

No10 team bolstered to deliver the people's priorities

Action to accelerate the defining mission of the Prime Minister to level up the country has taken a step forward today, with the appointment of a new Permanent Secretary and Chief Operating Officer to improve the Number 10 operation.

The Cabinet Secretary, with the approval of the Prime Minister, has announced the immediate appointment of Samantha Jones as interim Permanent Secretary.

Currently the Prime Minister's Expert Advisor on NHS Transformation and Social Care, Samantha will bring considerable management experience, including over 15 years leading organisations in both the public and private sector. This includes senior leadership experience as Chief Executive of West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust and Epsom and St Helier NHS Trust.

In line with plans to create a new Office of the Prime Minister she will be the first Chief Operating Officer for Downing Street, reviewing structures and operations in No 10 before a competition is launched to appoint the position permanently.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

I promised to make changes to my senior team so that we can get on with better delivering for the British people.

That is what we are now doing by bringing in the very best skills and management experience with a clear vision to unite and level up our country.

The Cabinet Secretary, Simon Case, said:

I am delighted Samantha has agreed to take on this critical role. Samantha has the blend of skills and experience needed to take on the job.

Samantha's experience of leading and managing transformation in the public and private sectors will be invaluable as we overhaul the structures which support the Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Samantha Jones said:

I am pleased to have been asked by the Prime Minister to take up the role of Permanent Secretary in No 10. I look forward to establishing an Office for the Prime Minister that provides him

with the professional operation to deliver his agenda.

Samantha joins new Chief of Staff, Steve Barclay MP, Director of Communications, Guto Harri, and Head of the Policy Unit, Andrew Griffith, to drive forward the Prime Minister's agenda, improve the No10 operation, strengthen Cabinet Government and build on the already vital connection between No10 and Parliament.

[Lassa fever cases identified in England, following travel to West Africa](#)

A further probable case of Lassa fever is under investigation. The cases are within the same family in the East of England and are linked to recent travel to West Africa.

Lassa fever is an acute viral haemorrhagic illness caused by Lassa virus. People usually become infected with Lassa virus through exposure to food or household items contaminated with urine or faeces of infected rats – present in a number of West African countries where the disease is endemic. The virus can also be spread through infected bodily fluids.

Most people with Lassa fever will make a full recovery, however severe illness can occur in some individuals. One of the cases has recovered, while the other will receive specialist care at the Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust.

The probable case is receiving care at Bedfordshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. The High Consequence Infectious Disease Network is engaged with their ongoing care.

Dr Susan Hopkins, Chief Medical Advisor at UKHSA said:

We can confirm that 2 cases of Lassa fever have been identified in England, and a further probable case is under investigation. The cases are within the same family and are linked to recent travel to West Africa.

Cases of Lassa fever are rare in the UK and it does not spread easily between people. The overall risk to the public is very low. We are contacting the individuals who have had close contact with the cases prior to confirmation of their infection, to provide appropriate assessment, support and advice.

UKHSA and the NHS have well established and robust infection control procedures for dealing with cases of imported infectious disease and these will be reinforced.

Prior to these cases, there have been 8 cases of Lassa fever imported to the UK since 1980. The last 2 cases occurred in 2009. There was no evidence of onward transmission from any of these cases.

Dr Sir Michael Jacobs, consultant in infectious diseases at the Royal Free London, said:

The Royal Free Hospital is a specialist centre for treating patients with viral haemorrhagic fevers, including Lassa fever.

Our secure unit is run by a highly-trained and experienced team of doctors, nurses, therapists and laboratory staff and is designed to ensure our staff can safely treat patients with these kind of infections.

People living in endemic areas of West Africa with high populations of rodents are most at risk of Lassa fever. Imported cases rarely occur elsewhere in the world. Such cases are almost exclusively in people who work in endemic areas in high-risk occupations, such as medical or other aid workers.

[New UK funding to support media freedom around the world: 9 February 2022](#)

Press release

The UK has announced up to £600,000 for a new secretariat to help advance the work of the Media Freedom Coalition.



- UK pledges up to £600,000 to further the work of the international Media Freedom Coalition
- Thomson Reuters Foundation will now provide administrative support to the Media Freedom Coalition

The UK has announced up to £600,000 for a new secretariat to help advance the work of the Media Freedom Coalition – a partnership of 50 countries working together to advocate for media freedom and safety of journalists and hold to account those who harm journalists for doing their job. The Coalition's purpose is to defend media freedom where it is under threat.

With 55 journalists and media workers killed last year, and the number of journalists jailed for their work at a global high media freedom continues to be a serious issue.

Since its inception, the Coalition has grown to 50 countries, and issued more than 20 joint statements calling out abuses and violations of media freedom. Media Freedom Coalition members have also used their diplomatic networks to lobby and address media freedom issues locally.

The new administrative support funded by the UK will be delivered by Thomson Reuters Foundation, a registered charity which works to advance media freedom and promote human rights, and will help coordinate Coalition activities.

The announcement was made at a ministerial meeting of Coalition partners hosted in Estonia today (9 February) by Lord (Tariq) Ahmad of Wimbledon, Minister of State for South and Central Asia, UN & The Commonwealth, Prime Minister's Special Representative on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict.

After two years as co-chair of the Coalition, the UK is handing the co-chair position to the Netherlands, but will remain a key partner and further the work of the Media Freedom Coalition as part of its Executive Group. Defending media freedom at home and abroad will remain a priority for the UK.

FCDO Minister of State for Human Rights, Lord Tariq Ahmad of Wimbledon, said:

Our new funding will further the crucial work of defending media freedom wherever it is under threat, supporting brave journalists around the world on the frontline of defending democracy.

Background notes to editors

- The Thomson Reuters Foundation is a registered charity and the administrative arm of Thomson Reuters, the global news and information services company. Their media freedom work covers three pillars; media for democracy and development, defending media freedom and strengthening the future of journalism.
- The 50 Members of the Coalition have all signed the Global Pledge on Media Freedom, a written commitment to improving media freedom domestically and working together internationally.
- The Coalition promotes media freedom by lobbying on individual cases, working to hold abusers to account, supporting members of the Coalition and other countries to improve protections for the media and making collective statements in multilateral fora.

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1000th OSCE Forum for Security Cooperation meeting: UK statement

Thank you Mister Chair. I would like to thank you for convening this Millennium Plenary Meeting to mark the 1000th meeting of the Forum for Security Co-operation (FSC).

As we know, the FSC was created at the Helsinki Ministerial Conference thirty years ago. At the first meeting in Vienna, in September 1992, the FSC began its work by focusing on issues such as proliferation, transparency and the need for further confidence- and security-building measures

Over time, the FSC's mandate has grown – notably at Budapest in 1994, Lisbon in 1996 and over the 2000s. Today, the FSC is a key decision making body for the OSCE on a range of important issues, including: arms control, disarmament and confidence- and security-building measures; security co-operation and conflict prevention; countering the proliferation of conventional and non-conventional weapons; and promoting the full, equal and meaningful participation of women.

Mr Chair, the FSC has achieved much. It has updated the Vienna Document in 1999 and most recently – over 11 years ago – in 2011. Another revision is long-overdue, but when it is properly implemented, the acquis provides States important tools to increase military transparency, reduce risk and help prevent unintended conflict. The FSC has adopted and improved on the landmark Code of Conduct (on Politico-Military Aspects of Security), which formulated key principles and commitments, on security relations between States, on the domestic democratic control of all armed and security forces and on the

protection and promotion of human rights. In the field of SALW/SCA, the FSC has designed Best Practice Guides and supported the implementation of many projects to tackle this shared challenge. And the FSC has promoted the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in its work, notably in, but not limited to, SALW/SCA.

Mr Chair, The Forum for Security Cooperation continues to offer a genuine platform for participating States to address their security concerns, and for us to find a way forward together. And we need look no further than today on why this remains important. The exchanges at the FSC on Ukraine, and the invocation of the Vienna Document Mechanism (for Consultation and Co-operation as regards) on unusual Military Activities are yet further evidence that military transparency and our wider FSC acquis are more vital than ever. This Millennium Plenary session underlines our shared responsibility to live up to our FSC commitments in both letter and in spirit – and to once again engage with each other in good faith to ensure that we can work collectively towards trust, cooperation and success at our next landmark Plenary. The FSC continues to have our full support.

Thank you, Mr Chair, this concludes our statement.

[Ministry of Justice to move 500 jobs to Wales](#)

New regional Ministry of Justice (MoJ) offices will create 500 new roles in Wales, the Deputy Prime Minister has announced as the UK Government continues to level up communities.

The jobs will expand the MoJ's presence in Swansea, Cardiff and Newport, with additional roles in North Wales.

Seven Justice Collaboration Centres will be launched alongside a series of satellite offices as the government's Places for Growth programme continues to move civil service roles out of London and closer to the communities it serves. The scheme will ensure the public sector utilises the vast array of talent across England and Wales with 22,000 roles moving out of the capital by 2030.

Almost 70 percent of the MoJ workforce is already based outside of London and the South East and this move will see more than 2,000 more roles in areas like finance, human resources and digital move out by 2030, with 500 of those heading to Wales.

Deputy Prime Minister, Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice, Dominic Raab, said:

This Government is committed to spreading opportunity more equally across communities and tackling regional inequalities.

By having more of our staff based outside London we can recruit the best people wherever they live so that the justice system benefits from more diverse backgrounds, outlooks and experience.

Secretary of State for Wales, Simon Hart, said:

Our key aim is to level up all areas of the UK and that commitment includes providing more jobs and opportunities within the UK Government.

We want to make full use of the talent and potential of the Welsh workforce and moving hundreds of roles to Wales will help us achieve that objective.

We have hugely ambitious plans for Wales which will deliver growth and innovation in the years to come and relocating more civil service roles is part of that package.

The new Justice Collaboration Centres are larger office spaces with a mix of traditional workstations and shared spaces, meeting and training rooms. They will support face to face work of staff in roles including finance, digital and human resources during training and meetings in Leeds, Liverpool, Nottingham, South Tyneside, Cardiff, Ipswich and Brighton.

Staff will also be based at smaller new regional Justice Satellite Offices, including desk space in pre-existing buildings like courts.

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Steve Barclay, said:

It's brilliant to see the Ministry of Justice is offering increased opportunities around the UK with the opening of seven new offices across in England and Wales, a clear demonstration of the government's ambition to level up local communities by delivering long-term career prospects to their area rather than the previous heavy concentration on central London.

Through our Places for Growth Scheme, we are bringing more opportunities and decision-making closer to the communities we serve.

Ministry of Justice Permanent Secretary Antonia Romeo said:

Broadening recruitment into the Ministry is crucial, not only because it creates opportunities but because it helps us to be more innovative and make better decisions.

Moving more than 2,000 MoJ roles out of London and the South East by 2030 and opening new regional offices across England and Wales will help ensure we are hiring the most talented people from all geographies and backgrounds to help deliver for the society we serve.

This announcement follows several other Government departments confirming that they are moving thousands of civil service jobs out of London, better serving the communities they represent such as Cardiff, Wolverhampton and Glasgow. This includes the Home Office, the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, the Department of International Trade and the Cabinet Office.

As positions become available they will be re-advertised nationally, rather than tied to a location, an approach that has already seen most new recruits based outside London.