

# Establishing the principles necessary for transparent, functioning voluntary carbon markets,

Friends, the clock is ticking down on the climate crisis.

We are running out of time to protect our precious planet from its worst effects, and to keep the goals of the Paris Agreement within reach.

To keep 1.5 degrees alive, as the UK COP26 Presidency is determined to do, we must halve global emissions by 2030.

And that means everyone playing their part – governments, investors, civil society and business.

Alongside companies setting science-based targets to cut emissions to net zero, and building resilience, voluntary carbon markets can play a vital role, enabling us to do more.

A voluntary carbon market with integrity can incentivise emissions reductions, and it can encourage technology innovation, and promote reforestation.

And it can raise finance, fast, getting funds to emerging markets and to nature-based solutions, including forest protection.

This of course is invaluable.

Because without finance, the task ahead is near impossible.

But integrity is the watch word.

With less than a decade to keep 1.5 alive, there is simply no room for greenwashing.

The era of carbon offsetting delaying meaningful climate action is over.

We need transparent, reliable markets playing a role in robust emissions reduction strategies, supporting companies to deliver, providing confidence to consumers and investors, and keeping 1.5 degrees alive.

That is why the work of the Voluntary Carbon Markets Integrity Initiative, working alongside private sector initiatives, is so important.

And why the UK Government is proud to support it.

But it will only succeed with your help.

So I urge all governments, businesses, civil society organisations and Indigenous Peoples listening to engage as fully as possible with the VCMi's

work.

Help to establish the principles necessary for transparent, functioning voluntary carbon markets, for it to be presented at COP26.

Together, let's build our resilience, drive down global emissions, and keep 1.5 degrees alive.

ENDS

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## [Parole Board Members Blog – July 2021](#)

Many people's experience and understanding of parole – and prisons – doesn't go much further than what was depicted in the Shawshank Redemption or in television dramas and documentaries. The parole process in England & Wales is a far cry from what is portrayed on our television screens in American films or TV shows.

There is no doubt that the Parole Board is one of the most misunderstood public bodies in this country. It is frustrating that even good friends still say: "This is Sian, she works in probation" or "She decides whether prisoners can be released early". Neither are the case and I spend quite a lot of time getting annoyed at the radio when commentators and politicians get it wrong.

When I joined the Parole Board 15 years ago, I quickly learned that our job is very different from that of a judge. Judges deal with sentencing. It is their role to hand down the appropriate punishment to offenders convicted of a crime and set the minimum period which they should spend behind bars before being considered for release.

Put simply, Parole Board members decide if a prisoner is safe to release. We take these decisions extremely seriously. After all, my colleagues and I have families of our own and all live in the community. Why would we release someone we considered dangerous?

We listen very carefully to experienced professionals, including probation and prison officers, psychologists, mental health professionals and the police, all of whom have worked closely with the prisoner. At a hearing, we question and test these professionals – and the prisoner – in their decision making and recommendations and only then do we come to a conclusion when we have weighed and sifted the evidence. Members will often digest over 1,000 pages of evidence in the lead up to a hearing. We also hear Victim Personal Statements from the victim's families. These can be extremely harrowing and powerful accounts which are paramount in ensuring that the victim's voice is heard.

As a Parole Board member, I have no powers to release a prisoner who is not

eligible for release. The vast majority of all prisoners are released automatically at the halfway point of their sentence without Parole Board involvement. The other 5-10% often convicted of the most serious offences, are serving indeterminate sentences, for example life sentences or IPPs as well as anyone recalled to prison. It is this small section of the prison population who I deal with as a member.

It is often reported that the Parole Board releases prisoner's "early" – This is not true.

In the case of life sentenced prisoners, they are only seen by the Parole Board after they have served the punishment part of their sentence, known as the tariff, which was set by the trial judge at the time. Once this term has been served, the Secretary of State for Justice will refer them to the Parole Board and a panel of Parole Board members will then decide if they are safe to release or not.

I have no powers to change the sentence set by a judge. It is my role to assess whether it remains necessary for the protection of the public for a prisoner to remain inside after that sentence has been served. We will only ever release someone if we deem it safe to do so.

I think I would always say that it's very heartening when you see prisoners who have used their time in prison to improve their lives and have genuinely reduced the risk of them hurting someone in the future. I've often dealt with applications to have supervision suspended in the community. That could typically be when a prisoner who has been convicted of a serious offence, has been released and completely rebuilt their life over time in the community, having accommodation, a job and in some cases a family. But be sure, we approach each case on an individual basis. We do not make decisions about someone based on generalisations, we do not assume that just because they've behaved well in prison or come across well in their hearing that all will be well on release.

Prisoners are human beings, many with the capacity to change and improve, but they would struggle to pull the wool over the eyes of members. Indeed, there are prisoners who will spend the rest of their lives behind bars because the Parole Board deems them too dangerous to ever be released.

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## [Growth in opportunities for young people at Dounreay](#)

News story

Career opportunities at Dounreay for young people increased this year with

the addition of a new apprenticeship in quantity surveying.



Two QS apprentices are joining Dounreay Site Restoration Ltd for the first time this month, taking the site's total intake across its graduate and apprenticeship programme during 2021 to 28.

The 2-year apprenticeship in quantity surveying is being delivered in partnership with Inverness College UHI. The course combines practical on the job experience of major decommissioning projects at the site with high quality classroom studies.

Carol Robertson, apprentice training manager at DSRL, said:

Quantity surveying and estimating is a skillset that is in demand at the site and I'm delighted we've been able to launch this new apprenticeship to fill that gap.

DSRL received a higher than usual number of applications to its graduate and apprentice recruitment programme this year.

Several hundred people from across the Highlands and Islands and beyond applied for the 14 graduate places, 8 engineering apprenticeships, 4 business administration apprenticeships and 2 QS apprenticeships.

The successful applicants all start work with DSRL between 4 August and 13 September.

In addition, the site is providing 3-month summer placements for 18 university students this year.

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted some aspects of the site's apprenticeship programme, resulting in a 6-month extension for those in their final year to catch up on any missed work.

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# Information for veterans about The Accumulated Campaign Service Medal (ACSM) 1994 and 2011

News story

Clarification of the qualification criteria for the ACSM 1994 and 2011.



ACSM 2011 (left) and ACSM 1994 (right). Crown copyright.

The Ministry of Defence can confirm that a formal review of the Accumulated Campaign Service Medal eligibility criteria has been completed. Due to ambiguity within the policy, it was necessary to pause all ACSM applications submitted since 2019, pending a review to ensure that those potentially eligible had their medal earning operational service correctly assessed.

The review reaffirmed the original intent of the medal, and clarified the qualification criteria to ensure that all time on a campaign or operation where a medal is earned should count towards the ACSM, unless the qualification criteria for the campaign medal specifically states it is excluded.

In some instances, prior to 2019, the Initial Qualifying Period (IQP) for the award of campaign medals had been incorrectly discounted when calculating a service person's aggregated time on medal earning operations towards a potential ACSM.

The IQP will now be included towards all ACSM applications, including those currently awaiting assessment. The MOD Medal Office (MODMO) is in the process of assessing all applications that have been submitted and frozen pending the outcome of this review. These applications do not require resubmitting. However, service personnel and veterans who are concerned that they may not have been awarded the ACSM, or disadvantaged from qualifying earlier, as a result of the exclusion of their IQP are invited to re-apply.

More detailed information, guidance on eligibility and how to apply can be

found on [The Accumulated Campaign Service Medal \(ACSM\) 1994 and 2011 Policy Review 2020.](#)

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## [UK Space Command officially launched](#)

A special ceremony held at Space Command Headquarters, RAF High Wycombe yesterday marked the official opening of UK Space Command, with the first 'Space Operator' Badges presented to personnel.

Space plays a vital role in the Armed Forces ability to undertake the majority of defence tasks, with any disruption to the space domain leading to significant consequences on civilian, commercial, economic and military activity.

The stand-up of Space Command is a crucial step to ensure we protect UK interests in space and builds on the commitments outlined in the Defence Command Paper, to invest an additional £1.4 billion on space over the next 10 years. The ability to operate in Space is further enhanced by an increase in Defence funding of £24 billion over the next four years, as announced by the Prime Minister last year.

Minister for Defence Procurement Jeremy Quin said:

As our adversaries advance their space capabilities, it is vital we invest in space to ensure we maintain a battle-winning advantage across this fast-evolving operational domain.

The stand-up of Space Command is an exciting and important step in our commitment to operate in space effectively.

Under the leadership of Air Vice Marshal Paul Godfrey, the Joint Command will have oversight of all space capability development in the Ministry of Defence across three main areas; Space operations; Space workforce training and growth; and Space capability to develop and deliver space equipment programmes.

When at full operating capability, UK Space Command will provide command and control of all of Defence's space capabilities, including the UK's Space Operations Centre, RAF Fylingdales, SKYNET and other enabling capabilities.

After the newly refurbished headquarters were officially opened, the Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Sir Mike Wigston, presented the first eight personnel with the new 'Space Operator' badges, which signify the excellence

of space professionals across defence. Six members of the Royal Air Force received the badge, as well as a British Army officer, and an exchange officer from the United States. The design is based upon the Airborne Specialist badge and features a single silver angled wing and a blue laurel surrounding a delta, an orbit ellipse and a constellation of stars representative of Aries, as UK Space Command was formed on 1 April which equates to Aries in the celestial calendar.

Commander of UK Space Command Air Vice Marshal Paul Godfrey said:

The space domain is vital, not just in enabling military operations across the world, but in the day to day lives of everyone across the nation.

With our new headquarters officially open, UK Space Command is now on the path to lead UK space operations to protect UK and allied interests in space.

UK Space Command will work with UK Strategic Command and the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory drawing on key expertise from across Defence to ensure multi domain integration across environments.

UK Space Command carries the UK's commitment in the Combined Space Operations initiative, which comprises of seven nations: Australia, Canada, France, Germany, New Zealand, UK and the US. The initiative seeks to improve cooperation, coordination, and interoperability opportunities in space, with main efforts focussed on ensuring a safe, secure and stable space domain.