

[CNC #ChooseToChallenge in support of International Women's Day](#)

IWD has been held annually on 8 March since 1911 and celebrates the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women across the globe.

The theme for 2021 IWD is #ChooseToChallenge and asks people to raise their hand and make a pledge to challenge and call out gender bias and inequality and help create an inclusive world.

In the CNC, inclusivity is one of our core Constabulary values and we wanted to mark IWD by asking our officers and staff from around the country to #ChooseToChallenge. Images and pledges were soon arriving and we will be publishing them across the CNCs social media accounts today as part of #ChooseToChallenge.

We'll also be featuring the first female officer to join the CNC (then UKAEAC) in 1976, Jean Crolla. Jean became one of the first female firearms officers in the UK and served at three sites before retiring as a sergeant in 2004. On IWD, we honour Jean and her fellow female firearms officers who inspired and led the way for many to follow.

Chief Constable Simon Chesterman said: "At the CNC, inclusivity, equality and fairness is at the heart of everything we do and I am so proud to be taking part in IWD and choosing to challenge inequality.

"As an armed police force, our number of female Authorised Firearms Officers is 11%, higher than the national average of 6.8%. In comparison, of our 319 police staff, 206 are women – nearly 65% – and we are committed to attracting more women to join us as armed police officers as well as in police staff roles.

"As part of IWD 2021 we have heard from officers and staff across the Constabulary, based around the country, about how they want to help make gender equality a reality for us all and I hope the actions of everyone #ChoosingToChallenge will make a real impact."

Meet more of our officers and staff celebrating international women's day on our accounts on @NuclearPolice on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#)

[Insolvency Service and R3 announce](#)

diversity and inclusion project

The Insolvency Service and [R3](#) are pleased to announce plans for a joint-project reviewing diversity and inclusion across the insolvency profession.

The Steering Group issued this statement:

“A data gathering exercise is planned to baseline levels of diversity and inclusion, and both bodies will work with the profession to improve inclusion where feasible to do so.

As well as seeking to analyse how diverse the sector currently is, the project will identify barriers that make joining, progressing, or succeeding as an insolvency professional more difficult for people on the grounds of their ethnic origins, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, identity or socio-economic background.

We will make recommendations that remove obstacles to ensure that the profession is open and welcoming to all. We recognise this is a long-term project, and in this regard we will publish regular updates of our findings and progress in making the insolvency sector a more diverse and inclusive profession.”

The Insolvency Service and R3 have collaborated to form a Diversity & Inclusion Steering Group to guide this project. The Steering Group is comprised of;

- Harold Brako (Addleshaw Goddard)
- Francesca Tackie (Mercury Corporate Recovery)
- Jo Hewitt (Alvarez & Marsal)
- Donna Miller (The BHA)
- Caroline Sumner (R3)
- James Jeffreys (R3)
- Angela Crossley (The Insolvency Service)
- Jeni Morgan (The Insolvency Service)
- Lee Hewlett (The Insolvency Service)
- Hamish Hore (The Insolvency Service)

Angela Crossley, Director of Strategy and Change for the Insolvency Service, said:

Working in the insolvency profession, whether that is for a firm of insolvency practitioners or a membership body, is a thoroughly rewarding experience. The work is extremely interesting and diverse, reaching a wide variety of industries and sectors.

But there is more we can do to improve diversity and inclusion in the insolvency profession and working alongside R3 and the Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group, our joint statement is just the start of a collaboration which I'm certain will hold benefits

for us all.

Caroline Sumner, Head of Technical, Training and Education at insolvency and restructuring trade body R3, says:

We're delighted to be partnering with the Insolvency Service on this key project to identify and address the issues the profession faces when it comes to diversity and inclusion.

Ensuring that the talent pool for insolvency and restructuring professionals is as deep as possible will enable us to better represent the diverse communities we serve. Creating a supportive and inclusive environment also enables better innovation, problem solving and enables us to attract and retain the very best people.

A number of firms have already recognised the benefits of getting this right and we are pleased to complement their great work.

British Embassy Prague: women and climate essay competition

"Women & Climate: Essay Competition" is a shared project of Embassy of the UK in the Czech Republic, Embassy of Canada in the Czech Republic, and Embassy of the United States in the Czech Republic.

Objectives

Contest's objectives: encourage Czech girls and women to come up with a proposal, in the form of a short essay, for goals that should be pushed for to achieve meaningful progress on climate change, in line with the COP26.

How to participate

- submit essay of 300-350 words in English on the following topic "If you could represent the Czech Republic at COP26, what goals would you push for to achieve meaningful progress on climate change?"
- essay should be submitted [via this form](#) or via ukinczechrepublic@fco.gov.uk. Applicants are required to submit: name, surname, email, nationality, age, present occupation, and use of social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn)
- the contest is open to Czech female nationals, age 16-25
- the essay must be submitted by midnight, March 31, 2021 via the above-mentioned form or email

- once submitted, the essay cannot be edited, updated, or resubmitted. Each contestant can submit only one essay
- participation in the Contest is understood as acceptance of all the rules of the contest

Platforms

The information about the essay contest, including the selection process, announcement of the winner, as well as activities engaging the winners will be communicated on social media platforms of all the sponsors and will include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube.

Communication between the sponsors and participants will take place via email. Winners announcement will be communicated on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube, however, none of these platforms are partners or sponsors of the contest.

Submissions of essays – format

Please, submit your essays in doc, docx, or pdf format. Each submission should include name of the contestant.

Content

Submissions must be original pieces, must not include text protected by intellectual property rights or third party's ownership rights.

Eligibility

Contest is open to females at the age of 16 to 25 of Czech nationality.

Only the person who submits essay will be considered as the contest participant. To participate in the contest, the participant must submit all the requested information, which will be strictly used only for the purpose of the contest and will not be shared with third parties.

The contest is not open for employees and interns of any of the sponsors, nor it is open to family members of such employees and interns.

After submission of the essay, the contest participant may be publicly identified.

Selection of winners

The sponsors reserve the right to remove all contributions to the Contest that do not fulfill the requirements.

The winners will be selected by representatives of all three Embassies. Each Embassy will choose one winner.

Winners

Each winner will agree to participate in public events related to the contest. This will include a full day of programming at/with the Embassy and

social media take-over when content produced by each winner will be used for Embassy's social media. The date of the activity will be negotiated between the Embassy and the participant and will be subject to COVID-19 measures.

The winners may request use of a nickname or pseudonym as all the sponsors are committed to protection of privacy.

Awards

Each of the three winners may expect:

- to spend a day at the Embassy with Embassy staff, shadowing the Ambassador or other Embassy representative.
- program of meetings climate stakeholders, selected and planned by the Embassy
- social media take-over for a day
- small gifts from the Sponsors

The sponsors reserve the right to make the winning essay available online on either Embassy website and/or on social media.

The winners must response to Embassy's email within a week. If the winner does not accept the selection, the sponsors reserve the right to reach out to the runner-up.

The fulfillment of the awards cannot be passed on a third person, cannot be exchanged for different activity, or cannot be reimbursed in money value.

Rights and responsibilities

1. The sponsors' selection does not automatically mean endorsement of the ideas in the essays.
2. The Contest and the sponsors will not support any activity violating intellectual property rights and therefore reserve the right to disqualify any submission in the Contest that would be in violation with these rules.
3. Contest participants always hold all the rights to their work. At the same time, participants explicitly agree to sponsors' use of any material related to the Contest (essay, photos etc.).
4. Sponsors reserve the right to check authenticity of the submissions and remove anyone who violates the above-mentioned rules from the Contest.
5. The sponsors reserve the right to disqualify any contestant who violates the rules of the Contest or violated rules
6. The sponsors reserve the right to change the awarded prize in case of outside circumstances prohibiting the execution of the afore-mentioned program at each of the Embassy.
7. Sponsors reserve the right to disqualify a person from the Contest if they deem the person violated the rules of the Contest, violated rules of an online platform involved in the promotion of the Contest, or otherwise acted in bad faith.
8. Sponsors reserve the right to change the process of the Contest or cancel the Contest.

9. Competitors agree to protect the good name of the sponsors, their parent, subsidiary and affiliates, officials, directors, employees, trainees and agents. In case of damaging their interests, the participants in the Contest will be responsible for all claims, damages, obligations, losses, liabilities, costs or debts; and expenses (including but not limited to legal fees) arising from (i) breaches of these official Contest rules; (ii) infringement of a third party's right, including but not limited to copyright, trademark, intellectual property, right to privacy, right of publication or other proprietary right in connection with the Contest; or (iii) any claim that the Contest entry has caused any harm to a third party, including financial loss. These compensation and protection obligations remain in force permanently even after the end of the Contest.
 10. Sponsors will take all precautions to protect PII of the participants in the Contest.
 11. The Sponsors of the Contest do not accept any liability or liability for any damage or injury resulting from the participation of any user in the Contest or the attempt to participate in the Contest or the ability or inability to upload, download or otherwise obtain information related to the Contest.
 12. The sponsors of the Contest do not accept any responsibility or liability for technical problems or technical failures arising in connection with the operation of the Contest, including: hardware or software errors; defective computer, telephone, cable, satellite, network, electronic, wireless or internet connection or other problems with online communication; errors or limitations of any ISPs, servers, hosting providers or providers; distorted, disordered or erroneous data transmission; failure to send or receive e-mail transmissions; lost, delayed, delayed or withheld electronic mail transmissions; complete or partial inaccessibility of the Contest site for any reason; congestion of the internet network or Contest site; unauthorized human intervention or other interference with the course of the Contest, including but not limited to tampering, unauthorized access, theft, virus, software bugs and worms; or the destruction of any aspect of the Contest or the loss, miscalculation, misdirection, inaccessibility or unavailability of the e-mail account used in connection with the Contest.
 13. Use of the Contest website is at the user's own risk. The sponsors of the Contest are not liable for personal injury, property damage or loss of any kind possibly suffered on the computer equipment because of participating in the Contest, using the Contest website or downloading information from the Contest website. By participating in the Contest, the competitor relieves the sponsors of the Contest of all claims arising directly or indirectly as a result of or in connection with the participation of the competitor in the Contest.
 14. Sponsors are not held liable for any delay in the Contest proceedings caused by external factors, such as weather, fire, strike, public health or other unforeseen circumstances.
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International Women's Day 2021: Choose to Challenge

With the theme for this year's International Women's Day (8 March) being "Choose to Challenge", we focus on the ongoing challenge to improve representation of women in the Ministry of Defence Police (MDP) and more widely in UK armed policing roles.

This year marks the MDP's 50th anniversary, having been first established in October 1971. At that time there were no female police officers in the force. It was not until 1974 that 2 female sergeants transferred into the MDP from Strathclyde Police. The first 4 female recruits then started their training in 1975.

The MDP is now a very different and much more diverse organisation, with women represented at all ranks from Constable to Assistant Chief Constable, working in the same roles, with the same kit and the same weapons as their male colleagues. There has clearly been much progress but, the need to encourage more women to pursue a career in armed policing is still present.

As Chief Inspector Fiona Kerr, Chair of the MDP Gender Network, explains:

Recruiting female officers remains a challenge for us as it is for many police firearms units in other forces, and we're committed to improving representation of women in the MDP.

Our officers, including myself, are sharing our stories on joining the MDP and our lived experiences on working in armed specialist policing roles, to show the range of career opportunities available.

Fiona's story

Fiona began her MDP career in 1987. Crown copyright.

My MDP career began in 1987, as a Constable at Clyde and I'm very proud that I have now returned to the station as a Senior Police Officer. When I first joined, I was issued with a small pistol, an equally small truncheon and handbags and skirts were the norm.

After a few years, I transferred with the MDP to London and I had the opportunity to carry out both armed and unarmed duties, gaining promotion over time and transferring to iconic UK sites such as Portsmouth and Whitehall. My career highlights include planning for the initial arrival of the Queen Elizabeth Carrier at Portsmouth, setting up the first Women's Staff Association within Defence, being the first female Initial Firearms Commander

in the MDP and working with some truly superb people.

I am a single parent of 2 children (now adults). As they were growing-up, I was able to pursue my career goals, with the support of my fantastic parents and family, and the flexibility and support of my managers and colleagues. I worked permanent nights for a time, to assist with childcare and I was always first in queue for breakfast club at the primary school, wanting to get home to get some sleep!

Being a single parent in any career is always a question of forward planning and having a support network and a continuity fall-back. In the MDP, I can personally vouch for the fact that raising children on your own is not a barrier to success, with policies, diversity networks and understanding managers there to support you along the way.

Hannah, PC Dog Handler

Hannah works as a dog handler. Crown copyright.

I joined the MDP in 2008 with the aspiration of becoming a dog handler. I was lucky to achieve this at my first station. I am currently based at HM Naval Base Devonport with my two specialist, explosive and drugs search dogs.

As an MDP dog handler, my role includes tracking suspects, property searches for evidence at scenes of crime, drugs searches and defensive searches for VIPs. I deploy to Defence locations across the UK and provide specialist support to other police forces.

Throughout my career I have always been particularly interested in how dogs learn and develop within their roles. This has now led me to a new career path as an instructor, to deliver training and develop police dog teams within the Force. I'm so proud to say that I will soon be the first female MDP police dog instructor and as part of my training role I look forward to assisting and supporting other women to progress in a police dog handling career.

Kirsty, Marine Unit Police Constable

Kirsty is a Day Skipper at HM Naval Base Portsmouth. Crown copyright.

I joined a Home Department Police Force when I was 18 years old and after just over 10 years, I decided that I would like a change. I researched the MDP and was interested in the opportunity to carry out unique specialist policing roles.

I am currently qualified as a Royal Yacht Association (RYA) Day Skipper at HM Naval Base Portsmouth and I'm working towards a RYA Coastal qualification. My proudest moment has so far been passing an Operational Firearms Commanders' course.

My most memorable experiences include escorting the HMS Queen Elizabeth and HMS Prince of Wales carriers, whilst having to negotiate a busy sea channel carrying passenger ferries and commercial shipping. My next challenge... I aim to become an MDP Marine Unit Sergeant.

Sally, T/Chief Inspector Operational Delivery and Special Escort Group Commander

Sally is an Escort Commander on the MDP Special Escort Group. Crown copyright.

After graduating with a degree in Archaeology, I ran the Students' Union and then went on to hold management roles in sales and catering before starting my policing career.

I chose to join the MDP because I wanted to work in a role where I could specialise as an Authorised Firearms Officer, right from the beginning of my career. The MDP also had, and still has, the largest Marine policing capability in the UK and that was a specialist area of policing that I was keen to get into.

The best thing about my career with the MDP has been the variety, from the Atomic Weapons Establishment sites in Berkshire, to the Operational Support Unit, to the HQ Operational Training and Capability Centre, to the Marine Unit at HM Naval Base Portsmouth, to a range of secondments at MDP HQ, I have enjoyed them all.

One of my proudest moments was representing the MDP as part of Operation Herrick, where I had the great privilege of mentoring the Female Afghan Police. I was also very proud to qualify as a Team Leader within 6 months of joining the Special Escort Group (SEG) and consequently becoming the first qualified MDP female Escort Commander and Rail Convoy Commander.

I am now working towards my goal to achieve substantive Chief Inspector rank and I look forward to continuing to develop in my career, whilst encouraging and mentoring my colleagues to help them achieve their full potential too.

Nicole, T/Police Sergeant Clyde Support Team

Nicole is a T/Police Sergeant at HM Naval Base Clyde. Crown copyright.

I always wanted to be a police officer and before joining the MDP I studied and graduated with a BA (Hons) in Criminal Justice. I decided to join the MDP because I wanted a role that offered a stable work life balance and plenty of opportunities for promotion and career development.

I'll never forget when I graduated as a new recruit from "Orange Class" with my super excited daughter watching throughout, dressed in orange for the occasion! After my graduation I was then immediately deployed as part of

Operation Temperer, following the Manchester Arena attack in 2017. Now, almost 4 years into the job, I'm working as a T/Police Sergeant, I'm a Force Personal Safety Training Instructor and I lead the Clyde Support Team in delivery of [Project Servator](#), protestor removal and search requirements.

I am very proud of everything that I have achieved so far and the MDP has well and truly lived up to my hopes for opportunities to progress and develop in a specialist policing career.

#ChooseToChallenge on social media

Ministry of Defence Police officers and staff are sharing their #ChooseToChallenge statements on social media throughout this week on Facebook and Twitter:

[MDP on Facebook](#)

[MDP on Twitter](#)

Find out more about the work of the [MDP and their specialist policing capabilities](#).

[Change of Her Majesty's Ambassador to Mauritania: Colin Wells](#)

Press release

Mr Colin Wells has been appointed Her Majesty's Ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Mauritania in succession to Mr Simon Boyden.



Mr Colin Wells has been appointed Her Majesty's Ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Mauritania in succession to Mr Simon Boyden who will be transferring to another Diplomatic Service appointment. Mr Wells will take up his appointment during April 2021.

Curriculum vitae

Full name: Colin Neil Wells

Year	Role
2020 to present	Full-time Language Training (French)
2018 to 2020	Moscow, Consul-General and Director of Corporate Services
2014 to 2017	Mumbai, Deputy Head of Mission
2011 to 2014	Ascension Island, Administrator and Head of the Ascension Island Government
2010 to 2011	Abidjan, Head of the British Embassy Office and Political Counsellor
2008 to 2010	Khartoum, Conflict Adviser and Political Officer
2004 to 2008	Baku, Deputy Head of Mission and Consul
2001 to 2004	Abuja, Second Secretary – Political and Human Rights
1999 to 2001	FCO, Policy Officer – Tibet and Human Rights, China and Hong Kong Department
1996 to 1999	Geneva, Third later Second Secretary – Human Rights, UK Mission to the United Nations
1992 to 1995	Bridgetown, Vice Consul and Entry Clearance Officer

Further information – Newsdesk

All the latest news is available on the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office page of the gov.uk website at: www.gov.uk/fcdo

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