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In order to safeguard regional stability, Allies pledged to continue working closely with regional partners.

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Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said:

The UK's immediate priorities are working alongside our NATO Allies to prevent Afghanistan from becoming a safe-haven for terrorists, ensuring that life-saving humanitarian aid can reach those who need it most, and working with international partners to safeguard stability in the region.

This week, the UK pledged to resettle 20,000 Afghan refugees over the next five years. This is in addition to the UK's ARAP scheme, which offers any current or former locally employed staff – who are assessed to be under serious threat to life – priority relocation to the UK. The UK also doubled its humanitarian and development aid to Afghanistan, to provide urgent assistance to those suffering from the conflict, drought and COVID-19. This brings the total UK aid to Afghanistan for this year to £286 million.

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Lincolnshire man prosecuted for illegal waste activities

A Lincolnshire man has been given a suspended prison sentence and his van and funds confiscated at Lincoln Crown Court, for storing and burning waste illegally at a site in Holbeach – despite repeated warnings from the Environment Agency.

Simon Mason, 51, of Bens Gate Road, Holbeach, Lincolnshire, was found to have burned a variety of waste at his property, without an environmental permit or registered waste exemption. He was also found to be storing more than 600 fridges at the site.

Some 700 cubic metres of waste were discovered at the site by Environment Agency officers

Mason's 8 month sentence was suspended for 2 years on condition he completes 250 hours of unpaid work and complies with a 3 month, 7pm to 7am curfew. His available assets of £8,317 were ordered to be confiscated after it was calculated he benefited from his illegal waste activities by £144,000. No order was made for costs because of Mason's limited means.

A registered waste carrier, Mason told Environment Agency officers that he had operated a waste business at the site for a number of years. He collected waste from house clearances and was paid by an electrical store to take away waste fridges. He burned some of the waste and stored the rest at his property.

Mason burned waste at the site, including fridges, which are classed as hazardous material and require special disposal

Officers visited the site on 6 occasions, beginning in April 2018, and told Mason verbally and in writing to stop bringing waste to the site and burning it. They also told him to take the waste to an authorised waste site for recycling or disposal, and later issued him with statutory notices. However, on returning to the site, they found more waste had been brought to the site and burned.

Rubbish observed at the site during the multiple visits included household waste, furniture, mattresses, clothing, paint cans, toilets, televisions and numerous fridges. Some of the rubbish had been burned, prompting neighbours to complain about the smoke generated. Fridges are classed as hazardous waste and require specialist disposal.

Environment Agency Senior Lawyer Sarah Dunne said:

By November 2018, the Environment Agency's patience was largely exhausted. Officers attended at the site and found 634 fridges and over 700 cubic metres of other waste.

Judge John Pini QC told Mason:

You started running this waste disposal business. You went into it with staggering naivety. It's pretty obvious to absolutely anybody that you can't dispose of this waste by burning it, putting toxic fumes into the environment. I fail to understand why you did not grasp that.

Reminding Mason that he was operating what he knew to be an illegal business throughout 2019 and 2020, Judge Pini warned him that he would be imprisoned if he repeated his illegal activity.

Helen Clayton from the Environment Agency's Waste North Team said:

Storing and burning waste in this way saved the cost of legal disposal and put the environment at real risk. This result should serve as a warning for others that we take illegal waste activity extremely seriously and we will take enforcement action against those who flout the law.

Despite our advice, Mr Mason showed a deliberate disregard for the law and we welcome this sentence, which sends a powerful message to anyone in Mr Mason's position that waste crime will not pay.

Environment Agency officers attending the site in November 2018 found 634 fridges being stored

Notes for editors

Simon Mason was prosecuted for operating a facility for the deposit, treatment and storage of waste between September 2015 and February 2021, contrary to Regulations 12 and 38(1)(a) Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016.

He was also prosecuted for the disposal of controlled waste in a manner likely to cause pollution of the environment or harm to human health between April 2018 and February 2021, contrary to Section 33(1)(c) and (6) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 as amended.

Extramural Studies (EMS) Placements at the VMD July 2022

News story

The VMD is inviting applications from veterinary students to attend a two-week EMS placement in July 2022.



The Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) is inviting veterinary students to apply to attend a two-week EMS placement next year, at the VMD's offices in Addlestone, Surrey.

There are 6 placements available for veterinary students who are in their final two years of study. This follows the success of our first-ever EMS placement, which took place in July 2021.

The placement gives students a comprehensive overview of the work of the VMD with a focus on areas of clinical relevance and also allows students to explore other career opportunities in the veterinary profession.

The next placement will run from 4 to 15 July 2022, please note that you should only apply if you are available for the full two weeks of the placement.

The weeks will be structured with lectures and workshops, as well as a student-led journal club. Topics that will be covered include:

- Introduction to the VMD
- Insight into the work of the different VMD teams; Pharmaceuticals (Quality, Human and Environmental Safety, Efficacy), Biologicals, Legislation, Enforcement, Residues, Pharmacovigilance, Antimicrobial Resistance and associated policy, International Development and Training
- Legal bases and authorisations of veterinary medicines
- Dossier requirements to demonstrate Quality, Safety and Efficacy of the medicine
- Generic medicines; bioequivalence and biowaivers
- Clinical trials design and conduct

- Novel therapies
- Prescribing and responsible use of veterinary medicines
- Animal Test Certificates in practice
- Anthelmintic resistance
- Benefit: risk balance
- Careers in the Civil Service

To apply please fill in the EMS application form [EMS Application form](#) (PDF, 127KB, 1 page) and e-mail to ems@vmd.gov.uk.

Applications will close on Friday 1 October 2021. All applicants will be notified of the outcome of their application by Friday 15 October 2021.

Please note, students will be responsible for their own accommodation and travel costs.

The intention is to run the placements at the VMD's offices in Surrey, however if due to COVID-19 restrictions this is not possible the placements will be run virtually.

We look forward to receiving your applications.

Published 20 August 2021

Government data shows mass events can take place safely but fans urged to remain cautious in crowds and get vaccinated

Data from NHS Test and Trace shows that mass participation events can be conducted safely, but caution must still be taken around specific aspects of event participation.

The data, drawn from a range of the 37 trial events that have formed the Events Research Programme over a four month period, has shown that case numbers were largely in line with or below community infection rates for the duration of the programme.

However, a cautious approach should be taken at unstructured events involving attendees being in close proximity for extended periods of time, when spectators are at high-density pinch points at venues, when travelling to and from events, and when mixing indoors before, during and after events.

Figures published today show that 585 cases were recorded by NHS Test and

Trace at the time of the British Grand Prix, which hosted the largest crowd in the UK in over 18 months with over 350,000 people in attendance across three days.

When broken down, the 585 cases from the Grand Prix show that 343 of those cases were likely to have already been infectious around the time of the event, while 242 cases are from people likely to have acquired an infection around the time of the event.

In England over this period 1.36-1.57% of people were testing positive for COVID-19, which equates to between 1/75 to 1/65 people.

Data from The Wimbledon Championships, which hosted around 300,000 people over a two week period, recorded 881 cases through NHS Test and Trace.

This data breaks down to 299 cases that were likely to have already been infectious around the time of the event, with 582 cases likely to have acquired an infection around the time of the event. In England over this time period 0.31-1.36% of people were testing positive for COVID-19, which equates to between 1/320 and 1/75 people.

The data from these two events, alongside the majority of others conducted as part of the Events Research Programme, demonstrate that mass participation events can be conducted safely, with case numbers comparable to, or lower than community prevalence. It is however, important to note that when observing this data, assumptions cannot be made that transmission definitely happened at the event, nor that individuals became infected at the time of their attendance at an event.

Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden said:

We've shown that we can reintroduce mass sports and cultural events safely but it is important that people remain cautious when mixing in very crowded settings.

So that we can keep the football season, theatres and gigs safe with full crowds this winter, I urge sport, music and culture fans to get the vaccine as this is the safest way we can get big events firing on all cylinders once more.

Health Minister, Lord Bethell, said:

Data is our greatest weapon in the fight against the pandemic, and these pilots inform our approach to mass events, now and in the future.

These events and the passion of supporters brought joy to millions of people across the country. But the reports make it clear that they also reinforce the need for us to not let our guard down. We all need to comply with the advice accompanying major events to

keep everyone safe and so everyone can safely enjoy these important occasions. We can all keep doing our bit by getting tested regularly and getting the vaccine.

The two EURO 2020 matches on July 7 and 11 were events of national significance in England. They took place during a period of higher underlying community prevalence, and drew significant numbers of ticketless individuals to the area surrounding Wembley Stadium, likely contributing to the increased infections data around these events.

The associated Public Health England / NHS Test and Trace data for the EURO 2020 final shows that 2,295 people in or around the stadium were likely to have been infectious at the time of the event, with an additional 3,404 people in and around the stadium potentially acquiring infection around the time of the event.

Dr Jenifer Smith, Deputy Medical Director, Public Health England, said:

EURO 2020 was a unique occasion and it is unlikely we would see a similar impact on COVID-19 cases from future events.

However, the data does show how easily the virus can spread when there is close contact and this should be a warning to us all as we try and return to a cautious normality once again. When attending large events there are actions we can all take to help reduce the risk. These include: getting both doses of the vaccine as soon as you can, wearing a face covering in enclosed spaces such as on public transport on your way, and if you are catching up with friends before an event, consider doing so outdoors to reduce the risk of the virus spreading.

Please do not attend events if you have symptoms – you must isolate and get a test as soon as possible. If you are a contact of a confirmed case and have had both doses of the vaccine, although you don't need to isolate you should still get a PCR test and limit socialising to keep your loved ones and the wider community safe.

The significant numbers of people seen outside Wembley Stadium at the Euro 2020 Final, and the events taking place under Step 4 are likely to make comparisons with the other ERP events misleading. As set out in the PHE research paper, while useful for informing the approach to managing risks at major sports events, these games are not considered typical of standard sporting events and should not be used as comparators.

On the days of England's latter EURO 2020 matches, data published by PHE shows there were subsequent spikes in cases across the country. The data shows that individuals tested positive reported participating in a variety of activities including visiting bars, pubs, other households and eating out on match days. This data highlights the need for members of the public to remain cautious in all settings, whether that be at an event, in homes, pubs or bars

when coming together with family, friends or other members of the public.

The Latitude and Tramlines festivals took place after Step 4 of the Government's roadmap out of lockdown on July 21, when community prevalence rates were higher. The data published from these events shows they have been associated with a higher number of cases (over 1,000 per event) through NHS Test and Trace data.

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

- Additional reporting from Phase II and Phase III of the Events Research Programme is continuing to be compiled by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, Public Health England and Department for Health and Social Care and science and research reports will be published in due course.
- Following the publication of the Phase I report, Phases II and III of the ERP have looked specifically at testing the safety of events at increasing size and scale, with greater crowd numbers present. Events participating in the latter two phases included the EURO 2020 matches at Wembley Stadium, the British Grand Prix at Silverstone, performances at the Piccadilly Theatre in London and music festivals, including Download, Tramlines and Latitude.
- The ERP has demonstrated how certification can be effectively implemented at large events via the NHS COVID Pass. These events generated valuable insights resulting in improvements in the NHS COVID Pass to make the services as easy as possible to use.
- The data published today outlines the mitigations that were employed for each event, attendance numbers, NHS Test and Trace data recorded at the time of the event, proportion of venue space used and research studies conducted for all phases of the ERP. It also provides comparator data that shows the level of community prevalence in England at the time.
- See the full Events Research Programme [Data Dashboard](#).
- Read the Events Research Programme Phase I [report](#).
- Find the full list of [events in the ERP](#).
- Read the '[Public Health Impact of Mass Sporting and Cultural Events in a rising COVID-19 prevalence in England](#)' paper.