

# [NDA postpones annual Supply Chain Event](#)

News story

The NDA has taken the decision to postpone its annual Supply Chain Event, because of the ongoing Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.



NDA postpones supply chain event

The event was due to take place on 3 February at The International Centre, Telford, and it will be rearranged when it's suitable to do so.

If you have registered for our event, then your booking will be carried over to a future date. We expect to announce a new date shortly.

We remain committed to working with and developing our supply chain which is essential in helping us to deliver our decommissioning mission.

For further information please contact the event management team at Marick at [info@decommsupplyevent.co.uk](mailto:info@decommsupplyevent.co.uk) or call 0161 8777693.

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## [National Highways awards new contract to revamp roads in the West Midlands](#)

Press release

The contract will help us maintain safe, reliable roads for drivers in the West Midlands, Shropshire, Worcestershire, Herefordshire, Warwickshire, Staffordshire and part of North Gloucestershire.



The contract will help us provide the best possible quality of service to road users

The multi-million-pound contract, which starts on 1 July 2022, will see Colas carrying out routine maintenance, repairing defects, responding to emergency incidents and providing severe weather services on some of the region's busiest routes, including the M6, M42 and M54.

The contract value is up to £328 million and is set to run for 8 years.

Regional Operations Director for the Midlands, Andrew Jinks, said:

Our roads are among the safest in the world and partnerships like this help to maintain the high standards that we set ourselves and our partners. By working more closely with our supply chain partners on routine maintenance, repairs and incident response, we're able to work more effectively, identifying innovative ways of working and provide the best possible quality of service to road users.

We're delighted that Colas has been awarded this contract and look forward to working with them, driving improvement and strengthening our regional expertise.

The area Colas will be maintaining covers around 2,300 miles (3,760 km) of motorway and trunk roads.

Carl Fergusson, CEO Colas Ltd, said:

Everyone at Colas is delighted that we are continuing to build on our successful relationship with National Highways with this new, significant, contract award. We are looking forward to establishing a highly effective collaborative working relationship in Area 9 with National Highways and our supply chain partners as part of the

contract, and in working towards the common goal of reducing carbon emissions to achieve net zero.

We provide National live traffic information through our [National Highways website](#).

Local Twitter services are also available at [@HighwaysWMIDS](#).

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## [PM opening statement at COVID-19 press conference: 4 January 2022](#)

Previous waves of the pandemic did not have a single day with more than 100,000 new cases reported.

On one day last week we had 200,000 people test positive.

And the latest figure today is another 218,000, though that includes some delayed reports.

So anyone who thinks our battle with Covid is over is, I'm afraid, profoundly wrong.

This is a moment for the utmost caution.

But our position today differs from previous waves in two crucial respects.

First, we now know that Omicron is milder than previous variants,

so while hospital admissions are rising quickly

with over 15,000 Covid patients now in hospital in England alone –

this is not yet, thankfully, translating into the same numbers needing intensive care that we saw in previous waves.

And second, thanks to the fantastic national effort to get Britain boosted,

we now have a substantial level of protection, higher than any of our European neighbours,

with over 34 million boosters administered,

including in England reaching more than 90 per cent of the over-70s,

and 86 per cent of the over-50s.

And so together with the Plan B measures that we introduced before Christmas, we have a chance to ride out this Omicron wave without shutting down our country once again.

We can keep our schools and our businesses open, and we can find a way to live with this virus.

But the weeks ahead are going to be challenging, both here in the UK and across the world.

There is no escaping the fact that some services will be disrupted by staff absences,

but we have been working through Christmas to prepare for this wherever possible.

And if we all play our part in containing the spread of this virus

the disruptions we face can be far less severe than a national lockdown, with all the devastation that would bring for livelihoods and the life chances of our children.

So the government is acting to protect critical national services,

keep supply chains open,

and fortify our NHS to withstand the pressures ahead.

We've identified 100,000 critical workers,

in areas from food processing to transport to our border force –

and from 10 January we'll be rolling out lateral flow testing for all these workers, available on every working day.

We'll be sending testing kits directly to these organisations and liaising with them on the logistics.

We've asked qualified teachers who have left the profession to come back and help fill temporary absences,

and I want to thank them and all teachers, parents and pupils for taking the precaution to test yourselves and to wear a mask in the classroom, enabling vital face-to-face education to continue.

We're increasing NHS capacity by building onsite Nightingale hospitals,

as well as creating 2,500 virtual beds where people can be safely treated at home.

We've bought more antivirals per person than anywhere else in Europe those

are the tablets which reduce your chances of going to hospital once you've caught Covid.

We're mobilising our volunteers

– the emerging territorial army of the NHS –

and we're working to identify those NHS Trusts which are most likely to need actual military support, so this can be prepared now.

As our NHS moves to a war footing, I will be recommending to Cabinet tomorrow that we continue with Plan B,

because the public have responded and changed their behaviour, your behaviour, buying valuable time to get boosters in arms and help the NHS to cope with the Omicron wave.

So please carry on observing those measures for now.

Work from home if you can.

Wear face coverings on public transport and in indoor public places,

and take a test before you go to a high-risk venue or meet those who are elderly or vulnerable.

And follow the relevant rules if you live in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland.

Above all, if you haven't already done so please, please get that booster.

Since I launched the Get Boosted Now campaign on 12 December:

we have delivered 10 million extra boosters across the UK;

we have doubled the rate of vaccination from 450,000 doses a day to a peak of more than 900,000;

we matched the NHS's previous record day, and then beat it again and again;

and we met our target of offering a booster to every eligible adult a whole month early.

The freedoms we are able to maintain in the teeth of this Omicron wave

have been made possible by the number of people getting boosted,

and I want to thank again, everyone who assisted this extraordinary national effort over Christmas.

Our GPs and their teams, pharmacists and everyone in our fantastic NHS,

the thousands of volunteers,

the ingenious initiatives of local communities,

like the one in Redbridge Town Hall which vaccinated 1,700 people on Christmas Day –

and every one of you who has come forward and done your bit by getting jabbed.

But there are still almost 9 million people eligible, who haven't had their booster,

And it's absolutely heart-breaking that as many as 90 per cent of those in intensive care with Covid have not had their booster,

and over 60 per cent of those in Intensive Care, who have Covid, have not had any vaccination at all.

People are dying needlessly because they haven't had their jabs,

they haven't had that booster.

And there are 2 million booster slots available this week alone.

It's already the case that to travel to some countries you need a booster to be considered fully vaccinated,

and it's likely that within weeks this will increasingly become the norm.

So if you haven't done it already, get yourself boosted this month.

Exactly a year after the UK administered the first AstraZeneca vaccine,

a British invention that has enabled 2.5 billion jabs around the world –

the best way to contain this virus, help our NHS, and keep our country open,

is to get boosted, and so please, Get Boosted Now.

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## **Home Office to introduce scientific methods for assessing the age of asylum seekers**

This advice will help ensure asylum seeking adults posing as children do not get access to support they are not entitled to, and remove the safeguarding risks of adults being wrongly placed in children's care system.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

The Nationality and Borders Bill will end many of the blatant abuses that have led to our immigration and asylum system being abused by those with no right to be in our country.

The practice of single grown adult men, masquerading as children claiming asylum is an appalling abuse of our system which we will end. By posing as children, these adult men go on to access children's services and schools through deception and deceit; putting children and young adults in school and care at risk.

It is a fact that two thirds of age dispute cases have found that the individual claiming to be a child is actually over the age of 18. I have given more resources and support to local councils to ensure that they apply vigorous and robust tests to check the ages of migrants to stop adult men being automatically classified as children.

I am changing UK laws to introduce new scientific methods for assessing the age of asylum seekers to stop these abuses and to give the British public confidence that we will end the overt exploitation of our laws and UK taxpayers.

Government reforms will bring the UK's age checking policy in line with other countries. Scientific methods are used by most European countries, who primarily use X-ray scans, and sometimes CT scans and MRI imaging to view key parts of the body.

For example, Finland and Norway take radiographs to examine the development of teeth and the fusion of bones in the wrist. In both countries, two certified experts will carry out the age assessment and must jointly agree on the person's age. In France, X-rays are taken to examine the fusion of the collar bone, alongside dental and wrist X-rays, while in Greece, dental X-rays are used alongside social worker assessments.

Professor Dame Sue Black has been appointed to chair the committee on an interim basis. Currently Pro-Vice Chancellor for Engagement at Lancaster University, Professor Dame Sue is one of the world's leading forensic anthropologists and is the current President of the Royal Anthropological Institute. Before this, she spent 15 years as Professor of Anatomy and Forensic Anthropology at the University of Dundee. A permanent appointment will be made in due course.

The committee will comprise a range of expertise, including medical practitioners, academics, scientists and social workers.

Dame Sue Black said:

I am pleased to have been asked to Chair this committee and look

forward to the opportunity to provide advice to the Home Office Chief Scientific Adviser on the important issue of scientific assessment of age.

The committee will be looking at a range of scientific methods for estimating age, and will be considering their accuracy and reliability, as well as ethical and medical issues. They will report their findings directly to the Home Office Chief Scientific Adviser to support her in advising Ministers on appropriate scientific methods for age estimation.

Many of those arriving in the UK who claim to be children understandably do not have clear evidence, such as a passport, to prove their age.

This can result in some people trying to claim they are younger than they are, in order to receive asylum or refugee status in the UK.

This is a significant issue. In the 12 months up to September 2021, of the 1,696 resolved age dispute cases in which an individual's claim to be a child is disputed, around two thirds were found to be adults.

Resolving such age disputes is currently very time consuming, challenging and expensive for local authorities and the Government. It also often relies primarily on interviews with social workers and, given it is not always combined with scientific evidence, can be subjective, often resulting in expensive legal challenges. These can cost councils hundreds of thousands of pounds and can take as long as three years to resolve.

Recent examples of where age assessment has gone wrong has resulted in adults being put into children's schools, or children being treated as adults, in both cases putting children at risk of harm. For example, in one instance pupils raised alarm at an obviously mature adult joining their class. He was re-assessed to be 10 years older than his claimed age.

Other new measures on age assessment include:

- establishing a National Age Assessment Board with expert social workers who can conduct an age assessment on behalf of a local authority. This will be a centralised team within the Home Office that Local Authorities can use if they do not want to conduct their own age assessments
- setting out which scientific methods those making age assessments, such as the National Age Assessment Board or Local Authorities, should use to lead to more informed decisions. If someone refuses to undergo a scientific age assessment set out by the Home Office without good reason, the person undertaking the age assessment must take into account this refusal as damaging the person's credibility, when deciding to believe what they say about their age
- creating a new right of appeal, which will provide a quicker and cheaper way to resolve legal disputes. The Nationality & Borders Bill is being debated in the House of Lords today (Wednesday 5th January)



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# Commercial digital radio multiplex licences renewed until 2035

Press release

Radio lovers will be able to enjoy the best of the UK's national commercial broadcasters' content through free-to-air digital radio for the next decade.



- Future of popular radio stations including Absolute Radio, Classic FM and Times Radio will be secured on digital for at least the next decade
- Renewal of the two UK national digital radio multiplex licences means stability for listeners and broadcasters

The government is giving Ofcom the power to renew two national commercial radio multiplex licences – Digital One Ltd Multiplex and Sound Digital Ltd Multiplex, due to expire in 2023 and 2028 respectively – until December 2035.

The move will mean audiences across the UK will enjoy uninterrupted access to the huge range of radio content available from the country's national commercial broadcasters through their digital devices on a free-to-air basis.

Well-known stations on the Digital One Ltd Multiplex include Absolute Radio, Capital and Smooth. Listeners can find the likes of Jazz FM and Talk Radio on the Sound Digital Ltd Multiplex.

Media Minister Julia Lopez said:

Radio's distinctive and much-loved format means it continues to be at the heart of people's lives. Today we are confirming plans to extend radio multiplex licences until 2035 so our hugely popular stations can continue to reach audiences through digital radio

networks and we can give broadcasters the certainty they need to invest in their future services.

Radio is extremely popular in the UK. Almost 9 in 10 adults listen to their favourite stations every week. But technological developments mean more people choose to listen to their favourite stations on digital devices and terrestrial broadcast digital (DAB) radio is now the most popular way people listen to radio programmes in the UK.

A digital radio multiplex is a service which groups a number of different radio stations onto one frequency. It differs from analogue (FM/AM) broadcasting where a single signal is broadcast.

Multiplexes allow radio broadcasters to use the spectrum – the airwaves over which all wireless communications devices communicate – to be allocated more efficiently and give listeners more choice on digital radio.

Renewing the two multiplex licences via a Legislative Reform Order will also provide long-term continuity for various national commercial stations to broadcast digitally.

ENDS

#### Notes to Editors

- The government consulted on the approach to the future licensing of national commercial radio multiplexes in a document [published in July](#) last year.
- In October the government and radio industry published the [Digital Radio and Audio Review](#), which assessed likely future trends in listening and made recommendations on ways of strengthening UK radio and audio.
- Recommendations included no formal switch-off of FM services before 2030 and new measures to protect UK radio stations' accessibility so that their content is carried on platforms via connected audio devices such as smart speakers.
- The full list of the radio services carried on the multiplexes being renewed:

D1 Multiplex licence expiring in 2023:

Absolute Radio

Capital

Capital XTRA

Capital XTRA Reloaded

Capital DANCE

Classic FM

Gold

Heart UK

Heart Dance

Heart 70s

Heart 80s

Heart 90s

KISS UK

KISSTORY

LBC

LBC News

Magic

Radio X

Smooth UK

Smooth Chill

talkSPORT

UCB 1

SDL/D2 multiplex licence expiring in 2028:

Absolute 80s

Absolute 90s

Boom Radio UK

BFBS

Fun Kids

Jazz FM

Mellow Magic

Planet Rock

Premier Christian Radio

Premier Praise

Scala Radio

Sunrise Radio

talkRADIO

talkSPORT 2

Times Radio

UCB 2

Union JACK

Union JACK Dance

Union JACK Rock

Virgin Radio

Virgin Chilled

Virgin Anthems

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