

[A new way forward for posties and others who have workplace pensions](#)

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[Dstl awards a new contract for Anglo-French technology partnership](#)

CW ITP is a major Anglo-French collaborative programme for missile research and development. MBDA will act as the prime and will coordinate research with major suppliers in the UK and France on behalf of Dstl and the French Department of Defence (DGA).

The CW ITP is worth £40m over 4 years, with Dstl, DGA and UK and French industries all contributing towards this total amount.

The governments of both the UK and France have shown a commitment to harness the opportunities innovation can present for the benefit of their Defence capabilities. This new 4-year contract follows on from the work of the Materials and Components for Missiles Innovation Technology Partnership (MCM ITP) over the last 13 years. The CW ITP will collaboratively identify and develop revolutionary and innovative technology to enhance complex weapons capability in both nations for the 2030s and beyond.

Dstl's Platform Systems Division Head, Matt Chinn said:

The new framework is fantastic and will see a sharp focus on 5 Enduring Technical Areas (ETAs) identified as unique and critical to the field of complex weapons. The capability improvements and potential disruptors will help deliver battle-winning and generation-after-next missile technologies, sustaining UK and France's industrial and scientific base.

A renewed group of UK and French companies, split equally across both nations, will lead the ETAs:

- MBDA for material, structure, electronics and mission systems and algorithms
- Thales and Leonardo UK for seekers
- Safran and Roxel UK for propulsion
- Thales UK and CEA (the French Alternative Energies and Atomic Energy Commission) for lethality

Éric Béranger, CEO of MBDA, said:

I am delighted that a new of era of the Innovation Technology Partnership is beginning with this contract. MCM ITP was an excellent example of Anglo-French co-operation, and the CW ITP will no doubt continue in this endeavour, showcasing that our countries remain committed to working together on future defence technologies.

CW ITP will also look to fund more 'disruptive ideas' through short, 3 to 6 month technology projects that, whilst at the smaller end of funding, carry a high risk of not being successful but high reward if they are.

Ed Dodwell, the Head of CW ITP, said:

The importance of CW ITP's cross defence collaboration is its facility to match up the evolution of ideas with their exploitation. Technology on its own, without a concept for use becomes redundant. Concepts that never materialise beyond that are opportunities missed. CW ITP addresses this by having the best experts working together, linking up the technology push of innovation with the market pull of complex weapons.

[Appointment to the Social Security Advisory Committee: Matthew Doyle](#)

Press release

The Minister for Work and Pensions, the Baroness Deborah Stedman-Scott OBE DL, has appointed Matthew Doyle to the Social Security Advisory Committee (SSAC).



Confirming the appointment, Baroness Stedman-Scott said:

I am delighted to appoint Matthew to the Social Security Advisory Committee. The Committee provides important scrutiny and advice to the government on social security matters, and Matthew's wealth of expertise and experience will enable him to make a valuable contribution to that work.

Dr Stephen Brien, SSAC Chair, said:

At a time when post-pandemic opportunities and challenges emerge for the social security system, Matthew's appointment is a very welcome addition to the Committee. He will bring excellent knowledge and insight to our work on a broad range of issues that affect many people in our society, including a strong understanding of the impact of the benefit system on workers.

About the Committee

The Social Security Advisory Committee is an independent statutory body established in 1980. It provides advice to the Secretary of State on proposals for the amendment of secondary legislation and on general social security matters.

The Commissioner for Public Appointments regulates all appointments made by the Secretary of State to SSAC. All such appointments are made in accordance with the Code of Practice published by the Commissioner. The code is based on three core principles – merit, openness and fairness.

SSAC members receive a daily fee of £256.80, for a time commitment of 2 to 3 days a month.

Matthew Doyle

Matthew Doyle is the Chairman of Money Matters Credit Union.

Matthew also holds the following voluntary roles:

- Chair of The Adolescent and Children's Trust
- Non-Executive Director of Pegasus Community Housing Trust

He will take up his five-year appointment on 1 August 2021.

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[African swine fever disease contingency plans tested through UK-wide exercise](#)

A UK-wide exercise that simulates an outbreak of African swine fever (ASF) will take place this week to test government contingency plans to contain and eliminate the disease in the event that it reached the UK.

ASF is a disease which affects pigs and wild boar and in recent years it has been circulating in parts of Asia and Africa, leading to the deaths of millions of pigs worldwide and causing significant disruption to the meat trade. The disease has also spread to parts of Eastern Europe through the movement of wild boar. Whilst there has never been an outbreak of ASF in the UK, the simulated exercise is an important part of testing the UK's plans to prevent and respond to a potential future outbreak.

ASF poses no risk to human health as it only affects pigs and related animals. ASF spreads between animals, but the virus can also be transmitted through feeding infected meat to other animals. The government currently deems the risk of the virus being brought into the UK in animal products from affected countries, including from illegal imports, to be at '[medium](#)' risk.

The exercise, which is named 'Exercise Holly', will see the Animal and Plant Health Agency, Defra, Scottish Government, the Welsh Government and the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs in Northern Ireland (DAERA-NI) working together to test the government's contingency plans to

respond to a national outbreak of ASF, enabling teams from across the country to work together to assess the UK's state of readiness to manage such an outbreak.

In a joint statement, the UK's four Chief Veterinary Officers said:

The risk of African swine fever arriving in the UK is ever present and would have a devastating impact on our pigs and pig keepers if it ever reached our shores. We regularly test our contingency plans in this way to ensure that we are ready to respond to potential future disease outbreaks.

Everyone can do their bit to help stop animal diseases spreading to this country through simple actions such as not bringing any pork products back to the UK and disposing of leftovers and food waste in secure bins that wildlife cannot access.

The exercise will help improve the UK's animal disease response capabilities through testing plans, instructions and the structures employed in managing an outbreak.

ASF poses no risk to human health as it only affects pigs and related animals. Everyone can help to stop the spread of ASF to the UK by doing the following:

- If you have visited ASF-affected areas in Europe, or elsewhere in the world, you must not bring any pork or pork products back to the UK.
- Disposing of leftovers or food waste in secure bins that pigs or wildlife cannot access.
- Farmers, the public and members of the food industry should practise high biosecurity standards, including never feeding catering waste, kitchen scraps or meat products to pigs which is illegal and can spread the disease.

The Government continually monitors disease outbreaks around the world to assess whether there may be risks for the UK and takes action to limit the risk of the disease reaching our shores.

A lessons identified report will be published after the exercise, with any improvements implemented to strengthen our national contingency plans.

The virtual exercise starts on Thursday 22 July and will conclude on Friday 23 July.

For more information on ASF, visit our [guidance](#) and [control strategy](#) for the disease.

For more information about the various animal disease outbreak contingency plans, visit each Government's exotic disease pages in [England](#), [Wales](#), [Scotland](#) and [Northern Ireland](#).

Prime Minister urges caution as England moves to Step 4

- Cases continue to rise but link with hospitalisations and deaths substantially weakened due to vaccination programme
- Prime Minister urges caution and calls for all adults to come forward for both vaccine doses
- Test, trace and isolate system remains in place to reduce transmission

England has today (Monday) moved to Step 4 of the Roadmap. This means the majority of Covid restrictions have now ended, replaced with guidance emphasising personal judgement and responsibility. People are expected to protect themselves and others through informed choice and move to Step 4 cautiously.

The Prime Minister has today called for all adults who have not yet received their first or second dose of the vaccine to come forward, to help protect themselves and others.

All over 18s are now able to book a vaccine, and nearly 60% of under 25s have received at least one dose. Young adults can be key drivers of transmission and are urged to come forward for both doses.

Cases will continue to rise as set out from the start of the Roadmap, but the vaccination programme has substantially weakened the link between infection and hospitalisation or death. Data from PHE suggests that one dose of either the Pfizer-BioNTech or Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine is 80% effective against hospitalisations with the Delta variant, increasing to 96% after two doses.

The Prime Minister has emphasised the need to remain cautious as restrictions are lifted. The pandemic is not yet over and moving to step 4 is a balance of risks. Cases across the UK and Europe are increasing, and the threat of a new variant remains.

The move to Step 4 was delayed by 4 weeks so more adults could be vaccinated. Nearly 8 million vaccines have been administered during the delay. Over two thirds of all adults have received two doses and every adult has been offered a first dose.

The delay to Step 4 has also moved the end of restrictions closer to the school summer holidays. Lifting restrictions later in the year when the weather gets colder carries further risks as viruses tend to spread more easily in the winter months, and flu will be circulating.

The Prime Minister has set out a five point plan for living with Covid as restrictions are eased:

- Reinforce vaccine defences by reducing the dosing interval from 12 to 8 weeks for all adults.
- The majority of legal restrictions have been lifted and replaced with guidance to enable people to make their own informed decisions to manage the virus, emphasising caution and personal responsibility as cases continue to rise.
- The test, trace and isolate system will remain, with all positive cases legally required to self-isolate. Contacts of positive cases are required to self-isolate until the 16 August, after which adults who have received two vaccine doses and all under 18s will be exempt.
- Border controls will be maintained, including quarantine for all those travelling from a red list country, and for amber list countries unless double vaccinated.
- Data will be continually assessed and contingency measures retained if needed during higher risk periods, but restrictions will be avoided if possible.

The vaccination programme and test, trace and isolate system continue to be the most effective way of reducing transmission, along with practicing good hygiene, keeping spaces well ventilated, and wearing a face covering in enclosed or crowded spaces.

All data will be kept under review, and the government will review the current guidance in September.