

Foreign Secretary statement: OECD appoints Mathias Cormann as next Secretary General

News story

The Foreign Secretary has issued a statement following the appointment of Mathias Cormann as the next Secretary General of the OECD.



Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said:

My congratulations to Mathias Cormann on his selection as the next OECD Secretary General. As the UK holds the Presidency of the G7 and hosts COP26 later this year, our close partnership with the OECD will be vital to building back better from this pandemic.

I look forward to working closely together to support the global economy to recover from COVID, and step up the fight to tackle climate change.

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Changes to our Customer Privacy Notice

News story

The new Customer Privacy Notice covers all types of Planning Inspectorate Casework for England and Wales.



We are moving our previous, and disparately located, Customer Privacy Notices onto a single [Privacy Notice page](#) for ease of use. These changes mean that it is now easier for you to navigate to information about how we process your personal data.

The page sets out the personal data that the Inspectorate collects and how we collect, use, store, share and dispose of your data. The new page is organised in sections and allows you to expand each section of the privacy notice to reveal more detailed information.

Links to the new Customer Privacy Notice will be available on:

- Planning Inspectorate websites
- Written documentation
- Emails

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UK government announces partnership with British rapid test manufacturers

- Supply of tests will support government's plan to cautiously ease restrictions by helping to stop the spread of the virus
- New contracts will create more than 500 jobs across the UK

Two British companies have secured contracts with the government to supply rapid lateral flow tests, which will help prevent the virus from spreading and stop outbreaks from taking hold as restrictions are carefully lifted.

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) has agreed contracts with:

- Omega Diagnostics, headquartered in Alva in Scotland
- Global Access Diagnostics, based in Thurleigh

to provide manufacturing capacity for up to 200 million COVID-19 lateral flow

antigen tests, which detect positive cases quickly – in under 30 minutes – meaning positive cases can isolate immediately, breaking chains of transmission.

Around one in three people who have coronavirus do not have symptoms, so to help stop them from unknowingly passing it on, regular rapid testing is essential to find more positive cases. Lateral flow tests are helping children go back to school, keeping healthcare staff safe and making sure businesses can reopen. Including symptomatic and asymptomatic testing programmes, today the government is on track to surpass 100 million tests carried out in the UK.

The contracts are expected to create around 470 additional jobs in total, in Alva in Scotland, Thurleigh in Bedfordshire, and more widely across the production line and wider UK supply chain.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock said:

Rapid lateral flow tests are essential to help us identify cases of the virus we otherwise wouldn't find and preventing the virus spreading in our workplaces and communities.

These tests will help keep businesses open, our children return to school, people to visit their loved ones in care homes safely.

British innovation is at the forefront of our response to this pandemic and this partnership with 2 Great British firms will help us to build back better by tapping into the UK's domestic talent, ingenuity and industry.

Lord Bethell, Minister for Health, said:

The UK continues to lead the way in medical diagnostics, and we are working with companies such as Omega and Global Access Diagnostics to build on our expertise in the field. The whole industry has come together to respond to COVID-19 and get us back to the people and things we love, helping us stop the spread of the virus now while strengthening our resilience for the future.

Omega and Global Access Diagnostics will have the capacity to produce approximately 2 million tests per week each by the end of May, helping scale up the government's rapid lateral flow testing programme across the country.

Mark Radford, Executive Director of Global Access Diagnostics, said:

This announcement marks the culmination of many months of hard work and collaboration between ourselves and colleagues from the DHSC, the NHS, our supply chain and the diagnostics industry. This will

not only deliver in terms of supporting the safer reopening of schools, of the economy and of the life we all long for a year on from the start of this pandemic, it is also an investment in the UK's resilience and response to future pandemics, both here and overseas. The team at Global Access Diagnostics are proud to be a part of this initiative.

Colin King, CEO of Omega Diagnostics Group plc, said:

We are delighted to deploy our state-of-the-art lateral flow test production facilities in support of the UK government's COVID-19 testing programme. The collaboration with other UK-based IVD companies and DHSC has facilitated the rapid development and manufacturing capability within the UK. We particularly welcome the government's assistance to secure the specialist machinery needed to dramatically increase the scale of our manufacturing capacity which has allowed us to ensure a ready supply of high quality, reliable British made rapid lateral flow tests.

Rapid lateral flow tests are an essential tool for identifying COVID-19 cases where people have no visible symptoms but could still be infectious and continue to spread the virus. We are very proud to be playing our part in the nation's effort to control the spread of coronavirus by using our production facilities in Scotland.

Omega Diagnostics and Global Access Diagnostics are members of the UK Rapid Antigen Test Consortium, a growing coalition of industry scientists and manufacturers, who have come together to secure lateral flow tests and manufacturing capability for the UK.

Professor Chris Molloy, Chair UK Rapid Antigen Test Consortium, said:

The consortium has been harnessing the power of the UK diagnostics industry since summer 2020 to significantly contribute to the national effort to ramp up and expand rapid regular testing programmes. We believe, these programmes, alongside vaccine roll-out, will be key for getting people back to work, education and friends and family.

We have increased manufacturing capacity tenfold, and our member's tests continue to be validated and marketed. We have also started a digital arm comprised of digital solution providers to work with HMG and regulators on new technologies and standards moving forwards.

Numerous bilateral deals have also been agreed between members as a result of industry coming together with intense purpose and leaving competition at the door in order to prioritise the generation of

new UK tests and manufacture them at a scale never considered possible.

We would like to take the time now to thank all those suppliers and manufacturers who have contributed their time and resources to this national effort. Our work here lays a strong foundation for how the diagnostics industry as a whole will flourish in the UK to improve our healthcare in the future.

Publication of contract information is being carried out as quickly as possible in line with government transparency guidelines and details will be published via the [Contracts Finder](#).

HMS Queen Elizabeth visits Scotland for the first time

Press release

The Royal Navy's Fleet Flagship, HMS Queen Elizabeth, has arrived in Glen Mallan, Scotland, as part of final preparations before her first operational deployment.



HMS Queen Elizabeth has arrived in Glen Mallan, Scotland. MOD Crown Copyright.

Sailing in along the Firth of Clyde, the 65,000 tonne aircraft carrier has spent the last two weeks at sea testing and trialling her latest equipment, before berthing at the new Northern Ammunition Jetty for a routine onload of operational stores.

HMS Queen Elizabeth is the first of the Royal Navy's fleet to visit the new £64 million facility, built by the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO).

Operated by Defence Equipment and Support (DE&S) through Defence Munitions, the Northern Ammunition Jetty is specifically designed to support the surface fleet, allowing them to continue entering and berthing at Glen Mallan.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:

HMS Queen Elizabeth has a very proud affiliation to Scotland and it is only fitting she returns before her first operational deployment later this year.

The £64m investment into the new Northern Ammunition Jetty reaffirms our commitment to supporting our core capabilities and defence estate across all corners of the UK.

Captain Angus Essenhig, HMS Queen Elizabeth Commanding Officer, said:

We are very proud of the close connection our ship has with Scotland, especially with our affiliated city of Edinburgh.

HMS Queen Elizabeth embodies the best of British engineering and craftsmanship, including Scottish shipbuilding, and it is a privilege to return to her birthplace of Scotland.

DIO project works undertaken include: the installation of four new navigational aids to ensure safe passage through the confined waterway in Loch Long, two new modular fender spacer units that move with the tide to prevent the aircraft carrier flight deck from coming in to contact with the jetty and the installation of dolphin mooring points to ensure the aircraft can be securely berthed.

Craig MacDonald, DIO's Project Manager, said:

It is fantastic to have HMS Queen Elizabeth berthed at Glen Mallan for the first time.

DIO previously worked closely with contractors and local partners to ensure vital infrastructure upgrades were completed in time to prepare for the visit and I would like to thank everyone involved.

This is the first time HMS Queen Elizabeth has visited Western Scotland, after she initially became a familiar sight on the River Forth where she was

assembled.

HMS Queen Elizabeth is due to sail for Portsmouth at the end of the month, and will deploy to the Mediterranean, Indian Ocean and East Asia later this year, as part of the UK's Carrier Strike Group.

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UK Government to relocate over 1000 civil service jobs to Scotland

- Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) to strengthen joint-headquarters in East Kilbride with 500 extra staff
- Plans will bring new jobs and investment to Scotland as part of the UK Government's commitment to level up in every part of the United Kingdom and build back better from the pandemic

Glasgow, East Kilbride and the surrounding areas will benefit from new jobs and investment from the UK Government, as the Cabinet Office and FCDO are set to relocate over 1000 civil service roles to Scotland.

The move brings key decision makers closer to the communities they serve and will strengthen diversity in the UK Civil Service. The new jobs and investment form part of the UK Government's commitment to level up every part of the United Kingdom and build back stronger, fairer and greener from the pandemic.

Today's announcement will also mean that ministers will spend a significant amount of time in Scotland as the UK Government and Scottish Government work together to build a sustainable recovery from the pandemic. This will create new opportunities to join UK efforts in tackling domestic and international challenges, and allow closer collaboration between Scotland's two governments as we work together to build back better from the pandemic.

Underlining the importance of the United Kingdom pulling together as we embark upon the road to recovery, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Michael Gove, has confirmed today that the Cabinet Office will establish a second flagship headquarters in Glasgow, with at least 500 staff based there within the next four years and new ministerial offices. The move will build on the presence of the COP 26 team, as the UK hosts the UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties in Glasgow in November.

The Foreign Secretary has also confirmed today that an additional 500 roles are moving to FCDO's joint-headquarters in East Kilbride, taking the total number of jobs at its Scottish base to 1,500 by 2025. This underlines the

immense contribution that the Scottish people make to the UK's foreign policy and international development work as we tackle global challenges as one United Kingdom.

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster Michael Gove said:

The Cabinet Office's new HQ in Glasgow will co-locate the engine room of the UK Government in Scotland, bringing decision makers closer to the communities they serve and ensuring closer collaboration between Scotland's two governments as we tackle the COVID-19 pandemic together and work to build a sustainable recovery.

Not only will this bring new jobs and investment to Scotland, it will strengthen the diversity of the UK Civil Service, ending the Westminster knows best approach to policy making and ensuring Scottish voices shape everything we do.

The road to recovery from the pandemic will be tough, but with all four nations pulling together we can ensure we build back a stronger, fairer and greener United Kingdom.

Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said:

There can be no clearer demonstration of our commitment to our joint HQ in East Kilbride than today's announcement that an extra 500 Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office jobs are coming to Scotland. This will ensure the Civil Service represents all parts of the UK and will be a boost to the Scottish Economy.

Staff at Abercrombie House are at the forefront of delivering the UK's diplomatic clout, as we prepare to host the G7 and COP26, while supporting the delivery of our £10billion aid budget to continue helping the world's poorest people.

Scottish Secretary Alister Jack said:

It is great news that hundreds more UK Government civil service jobs will be moving to Scotland, along with the creation of a second flagship headquarters. It will join Queen Elizabeth House in Edinburgh as a demonstration of our unwavering commitment to strengthening the United Kingdom.

I very much look forward to seeing the UK Government's expanded presence in Scotland, along with our ambitious new spending plans, as we continue to deliver for people and businesses.

Chief Operating Officer for the Civil Service and Cabinet Office Permanent

Secretary Alex Chisholm said:

The Civil Service needs to draw on the talents and skills of individuals and communities across the UK.

With the Cabinet Office establishing our second headquarters outside of London, we are opening up opportunities for our existing staff to develop their careers, while also drawing on a new and diverse talent pool.

This is why it's great news that the Cabinet Office will now be operating out of Glasgow as our second headquarters, as well as in York and other locations across the UK.

Today's announcement will bring economic benefits, with new spending power of those civil servants working in and around the areas outlined. £65 million has been allocated for the Government Hubs Programme in 2021/22 for office works and improvements.

The Cabinet Office, the heart of the UK government, will also continue to build the UK Government presence in Scotland, including in Queen Elizabeth House, the new UK Government Office in Edinburgh.