

## **Press release: Defence Secretary strengthens Romania ties and thanks RAF crews**

Gavin Williamson reaffirmed the UK's commitment to the region during meetings with his counterpart Mihai Fifor in Bucharest. They discussed existing mutual defence activity and announced their intention to step up UK-Romania co-operation by signing a Memorandum of Understanding before the end of this year.

They also unveiled plans for the British Army to support a Romanian-led Multinational Brigade (South-East), which is taking part in Exercise Scorpions Fury and is part of NATO's Forward Presence in the Black Sea, aimed at deterring aggression in the region.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

“European security is our security and though we are leaving the EU our commitment to our allies remains steadfast. That is why we are accelerating our military collaboration with Romania, with whom we enjoy a strong relationship.

“NATO is the cornerstone of both our nations' security and this deployment demonstrates the alliance's collective resolve and readiness in a world of intensifying threats.”

Mr Williamson discussed last month's NATO summit and defence post-Brexit in a meeting with Romanian Prime Minister Viorica Dăncilă before flying to the Black Sea to meet RAF crews flying Typhoon patrols as part of NATO's Southern Air Policing mission.

The UK's unwavering commitment to co-operating on European security is further evidenced by this week's deployment of two RAF Typhoons from Romania to Hungary where they are taking part in bilateral exercises with the Hungarian military.

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## **News story: 50 employers awarded gold for supporting the armed forces**

The 'Gold Awards' awards announced by the MOD today are for businesses and organisations who have shown outstanding support for the military community and the Armed Forces Covenant.

Employers have won awards for initiatives such as employing veterans, supporting individuals transitioning out of the armed forces into a new career, and providing flexibility for reservists.

Now in its fifth year, the MOD's Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Awards represent the highest badge of honour available to those that employ and support those who serve, veterans, and their families.

The 50 winners have been recognised for their long-term commitment to the armed forces, with organisations from the public and private sector achieving the top grade. Each has signed the Armed Forces Covenant, and where possible, engages with the MOD's Career Transition Partnership (CTP) to promote the recruitment of service leavers, as well as honouring individual pledges of support.

Minister for Defence People and Veterans Tobias Ellwood said:

The breadth and diversity of this year's winners shows how business support for the armed forces continues to flourish. Their commitment is a testament to the fantastic contribution our serving personnel, veterans and their families can make to any organisation.

We all have a role to play in ensuring that the armed forces community is not disadvantaged by service, and each of these employers is setting an example as meaningful advocates for those protecting the nation.

The 2018 Employer Recognition Scheme Gold award winners are:

1. Alexander Mann Solutions
2. Amey
3. Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board
4. BNY Mellon
5. C S Hodges
6. Cardiff and Vale University Health Board
7. City of London Corporation
8. City of Wolverhampton Council

9. Compass Group UK and Ireland
10. Defence Medical Welfare Service
11. Dumfries and Galloway Council
12. Durham County Council
13. East of England Ambulance Service
14. Ernst & Young (EY)
15. Forward Assist Veterans Charity
16. Future Sales Factory
17. Handy Heroes
18. ITI Network Services Ltd
19. James McVicar Printing Works
20. Kent County Council
21. Landmarc Support Services Ltd
22. Leeds Teaching Hospital NHS Trust
23. Leonardo
24. Lloyd's of London
25. London Borough of Wandsworth (Wandsworth Council)
26. London Southbank University
27. MBDA UK

28. Newcastle City Council
29. Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
30. NHS Hastings and Rother CCG and NHS Eastbourne, Hailsham and Seaford CCG
31. NHS Orkney
32. Norfolk and Norwich University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
33. Northumberland County Council
34. Portsmouth City Council
35. Raytheon Systems Limited
36. The Robert Jones & Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
37. Royal Surrey County Hospital NHS Trust
38. Sage
39. SaluteMyJob
40. SGN
41. SkillForce
42. South Tyneside Council
43. Sovini
44. Standard Life Aberdeen Plc
45. Stoll
46. Swansea Council

47. University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust

48. University of Lincoln

49. University of South Wales

50. WYG

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## [News story: jHub looks for medical ideas and innovations](#)

Launched in partnership with Medical Innovation, the Med Surge initiative provides a unique opportunity for businesses to submit medical solutions that could be used by the UK armed forces in the future. Importantly for suppliers, if successful, they will be fast tracked through the procurement process with pilots and awarded contracts taking place within six months to one year.

The call for cutting-edge medical solutions is open to companies from the UK and overseas and is specifically looking for innovations that fit into six categories:

- prophylaxing combat trauma
- physiological and anatomical disruption
- predictive algorithms
- future transfusion strategies
- total wound care and telemedicine
- augmented reality and virtual reality

Proposals are now being accepted and companies can also meet with the jHub at Medical Innovation in October in Birmingham. The event, organised in partnership with the UK Defence Medical Services, focuses on developing the medical capability of tomorrow that will help save lives in the future.

Air Vice-Marshal Bruce Hedley, Director Joint Warfare within Joint Forces Command, commented:

jHub has been designed to help the UK Armed Forces seek out the world's most innovative solutions that will help overcome specific challenges. By working with Medical Innovation we're hoping to expedite the process of identifying unique new healthcare concepts and technologies that we can put into the hands of the user within a year.

Proposals for the Med Surge initiative can be submitted from the [Medical Innovation site](#).

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## **[News story: The Royal Centre for Defence Medicine pays tribute to the wreck of His Majesty's Hospital Ship Glenart Castle](#)**

The Dive Team were heavily reinforced by members of the Royal Engineers Sports Diving Association and training took place over many months to ensure both teams were ready to dive in this remote location.

HMHS Glenart Castle sank 100 years ago when she was torpedoed by a German U-boat, resulting in over 160 lives lost including Medical Officers and Nurses. She currently lies at 73m in the Bristol Channel, 40 nautical miles from Padstow. During the dive two memorial plaques were fixed to the wreck on behalf of Royal Centre for Defence Medicine and the Thame Remembers Project; these plaques marked the centenary of the sinking and the end of World War 1.

The dive was poignant to those working for Defence Medical Services and the Royal Centre for Defence Medicine as the newly opened modern Tri-Service Mess for those serving at the Royal Centre Defence Medicine, Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham has been named after the Hospital Ship.



On the 21 July 2018, the Defence Medical Services Diving Association dived the wreck of His Majesty's Hospital Ship Glenart Castle. MOD Crown Copyright.

Major Henrietta Poon of the Royal Army Medical Corps said:

We remember the brave Medical Officers, Nurses and Service Personnel who perished onboard HMHS Glenart Castle. It was a particularly poignant moment for me as a serving Military Doctor to complete this dive and lay tributes at their final resting place.

The Commanding Officer of the Royal Centre Defence Medicine, Colonel Jo Palmer, said:

This challenging project to place Commemorative Plaques on HMHS Glenart Castle is a fitting tribute to all those on board who gave their lives whilst serving their country, and illustrates the enduring nature of the ethos and values of the military medical services.

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## News story: UK Armed Forces on high alert for hurricane season

British residents were killed, homes were destroyed and infrastructure was decimated when Irma and Maria, two of the most powerful hurricanes for decades, smashed through the region back-to-back in September 2017.

Mark Lancaster visited Barbados, Antigua and Montserrat this week to reassure locals that the Ministry of Defence is supporting other Government departments to ensure that similar devastation is not repeated.

Armed Forces Minister Mark Lancaster said:

No matter what the elements throw at our Overseas Territories this year, we will be there to help them every step of the way throughout 2018 and beyond. We may not be able to prevent natural disasters from occurring, but our world-class military have been planning meticulously to ensure lives are protected and damage is kept to a minimum.

Our citizens in the Caribbean have already shown incredible resilience over the last year and we are determined that when this difficult period is over their local facilities are in a better state than they were before.

Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) Mounts Bay will act as the hub of the UK's response, and the minister was able to see a demonstration of her amphibious capabilities while in Montserrat.



Fleet Auxiliary vessel MOUNTS BAY and her crew conducting a Humanitarian Relief and Disaster Relief (HADR) Exercise in Montserrat. Crown copyright.

As well as being able to carry vital aid and equipment, RFA Mounts Bay also has the latest Royal Navy Wildcat helicopter on board to provide aerial support – this will be the first time it has operated in the Caribbean. There is also a medical facility on board, with 10 patient beds for anyone who suffers serious injuries or illness.

The visit also provided an opportunity for Mr Lancaster to speak to island governors and residents about their needs as they continue to recover from last year's hurricanes.

As well as preparing for this year, RFA Mounts Bay has been in the region since Irma struck and will remain there until 2020 to help restore the islands to normal.



A Wildcat helicopter takes off from RFA Mounts Bay during the Humanitarian Relief and Disaster Relief (HADR) Exercise. Crown copyright.

The Government has already committed £142million to support the recovery effort in the affected territories, as well as £300million of UK loan guarantees.

Foreign & Commonwealth Office minister Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon is currently visiting the British Virgin Islands, which suffered extensive damage, as the Government continues its preparations for 2018.