

UKEF, EDC & US EXIM Joint Statement

News story

The export credit agencies of the United Kingdom, United States and Canada release a joint statement in response to the invasion of Ukraine.



The export credit agencies (ECA) of the United Kingdom, United States and Canada are appalled by the unprovoked invasion of Ukraine and will continue to stand strong in supporting Ukraine.

In a show of united action against the Russian Federation's assault as well as Belarus' support for this illegal invasion, UK Export Finance (UKEF), the Export-Import Bank of the United States (US EXIM), and Export Development Canada (EDC) have together withdrawn any new export finance support for the Russian Federation and Belarus, while retaining support for Ukraine. This decision builds on the wide-ranging packages of sanctions and measures imposed on the Russian Federation and Belarus since the beginning of military operations, and we encourage any ECA that has not already done so, to join us in this step to impose financial pressure on the two countries.

Export credits help fulfil global demand for essential supplies when the private sector is unable to provide adequate financial support. ECAs are well positioned to provide this financial security through economic cycles and market disruptions. We will continue to support Ukraine and ensure that exports from our home countries can continue to flow while we also believe that all government-backed finance for supplies to the Russian Federation and Belarus should end.

Contact

Published 23 March 2022

Chief Vet warns poultry keepers in Suffolk to take urgent action now or risk losing flocks to bird flu

The UK's Chief Veterinary Officer Christine Middlemiss is today urging poultry keepers in Suffolk to step up their efforts in the fight against bird flu following a recent spike of cases in the county.

In the last month alone, there have been five new infected premises confirmed in Suffolk with highly pathogenic avian influenza. The warning comes as the UK faces its largest ever outbreak of bird flu with over 100 cases confirmed since the start of November.

The Government introduced housing measures in November 2021 to minimise the disease spreading. This means that if you keep chickens, ducks, geese or any other birds you are legally required to keep them indoors and to follow strict biosecurity measures. If you do not do this, the disease could kill your birds and you could be prosecuted. These measures apply to all bird keepers whether you keep birds commercially or have a single pet chicken.

Wild birds spread the disease so it is vital to not allow wild birds to mix with your chickens, ducks, geese or other birds.

People can also spread the disease on their clothes and shoes so before going into bird enclosures you should wash your hands, and change or clean and disinfect your footwear.

The UK Health Security Agency has confirmed that the risk to public health is very low and the Food Standards Agency has said that bird flu poses a very low food safety risk for UK consumers, and it does not affect the consumption of poultry or eggs.

The Chief Veterinary Officer is reminding all poultry keepers that whilst the main source of infection comes from migratory wild birds, those failing to implement these measures risk infecting their own flocks by walking the virus into their holdings.

Chief Veterinary Officer Christine Middlemiss said:

We have taken swift action to limit the spread of the disease including by introducing housing measures. However we are still seeing a number of bird flu cases both on commercial farms and in backyard birds right across Suffolk.

Many poultry keepers in Suffolk have excellent biosecurity standards but the number of cases we are seeing suggests that not enough is being done by all bird keepers to keep bird flu out. Whether you keep just a few birds or thousands, you must take

action now to protect your birds from this highly infectious disease.

The avian flu outbreak has not gone away and implementing scrupulous biosecurity remains absolutely critical. You must continue to regularly clean and disinfect your footwear and clothes before entering enclosures, stop your birds mixing with any wild birds and only allow visitors that are strictly necessary. It is your actions that will help keep your birds safe.

Poultry keepers must do the following:

- house or net all poultry and captive birds to keep them separate from wild birds;
- cleanse and disinfect clothing, equipment and vehicles before and after contact with poultry and captive birds – if practical, use disposable protective clothing;
- where possible change their footwear before entering sheds housing poultry and captive birds. If not, then ensure they are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected;
- reduce the movement of people, vehicles or equipment to and from areas where poultry and captive birds are kept, to minimise contamination from manure, slurry and other products, and use effective vermin control;
- thoroughly cleanse and disinfect housing on a continuous basis;
- keep fresh disinfectant at the right concentration at all farm and poultry housing entry and exit points; and
- minimise direct and indirect contact between poultry and captive birds and wild birds, including making sure all feed and water is not accessible to wild birds.
- Store bedding so that it cannot be contaminated by wild birds.
- Ensure appropriate rodent control is in place in all areas where birds are kept, in addition to any areas where the birds bedding or feed is kept.

Poultry and captive bird keepers must be vigilant for any signs of disease in their birds and any wild birds, and seek prompt advice from their vet if they have any concerns.

We would encourage all keepers to [register their flocks with us](#). This is a legal requirement if you have 50 birds or more. Registering with us means that we will be able to contact you with information or action required should an outbreak happen near you.

Do not touch or pick up any dead or sick birds that you find. If you find dead swans, geese or ducks or other dead wild birds, such as gulls or birds of prey, you should report them to the Defra helpline on 03459 33 55 77. For further information see our advice to the public.

Bird keepers should report suspicion of disease in England to Defra Rural Services Helpline on 03000 200 301, in Wales contact 0300 303 8268. In Scotland, contact your local Field Services Office. In Northern Ireland

contact DAERA on 0300 200 7840. Keepers should familiarise themselves with our avian flu advice.

[CNC is helping to shape the future of UK policing](#)

Strengthening links between the specialist force and the West Cumbrian college, students working towards a level-three diploma in policing, were invited to spend time at the world-class Griffin Park tactical training centre, just outside the Sellafield site.

While at Griffin Park, which has the biggest 360-degree live fire range in Europe, students learned about life within CNC and the FTU from officers and staff who carry out this unique work, and were taught how the Dog Training Unit can be utilised to protect both nuclear facilities and the public.

This was the first cohort of students given a four-day placement, and Chief Inspector Marcus Robson, Griffin Park's Unit Commander, said: "It's vital CNC plays a role in shaping the future of policing; and it's also really rewarding for us to play a role in the education of local students.

"While at Griffin Park, the students were given first-hand experience of the FTU and dog unit. They also had an opportunity to learn about life within CNC, and the incredible work we do from our experienced staff, who proudly defend the UK's nuclear sites as well as the public.

"Through these links with Lakes College, our aim is to bolster the wider recruitment drive, and it was great to see the students enjoy their time with us."

There are plans to host more students throughout the academic year at Griffin Park, which cost £42.5m when it opened its doors in 2020, and most recently hosted soldiers from the [USA's Nuclear Disablement Team](#).

Kayleigh Smith, lead work placement officer for Lakes College, added: "With many of our policing students being interested in a career with CNC at Sellafield, this is a great opportunity to see what their future career could entail.

"We are also working closely with CNC to look at the delivery of our curriculum, as well as having employer-engagement sessions with our students around the recruitment process.

"We are very grateful for the work CNC has put into this to make our students' work placement an unforgettable experience."

[Pubs Code changes – Important information for the tied pub industry](#)

The Government is making changes to the Pubs Code from 1 April 2022. The Pubs Code Adjudicator (PCA) will be publishing more information over the coming weeks to help the industry understand the changes. In the meantime, you can find a summary of the changes below.

Market Rent Only (MRO) Procedure

The Pubs Code allows the tied tenant to request the option of a MRO tenancy for their pub at certain points in a tenancy, including at renewal or at a rent review. If the event which allows them to request a MRO option takes place on or after 1 April 2022, there will be an updated MRO procedure.

This involves a longer period to negotiate before the deadline to make a referral for arbitration in relation to any dispute about the compliance of the MRO terms.

The tied tenant can end negotiation earlier if preferred, for example, the terms are agreed but the tenant wants to refer the rent to an independent assessor.

From 1 April 2022:

1. The 21-day period in which the tied tenant must send their MRO notice to the pub company will start the day after the MRO event, instead of on the day the event happened.
2. The pub company must send an offer for the amount of rent payable as part of the MRO proposal. If it does not, the tied tenant has 14 days starting the day after they receive the MRO proposal to make an arbitration referral to the PCA.
3. If the pub company disagrees there has been a MRO event, the tied tenant has 14 days from receiving that response to make an arbitration referral to the PCA.
4. If the pub company fails to send any response, the tied tenant has 14 days from the end of the 28-day period of response to make an arbitration referral to the PCA.
5. A tied tenant who receives a MRO proposal will have a 3-month resolution

period to consider the proposal and negotiate with the pub company about the terms and rent.

6. Within 7 days of the resolution period ending, the pub company can send an updated MRO proposal to reflect the negotiations. This 7-day period is known as the updated period of response.
7. The tied tenant can end the resolution period earlier than 3 months after receiving the MRO proposal by giving the pub company 7 days' notice. But the resolution period must last for at least 21 days.
8. The tied tenant has 21 days after the end of the updated period of response to:
 - refer the pub company's proposal to the PCA for arbitration if they do not consider the terms are MRO-compliant
 - refer any dispute about the MRO rent to an Independent Assessor

Please note, the above highlights some important changes to the time limits but it does not represent the full scope of the amendments. The PCA will shortly be publishing a factsheet setting out further details of the new MRO procedure to apply to MRO events after 1 April 2022.

Annual price increases triggering right to request MRO and rent assessment

A tied tenant may request MRO and/or a rent assessment if there is a significant increase in the price of tied products or services. The Code sets out how to calculate whether there has been a significant increase in price.

For invoices received 1 April 2022 onwards, the 'comparison period' in the calculation changes so that the periods being compared when determining whether there has been a significant increase in price will be 12 months apart instead of 13 months.

Extended protection

When a pub company sells a tied pub, the tied tenant will keep their rights under the Pubs Code for a period of time (except the right to the MRO option). From 1 April 2022, the pub company must give details to the PCA of who they have sold the tied pub to.

This will allow the PCA to contact the new landlord and ensure that the continuing rights of those tied tenants are protected.

Changes to when a pub company starts being regulated under the Code

The Pubs Code regulates companies owning 500 or more tied pubs in England and Wales. The period for which a pub company must own 500 or more tied pubs in the previous financial year (in order to become regulated and have to comply with the Pubs Code) is being reduced from 6 months to 3 months.

This means that tied tenants will be protected by the Code sooner.

[InFocus: News and views from the GPA \(March 2022\)](#)

WELCOME TO INFOCUS, MARCH 22

Yvette Greener, Client Director

Our mission in the GPA is to provide great places to work for civil servants. We achieve this through continuous innovation, which involves excelling in both operations execution and strategic management putting clients and customers at the heart of everything we do. Through our quarterly newsletter, we hope to keep you updated on a number of key improvements and priority activities we have underway – there are many.

It is now just over three months since I joined the GPA as Client Director, during which time I have sought to understand more about what is and isn't working for clients. We are pleased to see a marked improvement in client satisfaction across nearly all of our clients in Q3 – an increase of 11 percent from Q2 and 33 percent from Q1. Several things have helped us deliver this progress including, improving responsiveness to queries and improving the accuracy of the invoices we send to clients. But, from our survey and through engagement with clients we have also heard that we need to be more consistent and focus on collaboration.

Moving into the new financial year we will be launching a new GPA Client Strategy and underpinning a plan to deliver it, which includes our expectations of how this will drive our performance. As part of embedding this new approach we want to work with clients through a matrix approach by the services they take, working in partnership with our clients to achieve "trusted partner" status, gaining a better understanding of drivers and in meeting requirements.

Whether you are currently a client or not, we want people to recognise that our ambition is to be an industry leader with all our clients and customers as our advocates.

HOW INSIGHTS UNDERPIN WORKPLACE DESIGN STRATEGIES

We are committed to delivering great places to work for our clients and customers. Essential to this is the need to gain a deep understanding of our customers so that we can deliver products and services that best meet their needs.

Following on from the success of the [Leesman homeworking survey and report](#) in 2020, we have now completed another five Leesman surveys. These surveys combined will provide us with data from approximately 35,000 civil servants which is helping to shape our workplace offer.

We have also piloted our own customer satisfaction survey in three buildings (Rosebury Court in Norwich, 2 Rivergate in Bristol and Temple Quay House in Bristol). We're currently analysing the data, using dashboards to present the insights back in a visual and engaging way. The data is already providing great insights into what is and isn't working. And we are putting action plans in place where improvement is needed. Our next step is to develop our plan for future surveys which we will share shortly.

SMARTER WORKING PROGRAMME

We have continued to support departments in their smarter working implementation, with 14 departments successfully achieving 'mature' status to date. This means each mature department has provided demonstrable evidence of how their people and culture, leadership, technology and workspaces are supporting, advocating and role modelling smarter ways of working. Most importantly for mature departments, smarter working is not complete once they reach mature status – the investment in creating and maintaining great workplace experiences is still a focus for all.

Smarter Working mature departments:

- * Charity Commission
- * Crown Prosecution Service
- * Department for Digital, Culture Media and Sport
- * Department for Education
- * Department of Health and Social Care
- * Department for International Trade
- * Food Standards Agency
- * Forestry Commission
- * National Archives
- * National Savings and Investments
- * OFGEM
- * OFSTED
- * OFWAT
- * UK Export Finance

The Smarter Working Programme has created a community of practitioners that support each other with sharing best practices and continuous improvement.

This community is helping to raise the bar in workplace experience across the civil service.

Get in touch today with our dedicated Smarter Working team
gpsmartworkingqueries@gpa.gov.uk.

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LATEST SURVEY RESULTS SHOW IMPROVEMENTS IN CLIENT SATISFACTION

Our ambition is to be recognised as an industry leader, with our clients and customers as our advocates. We're achieving this through continuous improvement and innovation, which involves excelling in both operational execution and strategic management, putting clients and customers at the heart of everything we do.

Our Client Satisfaction Survey 2021/2022 Q3 scores have continued to increase, with an 11 percent improvement since Q2, and 33 percent from Q1. The greatest improvements have been seen in finance and recommendation, as well as attitude and workplace projects.

Although we are seeing improvements in most areas, we are continuing to work hard in areas where more focus is needed, such as delivering client-focused services to ensure end-to-end solutions; improving responsiveness and delivering more consistent services; and continuing to attract and retain the right people to ensure the appropriate amount of resources and skills.

In the 22/23 financial year, we will implement a GPA-wide programme to deliver strategic change that embeds a client-centric approach into our DNA. This will be woven into staff inductions and communications, and embedded into team meetings, projects and delivery programmes. We will continue to share updates on this in the coming months.

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GPA'S OneEstate IS IMPROVING PRODUCTIVITY, FLEXIBILITY AND REPORTING

Our OneEstate initiative is a series of interoperable digital products that is allowing civil servants from our client departments to work flexibly, from any location and on the go. It is also improving the data we capture to make better informed decisions and provide more transparent reporting.

Shared Network

Our shared network is now fully operational across three Hubs, and is being

installed in two further properties over the next few months. This is enabling multiple departments to share a common network infrastructure in a single building.

GovWifi

GovWifi was confirmed as a live service in 2021. It is being rolled out across Government buildings as the standard for wifi connectivity. We have identified some buildings with limited performance and bandwidth, and are working with the Cabinet Office to improve the service in these locations. But overall, analysis is showing greater reliability.

GovWifi is the seamless connection to the wifi within a building. Once a user has registered with the service, GovWifi will continue to connect automatically as the default provider when in any GovWifi-enabled building.

GovPass

Our new GovPass – common access pass – solution was developed in collaboration with the Government Security Group. It is now installed in five properties, with more planned this financial year. This includes some of London's most iconic properties.

We are also extending GovPass from the sole purpose of a common access pass to allow occupancy reporting. We expect to pilot GovPass for occupancy reporting from March. When enabled, it will allow clients to receive automated occupancy reports from their access control systems via the GPA.

GovPrint

GovPrint – the centralised networked printing service – is now installed in a small number of buildings and is reducing the number of printers required. We are working closely with HMRC to pilot GovPrint in its Hubs with an intention of a wider roll out.

Development of GovPrint 2 is underway with initial discussions with print solution suppliers. We hope to have this available in the next 12 months, building on the success of the first generation product.

Occupancy

The GPA is now monitoring level 1 occupancy across 23 properties. This means we are capturing the number of people in a specific building. The data is currently being collected from a combination of digital and manual processes. We have also completed a contract to deploy sensor based capabilities to 12 properties, and will continue to increase this over the next three years.

Audio Visual

Our audio visual standard has now been successfully installed in several Hubs. We've also improved equipment in meeting rooms to support collaborative working across the UK. And we are now looking to evolve this solution further to provide better services based on lessons learned from previous

installations and the impact of Covid. We hope to publish this updated standard over the coming weeks.

Procurement

Our range of interoperable products is offering an exciting mix of benefits to our clients. And we continue to develop and evolve these products in collaboration with our partners, and based on client needs and industry trends.

We have recognised limitations in some of our supplier contracts, which has made it difficult to support our clients to access some technologies for their own needs. We are currently in a strategic procurement process across our entire product range to improve this situation. Our intention is to have long-term partnerships with suppliers as we develop our regional Hubs and Whitehall Campus, as well as have contracts that are designed to allow our clients to leverage the same technology for their own needs.

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GPA'S CAPITAL PROGRAMME PROGRESS CONTINUES

Our Capital Projects team is recognised as the delivery partner for a number of our client government departments. We're also leading the Government Hubs and Whitehall Campus programmes. Many of our client-funded projects are very significant in scale and greatly increase the scope of the built infrastructure programme we are delivering. For example, we provided advisory support to BEIS in its successful bid to retain the European Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasting (ECMWF) in the UK, and relocate it to the University of Reading campus. We are continuing to support BEIS with the development plans for this landmark Net Zero carbon new facility. [Find out more about the ECMWF relocation here.](#)

We have recently restructured our team to provide a more regionally-focused approach (North; Scotland and Northern Ireland; Central; South and Wales; and London), which ensures the continued delivery of our committed, large-scale and complex programme portfolio and projects. It is also enabling a greater alignment with clients and colleagues, supporting regional and portfolio planning.

GOVERNMENT HUBS PROGRAMME

Places for Growth (PfG), our Capital Programme and government departments are adopting a 'regional campus' model, to ensure roles are relocated out of London. This also supports collaboration and co-location between teams, while allowing the Civil Service to draw from talent across regions.

In locations such as York and Manchester, the proposed Hubs will help to unlock a much larger urban regeneration opportunity on some of the largest redevelopment sites in the UK.

HUBS UPDATES:

Peterborough, Fletton Quays

Bridehall Developments has now completed the Developer Base Build CAT A construction phase. We are excited to take possession of this latest Government Hub as we move into CAT B fit-out stage, which is being delivered by Overbury. We remain on schedule to welcome tenants in January 2023.

Left: Exterior view showing the Attenuation pond and hard landscaping completed with close to 10,000 plants in place.

Top right: The public-facing entrance.

Bottom right: A typical floor at completion of the main construction works.

Croydon, 2 Ruskin Square

Construction remains on schedule with our Developer, Stanhope. The building has achieved full height with all floors constructed. With the façade being installed at pace. Work has been completed on the stage 3 design and we are due to receive tenders back imminently for the fit out works. We remain on schedule for the developer to conclude construction works in September 2023.

Far right: Insulation and fire protection being installed to the underside of the loading dock.

Top left: Looking out over the double-height staff entrance.

Bottom left: Facade being installed on the buildings' South and West elevations.

WHITEHALL CAMPUS PROGRAMME

Our Whitehall Campus programme shares many common objectives and approaches with our Hubs programme: both support the Governments' Levelling Up initiative to regenerate regional areas and to relocate roles out of London, both of which play a direct role in the Civil Service transformation.

London, Whitehall Campus

3-8 Whitehall Place and 55 Whitehall – Full Business Case has been approved, and we have a pre-Construction Services Agreement in place to award the contract to BW: Workplace Experts.

22-26 Whitehall – the Outline Business Case is approved and the programme has reached a key milestone with the completion of the design stage recognised as Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) Stage 2: Concept Design.

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SHAPING SUPPLIER PARTNERSHIPS WITH CLIENT INSIGHTS

We recently completed the Workplace Services Transformation Programme (WSTP) contract specifications for the Supply Chain Project (SCP). This includes five procurements, and is currently being reviewed by the Crown Commercial Service (CCS).

We have commenced a data gathering exercise and engagement sessions with clients to understand five key areas of our service design:

- * current FM service provision
 - * future FM service needs (if different from above)
 - * essential requirements, such as policy compliance, security clearance levels, etc
 - * niche FM service requirements, such as various single services which could be bundled within the WSTP scope to maximise competition and achieve greater value
- * how the proposed GPA services already developed meets their needs, e.g. Hubs

The sessions are also identifying the services to be delivered with our Workplace Services Performance Partner. And we are gathering feedback to assess potential impacts and/or issues, such as clients with on-site helpdesk services, as well as dedicated escalation and communication needs.

The feedback from all sessions is enabling us to design the final draft specifications to ensure they reflect current and future client needs, and are being mapped on an action log for final review.

We are also reviewing the GPA's own policies to ensure that, where required, any client-specific policies that differ from our own are included within the tender documentation for the FM, Security, and Performance Partner services.

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Find out more about the [Government Property Agency here](#)