

Statement to Parliament: MCA business plans: 2017 to 2018

Maritime and Coastguard Agency's business plan for 2017 to 2018 released.

I am proud to announce the publication of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency's (MCA) business plan for 2017 to 2018. The MCA does vital work to save lives at sea, regulate ship standards and protect the marine environment. The agency affects not just those working on the coast or at sea, it upholds the legacy of our great maritime nation.

The business plan sets out:

- the services that the agency will deliver and any significant changes it plans to make
- the resources the agency requires
- the key performance indicators, by which its performance will be assessed

This plan allows service users and members of the public to assess how the agency is performing in operating its key services, managing reforms and the agency finances.

The business plan will be available electronically on GOV.UK and copies will be placed in the libraries of both houses.

News story: CMA sets out priorities for year ahead

Over the past 12 months the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has brought several major pieces of work to successful conclusion, including a market study into [legal services](#) and its 2 market investigations into the [energy](#) and [retail banking](#) markets.

In its fourth year, as set out in its [annual plan](#), the CMA will build on its progress to date, intervening in markets where necessary to ensure people, including the hardest-pressed in society, are offered the best possible deals when buying goods and services.

The CMA enters 2017/18 with a substantial portfolio of ongoing work. It is pushing ahead with studies into sectors that have long been central to many people's lives (like [care homes](#)), alongside growing and evolving areas of the

economy ([digital comparison tools](#)) as well as investigating concerns that consumers' rights are being ignored ([online gambling](#)).

The CMA has already sharply stepped up its enforcement against anti-competitive practices. It opened 10 new civil competition enforcement cases in the past year – more than twice its annual target – imposed [multi-million pound fines](#) on pharmaceutical companies charging the NHS excessive prices for vital medication and secured the UK regime's first [Company Director disqualification](#) for a competition law breach. In the coming year, the CMA commits to further increasing the pace, scale and impact of its enforcement, without sacrificing hard-won improvements to rigour and fairness.

Alongside enforcement, the CMA will continue to use communications tools to raise awareness of the law, minimise the burden of complying (especially for smaller firms) and encourage complaints when firms see unfair practice by others.

The CMA will also continue to operate an efficient and effective mergers regime, building on the improvements already made to the efficiency of its end-to-end processes. It will also continue to conduct regulatory appeals with rigour and independence as required, to ensure an efficient and stable regulatory regime which encourages long-term investment in the UK economy and is ultimately beneficial for consumers.

The CMA is committed to supporting growth in the UK economy. There is a [body of evidence](#) that competition, and competition policy interventions, boost productivity and in 2017/18, the CMA will continue to help tackle the UK's long-standing productivity problem by supporting conditions that enable innovative businesses that treat their customers well to emerge and succeed.

The CMA remains an expert advocate and a strong voice for competition, including in its role as a trusted adviser with policymakers and regulators in the UK and internationally. As the UK prepares to leave the European Union in 2019 and as the government forms its new economic strategies, this role will be more crucial than ever.

The CMA is prioritising further improving its effectiveness and its efficiency. It aims to do so by using all its resources – physical, financial and intellectual – as efficiently as possible and by learning from its experiences to date. This includes, in relation to market investigations and following a thorough internal review the CMA is [currently consulting](#) on, proposed changes to the way it carries out these complex projects.

David Currie, CMA Chairman, said:

“Our primary duty is to promote competition for the benefit of consumers, and in the year ahead we will continue to protect them from anti-competitive practices, from harmful unfair trading practices and where markets are not working for them, right across the UK.

“Wider developments will have a bearing on our work this year, notably the UK's planned exit from the EU and new government economic strategies. In the

period ahead we intend to remain a strong voice for competition and consumers, working as a trusted adviser to government.

Press release: Statement from the Secretary of State for Wales in response to Snowdonia helicopter crash

Alun Cairns: Thoughts and deepest sympathies go out to the families of the victims

Snowdonia helicopter crash: Statement from the Secretary of State for Wales, Alun Cairns

My thoughts and deepest sympathies go out to the families of the victims of the helicopter crash in Snowdonia.

I have today spoken to the Acting Chief Constable of North Wales Police to offer the UK Government in Wales' full support to the investigation.

The emergency services and the mountain rescue involved in the search, rescue and recovery operation have carried out their work in incredibly difficult conditions. I am grateful to them for their determination and dedication, and to those providing support to the families during what is a very difficult time.

The recovery operation will be challenging. I ask that the investigating authorities be given the time and space necessary to undertake this important work.

Press release: Regulators give design acceptance to the AP1000® power station design

The AP1000® nuclear reactor, designed by Westinghouse, is suitable for construction in the UK said the regulators today following completion of [an in-depth assessment of the reactor design](#).

The Office for Nuclear Regulation (ONR), the Environment Agency (EA) and Natural Resources Wales (NRW), the regulators who undertake the Generic Design Assessment of new reactor designs, are satisfied that the reactor meets expectations on safety, security and environmental protection at this stage of the regulatory process.

ONR has issued a Design Acceptance Certificate (DAC) to Westinghouse and the environment agencies have issued a Statement of Design Acceptability (SoDA).

Dr Richard Savage, ONR's Chief Nuclear Inspector, said:

The closure of our assessment of the generic design of the AP1000® reactor is a significant step in the process, ensuring the design meets the very high standards of safety we expect.

We will now focus our regulatory attention on site specific assessments, and NuGen's application for a nuclear site licence.

Dr Jo Nettleton, Deputy Director for Radioactive Substances and Installations Regulation at the Environment Agency, said:

Successfully completing GDA means that the AP1000 is capable of meeting the high standards of environment protection and waste management that we require.

We're already working with NuGen, as it develops its proposals to build and operate three AP1000 reactors at Moorside in Cumbria, to ensure that those high standards are delivered.

The regulators required 51 GDA Issues to be resolved before confirming the suitability of the AP1000. All of the issues have been addressed to the regulators' satisfaction enabling the DAC and SoDA to be issued. The regulators' assessment reports are all available [online](#)

ENDS

Notes for Editors

1. The Office for Nuclear Regulation is the nuclear safety and security regulator for the UK.
2. The [Environment Agency](#) and Natural Resources Wales are the environmental regulators of nuclear sites in England and Wales respectively.
3. More information on Generic Design Assessment on the joint regulators' website <http://www.onr.org.uk/new-reactors/index.htm>
4. All assessment reports, decision documents and a copy of the Design Acceptance confirmation (DAC) and Statement of Design Acceptability (SoDA) are available online ONR <http://www.onr.org.uk/new-reactors/ap1000/reports.htm> Environment Agency

<http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gda-decisions-and-soda-ap1000-nuclear-power-station-design-by-westinghouse-electric-company>

5. The DAC and SoDA are valid for a period of ten years from issue and can be extended subject to review and agreement of the regulators.
 6. The issuing of a DAC/SoDA does not mean the construction of the reactor can start. Before a new nuclear power station can be built, the operator (NuGen in this case) must obtain a number of site specific permissions from the regulators and Government, including a nuclear site licence and relevant consents, environmental permits and planning permission (Development Consent Order).
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/guidance-for-operators-of-new-nuclear-power-stations>
 7. The Statement of Design Acceptability (SoDA) is being issued jointly by the Environment Agency and Natural Resources Wales. GDA applies to both England and Wales.
 8. For more information, please contact the ONR press office on onr@onr.gov.uk or 020 3028 0505.
 9. For the Environment Agency media team contact newsdesk@environment-agency.gov.uk or 020 3025 5623
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Press release: New section of A590 opens after Lindal 'dip' work

Highways England is thanking local people and drivers in Cumbria for their patience and support after a new section of the A590 was opened following a £1 million engineering project to tackle flooding.

Drivers started using the brand new section of the road at Lindal near Ulverston shortly after 5am this morning (Tuesday 28 March) as the 4 month project nears its completion at the end of the week.

Lindal 'Dip' before and after photographs

Key elements of the construction work have included moving the carriageway 7 metres north west of the previous alignment and raising it by up to almost 2 metres in places – removing the so-called Lindal 'dip' and solving the flooding issue which in bad weather often required temporary traffic lights to manage traffic past the rain water.

Highways England project manager Peter Gee said:

Lindal Dip is no more. The completion of this work means we can keep the road fully open during bad weather, giving drivers safer and more reliable journeys. We know a lot of people will share our

satisfaction in completing this long-awaited project and we'd like to thank local people and drivers for their patience with the road works over the last few months.

The flooding was caused by a combination of factors including the carriageway dip and water from several sources, including the local road network, collecting on the A590.

As well as building a brand new 100 metre raised and realigned section of road with eastbound and westbound carriageways, an innovative 'infiltration' system has also been constructed – using a 1.2 metre diameter drainage pipe to help store rain water before slowly releasing it away.

Some overnight finishing work, requiring temporary traffic lights, will be done over the next 4 nights before the road works will be completely removed.

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.