

UK government secures satellite network OneWeb

- Transaction completes to secure the future of British satellite company, OneWeb
- strategic investment underlines scale of Britain's ambitions to be at the forefront of space technology
- satellite constellation to provide high-speed internet access across the globe

This is a significant strategic investment, demonstrating the government's commitment to the UK's space sector and ambition to put Britain at the forefront of a new commercial space-age. OneWeb is now staffing up to complete the development of its first generation constellation, adding new employees in the UK, and we will continue to work with OneWeb to maximise the benefits to the UK from the OneWeb program, both before and after commercial launch.

The company has the foundation of the network already in place with 74 satellites launched and infrastructure in development in strategic locations around the world. The company is launching another 34-36 satellites in December, bringing its in-orbit fleet to 110 satellites. OneWeb is on track to begin commercial connectivity services to the UK and the Arctic region in late 2021 and will expand to delivering global services in 2022.

Business Secretary Alok Sharma said:

This strategic investment demonstrates government's commitment to the UK's space sector in the long-term and our ambition to put Britain at the cutting edge of the latest advances in space technology.

Access to our own global fleet of satellites has the potential to connect people worldwide, providing fast UK-backed broadband from the Shetlands to the Sahara and from Pole to Pole.

This deal gives us the chance to build on our strong advanced manufacturing and services base in the UK, creating jobs and technical expertise.

The government is committed to work with OneWeb's shareholder partners to use this investment as a platform to promote UK jobs and supply chains and protect UK critical assets and intellectual property.

OneWeb will provide a new source of broadband connectivity for businesses, communities, and governments around the world. It could also improve connectivity in a broad range of sectors, including aviation, maritime,

government, and enterprise customers, unlocking digital services and applications in a wide range of locations that historically have not access to low latency broadband connectivity.

Sunil Bharti, Founder and Chairman, Bharti Global said:

Together with our partners at HMG, we are looking forward to a new Low Earth Orbit opportunity. Innovation, resilience and growth in the high-tech sector are all served by this powerful global opportunity.

By the end of 2022, OneWeb will be a truly global force for good.

Graham Turnock, Chief Executive of the UK Space Agency, said:

This landmark government investment marks the start of an incredibly exciting period for OneWeb and the whole UK space sector, which can play a vital role in our economic recovery.

Global connectivity has never been more important and there is a significant opportunity for satellite constellations to deliver a range of valuable services to consumers, businesses and government.

OneWeb was formed in 2012, and has been developing cutting-edge satellite technology from its facilities both here in the UK and in the United States.

The UK government will have a final say over any future sale of the company, and over future access to OneWeb technology by other countries on national security grounds.

- The UK space sector is an economic success story, growing by over 60% since 2010. The sector already supports £300 billion of UK economic activity through the use of satellite services, and is expected to grow further as new commercial opportunities are unlocked by this agreement
 - OneWeb was formed in 2012 and has been developing cutting-edge satellite technology from its facilities both here in the UK and in the United States
 - earlier this year, [government announced a \\$500 million investment](#) to acquire OneWeb together with leading international telecoms operator Bharti Global
 - critical assets protected include OneWeb Spectrum. Find out more on [Ofcom's site](#)
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Consensus statement emphasises importance of COVID-19-secure workplaces

Public Health England (PHE), Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and Faculty of Occupational Medicine (FOM) have issued a [consensus statement](#) on the best approach to reduce occupational risk for workers including those of ethnic minority groups.

The statement recommends implementing and reinforcing existing HSE, government and specific industry guidance, workplace procedures and systems which help mitigate the risk of exposure to coronavirus (COVID-19) for all workers.

The statement adds that actions targeted at the entire workforce, rather than solely at ethnic minority groups may help reduce the risk of stigmatisation and opportunity inequalities at work.

Some staff may be at greater risk of infection or more severe illness from COVID-19 due to factors such as age, sex, deprivation, obesity or diabetes and the statement recommends that individual discussions, where appropriate, should take place as part of a wider workplace risk management strategy.

Professor Kevin Fenton, Regional Director, PHE London, said:

We know that some workplace settings can be a risk for transmitting COVID-19 and comprehensive guidance for a wide range of sectors is available. PHE has worked with the HSE and FOM on a consensus statement that stresses the importance of implementing effective risk management strategies in the workplace for all workers, which will help keep people safe at work and reduce the spread of the virus.

Rick Brunt, Head of Operational Strategy, HSE, said:

Responding effectively to disparities is an instrumental part of the mission of keeping people safe amid the risk of coronavirus – one we have a deep commitment towards.

This consensus statement underlines that the critical need for good risk management and detailed risk assessment, as well as open dialogue with workers, to make a COVID-secure workplace has not changed.

We understand the continuing challenge to ensure this message reaches those it needs to. We urge both employers and employees to

use existing guidance and materials to help them reduce the risk of COVID-19 in the workplace.

Dr Anne de Bono, President of FOM, said:

Assessment of both workplaces and workers underpins occupational medical and health practice. Safe systems of work, including appropriate control measures and protection for staff alongside safe deployment, with adjustments to individual work duties when necessary, maintain good work and good health in all sectors.

Dr Shriti Pattani, Chair of the NHS Health at Work Network, commenting on the consensus statement, said:

COVID-19 has brought new risks for NHS staff, particularly those with increased vulnerability to this infection. Occupational health services in the NHS are providing the strategic advice and workplace and individual assessments which contribute to risk reduction, safer working and better patient care.

[Lord Evans's statement on the resignation of Sir Alex Allan KCB](#)

Press release

Lord Evans responds to the resignation of the Prime Minister's Independent Adviser on Ministers' Interests, Sir Alex Allan



"Sir Alex Allan is a man of great wisdom and integrity and it is deeply concerning that he has resigned.

“This episode raises serious questions about the effectiveness of the current arrangements for investigating and responding to breaches of the Ministerial Code.

“The Committee will be looking at this urgently as part of its [review](#).”

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[Homecare workers to be tested weekly for COVID-19](#)

- Registered carers looking after people in their own homes will be able to access weekly coronavirus tests
- Care providers will be able to book tests for their staff online from Monday (23 November)
- The roll-out marks the next stage in the government’s expansion of mass testing

Those working for CQC-registered providers will receive weekly PCR tests to administer at home, which will help identify more asymptomatic cases and protect care users who are more vulnerable to the virus.

Regular testing will give workers peace of mind by picking up on any asymptomatic transmission and protect those they care for.

The expansion of testing to homecare workers is the next phase in the roll-out of mass testing across the country, and has been made possible by the huge increase in testing capacity in recent weeks. Nearly 35 million tests have now been processed in the UK since the service began and this week [the government announced 2 new ‘megalabs’](#), which will add a further 600,000 to daily UK testing capacity in early 2021.

Minister for Care Helen Whately said:

Homecare workers have been doing an incredible job throughout the pandemic, caring day in and day out and going the extra mile to keep people they care for safe from COVID.

As our testing capacity continues to expand, I’m glad we’re able to take this next step and make regular testing available to homecare workers. Now, as well as having PPE, homecare workers will be able to take a weekly test to check they do not have coronavirus.

We now have the largest testing capacity in Europe, so we’re using this to protect those who are at greater risk if they catch COVID.

Proactively testing asymptomatic individuals helps to identify those who unknowingly have the virus and enables those who test positive and their contacts to self-isolate. This is crucial to break the chains of transmission of the virus.

All registered homecare agencies will be contacted with details of how to apply for test kits for their carers next week. Homecare agencies will be responsible for ordering and distributing tests to all homecare workers for them to conduct at home on a weekly basis, testing on a Thursday, Friday, Saturday or Sunday. This approach will maximise capacity available in our laboratories.

We will be expanding testing further to all other homecare workers, including live-in carers and personal assistants in a phased roll-out. We will provide further details in due course about how these groups access testing.

A month's worth of test kits will be delivered to care providers directly who can distribute tests to their staff using the same channels used to distribute PPE.

Over 120,000 tests are already ring-fenced for social care every single day, and a testing pilot has begun in care homes this week to support visiting ahead of a national roll-out starting in December.

Work is also currently being carried out to explore making the rapid 30-minute lateral flow tests, currently only conducted by dedicated trained personnel, available for self-administration at home. This would allow workers to quickly find out if they are COVID-19 positive and have to isolate.

Interim Executive Chair of the National Institute for Health Protection Baroness Dido Harding said:

NHS Test and Trace has worked tirelessly to increase capacity for testing, achieving its target of capacity for 500,000 tests by the end of October. This is testament to a huge amount of work up and down the country by unsung heroes in labs, distribution centres, test centres and manufacturing plants.

I am delighted that this capacity means that we can now roll out regular, weekly testing to our domiciliary care staff. This has long been a priority for us and it will ensure greater protection to this vital, often unseen, workforce and the people they care for.

Our approach to testing health and care workers is guided by the latest scientific advice, which finds that regular testing of people without symptoms can be most effective among populations where prevalence is higher and where individuals are more at risk from coronavirus.

The government continues to expand asymptomatic testing for COVID-19, with

the roll-out of lateral flow test kits across schools, universities and local authorities, and whole-area pilots in Liverpool and Merthyr Tydfil in Wales.

This expansion in testing is the latest measure the government has introduced as part of wider ongoing support throughout the pandemic.

The government has made £4.6 billion available to councils in England so they can address pressures on local services caused by the pandemic, including in adult social care, on top of a £1.1 billion Infection Control Fund and free PPE supply for care homes and domiciliary care.

See the [guidance on coronavirus \(COVID-19\) testing for homecare workers](#).

HMRC announces new chair of the HMRC Board

Dame Jayne-Anne Gadhia, a member of the UK government's Industrial Strategy Council and former CEO of Virgin Money, is to become the new chair of the [HMRC Board](#).

She replaces Mervyn Walker, who is stepping down at the end of December 2020 after 6 years on the board, including the last 3 as lead non-executive director and chair.

Jayne-Anne is the founder and executive chair of Snoop, a household financial management app, and was CEO of Virgin Money from 2007 to 2018.

A chartered accountant, she spent 6 years at Norwich Union (now Aviva) before becoming one of the founders of Virgin Direct in 1995. Three years later, she set up the Virgin One account, which was acquired by the Royal Bank of Scotland in 2001. She subsequently spent 5 years at the Royal Bank of Scotland before returning to Virgin as CEO of Virgin Money.

In 2016 she was appointed the UK government's Women in Finance Champion, and in 2017 she became a founder member of its Business Diversity and Inclusion Group. She is chair of the Prince's Foundation and a trustee of the Tate.

She also sits on the Mayor of London's Business Advisory Board. She was made a Dame in the 2019 New Year's Honours list.

HMRC Chief Executive Jim Harra said:

I would like to thank Mervyn for his outstanding contribution to the leadership of HMRC. He has been a tremendous influence on the strategic direction of HMRC throughout his time with us and has always challenged us to keep the needs of our customers at the

heart of all we do. His personal help to me as Chief Executive has been invaluable.

Drawing on her deep experience in leading transformative change within the finance sector, Jayne-Anne will help steer HMRC towards our vision of becoming a trusted, modern tax and customs authority.

Jayne-Anne has extensive experience working with the public sector and I have no doubt she will provide HMRC with the proactive support and challenge that we need.

Dame Jayne-Anne said:

I'm delighted to be taking on the role of chairing the HMRC Board and building on the excellent work of my predecessor, Mervyn Walker. We've seen just how pivotal HMRC has been during the pandemic, as a force of economic support.

While there will continue to be many challenges, I'm confident there are also many opportunities for the department to deliver against its ambitious strategy as a tax and customs department, fit for the future.