

# **Magnox seeks suppliers for major decommissioning projects**

Magnox Limited is inviting suppliers to collaborate on two separate decommissioning projects at the former nuclear research site at Harwell, Oxfordshire.

Interested companies are invited to join pre-market engagement webinars on Wednesday 5 October 2022 to:

Investigate the current market capabilities and gain knowledge about existing and future products, and techniques which may assist informing the development of the sourcing strategy and any subsequent tender documentation.

Explore supply chain interest and expertise and to gain knowledge about existing or future products and techniques that could deliver this work.

Companies that are either new to nuclear or existing decommissioning suppliers are encouraged to attend.

## **BEPO reactor decommissioning programme**

Comprises of two main projects running in tandem: BEPO reactor project and BEPO ancillary project. Magnox is seeking early engagement with suppliers on how they can support delivery of the BEPO reactor scope of works depending on the outcome of the scheme design being developed and suggested costs.

Further information is available on the prior information notice [here](#).

Click [here](#) to sign up for the preliminary market engagement webinar commencing 10am Wednesday 5 October.

## **B220 Radiochemistry laboratory complex**

A three year £7.9m project to establish the legacy radiochemistry inventory and to complete a refurbishment and demolition asbestos survey within the B220 complex prior to its future de-plant and demolition.

The facility consists of approximately 120 laboratories and offices that supported the UK's pioneering nuclear mission for over six decades. Further information is available on the prior information notice [here](#)

Click [here](#) to sign up for the market engagement webinar commencing 1.30pm Wednesday 5 October.

Interested suppliers should have the capability to deliver value for the UK taxpayer while also maintaining the highest standards of safety and social

value.

Linda Sapsford, Magnox Head of Procurement and Supply Chain, said: “This is an incredibly exciting time in the nuclear industry and the opportunities at Magnox have never been so great. 60% of our mission is delivered through our specialist supply chain partners who all form an integral part of the Magnox team. Our continued goal is to forge and sustain effective and productive relationships via collaborative, transparent and well-regulated procurement delivery.”

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## HMRC late payment interest rates to be revised after Bank of England increases base rate

### News story

HMRC interest rates for late payments will be revised following the Bank of England interest rate rise to 2.25%.



The Bank of England Monetary Policy Committee voted on 22 September 2022 to increase the Bank of England base rate to 2.25% from 1.75%.

HMRC interest rates are linked to the Bank of England base rate.

As a consequence of the change in the base rate, HMRC interest rates for late payment and repayment will increase.

These changes will come into effect on:

- 3 October 2022 for quarterly instalment payments
- 11 October 2022 for non-quarterly instalments payments

[Information on the interest rates for payments](#) will be updated shortly.

HMRC interest rates are set in legislation and are linked to the Bank of England base rate.

Late payment interest is set at base rate plus 2.5%. Repayment interest is set at base rate minus 1%, with a lower limit – or ‘minimum floor’ – of 0.5%.

The differential between late payment interest and repayment interest is in line with the policy of other tax authorities worldwide and compares favourably with commercial practice for interest charged on loans or overdrafts and interest paid on deposits.

The rate of late payment interest encourages prompt payment and ensures fairness for those who pay their tax on time, while the rate of repayment interest fairly compensates taxpayers for loss of use of their money when they overpay or pay early.

Published 22 September 2022

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## [Human rights in Russia: UK statement on OSCE's Moscow Mechanism expert report](#)

Thank you, Mr Chair. I wish to make a statement in my national capacity, to supplement the statement delivered by Ambassador Callan on behalf of the 38 States which invoked the Moscow Mechanism on Russia's legal and administrative practices.

I would like to thank the independent expert Professor Nußberger for her expertise and her drafting of a robust and important report.

Mr Chair, the United Kingdom supported the invocation of this Moscow Mechanism because the issue of Russia's repression of human rights is vitally important. It is important to the Russian people who face restrictions on their fundamental freedoms and it is important for peace and security in the OSCE region.

I want to highlight 3 elements of this forensic report. First, President Putin's Russia has waged a systemic and a repressive war against the freedoms of its own people over the last two decades. Repressive legislation is used to restrict the rights of Russian people, most notably through the “foreign agents” and “undesirable organisations” laws.

Since the invasion, the Kremlin has implemented a wave of legislation targeting the dissemination of “knowingly false information” and

“discrediting” of Russian armed forces. The real purpose is to criminalise the dissemination of the truth and for calling Russia’s illegal invasion of Ukraine what it is. Over 4,000 people have been prosecuted because of these laws, including dual British Russian national Vladimir Kara-Murza. As the report says, “this is military censorship”.

Secondly, Russia has created a climate of fear and intimidation to silence independent voices further. President Putin and the authorities employ propaganda to de-humanise Russian civil society. Murders and physical attacks are either carried out on the direct orders of the Kremlin, or are tacitly welcomed with no follow-up investigations. Between 1992 and 2021, at least 58 journalists were killed in Russia in connection with their work.

Police use violence and intimidation to suppress anti-war protestors. Over 16,000 people have been arrested. And overnight over 1,000 more were arrested for peacefully protesting mobilisation. The report highlights many cases of violence towards those detained. Grigory Yudin, a political scientist, was arrested at an anti-war protest and beaten in a police van until he lost consciousness. Female protestors were arrested, forced to undress, and physically attacked.

Thirdly, Russia’s domestic repression is a key enabler of its aggression abroad. Professor Nußberger writes that “repression on the inside and war on the outside are connected to each other as if in a communicating tube.” A tightening of freedoms at home allows the State to pursue conflict abroad with limited domestic accountability. This state of perpetual war provides a justification for further restrictive measures domestically. And we are seeing the grim outcome of this interrelation play out in Ukraine.

Mr Chair, this report reveals the horrifying scale of restrictive policies implemented by Russia over the last decade. Putin pursues these policies because he fears that a free society would hold him accountable for the abuses his regime have committed at home, and restrain his ability to commit abuses abroad. The tragedy is that both Russian and Ukrainian people, particularly vulnerable groups, are enduring the worst effects of this repression.

The UK, with partners from across the OSCE and the world, will defend human rights and the fundamental freedoms of citizens everywhere. We call on Russia to heed the warnings and recommendations of this Moscow Mechanism report. In particular, to comply with its OSCE Human Dimension obligations, and to critically assess the short- and long-term consequences of the “foreign agents” law, amongst other repressive legislation, on civil society.

I want to express the United Kingdom’s solidarity with all those who suffer repression at the hands of the Russian authorities. And to reiterate once again our resolute support for Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders.

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# Broad comparability

## News story

Broad comparability assessments, which relate to protecting future pension rights, will resume in full later this year.



Pensions experts at the Government Actuary's Department (GAD) are set to restart 'broad comparability' assessments in full. These will resume in the autumn for service before April 2022.

This follows on from the resumption of assessments in respect of service from April 2022 announced earlier in the year.

## **Broad comparability**

Broad comparability primarily relates to protecting future pension rights. It applies to compulsory transfers of staff within the public sector. It can also apply in other circumstances.

The policy in such transfers is generally to protect transferring staff. New employers should offer them pension benefit packages which are at least 'broadly comparable' to the pension benefits offered by their old employer.

A pension arrangement does not need to offer identical benefits to be deemed 'broadly comparable'. Instead, it must offer broadly the same range of benefits, with the same (or greater) overall value. A broad comparability assessment includes both quantitative and qualitative tests.

## **Restart assessments**

Work on most broad comparability assessments at GAD was paused in August 2020 in response to the McCloud age-discrimination judgment. They were partially restarted earlier this year when several technical uncertainties that flowed from the remedy in response to that judgment were resolved.

Actuary Ian Boonin leads on staff transfers at GAD. He said: "Having partially restarted broad comparability assessments earlier this year, I am

very pleased that we'll soon be able to restart our broad comparability work in full for our clients.

"The remedy that followed on from the McCloud judgment will mean some of the work will be more complicated. When it comes to broad comparability assessments, we'll need to consider pre- and post-reform benefits across old and new pension schemes for affected members."

GAD is set to restart pre-31 March 2022 assessments this coming autumn.

Published 22 September 2022

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## [Human rights in Russia: joint statement on OSCE's Moscow Mechanism expert report](#)

I am delivering this statement on behalf of the following 38 participating States that invoked the Moscow (Human Dimension) Mechanism on 28 July: Albania, Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Republic of Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

Professor Nußberger, on behalf of the invoking States I wish to thank you for your work as Rapporteur under the OSCE's Moscow Mechanism. We are most grateful for your professional and meticulous approach to your mandate, for the thorough methodology that you have applied and for the substantial report which you have produced. Your integrity and dedication to human rights and fundamental freedoms are evident in your report. We hope that all 57 participating States to the OSCE will do justice to your report by considering carefully your findings and recommendations, which are addressed not only to the Russian Federation but also to OSCE participating States and the wider International Community.

Mr Chair, we invoked the Moscow Mechanism because we identified the situation in the Russian Federation as a particularly serious threat to the fulfilment of the provisions of the OSCE human dimension as set out in various documents. The mandate provided was substantial, reflecting the scope and severity of the alleged human rights violations and abuses.

It is clear from the report that we were right to be concerned. The report is based on in-depth analysis of Russian Federation legislation, extensive

documentation, including decisions by the European Court of Human Rights, opinions by the Venice Commission, statements by the autonomous institutions of the OSCE and other international organizations, and reports and testimonies by civil society. Regarding the legislative changes in the realms of freedom of association, freedom of expression, and freedom of peaceful assembly, the report concludes, "Russian legislation is obsessed with restricting these rights more and more. [...] Russian legislation in this area is clearly incompatible with the rule of law. On the contrary, the multitude of detailed provisions gives the authorities wide discretionary powers and thus provides the basis for arbitrariness." The report goes on to shed light on the correlation between peaceful protest and repressive legislation, "Whenever there were mass protests [...], new restrictive laws followed."

The report provides us with some answers as to why the Russian Federation clamps down on human rights and fundamental freedoms. "Ultimately, it is about integrating civil society into the vertical of power."

Silencing civil society puts Russia's authorities in a position in which they deem themselves free from answering to citizens. In addition, with its clampdown on human rights and fundamental freedoms, the Russian Federation has helped prepare the ground for its war of aggression against Ukraine. The report outlines Russian government thinking: "restrictive measures are considered necessary in order not to be disturbed during the preparation for war or after it has started. This explains the wave of repressive measures in Russia immediately before, but, above all, after 24 February 2022."

Mr Chair, the Russian government and administration not only excessively limit human rights and fundamental freedoms, but actively work to their detriment to propagate the war. In that context, the report analyses speeches delivered by President Putin that call civil society the "fifth column" and de-humanise those considered to be enemies, thus revealing "an attitude of deep-seated hatred".

The report also cites several astonishing examples of pressure in opinion formation, for instance towards students and artists, and of excessive violence against critical civil society activists, journalists, and other media actors, such as the case of Grigory Yudin, political scientist and sociologist. "On 24 February 2022, he was arrested during an anti-war protest in Moscow and severely beaten in a police van, until he lost consciousness. Many more cases have been documented by human rights organisations who claim that the degree of violence has considerably increased – many interviewees drew a parallel to the violent suppression of protest in Belarus."

Not all violence is committed by state representatives, the report points out, but it goes on to state that "[t]he Russian State implicitly supports this development through its lack of protection and its ineffectiveness in freedom-of-speech related cases."

Freedom of expression is also particularly affected by the war. "Especially the extension of espionage [...] and therefore of "high treason" [...] under [...] the Criminal Code [...] makes journalistic work during the ongoing war of the Russian Federation against Ukraine impossible."

Importantly, the report sheds light on the specific ramifications for women and members of the LGBTQI+ community. For instance, the report describes gender-based violence against women protestors. Women “are in an especially vulnerable position, especially if they are detained alone. Sexualized violence is a relatively new phenomenon, more noticeable since February 2022.”

Mr Chair, colleagues, “repression on the inside and war on the outside are connected to each other as if in a communicating tube.” May this conclusion of the report be a lesson and warning to all of us. It is a timely reminder of one of the cornerstones of the 1975 Helsinki Final Act on the universal significance of human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for which is an essential factor for the peace, justice and well-being. What is at stake is nothing less than the OSCE concept of comprehensive security. It is our common duty to properly defend the values and principles of this organization.

Once again, I offer our sincere thanks to Professor Nußberger.

Thank you.