths increase their chances of getting a job, a career or going on to higher levels of education.
- If you're over 16 and left school without gaining a GCSE grade 4 in

maths, then you'll continue to study maths as part of your 16-18 education or training. As a result of this, tens of thousands of young people aged 17 and over in England are successful in their GCSEs or equivalent qualifications.

- If you are aged 19 or over and haven't achieved a GCSE grade C/4 or higher in maths already, but want to improve your maths, the Government fully funds a range of maths courses up to Level 2 (GCSE or equivalent).

Our network of specialist maths hubs are supporting schools to deliver improved and innovative teaching methods across the county.

- In 2014, we launched the maths hubs programme – a national network of 35 hubs across England to support to teachers and schools to improve the quality of maths education from the Early Years through to age 18. All the support is available free of charge to maths teachers in any state funded schools and colleges in England.
- Maths hubs also deliver the Teaching for Mastery programme, which adapts maths education from top-performing East Asian schools for teaching in English schools. The programme which is backed by £76 million aims to reach 11,000 primary and secondary schools by 2023.

New Centres of Excellence in Maths established around the country to boost maths post-16

- 21 Centres for Excellence in Maths have been launched and will work with networks of Further Education providers across the length and breadth of England. The Centres are designed to improve understanding of what works in teaching and support best practice to improve maths for students over the age of 16 who previously had low attainment grades.

More support for Further Education providers to help boost maths outcomes for their students

- Finally, we've launched the [Basic Maths Premium Pilot](#). It offers up to £500 per eligible student aged 16 and over to Further Education providers to improve the outcomes of low attaining students.

To find out whether your numeracy skills are up to scratch, get involved by taking the National Numeracy Day challenge [here](#)

[News story: Government awards £25 million to fund zero-emission transport innovations](#)

- 22 projects in total will benefit from government investment to decarbonise UK transport
- innovations to be funded include a quick-charging fully-electric motorbike prototype and agricultural vehicles with reduced emission capability
- investment a key Industrial Strategy milestone, and part of wider measures towards a net zero carbon economy

Projects across the country are set to benefit from £25million investment to develop ground-breaking zero emission technologies for new vehicles.

A boost for green transport, the investment is a key part of the government's Industrial Strategy, and part of wider efforts towards developing a net zero carbon economy.

One project aims to develop innovative, new electric motorcycle technology lowering vehicle emissions and noise, with faster battery charge times and making electric motorbikes attractive to the market.

Led by Triumph Motorcycles, the project adds award-winning motorsport and electrification experience from Williams Advanced Engineering, propulsion innovation from Integral Powertrain and Warwick Manufacturing Group's success integrating academic research with public and private sector projects.

Other winning projects include:

- a project that will add an electric drive axle to a conventional diesel-powered truck, creating a hybrid engine which will store and reuse the electrical energy on the trailer
- a research and development project to replace metals with new materials using recycled carbon fibres from aviation waste
- a feasibility study into the potential of hydrogen fuel cell technology as a zero-emission solution for utility and off-road vehicles

The support for these projects is key to the delivery of the government's modern [Industrial Strategy's Future of Mobility Grand Challenge](#) and the [Road to Zero Strategy](#), both of which aim to put the UK at the forefront of the design and manufacturing of zero emission vehicles. This transition is also a crucial part of the UK's move to a net zero emissions economy to end the country's contribution to global warming entirely.

The government's ambition is for all new cars and vans to be effectively zero

emission by 2040. The numbers of ultra-low emission vehicles on UK roads is currently at record levels, with around 200,000 ultra-low emission vehicles registered in the UK.

Future of Mobility Minister Jesse Norman said:

The government continues to invest in technologies and innovation that help the UK to a zero emission future. This is a central part of our Future of Mobility Grand Challenge.

It is great to see such enthusiasm and imagination from industry, as we work together with them to realise the environmental, health and wellbeing benefits of greener transport.

Business Secretary Greg Clark said:

We are committed to ensuring the UK continues to develop its world-leading reputation for excellence in the design and manufacturing of greener transport.

These exciting new projects, from Liverpool to Slough, are powering the future of zero emission vehicles and through our modern Industrial Strategy. Investments like these will also enable us to realise our commitment for all new cars and vans to be effectively zero emission by 2040.

Since 2010, the government has designed and funded a series of collaborative, industry led competitions with Innovate UK, creating a diverse range of high-quality projects that have driven forward advanced technologies and strengthened UK industrial and supply chain capability. Government and private sector investment in these competitions has already provided over £600 million of funding.

The full list of winning projects can be found below.

PDF, 393KB, 4 pages

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News story: Funding available for professionals testing extended court hours

- Participation fee for publicly funded legal professionals
- This will help fund additional financial burdens for legal firms
- Flexible Operating Hours pilots to commence by the summer

A small amount of funding will be made available by HM Courts and Tribunals Service for publicly funded practitioners taking part in Flexible Operating Hours pilots, with a fee of £100 for attendance at a housing duty solicitor slot and £50 for attending a single hearing. This decision has been made to reflect the short term change in arrangements for participating legal professionals and the potential financial burden for firms involved. It will only apply to those who attend court outside the hours of 9am and 5.30pm.

HMCTS announced its plans to test early and late sittings in civil and family courts in November last year, to give people greater access to hearings that can fit around their busy lives.

Manchester Civil Justice Centre and Brentford County Court will run the pilots for six months, testing whether civil and family buildings can be used more effectively; the benefits of making it possible for people to attend court outside of the traditional 10am – 4pm sitting day; and what more flexibility means for staff and legal professionals.

For more information see the [Flexible Operating Hours pilots prospectus](#).

Notes to editors

1. Participation fees will be funded by HMCTS and administered by the Legal Aid Agency (LAA) and would be separate to any normal legal aid claims practitioners would make to the LAA.
2. Pilots are expected to begin by the summer.
3. Any future decision regarding the future of Flexible Operating Hours will be subject to a full and independent evaluation.