

# Speech: HMS Queen Elizabeth, Portsmouth: Theresa May's Speech

It is a great pleasure to be here with you aboard HMS Queen Elizabeth today. Let me start by thanking you all, a great partnership of ship's company and contractors, for your tremendous work putting this great ship through her paces during her sea trials. I know it's been a major undertaking.

This is the biggest and most complex warship ever built for the Royal Navy. So to test her capabilities thoroughly, and to make sure that her 17 million components are working as they should, is a very big job. The fact that she was ready to come in to port ahead of schedule is testament to your hard work.

As the first generation of sailors to form this ship's company, you have a special privilege and responsibility. You are setting the standard for those who come after you. Decades from now, when this ship is carrying our flag around the world, protecting our interests and ensuring our security, you will be able to look back on this time with pride. And the whole country is proud of you. The skill and professionalism of the Royal Navy are world-renowned. Your service is critical to our country's security and success in the world. In doing your vital work, you and your families are often called upon to make enormous sacrifices.

I know that you make them unstintingly and that you always give of your best. Britain truly has the best sailors, marines and officers in the world and I believe that you deserve the very best equipment. That is what we have with HMS Queen Elizabeth. This ship is a symbol of the United Kingdom as a great global, maritime nation.

Clearly, she is a stunning piece of twenty-first century engineering and a true testament to British shipbuilding and design. Six shipyards from across the United Kingdom contributed sections of this vessel. In Glasgow, Devon, Tyneside, Merseyside, Portsmouth and Fife, the skill of British shipbuilders were on display in her construction. Over 10,000 people, including 800 apprenticeships, 700 businesses helped build the mighty ship we see today. We are determined to build on the success of the Queen Elizabeth class carriers with a National Shipbuilding Strategy to open up new opportunities for our great British shipyards in the future.

Britain can be proud of this ship, and what it represents. It sends a clear signal that as Britain forges a new, positive, confident role for ourselves on the world stage in the years ahead, we are determined to remain a fully engaged global power, working closely with our friends and allies around the world.

As a leading member of NATO, the foremost military power in Europe and a permanent member of the UN Security Council, Britain has an enduring responsibility to help sustain the international rules-based order, and to

defend the liberal values which underpin it.

To ensure we can do so effectively, we will increase defence spending every year and continue to meet NATO's target to spend 2% of GDP on defence. Our carrier programme is an example of what that spending can deliver. As highly versatile and potent assets, they will be able to meet the widest range of challenges around the world. Whether the task be high intensity war fighting, targeted action to fight terrorism or humanitarian relief to save lives overseas, these ships will transform the UK's ability to project power around the world.

Alongside her supporting task-group, including state-of-the-art aircraft, helicopters and escorts, HMS Queen Elizabeth and HMS Prince of Wales will in time give the UK a truly world class carrier strike capability for decades to come. Here in Portsmouth, the home of the Royal Navy and the new home of this great ship, we are surrounded by reminders of the Royal Navy's proud past. It was from this harbour that Nelson embarked aboard HMS Victory before the battle of Trafalgar; from here the allied forces left for the Normandy beaches to defeat fascism on D-day; and from here that the task-force set sail for the South Atlantic to liberate the Falklands.

Many times in our history we have called upon the Royal Navy to defend our island and protect our interests and those of our citizens around the world. The threats we face may have changed, and naval technology advanced beyond all recognition. But in the fifty years of service to come from this vessel, we can be inspired by those traditions to face the new challenges of the twenty-first century with the same determination and resolve which have always been the Royal Navy's hallmarks.

I hope that you can all enjoy some respite before you take the ship out of harbour again for the next phase of her sea trials, and let me once again thank you all for your service to our country.

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## **Press release: Angler arrested and fined after obstructing a water bailiff**

James Jones, 21, of Blodwen Road, New Inn, Pontypool was caught with a rod and line but no licence on the River Severn at Worcester on 18 February. Initially he gave a false name and was arrested by the bailiff, but after giving his correct details was issued with a ticket.

Jones was summoned to appear in court on 3 August but he did not attend, so the magistrates issued a warrant for his arrest. He was then arrested by West Mercia Police and brought to court.

After pleading guilty he was fined £120 for obstructing the bailiff and ordered to pay costs of £172 and a victim surcharge of £30. This offence is reportable to the Police National Computer and has been reported to the ACRO Criminal Records Office.

Andrew Eardley of the Environment Agency said:

Water bailiffs have the powers of police constables, including the power to arrest. This case demonstrates that we won't give up on tracking down offenders who obstruct our officers, and the police are willing to support us by executing arrest warrants.

Most anglers enjoying the sport fish legally, but there continues to be small number of anglers who fail to buy a fishing licence. These few are cheating their fellow anglers and the future of the sport.

An annual licence costs from just £30. It seems ridiculous that anglers risk significant fines and costs, a criminal conviction and the loss of their fishing equipment for such a small fee.

Speaking for West Mercia Police, Alexa Neville said:

British conservation-based angling law is in place for a very good reason and we can, and do, take action to support the Environment Agency in its duty of fishing enforcement.

West Mercia Police and our partners also have Operation Leviathan in place to raise awareness of fish theft, illegal angling and anti-social behaviour around waterways.

Money from fishing licence sales is invested in England's fisheries and is used to fund a wide range of projects to improve facilities for anglers including protecting stocks from illegal fishing, pollution and disease; restoring fish stocks through re-stocking; eradicating invasive species; and fish habitat improvements. Licence money is also used to fund the Angling Trust to provide information about fishing and to encourage participation in the sport.

You need a valid Environment Agency fishing licence to fish for salmon, trout, freshwater fish, smelt or eel in England. [Buying a rod licence](#) is easy. A licence lasts 365 days from the day you buy it.

Anyone witnessing illegal fishing incidents in progress can report it

directly to the Environment Agency hotline on 0800 80 70 60. Information on illegal fishing and environmental crime can also be reported anonymously to Crime stoppers on 0800 555 111.

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## [News story: Pledge to protect Belfast Agreement and Common Travel Area in new position paper](#)

The Government has today published a comprehensive paper which outlines the UK's position on addressing the unique circumstances of Northern Ireland and the land border with Ireland.

The position paper – which has been published ahead of the August negotiating round – states that the Government will protect the Common Travel Area (CTA) and associated rights for UK and Irish citizens, and put upholding the Belfast ('Good Friday') Agreement at the heart of its Exit negotiations.

The paper also puts forward proposals on avoiding a hard border on the movement of goods – making clear the UK's position that there should be no physical infrastructure at the border – and plans to preserve the wide range of institutional cooperation between Northern Ireland, Ireland and Great Britain including for the energy market.

### **Secretary of State for Exiting the EU David Davis said:**

The UK and Ireland have been clear all along that we need to prioritise protecting the Belfast Agreement in these negotiations, and ensure the land border is as seamless as possible for people and businesses.

The proposals we outline in this paper do exactly that, and we're looking forward to seeing the EU's position paper on the Northern Ireland border.

In committing to keep the Common Travel Area, which has existed for nearly a century, we're making sure UK and Irish citizens will continue to be able to travel, live, work and study across both countries.

### **Secretary of State for Northern Ireland James Brokenshire said:**

This paper shows the Government's commitment to protecting and advancing the unique interests of Northern Ireland as we leave the

EU. We are fully committed to the Belfast Agreement ,and the principles, rights and institutions it established.

The paper provides flexible and imaginative ideas and demonstrates our desire to find a practical solution that recognises the unique economic, social and cultural context of the land border with Ireland, without creating any new obstacles to trade within the UK. I believe it is possible to find a solution that works for the UK, for Ireland and for the EU – and, specifically, for Northern Ireland – and am determined to work to achieve that.

It is clear that there are many areas where the UK, Ireland and the rest of the EU have shared objectives. We have a lot to build on but need to work together intensively over the coming months.

The paper will say:

- Support for the Belfast Agreement should be written into the Withdrawal Agreement to reflect the absolute commitment of the UK Government, Irish Government, and the European Union, to the peace process.
- The Withdrawal Agreement should recognise that the people of Northern Ireland will continue to have – as set out in the Belfast Agreement – a birthright to both Irish and British citizenship. Any people in Northern Ireland who are Irish citizens will continue to benefit from the EU citizenship rights that flow from that.
- The Withdrawal Agreement should also recognise the ongoing status of the CTA and associated rights, a position that is entirely consistent with the EU's negotiating directives. This will mean there are no passport controls for UK and Irish citizens travelling within the CTA and no question of new immigration checks operating between Northern Ireland and Ireland.
- PEACE funding for reconciliation projects in border areas should be continued. We want to explore a potential future programme post-2020 with the Northern Ireland Executive and Irish Government.
- The UK and the EU should agree a common understanding of the principles of North-South and East-West cooperation in the initial phases of the dialogue, including key principles to test future models for border arrangements and energy. This includes no physical border infrastructure and maintaining the Single Electricity Market.

The policy document is the fourth formal position paper to be shared with the EU on matters related to the UK's withdrawal from the EU.

It will inform the ongoing dialogue between the UK and EU negotiating teams on the the unique circumstances of Northern Ireland and Ireland in light of the UK's withdrawal from, and new partnership with, the EU, as well as building on the proposals in the UK's customs paper published on Tuesday.

You can find the paper [here](#)

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## **Press release: Over 3 million more people in work since 2010**

According to the Office for National Statistics, the number of people in work is at the highest level since records began in 1971.

The record figures have been driven by increases in the number of people in secure work – over 75% of the increase in employment over the past 7 years has been in full-time work.

There are now 338,000 more people in work compared to this time last year.

Minister for Employment, Damian Hinds said:

These statistics show that record levels of people are in work across the country and earning a wage, which is great news.

Over 3 million more people are in work now than in 2010, with 7 in 10 of these roles being in higher skilled work.

Over the past year the rise in employment has been overwhelmingly driven by permanent and full-time jobs, as employers continue to invest in Britain's strong economy.

The task now is to build on this success through Jobcentre Plus and our employment programmes so that everybody can benefit from the opportunities being created.

Today's figures also show:

- the employment rate is at a record high of 75.1%, with 32.07 million people now in work – an increase of 338,000 on the year
- this year has been a strong one for employment growth with 247,000 more people now in work since January

- there are a near record 768,000 vacancies in the economy at any one time
- the female employment rate is at a record high of 70.5%, with over 15 million women in work
- youth unemployment is down by 394,000 since 2010
- there are more British people in work than ever before and around 9 in 10 people in jobs are UK nationals
- the UK employment rate is now the fourth highest in the European Union and 7 percentage points higher than the EU28 average

Separate figures out today [show 1.3 million claims have been made to Universal Credit](#). Of the 570,000 people now claiming Universal Credit, 39% are in work.

The government recently announced up to [£35 million of funding with devolution authorities across England for 6 new innovation employment pilots](#). These will help over 18,000 disadvantaged people into employment, and tackle long-term barriers to work and in-work progression.

Estimates of the claimant count are no longer included in the ONS statistical bulletin as they may now be providing a misleading representation of the UK labour market. For further information, read the [ONS statement explaining the decision \(23 February 2017\)](#).

Follow DWP on:

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## [Press release: Contract award – Operations Site Works](#)

Sellafield Ltd has awarded a contract to OneAIM, a joint venture comprising AmecFosterWheeler and Interserve.

The four-year Operations Site Works framework has a value up to £160m and will provide engineering support services to Sellafield's reprocessing plants and associated facilities.