

UK announces RAF and Royal Navy support to Qatar World Cup 2022

The Ministry of Defence will support Qatar with military capabilities to counter terrorism and other threats to the tournament. This will include maritime security support from the Royal Navy, advanced venue search training, operational planning and command and control support, and further specialist advice.

The Joint Typhoon Squadron, also known as 12 Squadron, is based at RAF Coningsby and is operated by RAF and QEAF personnel. During the deployment they will support counter-terrorism efforts through air security operations.

Since their formation as a joint squadron in June 2020, 12 Squadron have exercised regularly in Qatar and the World Cup deployment co-insides with a pre-planned deployment.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace MP said:

Making sure citizens from across the world can enjoy attending the World Cup, Britain and Qatar will join forces to provide air policing in the skies above the tournament.

I am delighted that our joint squadron with the Qatari Emiri Air Force of Typhoons will patrol the airspace during the tournament.

Defence cooperation with Qatar has been long standing. Qatar remains the only partner with whom the RAF operates joint squadrons – 11 Squadron Qatari Emiri Air Force, the Joint Hawk Training Squadron at RAF Leeming, and 12 Squadron, the Joint Typhoon Squadron at RAF Coningsby.

The partnerships aim to provide RAF personnel with access to increased aircraft flying hours, give the Qatari Emiri Air Force access to world-class RAF accredited training, and see long-term investment in RAF infrastructure and training facilities.

The [Qatar Air Programme](#) comprises of a series of contracts between the Qatar Armed Forces (QAF). Qatar's contract with BAE Systems is for 24 Typhoons, 9 Hawk jet trainers and a bespoke support and training package, alongside a contract with MBDA for an associated weapons package. These contracts are collectively worth in excess of £6bn and are supporting and sustaining thousands of jobs in the UK.

The Qatari Emiri Air Force is overseeing air security for the World Cup, delivering the majority of operations. The UK's contribution will add expertise and capability, in part gained through the UK's Olympic experience

in 2012. It is a demonstration of our strong defence relationship, and further enhances the UK and Qatar's ability to tackle our shared security challenges –contributing to regional stability and protecting mutual prosperity and security.

[PM call with President Zelenskyy: 28 May 2022](#)

Press release

Prime Minister Boris Johnson spoke to Ukrainian President Zelenskyy this morning.



The Prime Minister spoke to Ukrainian President Zelenskyy this morning.

The leaders discussed the latest developments in the Donbas and the East of Ukraine. The Prime Minister said that the UK will continue to support the heroic Ukrainian Armed Forces in their efforts to defend their homeland against this barbaric attack, including helping provide the equipment they need.

The leaders spoke about Putin's despicable blockade of Odesa, Ukraine's biggest shipping port. The Prime Minister outlined to President Zelenskyy the intensive work taking place with international partners to find ways to resume the export of grain from Ukraine to avert a global food crisis. He said that the UK would work with G7 partners to push for urgent progress. The leaders agreed next steps and the imperative for Russia to relax its blockade and allow safe shipping lanes.

The Prime Minister spoke about the importance of the international community continuing to work and act together, so that Ukraine succeeds and Putin fails. He also emphasised that countries have a duty to support Ukraine, both now and in the long-term, so that it is never in the position to be attacked again.

The leaders agreed to remain in close contact.

Published 28 May 2022

[Live Events Reinsurance Scheme supports over £400 million of investment and paves way for busy summer events season](#)

- Almost 15,000 jobs and more than 150 events supported by the scheme, including Wimbledon, The BRIT Awards and Virgin Radio's Big Thank You Tour
- UK live events sector is worth more than £70 billion annually to the economy and is bouncing back from the pandemic with a vibrant summer programme of events

Nearly three million people are expected to have attended events supported by the Government's Live Events Reinsurance Scheme by the end of the summer.

The scheme, which closes in September, has paved the way for a busy summer events season, giving event organisers the confidence to invest in future events – safe in the knowledge they can insure against the most severe coronavirus-related risk, providing job security and boosting the economy.

The Government acted as a reinsurer and guaranteed to make sure insurers offered products to event companies. Prominent insurers in the Lloyd's Market including Munich Re, Beazley, Arch, Dale Underwriting Partners, Hiscox and Ark are carriers of the scheme.

The scheme has already provided well over £100 million worth of cover – supporting more than £400 million of investment and protecting almost 15,000 jobs, keeping the economy moving and driving growth across the country.

Events supported across the UK include national set-piece events such as Wimbledon, The BRIT Awards, Birmingham's Spring Fair and the London Art Fair. It has also supported important community events such as the Shaftesbury Book Fair, the Cardiff Half Marathon and the Gloucester Quays Christmas Outdoor Ice Rink.

Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak said:

The UK is a rich cultural hub and puts on some of the best arts, sporting and music events across the globe.

Our Live Events Reinsurance Scheme backed these events, enabling them to take place in the midst of uncertainty caused by the pandemic – helping to support nearly 15,000 jobs and over £400m of investment.

Arts Minister Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay said:

This summer the public can look forward to a packed schedule of live events in sport, culture and business thanks to Government support for the live events sector and the incredible resilience and ingenuity of the people who work in it.

While it is right that the Live Events Reinsurance Scheme is being wound down as we bounce back from the pandemic, I am proud of the role it played in getting the live events sector back on its feet.

Virgin Radio UK content director, Mike Cass said:

The Virgin Radio UK Big Thank You Tour was one big rock star thank you to our key workers for everything they have done for us all during the pandemic.

The Live Events Reinsurance Scheme meant we could reschedule the tour for when it was safe to go ahead and ensure our key worker heroes were properly thanked by the best names in the business with three evenings of great music.

Patrick Davison, underwriting director, Lloyd's Market Association, said:

Event cancellation due to covid was an uninsurable risk everywhere in the world. No one would touch it. But in co-operation with the LMA and Her Majesty's Government – without whose support the scheme could not have been possible – specialist underwriters at Lloyd's were prepared to innovate in support of the UK events industry, to get the country back on an even keel. I am proud of their willingness to risk their own capital to build confidence in the events sector and help restore the economy.

There are strong signs the vital events sector is bouncing back, with a full programme of concerts, music festivals, sporting competitions and other events throughout the summer. This is thanks to a number of successful Government policies such as the Events Research Programme and world-leading levels of support committed through the £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund.

The Live Events Reinsurance Scheme has supported events across the country and in all four nations of the UK. In the West Midlands, events totalling £13 million in spend have been covered, including the National Running Show and

MACH 2022 at Birmingham's National Exhibition Centre. More than £3 million has been spent towards events in the North West, including Virgin Radio's Big Thank You Tour and the Federation of Small Businesses Awards.

As the risk posed to events by Covid-19 has been significantly reduced thanks to the success of the Government's vaccination programme, the reinsurance scheme is scheduled to end as planned on 30 September in line with the Government's Living with Covid plan.

Ends

Notes to editors:

Testimonials:

Sally Bolton, Chief Executive, All England Tennis Club, said:

The AELTC welcomes the support of the Live Events Reinsurance Scheme in relation to The Championships 2022.

Mike Seaman, CEO Raccoon Events, Organiser of the National Running Show, said:

The pandemic was a difficult time for us as exhibition organisers. The reinsurance scheme gave us the confidence to delay any decision about postponing our event until the situation had improved markedly. We are a small business and could not have done this without the backing of the government and the net result was that we brought 20,000 people together, promoting exercise, improving mental health and stimulating trade, all as a result of the reinsurance scheme.

Platinum Jubilee fund creates boost for village halls

England's village halls are set to benefit from a major new renovation fund launched by the Government today (28 May 2022) to mark Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

At the heart of rural life and communities, village halls are home to fitness classes, coffee mornings, community groups, jumble sales, art clubs and post office services – even in the most remote of locations. They often provide the only place for a community to meet and socialise locally and are vital in

tackling loneliness, providing a lifeline for those who can't travel long distances.

The new £3 million grant fund announced today will be a significant boost to rural communities with 125 village halls set to benefit, allowing vital modernisation and improvements to take place.

Bigger, brighter, contemporary spaces will encourage more people to make use of their village halls, and bring people together.

Lord Benyon, Minister for Rural Affairs said:

Village halls are the centrepiece of rural life and funding their renovation to mark the Jubilee is a fitting tribute to The Queen's Service.

In a changing world, they are important facilities for community groups, social clubs and local services. This funding will ensure they are central to the fabric of our villages for many more years to come.

Margaret Clark CBE, Chair of the Rural Coalition said:

Village halls provide the focal point for village life. They support important services and facilities and offer places to meet which would not otherwise be available to many rural communities. In doing so, they have a crucial role to play in helping levelling up in rural areas.

I welcome the new Platinum Jubilee Fund, announced today, which will allow more village halls to upgrade and modernise their premises, so that they can continue to meet the needs of their communities in the years to come.

David Emerson CBE, Chair of Action with Communities in Rural England said:

We are delighted to know that through this capital funding programme, the Government is renewing its support for village halls in this jubilee year. At the heart of rural communities for over a century, these unique volunteer run halls do so much to support the well-being of local residents, as well as helping to sustain the many livelihoods which depend on use of these important buildings.

This is an announcement that is especially appropriate in the week that 1000s of halls across the country are hosting local celebrations of the Royal Jubilee.

Chris Cowcher, Head of Policy, Plunkett Foundation:

The Platinum Jubilee Renovation Fund for village halls is a real cause for celebration! Many village halls host community-owned businesses, such as local shops, markets and post offices, they create a real beating heart to their villages that, not only, provides vital services but reaches out to the vulnerable, isolated and lonely. We hope this fund will support more community enterprises and quite simply help rural places to thrive.

The Platinum Jubilee Village Hall Improvement Grant Fund will provide grant funding over three years (to 2025) to support capital improvement projects for village halls, such as installing Wi-Fi, extending buildings and modernising facilities.

The announcement today builds on previous Government support for village halls. Defra has supported the modernisation of village halls in England through the previous Village Halls Improvement Grant Fund (VHIGF). This fund, launched in 2019, supported projects to modernise 125 village halls, which together with other sources of finance enabled village hall improvements of over £17 million.

The Platinum Jubilee Village Hall Improvement Grant Fund will build on the success of the schemes to commemorate both Queen Victoria and King George, and demonstrate that almost 200 years on, we continue to build on the legacy of the monarchy, both past and present with another 125 village halls who will carry on this legacy.

Details on how the funding will be administered will be announced in due course.

[PM call with Prime Minister of Hungary: 27 May 2022](#)

Press release

The Prime Minister spoke to Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán this evening.



The Prime Minister spoke to Viktor Orbán this evening following his re-election as Prime Minister of Hungary last month.

The Prime Minister set out his strong condemnation of Russia's continued attack on Ukraine and said the international community had to continue to apply maximum economic pressure to cripple Putin's war-machine. He acknowledged the challenging circumstances some countries faced in sourcing energy supplies but hoped the EU would be able to proceed with its sixth sanctions package given the paramount priority of ending the war in Ukraine as soon as possible.

Both leaders agreed that shoring up energy security and domestic resilience in Europe was crucial, while endless confrontation in Ukraine would only cause more suffering.

The Prime Minister said he believed the Ukrainian forces would fight for as long as it took and paid tribute to their valiant efforts.

Both leaders agreed to stay in close touch.

Published 27 May 2022