

Temporary appointment of Second Permanent Secretary at the Department for Education

Press release

Susan Acland-Hood has been appointed as Second Permanent Secretary at the Department for Education on a temporary basis.



To ensure that the government is able to respond fully to exam results, whilst also ensuring the return of schools in September, Susan Acland-Hood has been appointed as Second Permanent Secretary at the [Department for Education](#) on a temporary basis to lead the Government's response on exams.

Susan Acland-Hood is currently Chief Executive of Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service and has previously worked as a Director in the Department for Education and as a Senior Adviser on education policy in Number 10. She will join the Department for Education on 21 August for a period of six weeks.

Kevin Sadler will take up the role of Chief Executive of her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service on an interim basis. Kevin has been the Deputy Chief Executive since 2016.

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Second team of UK medics sent to

support hospitals in blast-hit Beirut

Press release

The team will help tackle the coronavirus outbreak in Lebanon, which has been made significantly more challenging by the explosion.



UK Emergency Medical Team members at Heathrow airport ahead of their flight to Beirut. Picture: UK Med

A second team of UK-aid funded medics have flown to Lebanon today (Friday 21 August) to help tackle coronavirus in hospitals affected by the explosion.

The team of five, who left from London Heathrow Airport, are part of the UK's Emergency Medical Team (UK EMT) and specialise in intensive care, infection control, and water and sanitation. They will join three colleagues deployed earlier this month, with five more medics expected to join in the coming weeks.

An assessment from the first team of medics from the UK EMT, showed there was an urgent need for help to tackle the coronavirus outbreak in Lebanon, which has been made significantly more challenging by the explosion. The team will share their expertise with the World Health Organisation (WHO), which is coordinating health needs in the city.

International Development Secretary Anne-Marie Trevelyan said:

Beirut is still facing an uphill battle to get back on its feet, having to deal with the complex double challenge of the aftermath of the explosion at the same time as tackling a worrying increase in coronavirus cases.

I want to thank this team of British heroes, whose expertise will help co-ordinate the response to this tragic disaster.

Lebanon has seen a stark rise in reported coronavirus cases, with the total

numbers of cases doubling since the blast.

The full team of 13 experts will meet needs on the ground by joining up with the WHO to coordinate the international response to the health crisis and embedding in two public hospitals to help tackle coronavirus cases.

Notes to editors

- The UK EMT team includes three from an earlier team deployed on 7 August (who will remain in Beirut), today's further five experts, and a team leader who will arrive in Beirut early next week. Four more will travel to Beirut in the coming weeks.
- The UK has committed up to £25 million in response to the Beirut explosion. This includes a package of £20 million to the UN world Food Programme to help provide food for the most vulnerable in Lebanon, £3 million to the British Red Cross and a shipment of medical supplies.
- The UK has provided £743m in support to the Lebanon since the 2011 outbreak of the Syria crisis, supporting some of the most vulnerable people.
- The UK EMT team members have been recruited and prepared by charities UK-Med and Humanity & Inclusion.
- Lebanese Ministry of Health figures show that the total number of cases has increased by 116% from 5,062 (3 Aug) to 10,952 (20 Aug).

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[A Grenfell Community Update about the next phase of discussions about Grenfell Tower and the future memorial](#)

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Defence Secretary's speech at meeting of UK, German and French defence ministers

Good morning everyone.

It is wonderful to be here, and also to thank you for your hospitality last night.

What I would say is, first of all, this part of the world is an example of how the security of Europe is important to all of our security and, as the E3, we often meet to discuss a range of topics, not only in Europe but obviously around the world.

I think, as Florence [Parly] has talked about, we have areas of absolutely common agreement. It is our view that what has happened in Belarus, the election, is not something that we recognise and we will monitor the situation very carefully and urge the respect of human rights and non-violence in that country. We urge all people not to interfere in that country and move towards a body, such as the OSCE, to monitor and examine what went on in that election.

I think it's important that people recognise there is no aggression on the behalf of NATO. There are no plans and it's really about respecting the wishes of the people of Belarus. That is what we all would agree on.

Further afield we had good discussions on the eastern Mediterranean and the issues around respecting the rule of law, respecting freedom of navigation, recognising the different issues that are at stake in the eastern Mediterranean and trying to find a way forward. The United Kingdom is very supportive of the German effort to try and negotiate a political solution in that it is absolutely the right thing to do and I have offered my support to my German colleagues, to make sure we hopefully deliver a good result on that.

Then for all of us, Mali and the Sahel, and indeed West Africa, is very important as the growth of extremism and terrorism across the African continent should worry us all. What happens over there has a reach back to over here, and to our friends and allies on that content. That's why we're monitoring the developments in Mali very closely.

It is our view that a coup is definitely not the way to go about resolving political issues in that country and we have called that out as something that we definitely do not support, and wish a return to civilian government. But we also recognise the absolute importance of tackling extremism and the nation building that we need to do in accordance with the Algeria agreement

back in 2015, to make sure stability is returned to that part of the world.

What happens in Mali also affects many of the neighbouring states, not just Sahel states, but other states further along the west of Africa. We will continue to work strongly together to make sure that we uphold the UN mandate, to make sure we support counterterrorism efforts, but also to make sure that the rest of the world recognises that it is going to be serious about tackling the problem that followed. It has to help them with the development and the nation building, tackling anti-corruption and respect to the rule of law and we'll be working together to make sure that happens and that people contribute to that process.

Thank you.

Passenger train derailment near Carmont – updated 21/08/2020

The RAIB is investigating a fatal accident that occurred near Carmont on the national rail network in Scotland.

At around 09:38 hrs on Wednesday 12 August 2020, all six vehicles of a passenger train derailed after striking a landslip around 1.4 miles (2.25 km) north-east of Carmont, Aberdeenshire. There were nine people on the train at the time of the accident – three train crew (the driver, conductor and a second conductor travelling as a passenger on this train) and six passengers. Tragically, the driver of the train, the train's conductor and one passenger suffered fatal injuries in the accident. The remaining passengers and member of train crew were taken to hospital.

On the morning of 12 August, there were thunderstorms with associated heavy rain in southern Aberdeenshire. Weather records indicate that between 05:00 hrs and 09:00 hrs, around 52 mm of rain fell in the Carmont area. This is almost 75% of the total monthly rainfall (70 mm) for Aberdeenshire in an average August.

The site of the accident was approximately four miles (6.4 km) south-west of Stonehaven and 20 miles (32 km) north of Montrose, on the double track main line which runs between Dundee and Aberdeen. The train, which was operated by Abellio (trading as ScotRail), was a High Speed Train set with a leading power car, four Mark 3 passenger coaches and a rear power car. It had originally been operating as train reporting number 1T08, the 06:38 hrs service from Aberdeen to Glasgow Queen Street. Train 1T08 had departed on time from Aberdeen and then from Stonehaven, its next scheduled stop.

After departing from Stonehaven, train 1T08 continued past Carmont on the up (southbound) line until it was stopped by the signaller at Carmont at 06:59

hrs, using a radio message. This was because the signaller had just received a report from the driver of train 2B13, which was on the down (northbound) line, that a landslip was obstructing the up line between Carmont and Laurencekirk.

Google Earth image showing locations

Train 1T08 stood south of Carmont for over two hours. Soon after 09:00 hrs, after the rain stopped, the skies cleared and by 09:30 hrs there was bright sunshine.

The northbound train (2B13) which had reported the landslip had been held at Stonehaven station because of reports of flooding between Stonehaven and Aberdeen. At 09:10 hrs, after its passengers had alighted, train 2B13 was moved a short distance forward to create space in the platform at Stonehaven. It was apparent that train 1T08 could not continue its journey south, and the decision was taken to run it to Stonehaven, to enable onward travel for the passengers. At 09:25 hrs train 1T08 was given permission to start moving north, and was routed over a crossover at Carmont onto the down line. The signaller at Carmont cleared the signal for the train to proceed to Stonehaven, and the train continued north, passing over the crossover at 5 mph (8 km/h) at 09:36 hrs. Its speed increased, reaching 72.8 mph (117.1 km/h) after it had travelled for approximately 1.4 miles (2.25 km), which is within the maximum permitted speed for HSTs of 75 mph (120 km/h) on this stretch of line.

At around 09:38 hrs, the train struck a landslip covering the down line and derailed. As the track curved to the right, the train continued in a roughly straight line for around 77 yards (70 metres) until it struck a section of bridge parapet, which was destroyed. The leading power car continued most of the way over the bridge and fell from the railway down a wooded embankment, as did the third passenger carriage. The first passenger carriage came to rest on its roof, having rotated to be almost at right angles to the track. The second passenger carriage also overturned onto its roof and came to rest on the first carriage. The fourth passenger carriage remained upright and attached to the rear power car; it also came to rest on the first carriage. All wheelsets of the rear power car derailed, but it remained upright.

Aerial photograph of derailment site

In the area where the derailment occurred, on the left-hand side of the railway (in the direction of travel of the train) a slope rises steeply to a field which then slopes gently upwards away from the railway. A drain runs northwards along the lower edge of the field until it reaches an access chamber about 50 metres south of the landslip area, from where it runs diagonally down the steep slope, passing through two more access chambers, until it reaches an outfall structure at a track level ditch which takes water northwards towards Carron Water. The drain running diagonally consists of a 450 millimetre (18 inch) diameter plastic pipe laid at the bottom of a

trench. After the drain was installed, the trench was filled with gravel. Water flowing from land above the railway washed some of this gravel onto the railway, together with some larger pieces of rock which had formed part of soil eroded from the sides of the trench.

Lineside features in the area of the landslip

We are currently collecting evidence needed to identify factors relevant to the cause of the accident and its consequences. The scope of the investigation is likely to include:

- the sequence of events and the actions of those involved
- the operating procedures applied
- the management of earthworks and drainage in this area, including recent inspections and risk assessments
- the general management of earthworks and drainage and associated procedures designed to manage the risk of extreme weather events
- the behaviour of the train during, and following the derailment
- the consequences of the derailment and a review of the damage caused to the rolling stock
- underlying management factors
- actions taken in response to previous safety recommendations

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.

The RAIB's investigation is independent of any investigation by the railway industry, and of the joint investigation instructed by the Lord Advocate to be carried out by British Transport Police, Police Scotland and by the industry's regulator, the [Office of Rail and Road](#).

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