

I-VMS grants system now open

Press release

The online system making it quick and easy to apply for a grant of up to £650 to cover the costs of an IVMS device has gone live today.



The online system making it quick and easy to apply for a grant of up to £650 to cover the costs of an IVMS device, is now live.

[Applications are now welcome](#) from the first tranche of under-12 metre fishers installing devices on their vessels ahead of enforcement coming in.

As part of the launch [full guidance on how to apply](#) is now available for the start of the installation phase. A full programme of engagement and support is also planned throughout 2022 to help fishers to access the funding.

Michael Coyle, MMO's acting Operations Director, said:

We recognise the concerns fishers have expressed about meeting the costs of IVMS devices. We have therefore devised a system and process that is simple and fast to use, with the clear intention of paying the >grants of up to £650 to eligible fishers within a matter of days of their application.

[Full terms and conditions](#) for the funding have been published alongside the guidance that fishers will have to meet to qualify for the funding. They will need to:

- Purchase the device of their choice. The contract for the device is a private one between the fisher and the supplier so fishers must meet the upfront cost of the unit before claiming a grant
- Ensure their chosen device is installed by a suitably qualified marine engineer and is transmitting
- Provide the MMO with proof of purchase – typically a photo or screenshot of the invoice for the product and a similar digital image of the fishers' bank transaction to show payment has been made.

Once submitted the grant applications team will work with individual fishers to help ensure funds can be transferred into their bank accounts as quickly as possible to cover their initial device and installation costs. IVMS is being introduced in four tranches to allow time for installation by size category on the more than 2,000 vessels in the English under-12m fleet.

IVMS records the accurate location, speed and course of individual vessels via a secure, tamper-resistant device that transmits this data to a national operations centre via mobile phone signal.

Michael Coyle, MMO's acting Operations Director, added:

Data taken from VMS will provide a more complete picture of all fishing in our seas by all fishing vessels. Combined with data on catch volumes, scientific evidence of stock levels and a range of other significant data, I-VMS will enable more efficient and informed decisions on local and national measures and policies. To sustain fishing for the future we need to modernise the industry and make best use of this technology.

For any further enquiries please contact media@marinemanagement.org.uk

Published 17 February 2022

Joint statement by the United Kingdom, Poland and Ukraine: 17 February 2022

Press release

Joint statement by the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine.



The United Kingdom, Poland and Ukraine enjoy deep historical ties, built on shared values, a shared commitment to peace and security and a shared history of standing together against aggressors who threaten freedom in Europe.

We reiterate that each European State is free to choose or change its security arrangements, including treaties of alliance, and no State can consider any part of Europe as its sphere of influence.

Our three nations will intensify our joint work to safeguard stability and build resilience in Ukraine, strengthening democracy at the frontier in Eastern Europe.

To this end, we agreed today to develop a Trilateral Memorandum of Co-operation. This will demonstrate our commitment to further strengthening the strategic cooperation and engagement between our three nations on the highest priority issues in support of Ukraine.

We will work together to advance our cooperation, which includes but not limited to co-ordinating support to the International Crimea Platform, increasing our collaboration on cyber security, energy security, and boosting strategic communications to counter disinformation.

The UK and Poland will continue to provide Ukraine with support, standing in unity with Ukraine, in the face of ongoing Russian aggression, and fully committed to stand with Ukrainian nation in its efforts aimed at defending Ukraine's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders.

ENDS

Published 17 February 2022

[North East charity gets boost as water](#)

company pays for pollution

Northumbrian Water has agreed to pay £165,000 to Tyne Rivers Trust after causing an unauthorised discharge from its Horsley Water Treatment Works, which led to a pollution incident at Kitty's Burn, near Newcastle, in 2018.

Northumbrian Water submitted an Enforcement Undertaking to the Environment Agency, which has now been accepted.

An Enforcement Undertaking is a voluntary offer made by companies and individuals to make amends for their offending.

'Address and restore' harm caused

Area Environment Manager, Rachael Caldwell, said:

All businesses, including water companies, have a responsibility to ensure their activities do not present a risk of harm to people and the environment.

When companies fail to meet their environmental obligations, it's a serious matter and we will take appropriate action, which may include civil sanctions.

Enforcement Undertakings allow companies who fail to comply with legal requirements, or pollute the environment, to positively address and restore any harm caused and prevent repeat incidents.

This payment to Tyne Rivers Trust will help protect and enhance nature in the local area.

Drainage was connected to wrong sewer

Northumbria Water had temporarily contracted a machine to separate liquids at the Horsley site to help the works cope with a period of increased demand, but staff used old drainage plans and mistakenly connected it to a surface water drain rather than a foul sewer.

As a result, the liquid from the process – called centrate, produced when sludge is dewatered – was discharged into a drain which led to Kitty Burn, and which then flowed about 1.3km into the River Tyne.

The Environment Agency attended on 2 November 2018 and enquiries revealed the discharge had been happening sporadically for around eight weeks, with almost eight million litres of centrate discharged. Sampling indicated there had been minimal impact on the ecology of the river.

The Enforcement Undertaking offer from Northumbrian Water details how it has introduced standard operating procedures to ensure that all sites have

colour-coded drain covers and on-site signage, that all drains are to be identified and checked against a current site drainage plan, and it has invested in new machinery.

Enforcement Undertakings are one of a number of enforcement options available to the Environment Agency.

Since 2015, the Environment Agency has secured water company court fines of over £137million. Most recently, Northumbrian Water was fined £240,000 at Newcastle Crown Court for polluting Coundon Burn in March 2017; and in October 2021 they were fined £540,000 at Durham Crown Court for polluting a watercourse that runs through Heads Hope Dene in Castle Eden in May 2017.

[Chancellor calls for strengthened supply chain and energy market resilience in first G20 of the year](#)

News story

Chancellor Rishi Sunak calls for global cooperation to strengthen and promote supply chain and energy market resilience in first meeting of G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors under the Indonesian Presidency.



- Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak calls for global cooperation to strengthen supply chain and energy market resilience in first G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors meeting under the Indonesian Presidency.
- Rishi Sunak reiterated the importance of future pandemic preparedness and the need to help developing countries meet their climate goals.
- Ministers agreed to continue monitoring major global risks arising from geopolitical tensions and macroeconomic and financial vulnerabilities.

Rishi Sunak was the lead speaker in Thursday morning's Global Health and

Economy session, and urged the G20 group to work together to share information and better understand new and evolving risks for global energy markets and supply chains as the world transitions to a lower-carbon and more digital economy.

During the meeting, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak said:

As we know, high energy prices and disruptions to our global supply chains have caused real challenges in many of our economies... It is critical that we, together, work to promote the resilience of energy markets and supply chains to future shocks while remaining committed to openness.

The Chancellor also reiterated the importance of preparing for future pandemics, and the need to invest to ensure our health systems are ready to avoid fiscal and economic costs further down the line.

Sunak said that a full global economic recovery “will not be possible until we achieve our immediate priority of getting vaccines from airports to arms”.

Part of the response will be through strengthening existing institutions, and the Chancellor noted the UK’s role in hosting the global Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness and Innovation (CEPI) conference on 8 March, further cementing the UK’s leadership in supporting innovative financing and the Prime Minister’s pledge to reduce the development of vaccines to 100 days.

This global coalition has been created to accelerate the development of vaccines against emerging infectious diseases and enable equitable access to these vaccines for people during outbreaks.

Rishi Sunak also highlighted the importance of ensuring that the international community continues to help developing countries fulfill their climate goals, in line with what was agreed at COP26 in Glasgow last year.

Ministers also agreed to continue monitoring major global risks arising from geopolitical tensions and macroeconomic and financial vulnerabilities.

Further information:

- To view pictures of this meeting, click here (link to Indonesian pictures)
- CEPI is seeking \$3.5bn to reduce development of vaccines to 100 days. The Summit will include speeches from several G7 leaders, Melinda Gates, IOs including IMF and World Bank.
- This year, the G20 is being led by Indonesia. To see their priorities for the year, click [here](#).

Published 17 February 2022

OSCE reports on conflict in eastern Ukraine: UK response

Thank you Mister Chair. Ambassador Çevik, Ambassador Kinnunen we are grateful for your reports today and all your efforts towards a peaceful and sustainable resolution to the conflict.

Your reports today, as well as the letter issued to the Permanent Council by the Secretary General on 14 February, illustrate the gravity of the current situation, which is clearly fragile.

The UK remains gravely concerned by the massive, unprovoked and unjustified Russian military build-up on Ukraine's border and in illegally-annexed Crimea.

In this Council I have repeatedly pointed to Russia's bellicose rhetoric towards Ukraine, as well as its disinformation about alleged Ukrainian actions and the importance of transparency and verification. Indeed, since the beginning of February we have identified over 40 different stories emanating from the Kremlin, promoting unfounded claims in a shameful attempt to justify any future further Russian military action against Ukraine. We support efforts by the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM) to establish the facts on the ground and provide their impartial reporting on the situation.

In the context of unprecedented tensions in the region, we regret that Russia, once again, has failed to honour its commitments following initiation of the [Vienna Document Risk Reduction Mechanism](#). It is wholly unacceptable that Russia is claiming that Vienna Document Paragraph 16, which requires participating States to "consult and cooperate with each other about any unusual and unscheduled military activities . . . outside their normal peacetime locations", does not apply.

Despite Russia's announcement that some Eastern Military District & Western Military District troops are withdrawing to permanent locations, and we are yet to see real evidence of any military withdrawal that would indicate a de-escalation on Russia's part. Russia continues to mass extraordinary levels of military forces along Ukraine's border and in illegally annexed Crimea. We call on Russia to abide by its commitments, engage constructively in the confidence building measures – which all participating States have signed up to – and provide much needed transparency around its military activity.

It is the rising threat from Russia that led the UK to temporarily withdraw our seconded personnel to the Special Monitoring Mission out of Ukraine. We are grateful to the Mission for its assistance in facilitating their movement. This decision was made due to the UK's duty of care responsibilities. The UK remains a strong supporter of the SMM and its

mandate. Both we, and the British women and men of the SMM, are ready to keep supporting the Mission in these extraordinary times, and against the backdrop of this unprecedented threat from Russia.

Ambassador Çevik, we remain grateful for the SMM's impartial, facts-based reporting. We were deeply concerned to see that between 9 September 2021 and 12 January 2022, the SMM recorded a doubling of the use of weapons that should have been withdrawn according to the Minsk agreements. It is noteworthy that during this period, the SMM recorded 477 weapons in violation of their respective withdrawal lines, of which 83 per cent were in non-government controlled areas.

We have, and will continue to condemn unacceptable restrictions and threats directed towards the Mission, including the appalling case on 11 February when a member of the Russian-backed armed formations threatened an SMM patrol with arrest at a border checkpoint on the uncontrolled segment of the Ukraine-Russia State border. This is just one instance of the systematic restrictions of freedom of movement the Mission experiences in non-government controlled areas. Between 9 September 2021 and 12 January 2022, 92 per cent of all SMM freedom of movement restrictions occurred in areas held by the Russia backed armed formations. Once again, we call on Russia to use its undeniable influence over the armed formations it backs to ensure the Mission has safe, free and unimpeded access throughout Ukraine, including Crimea.

Ambassador Kinnunen, we welcome the ongoing efforts by you and your team to make progress on issues that would have a positive impact on the security situation in eastern Ukraine. We welcome your report that the Trilateral Contact Group last week discussed concrete topics, particularly in the Political Working Group, where a number of real, substantive issues related to the political settlement of the conflict were discussed. We hope this will translate into tangible progress towards an end to this conflict in full respect of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Russia as the instigator, and as a party to this conflict, must match Ukraine's political will for this to be possible.

We also urge Russia to use its undeniable influence to make progress on issues which continue to have a devastating impact on conflict-affected civilians in eastern Ukraine. This includes the opening of new entry-exit checkpoints along the line of contact, now a year overdue on the Russia backed armed formations side, and on plans for further demining and disengagement areas.

We reiterate our support for the Minsk agreements to deliver a peaceful resolution to the conflict in full respect of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and the work of the Trilateral Contact Group and the Normandy Four in this regard. We call on Russia to refrain from any unilateral measures that undermine the Minsk agreements and Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and instead focus on implementing its commitments. In this respect, we condemn the action taken by the Russian Duma to propose that the Russian President recognise the regions of Luhansk and Donetsk as independent. This would directly undermine the Minsk agreements and must be clearly rejected by the Russian authorities, in line with their

commitments.

Russia must withdraw its military personnel and weapons from the territory of Ukraine; cease its support for the armed formations it backs; and stop access restrictions and intimidation of the SMM in areas held by the Russia-backed armed formations.

The UK strongly supports Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders, including its territorial waters. We do not and will not recognise Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea. The UK has consistently stood with Ukraine in opposing all instances of Russian aggression towards Ukraine and we will continue to do so, including through sanctions, together with our international partners.