

# Armed Forces to be more active around the world to combat threats of the future

As part of the major development to the UK's Defence policy, detailed in the Command Paper, Defence in a Competitive Age, the UK's military will increase its defence of Britain's interests across multiple domains and in all corners of the globe.

At sea we will have more ships, submarines, sailors and Future Commando Force deployed on an enduring basis, to contribute to security, protect shipping lanes and uphold freedom of navigation.

This year's Carrier Strike Group deployment to the Indo Pacific is just one example of this more confident, UK-led, highly technological, and internationally partnered effort to strengthen our alliances and national interests in a region critical to global peace and prosperity.

On land our world class Army will be spearheaded by a new special operations Ranger Regiment able to operate discreetly in high-risk environments and be rapidly deployable across the world.

Details released in the Command Paper also reveal new plans for persistent training for our Armed Forces globally which will reinforce UK's strategic presence across the globe.

High profile defence activity this month alone demonstrates how the Armed Forces deter global threats; fresh strikes have been launched against Daesh in Iraq, a drugs bust conducted in the Northern Arabian Sea and naval operations with NATO Allies completed in the Baltic.

## **Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:**

From striking Daesh terrorists in Iraq, disrupting drug shipments and deterring Russian aggression in the Baltics, our Armed Forces already reach where others cannot.

In the coming years, we will broaden the spectrum of this worldwide engagement even further. Across a vast global footprint, we will be constantly operating to deter our adversaries and reassure our friends, integrating with our Allies, and ready to fight should it be necessary.

## **Future Commando Force**

The Royal Navy will transform the Royal Marines into the Future Commando Force (FCF), marking an evolution from amphibious infantry held at readiness

in the UK to a versatile Special Operations capable Commando force persistently forward deployed.

Receiving over £200m of direct investment across the next decade, the FCF will be optimised to conduct roles traditionally carried out by Special Forces to deliver specialist capacity building and maritime security operations, pre-empt and deter sub-threshold activity, and counter state threats.

### **HMS Trent**

Later this year, Royal Navy patrol ship HMS Trent will for the first time operate from Gibraltar. From here she will be able to support NATO operations in the Mediterranean, work with our North African partners and support multinational counter piracy operations in the Gulf of Guinea off the coast of West Africa. HMS Trent will be able to integrate with the French Navy through our Combined-Joint Expeditionary Force, now fully operational.

The Royal Navy already has ships forward deployed in the Caribbean, South Atlantic and Middle East. The Royal Navy will continue to enhance its forward presence with further deployments of Offshore Patrol Vessels in the future.

### **Royal Navy secures drugs bust**

The benefits of our Armed Forces always being on the front foot beyond our borders has been demonstrated in recent weeks by Royal Navy warship HMS Montrose completing its third drugs bust in five weeks from its permanent presence in the Gulf.

On 12th March HMS Montrose, the Royal Navy's first Forward Deployed Frigate, seized three tonnes of illicit drugs in the North Arabian Sea. The 10 hour operation seized 2800kg of hashish and 50kg of heroin, depriving criminal and terrorist networks of approximately £3.24m and restricting their ability to fund their nefarious activities.

### **Ranger Regiment**

The British Army is establishing a special operations Brigade, the core of which will be four battalions of the new Ranger Regiment.

Over the next four years a share of £120 million will be invested into the unit, enabling it to undertake roles traditionally carried out by Special Forces. They can be expected to be involved in collective deterrence such as training, advising, enabling and accompanying partner forces.

Alongside special operations, a further Brigade will be established. The Security Force Assistance Brigade to provide guidance and training to allied partner nations and draw expertise from across the Army.

Elements of each Brigade will be routinely deployed across the globe to assist partner nations in delivering defence and security.

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## £660 million UK Government funding for Scotland

Scotland will benefit from £660 million of additional UK Government funding, as a result of last week's announcement by the Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock of a further £7 billion for NHS and social care services

In total, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland will receive £1.3 billion new funding. The funding breakdown is determined by the Barnett formula and it is up to the devolved administrations how they spend the money. When England receives additional funding, the Barnett formula ensures Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland all receive an equivalent share of funding.

In England, the investment will support the continuation of the NHS response to COVID-19, and the recovery of elective services as hospitalisations continue to fall, as well as infection control measures in adult social care, and a hospital discharge programme to help free up staff and beds.

Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock said:

Throughout this crisis we've protected the NHS, and made sure they have the resources they need. As a result, across the whole United Kingdom the NHS has been able to live up to its promise of treating everyone according to need not ability to pay. Those values have stood in good stead in this pandemic in very difficult times.

I'm delighted to confirm that as a result of the £7 billion extra UK Government investment announced last week, Scotland will receive £660 million, helping ensure health services in all parts of the UK can continue to tackle the impact of this pandemic. This is another example – alongside the vaccine rollout – of the UK working together for all our citizens.

The funding is on top of the additional £3.6 billion that Scotland is already receiving over the next financial year through the Barnett formula, building on the £9.7 billion of additional funding Scotland received in 2020-21.

Scottish Secretary Alister Jack said:

The UK Government's commitment to supporting Scotland through the pandemic has been unwavering, which is why today we are giving an extra £660 million to the Scottish Government to ensure NHS Scotland has the vital funding it needs in these challenging times.

Alongside this, the UK Government continues to provide the bulk of all Covid-19 testing in Scotland as well as vaccines, which are important in lifting of restrictions and reopening the economy.

The strength of the Union has never been more important to the people of Scotland than it has been over the past 12 months with our Covid-19 response also helping families to retain their livelihoods and supporting businesses to keep running.

It comes as the UK government sets out its bold vision for the future of clinical research, developed by every part of the UK. The vision is designed to improve the speed and efficiency with which the UK Government sets up studies, uses digital platforms to deliver clinical research, and makes research more diverse and relevant to the whole UK.

Reflecting the ambition of all four UK governments, the vision demonstrates a continued shared commitment to work collaboratively, ensuring the UK remains a world-leader in innovative research for the benefit of all four nations.

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## [CMA takes Norton to court for withholding information](#)

Press release

Unprecedented decision reflects the serious impact of Norton's refusal to provide information.



The CMA is taking a leading anti-virus software firm, Norton, to court after it refused to provide certain information for an investigation into auto-renewing contracts.

During its investigation into the [anti-virus software sector](#), the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) has identified a number of important concerns

that Norton's terms and practices for automatically renewing contracts could result in customers paying for services they no longer want or need.

To progress its case on the basis of relevant evidence, the CMA requested information from Norton, including research undertaken by the software firm on how customers responded to website information on auto-renewal and pricing. Norton has refused to provide some of this information.

The CMA considers Norton's non-compliance to be in breach of its legal obligations and the CMA will now use its powers to enforce the request for information through the courts. This is the first time the CMA has needed to take this step in a consumer protection case.

**Andrea Coscelli, CMA Chief Executive, said:**

It is completely unacceptable that a leading anti-virus software firm has refused to supply all the information we asked for, which is why we're taking the firm to court.

Our unprecedented decision in this case reflects the serious impact of Norton's refusal, which is delaying a CMA investigation intended to protect UK consumers.

A rollover or auto-renewing contract automatically renews at the end of a set time period onto a further set period. It means the customer – whose payment details are kept on file – is charged unless the customer actively takes steps to cancel the contract.

During this case, the CMA is investigating whether Norton:

- provides sufficiently clear or prominent information that a contract will automatically renew, both before the customer enters into the contract and then before it automatically renews
- provides the customer with adequate ways to cancel the automatic renewal
- uses price promotions that present a regular introductory price as a sale price
- uses unfair contract terms to increase the prices paid by customers when contracts automatically renew

The CMA has made an application to obtain an Order requiring Norton to provide the outstanding information.

More information can be found on the [anti-virus software sector investigation](#) case page.

**Notes to Editors:**

1. The CMA's court action for non-compliance with the information gathering request is against NortonLifeLock UK Limited and NortonLifeLock Ireland Limited.

2. Under the Consumer Rights Act 2015, the CMA has the power to send a written notice to any person requiring them to provide information to enable the CMA to exercise or to consider whether to exercise its powers to enforce consumer protection legislation (see note 3 below). If a person does not provide the required information, then the CMA can apply for a court order requiring them to comply.
3. The CMA opened its [investigation into the anti-virus software sector](#) in November 2018. The key piece of consumer protection legislation relevant to the CMA's enforcement action into the anti-virus software sector is the Enterprise Act 2002.
4. Whilst the CMA can raise concerns around a breach of consumer protection law, ultimately, only a court can rule that a particular practice infringes the law.
5. As an enforcer under Part 8 of the Enterprise Act 2002, the CMA cannot impose fines on businesses, but it can enforce the above legislation through the courts, and where appropriate, obtain additional measures to improve consumer choice, drive better compliance with the law, or obtain redress for consumers.
6. For media enquiries, contact the CMA press office on 020 3738 6460 or [press@cma.gov.uk](mailto:press@cma.gov.uk)

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## [Boost for jobseekers as new jobcentres offer more frontline support](#)

Jobseekers across the UK will have easier access to more frontline support as 80 towns and cities nationwide welcome new temporary jobcentres, the Minister for Employment, Mims Davies, announced today.

The sites, some of which are already up and running, will be in addition to the existing 639 jobcentres already supporting those looking for work, and will house some of country's 13,500 new Work Coaches – 10,000 of which have already been recruited.

The 80 new temporary jobcentres are the first phase of the programme to expand this support in response to the pandemic, with dozens more expected to follow, to help millions of jobseekers from all over the UK find their next role and get back on track.

Minister for Employment, Mims Davies said:

With more new, temporary jobcentres in place in the heart of our communities, we can support even more people impacted by the pandemic to find work and progress into new roles.

We've already boosted our DWP Work Coaches by 10,000 – and with these new local jobcentres to operate from, we can drive forward our Plan for Jobs, creating fresh opportunity for people all across the country.

The government's Plan for Jobs is well underway, with 150,000 Kickstart roles created for 16 – 24 year olds, over 40,000 people supported through Sector-based Work Academies and thousands more set to get rapid digital support through our Job Finding Service (JFS).

The new temporary jobcentres will follow in the footsteps of those that have been open throughout the pandemic, helping ensure staff can remain COVID secure in line with latest government guidelines.

### **Further information**

List of new jobcentre sites:

Ashford County Square Shopping Centre TN23 1YB  
Ashton Under Lyne OL6 6BJ  
Banbury Castle Quay Shopping Centre OX16 5UH  
Basildon Great Oaks SS14 1GJ  
Bedford Woodlands MK41 7NU  
Bexleyheath Broadway Shopping Centre DA6 7JN  
Birmingham Summer Hill Road B1 3RB  
Birmingham Newton Shopping Centre B19 2SS  
Bolton Thynne Street BL3 6BH  
Bournemouth Castle Lane East BH7 7DT  
Bracknell Cookham Road off Longshot Lane RG12 1RB  
Bradford 2 – 4 Godwin Street BD1 2ST  
Burnley Charter Walk BB11 1AX  
Burton upon Trent Union Street DE14 1AA  
Bury (Manchester) Millgate Shopping Centre BL9 0BX  
Cardiff Queen Street CF10 2HQ  
Chesterfield Vicar Lane S40 1PY  
Chichester Southgate Office Village P019 8GR  
Coventry Judds Lane CV6 6GE  
Crawley (Gatwick) Beehive Ring Road RH6 0LG

Derby Sir Frank Whittle Way DE21 4RX  
Doncaster 39-40 High Street DN1 1DE  
Exeter Bampfylde EX1 2FW  
Falkirk Callendar Square Shopping Centre FK1 1UJ  
Forest Hill Lewisham High Street SE13 6JP  
Gloucester Eastgate Street GL1 1QN  
Halifax Broadstreet Plaza HX1 1YQ  
Harlow Harvey Shopping Centre CM20 1XR  
Huddersfield 11 Trinity Street HD1 4DA  
Ipswich 1 Cutler Street IP1 1 LL  
Kingston Wood Street KT1 1TS  
Leeds Limewood Approach, Seacroft LS14 1NH  
Leeds Great George Street LS2 8ER  
Leeds Kirkstall Road LS4 2BT  
Liverpool Edge Lane L7 9NJ  
London Barnet North London Business Park N11 1GN  
London Croydon Borough 6 Cherry Orchard Way CR9 6BE  
London Hackney E8 1DY  
London Hammersmith W6 9DL  
London Marylebone 24 Eversholt Street NW1 1DB  
London Mitcham The Grange, Central Road, Morden SM4 5PQ  
London Sutton Wallington SM6 0DX  
London Tower Hamlets (Poplar) Tower Hamlets E1 8GH  
London Walthamstow 45 Selborne Walk E17 7JR  
London Walthamstow Kestral House E4 8TD  
London Wandsworth High Street SW15 1TW  
London Wembley High Road HA9 7BH  
Manchester (Stretford) Stretford Mall M32 9BD  
Middlesbrough Dundas Shopping Centre TS1 1HR  
Middlesbrough Columbia Drive Stockton-on-Tees, County Durham TS17 6BJ  
Newcastle (Gateshead) Unit B24 NE11 9YG  
Newcastle (North Shields) Royal Quays NE29 6AR  
Oldham 46 Union Street OL1 1BN  
Peterborough Northminster PE1 1YN  
Plymouth Bretonside PL4 0BG  
Reading 121 Kings Road RG1 3AH  
Sheffield Tenter Street S1 3GG  
Slough Trinity Park E4 8TD  
Stockport 80-82 Wellington Road North SK4 1HW  
Stoke on Trent 1 Smithfield ST1 3DR  
Swinton Swinton Square Shopping Centre M27 4BH



Walsall Unit 2a WS2 8LL  
Walsall Unit 2b WS2 8LL  
Watford 78 St Albans Road WD17 1AF  
Woking Woking, Surrey GU21 6AZ  
Wolverhampton WV1 3BA  
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## [Buffer stop collision at Kirkby station](#)

News story

Investigation into a buffer stop collision at Kirkby station, Merseyside, 13 March 2021.



Derailed train after the collision

At around 18:53 hrs on 13 March 2021, the 18:35 hrs service from Liverpool Central to Kirkby struck the buffers located at the end of the Merseyrail Northern line platform at Kirkby station. The train approached the station at around 42 mph (68 km/h), before an emergency brake application was made, slowing the train before it hit the buffers. The train then derailed and collided with a platform extension which links the Northern line platform to the adjoining Kirkby branch line platform. The derailed train came to a stop under a bridge and clear of the branch line, which was not occupied by a train at the time.

Twelve people reported suffering minor injuries as a result of the accident,

and significant damage was caused to the train and to railway infrastructure.

Our investigation will seek to identify the sequence of events which led to the accident. It will also consider:

- the performance of the train and the infrastructure
- any factors that may have influenced the train driver's actions
- the training, supervision and management of Merseyrail drivers
- the processes used to assess and control the risk of terminal platform overruns
- any relevant underlying factors

Our investigation is independent of any investigation by the railway industry, the British Transport Police or by the industry's regulator, the [Office of Rail and Road](#).

We will publish our findings, including any recommendations to improve safety, at the conclusion of our investigation. This report will be available on our website.

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