

[News story: New £48m contract for workboat fleet will support UK carriers and UK jobs, Defence Minister announces](#)

The fleet of up to 38 workboats will assist Royal Navy ships from UK bases and on operations all over the world.

With Britain's flagship [HMS Queen Elizabeth Carrier set to enter her new home in Portsmouth in under two weeks time](#), tasks to be carried out by the boats will include transferring personnel to and from both of the UK's carriers. Able to carry up to 36 passengers at one time, the workboats can be stowed inside the Carriers and winched to and from the water using on-board lifting equipment, allowing them to support the enormous ships either in port or on operations.

Building and supporting the boats will also sustain 60 British jobs, including 15 at Atlas Elektronik UK near Dorchester in Dorset where the boats will be built. A further 45 jobs will be sustained across the supply chain, including at E P Barrus in Bicester, KPM-Marine in Birmingham and Mashfords in Plymouth.

Defence Minister Harriett Baldwin said:

From the south coast to the banks of the Clyde, British shipbuilding is ensuring that our growing Navy has the reach it needs to protect our interests around the globe. These cutting-edge workboats will support the likes of our iconic new aircraft carriers and the Type 26 frigates, as well as sustaining 60 British jobs. This is another step in our £178 billion plan to provide our Armed Forces with the very best equipment to keep our country safe.

The £48m contract will support UK carriers and UK jobs.

Ranging in length from 11 to 18 metres, the boats will also perform other tasks including officer and diver training, Antarctic exploration and explosive ordnance disposal.

They are highly adaptable to operational demands thanks to their cutting-edge modular design elements. For example, if the Royal Navy wished to quickly redeploy a boat from hydrographic survey duties to support diving for explosive ordnance, the survey module can be quickly lifted out of the boat and replaced with the diving module containing the high pressure air required for that task.

The contract will enable the design and construction of up to 38 boats as well as in-service support for the fleet for a further two years after the final boat is accepted. The first boat will enter service next year.

Chief Executive Officer of Defence Equipment and Support, the MOD's procurement organisation, Tony Douglas said:

These boats use modern materials and have been designed from the keel up to provide the Royal Navy with unparalleled flexibility and adaptability.

DE&S is proud to maintain excellent working relationships with partners across UK industry, ensuring our Armed Forces continue to be provided with the equipment they need while also maintaining vital British skills and jobs.

The boats will all feature glass-reinforced plastic hulls and advanced twin waterjet propulsion. Despite their varying roles, they will all have the same steering and control system, reducing the need for training and making them simpler to operate.

[News story: Are you a current Functional Skills maths teacher?](#)

Ofqual is looking to recruit current Functional Skills maths teachers to take part in an online research study.

Participants will be asked to compare the likely difficulty of multiple pairs of maths questions – in terms of which question in each pair is likely to be most difficult for a Functional Skills student to answer fully. To do this we are looking for current Functional Skills maths teachers, or people who have taught Functional Skills maths in the last 3 years. You must not have been involved in developing assessment materials for Functional Skills maths.

Each question will be isolated from its usual context of a whole paper; and you will be making a judgement of difficulty considering all the factors that may affect a student's response. You won't need to complete the work in a single sitting, but will need an internet connection while you're doing it.

We plan to run the study in late August/early September over a 2 week window. Participants will be paid for their contribution.

If you're interested in taking part, please email your contact details, along with your experience in Functional Skills maths to

functionalskillsreform@ofqual.gov.uk by 21 August 2017. We will then provide further details about the work itself and what you need to do next.

News story: Norovirus associated with the World Athletics Championships

Public Health England (PHE) statement about an outbreak of norovirus associated with the World Athletics Championships in London.

Dr Deborah Turbitt, PHE London deputy director for health protection, said:

PHE has been notified of a confirmed outbreak of norovirus among people associated with the World Athletics Championships.

We have so far been made aware of approximately 30 people reporting illness and 2 of these cases have been confirmed as norovirus by laboratory testing.

PHE has been working closely with the London 2017 organisers and the hotel to provide infection control advice to limit the spread of illness.

Norovirus is often caught through close contact with someone carrying the virus or by touching contaminated surfaces or objects.

Norovirus can be very unpleasant but is rarely serious. Most people make a full recovery within 1 or 2 days, without treatment. It is important that people with diarrhoea and vomiting drink plenty of fluids to avoid dehydration.

More information about norovirus is available on [NHS Choices](#).

News story: Grave of Kent born WW2 Pilot Officer finally rededicated

after 77 years

Verifying the research submitted was crucial in identifying the final resting place of Pilot Officer (P/O) Hector Garman Webb of the 224 Squadron, Royal Air Force (RAF), who was killed during WW2. A rededication service was held on 8 August 2017 at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) Åndalsnes Church Cemetery, Norway 77 years after he fell.

The service, which was a fitting tribute to the sacrifice made by P/O Webb, was organised by the MOD's Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC), part of Defence Business Services, and was conducted by The Reverend Dr David Richardson, RAF Station Chaplain, RAF Halton.

Reverend David Richardson, said:

As someone serving at RAF Halton today, it is such a privilege to be here at this beautiful cemetery to remember the courage and sacrifice of Hector who graduated from Halton nearly 80 years ago.

P/O Webb was just 16 years old when he joined the RAF as an apprentice engine fitter. He later volunteered to train as a pilot and in 1937 he joined 224 Squadron as a Sergeant. He finally received his commission to become a Pilot Officer in 1940.

In the early stages of WW2, 224 Squadron were assigned to provide air cover in support of Operation Primrose – the landing of British troops near Åndalsnes, Norway. On 23 April 1940 P/O Webb's aircraft (Hudson N7249) was approaching Åndalsnes when he was hit by friendly fire and crashed into a nearby mountain. His 3 crew members ejected and parachuted to safety, however, P/O Webb was sadly killed. He was aged just 24.

P/O Webb's burial place had remained unknown, until the grave of an unknown airman buried in Åndalsnes Church Cemetery, Norway was brought to the attention of the Ministry of Defence by Hector's nephew, Ben Sharp. Further research was undertaken by the MOD JCCC to corroborate the evidence and the identification of the "Unknown Airman" grave was found to belong to P/O Hector Garman Webb, meaning his grave could finally be marked with his name.

Ben Sharp who travelled to Norway from the USA to attend the service of his uncle, Hector, said:

It was a very touching ceremony and we were so pleased to see the people of Åndalsnes here to remember him with us.

It is very important for us to take a break in our busy lives and spend time to remember the sacrifices these men made for our

freedom. We are especially thankful to the JCCC, CWGC and the local community who have looked after Hector's grave so well for all these years.

Nicola Nash, JCCC said:

It has been a privilege to work on this case and today's ceremony was a fitting commemoration for P/O Hector Webb and the ultimate sacrifice he made.

A new headstone bearing P/O Webb's name was provided by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

[News story: Professor Sir Michael Rawlins re-appointed Chair](#)

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency announced the re-appointment of Professor Sir Michael Rawlins as its Chair yesterday for a further 3 years.

Since taking up the position of chair at the Agency in 2014, Sir Michael has overseen the Agency's work as an effective regulator of medicines and medical devices across the UK. He has promoted the first-class science and research carried out in each of the Agency's centres; the National Institute for Biological Standards and Control (NIBSC), the Clinical Practice Research Datalink (CPRD) and MHRA.

Earlier this year, Professor Sir Michael Rawlins was appointed Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the British Empire (GBE) for the services to the safety of medicines, healthcare and innovation.

Professor Sir Michael Rawlins said:

"I am delighted to serve as the Agency's Chair for a second term. One of the joys of this job is seeing each part of the Agency continue to deliver innovative science and protect public health.

"I am looking forward to taking on the next challenge, as we seek to continue to play a leading role in both Europe and the world on promoting public health."

Chief Executive Dr Ian Hudson said:

"Sir Mike has overseen a very successful period in the Agency's history, and

I'm delighted to see his re-appointment, as we move into an equally crucial next stage.

"He has been at the forefront of innovation, development and leadership in the public health sector for more than 3 decades."