

[UN Human Rights Council 44: Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression](#)

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The United Kingdom would like to thank the Special Rapporteur for his work and his recent reports. The report on 'Disease pandemics and the freedom of opinion and expression' highlights a number of concerns that the UK shares during this time of COVID-19.

Like the Special Rapporteur, the UK believes that freedom of expression and a free media are essential qualities of any open society. People must be allowed to discuss and debate issues freely, to challenge their governments, and make informed decisions, including during this pandemic. We deplore attempts to restrict freedom of expression arbitrarily, including blocking access to the internet, through shutdowns and other means, the intimidation and abuse of journalists and interference in their ability to operate freely.

Mr President,

The UK calls upon States to ensure that all human rights are respected, protected, and fulfilled while combatting the pandemic. Any restrictions must be lawful, non-discriminatory, targeted, time-limited, and subject to regular review. Restrictions must remain strictly necessary as a response to COVID-19.

What steps does the Special Rapporteur believe that states can take to ensure their responses to COVID-19 do not arbitrarily infringe upon the right to freedom of expression?

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[£40 million to kick start next-gen nuclear technology](#)

- Government invests £40 million to develop the next generation of nuclear energy technology, creating R&D and manufacturing jobs across the UK
- funding will develop technologies to supply low-carbon heat, hydrogen, and other clean energy for decades to come
- building new, low-carbon industry will support the UK's clean economic recovery as we move towards net zero emissions by 2050

The UK government today announced £40 million of funding to unlock thousands of green jobs by developing the next generation of nuclear energy technology.

Part of this funding will support 3 Advanced Modular Reactor (AMR) projects, which are far smaller than traditional nuclear plants and use intense heat generated in nuclear reactions to produce low-carbon electricity. They can be used at remote locations thanks to their size, and can produce enough energy to power anything from a small village to a medium-sized city.

£30 million of funding will speed up the development of 3 AMR projects in Oxfordshire, Cheshire and Lancashire and drive them closer towards supplying low-carbon energy to the nation. The remaining £10 million will be invested into unlocking smaller research, design, and manufacturing projects to create up to 200 jobs.

Minister for Business and Industry, Nadhim Zahawi, said:

Advanced modular reactors are the next step in nuclear energy and

have the potential to be a crucial part of tackling carbon emissions and climate change.

Today's investment will immediately create new jobs in Oxfordshire, Cumbria and Lancashire. But through this vital research, the technology could also create thousands more green collar jobs for decades to come.

Today's funding will ensure the technology is more attractive to private sector investors, supercharging the development of the industry and creating supply chains feeding future modular reactor developments. The successful AMR projects, awarded £10 million funding each, are:

- Tokamak Energy, Oxfordshire – working with industry partners and research establishments including Oxford University to develop fusion reactors
- Westinghouse, Lancashire – developing a lead-cooled fast reactor, a type of fission reactor
- U-Battery, Cheshire – working on a small high temperature gas-cooled fission reactor

On top of funding the AMR projects, the government will invest £10 million into turbocharging the industry – £5 million of that will be invested in British companies and start-ups, developing new ways of manufacturing advanced nuclear parts for modular reactor projects both at home and abroad. Regional projects that have secured funding so far include:

Cheshire

- U-Battery, Concept Development and Demonstrator for U-Battery AMR Off-Site Modular Construction in Capenhurst – £1.1 million
- Jacobs, Evaluation Technologies for Advanced Manufacturing Qualification in Warrington – £181,431

Yorkshire

- Laser Additive Solutions, SonicSMR, in Doncaster – £826,633
- Cavendish Nuclear, AWESIM in Sheffield – £1.3 million
- Sheffield Forgemasters, Large scale thick section electron beam welding – £8 million

Derbyshire

- Rolls-Royce Submarines, SAS in Derby – £259,989
- Rolls-Royce Submarines, FAST in Derby – £1.4 million
- Nuclear Energy Components, PITCO2C, in the Hope Valley at Bradwell – £378,000

Cumbria

- Createc Technologies, MW-CT in Whitehaven – £314,595

Merseyside

- Cammell Laird, FAITH in the Wirral – £5.1 million

Gloucestershire

- EDF Energy, in Gloucester, £1,373,095

The remaining £5 million will be put to strengthening the UK's nuclear regulatory regime -- ensuring it remains one of the most robust and safest in the world as the UK looks to develop and deploy advanced nuclear technologies.

Recent research has shown that the UK's entire nuclear industry could contribute £9.6 billion per annum to the economy and support 130,000 jobs by 2050, as well as creating significant export potential for AMR technology. AMRs also provide the possibility to diversify the UK's low-carbon energy mix by producing heat for industry and zero-carbon hydrogen, and have already demonstrated the potential to stimulate private investment.

A significant part of the UK's nuclear research takes place in a belt running from Cumbria to North Wales – a region that could be set to benefit from the nuclear industry's enormous potential for job creation, in part thanks to this investment.

Today's announcement – an important part of the [Nuclear Sector Deal](#) – is an important step forward in meeting the aspirations in the UK's Industrial Strategy.

This builds on government plans to support tens of thousands of green jobs with a package of measures worth over £3 billion, unveiled by the Chancellor on Wednesday to power up the nation's workforce and protect the environment.

Funding for the AMR and advanced manufacturing projects is provided through the BEIS £505 million Energy Innovation Programme. Find out more from our [Funding for nuclear innovation](#) page.

The exact funding of the Advanced Modular Reactor projects breaks down as:

- Tokamak Energy Ltd, Advanced Modular Fusion – The Spherical Tokamak, £9,999,999
- Urenco Ltd, U-Battery, £9,999,195
- Westinghouse Electric Company UK, An Innovative Nuclear Solution based on Lead Fast Reactor Technology, £9,998,387

The £5 million funding provided to the UK Nuclear Regulators will enable them to continue to engage with all stakeholders on how they can progress future regulatory assessment that keeps pace with technology.

Companies House to restart the voluntary strike off process

In March 2020, we introduced temporary easement measures to suspend voluntary strike off action in response to coronavirus (COVID-19) and we've reviewed these measures each month.

Following our July review, this temporary measure will be lifted from 10 September 2020. From this date, we'll restart the process to dissolve companies that have applied for voluntary dissolution.

If you've filed an application to strike off your company (DS01)

On 10 September 2020 we'll restart the process of removing your company from the register.

You may have received a letter from Companies House stating that your company will be struck off within 2 months if no objections are received, but your company is still listed on the Companies House register.

We may have suspended strike off action because we've received an objection to your application for strike off. Or this could be due to our temporary measures to suspend voluntary strike off action during the coronavirus outbreak.

When voluntary strike off action restarts from 10 September – if there are no objections to dissolution and the 2 month period from the publication of the Gazette notice has expired, your company will be struck off shortly afterwards.

Objections to a strike off application

Any person with an interest in a company which is nearing strike off should [register an objection to dissolution](#) at Companies House. If you've already registered an objection, but the time period for that objection is due to expire – you'll need to register your objection again if it's still required.

When we receive an objection to strike off, we'll respond to advise whether the objection has been accepted or rejected. Every response will give a deadline and if we receive no further evidence that action is progressing by that date, we'll resume the process to remove the company from the register.

It's important to send any objection to Companies House as early as possible after publication of the Gazette notice and at least 2 weeks before the notice expiry date.

Applications from today (10 July 2020)

If you're going to file an application to strike off your company from today onwards, these changes will not affect your company. The easements for voluntary dissolution apply to applications for strike off registered at Companies House before 10 July 2020.

If your application is acceptable, it will be registered and a notice published in the Gazette. If there are no objections to the dissolution, your company will be struck off in around 2 months' time.

Compulsory strike off

The compulsory strike off process is still paused. We'll continue to review this measure on a monthly basis and publish any changes on our website.

More information

[Richard Irvine appointed as UK's Deputy Chief Veterinary Officer](#)

News story

Richard Irvine has been named as the new Deputy Chief Veterinary Officer (DCVO) for the United Kingdom.



Richard Irvine (centre) has been appointed as the UK's Deputy Chief Veterinary Officer

Richard Irvine has been named as the new Deputy Chief Veterinary Officer (DCVO) for the United Kingdom following an extensive international recruitment campaign.

Richard is an experienced veterinarian with a background in animal health and welfare policy and science. He currently is Deputy Director for 'Global Animal Health and Trade' in Defra, and has overseen a number of successful market access gains including recent agreements on exporting UK beef to China, the USA and Japan. Prior to this, Richard led the Animal and Plant Health Agency's (APHA's) Surveillance Intelligence Unit and was Head of the National Reference Laboratory for Viral Diseases of Poultry at APHA Weybridge.

Welcoming the appointment, Christine Middlemiss said:

Richard has been successful in securing the DCVO role against a very strong field of candidates. I am confident that he will help meet the challenges we face and provide excellent support to me and others on veterinary and technical issues.

Richard's appointment comes at what is a very important and interesting time for Defra and the UK Government, and he will be a great asset to the veterinary senior leadership team in the Defra group.

Richard started his veterinary career in mixed and farm animal clinical practice in 1997. He first started working for the civil service in 2001 as a Veterinary Investigation Officer at one of the Regional Laboratories of what was at that time the Veterinary Laboratories Agency, now part of the APHA. Since then Richard has worked in several different veterinary and science leadership roles in the Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency and APHA. On joining Defra he has brought this experience and knowledge into his trade policy roles.

Speaking about his appointment Richard said:

I am truly delighted to have been appointed, and to be able to both contribute to the work of maintaining and developing the animal health and welfare status of the UK, and represent these interests internationally. It is a privilege to support our farming and food industry in this role.

I am very much looking forward to working with the team at Defra, its agencies, the devolved administrations, and all the individuals and groups who contribute together to not only cement the UK's place as a world leader on animal welfare at these unique times, but also meet future challenges head-on across the animal health and welfare spectrum. I am delighted to have an opportunity to play a part in that.