

# Independent Veterans Advisor to UK Ministers visits Veterans UK

News story

Mr David Richmond CBE, an ex-serving member of the Armed Forces himself, visited Veterans UK last week and met with staff from multiple business areas.



David Richmond talking with Veterans UK staff

Mr Richmond was given a tour of the compensation operational teams and met with staff that help administer the schemes. Mr Richmond also met with Armed Forces and Veterans Services deputy heads and the communication and engagement teams to find out about the ongoing work Veterans UK is doing to improve customer service.

Mr Richmond said:

Veterans UK has a touch point with every veteran of the UK Armed Forces and will be pivotal in delivering the government's vision to make the UK the best place in the world to be a veteran. I thoroughly enjoyed meeting the team at Norcross and was struck by their deep commitment and desire to do a great job. Ministers must ensure now that they give the Vets UK team the tools they need to deliver that great service and the current digitisation programme will be vital to that.

We look forward to seeing Mr Richmond in future visits.

David Richmond talking with Veterans UK operational staff

Published 16 August 2022

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# Regulator opens inquiry into legal charity over concerns about the continued involvement of a disqualified trustee

Press release

The Charity Commission has opened a statutory inquiry into JAFLAS (1142202), after concerns that a disqualified individual was still acting as a trustee.



JAFLAS provides free legal advice to those experiencing financial hardship.

The Commission's engagement began when a former trustee of the charity, Dr Alan Blacker, was automatically disqualified from acting as a trustee or a senior manager. However, as of July 2022, Dr Blacker was still listed as a director of the charity and as being a person of significant control on Companies House records (the charity is a charitable company and is therefore also registered with Companies House).

The inquiry will examine the administration, governance and management of the Charity and in particular:

- whether a disqualified individual has continued to play a role in the charity – acting whilst disqualified has both criminal and civil consequences
- the trustees' response to the automatic disqualification of a trustee and their decision-making regarding that individual's continued involvement in the charity
- whether the charity's objects are being met and the charity is operating for the public benefit
- the trustees' compliance with their legal obligations for the content, preparation and submission of the charity's accounts, and other information and or returns.

The Commission may extend the scope of the inquiry if additional issues emerge.

### Notes to Editors

1. The Charity Commission is the independent, non-ministerial government department that registers and regulates charities in England and Wales. Its purpose is to ensure charity can thrive and inspire trust so that people can improve lives and strengthen society.
2. The Commission has not made any conclusions and the opening of the inquiry is not a finding of wrongdoing.
3. Individuals who are automatically disqualified from trusteeship can apply to the Commission for a waiver. Dr Blacker applied for such waiver, and was rejected. He appealed this rejection to the Charity Tribunal, and lost that appeal.
4. The charity does not have an official connection with HM Armed Forces.

Published 16 August 2022

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## [\*\*jHub Fellowship Scheme: “Connecting world class technology and talent to Defence”\*\*](#)

News story

Callum, Chief Operating Officer at jHub and manager of the jHub X Team, shares his insights on making innovation in defence a reality.



When I speak to friends outside of work now and again, we'll talk about what we do and when I say 'connecting world class technology and talent to defence' they say: 'That sounds awesome!'

Callum has been working at jHub for three years and, in his words, it's the best role he's had in defence. As Chief Operating Officer, Callum manages the jHub X Team which are responsible for the special forces projects within Strategic Command Innovation.

I really love it, it's an enthusiastic place to be. Everyone is incredibly forward leaning, everyone cares, and is incredibly passionate about what they do.

The jHub is made up of people from all backgrounds and this contributes to, what Callum describes as, a matrix of diversity across the organisation.

The mix between civil service and armed forces is evident throughout, and despite the challenges the two worlds combining sometimes presents, it's the numerous positives that Callum really enjoys:

I'm a civil servant but I spend more time with my military counterparts, and I personally get a lot out of it because I'm seeing the world through their eyes. I think the jHub is better for it.

The whole-force feel of the jHub and the host of backgrounds and experiences on offer, means working collaboratively to complete a task is more pleasure than chore.

When I'm in the office I've got a team all around me. I can bring together people from a range of experiences and we can run together on a project, collaborating and really making an impact.

With three-years under his belt, Callum is more than qualified to recommend jHub and ends our chat with a sincere:

I couldn't recommend it more. It's great.

You can find more information about working for the jHub and their new Innovation Fellowship by reading the [Innovation Fellowship Launches](#) article.

Published 16 August 2022

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## [NZ and UK must maintain Pacific climate focus says UK Minister](#)

- Tackling climate change and biodiversity loss in the Pacific remains top priority says UK Minister,
- The UK will welcome NZ agritech companies next month to build new research, science and innovation links.
- Speech on last day of visit to Australia, Vanuatu and New Zealand – to boost ties with the UK's Pacific partners.

Tackling climate change and biodiversity loss in the Pacific should remain a top priority for the UK and New Zealand, says a visiting British Foreign Minister.

At the British High Commission in Wellington to an audience of diplomats, policy-makers and academics, Amanda Milling, the UK Minister for Asia and the Middle East, welcomed New Zealand's pledge to reduce carbon emissions to net zero by 2050.

On the last day of her tour to Australia, Vanuatu and New Zealand, she also underlined the joint UK / New Zealand commitment to deliver on the [Glasgow Climate Pact](#), which pledges to cut emissions and limit global warming to below 1.5°C.

Tackling climate change and biodiversity loss in the Pacific should remain a top priority for the UK and New Zealand, says a visiting British Foreign Minister.

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Minister for Asia and the Middle East, Amanda Milling said:

I heard first-hand in Vanuatu about the impacts of climate change in the Pacific, and the importance of supporting Pacific Island countries to build resilience.

The UK and New Zealand are working with partners to ensure those countries can access climate finance, and that Pacific Island voices are heard.

The Minister's visit to the region – to boost diplomatic and trade ties with the UK's vital Pacific partners – follows COP26 President Alok Sharma's tour last month to Australia, New Zealand and Fiji, and the meeting of Prime Ministers Boris Johnson and Jacinda Ardern in London on 1 July 2022.

At that meeting, the leaders signed a new research, science and innovation arrangement which will see both countries share expertise and develop new technologies, including in the fields of agriculture and climate-change.

As part of this agreement, the Minister announced the UK will welcome some of New Zealand's most advanced agritech companies next month to build new links, with some of the UK's leading firms visiting New Zealand on a similar mission in November.

On the UK's recent trade deal with New Zealand, Minister Milling said:

We are also looking forward to our free trade agreement entering into force and watching our trade with New Zealand soar. But this is about so much more than business opportunities. It's about the participation of indigenous people and women in trade. And it's about a greener deal; bolstering commitments to the Paris agreement and Net Zero, while encouraging investment in low-carbon tech.

Finally, on Ukraine, Minister Milling thanked New Zealand for its support in standing against Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine arguing Putin has "thrown the international rules out of the window, shattered global stability and stamped on the principle of territorial sovereignty."

She went on to add that: "We must ensure that Putin loses, and that Russian aggression is never again allowed to shatter peace, freedom and democracy in Europe."

While in New Zealand, Minister Milling visited Auckland, the Waikato and Wellington. She met Aupito William Sio, Associate Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister for Pacific Peoples in Aotearoa New Zealand, to discuss the challenges for Pasifika; Te Taumata, MFAT's Māori engagement group, and the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee.

She also attended a memorial for the former Māori Queen, Dame Te Atairangikaahu and visited several businesses in the Waikato, promoting the recently signed UK-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement.

## Further Information

- The UK is helping Pacific nations and others to protect the marine environment and reduce poverty through our £500m Blue Planet Fund. This will directly support delivery of the region's [2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent](#).
- At COP 26, the UK announced £274 million for a new 'Climate Action for a Resilient Asia' programme across the Indo-Pacific. This will support up to 14 million people to adapt to global warming.
- The UK also pledged £40 million to help Small Island Developing States become more resilient, including in the Pacific in November 2021.
- The UK and New Zealand are working with partners to ensure those States can access climate finance, and that Pacific Island voices are heard. This includes collaborating with Fiji to address concerns raised through the Taskforce on Access to Climate Finance.

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## [The Rt Hon Amanda Milling MP gives speech at British High Commission in New Zealand](#)

Tēnā koutou katoa. It is wonderful to be here in New Zealand.

I've spent the last week meeting people across Australia, Vanuatu and New Zealand, experiencing the incredible hospitality of the Pacific family. It's been great to see first-hand how we're working together on shared challenges and opportunities. And I've enjoyed meeting so many people, from Ministers to scientists, businesspeople and people of the land.

Although we are half a world away from my home in Cannock Chase in the English Midlands, you might be interested to hear that my local area has a very meaningful link to New Zealand. As some of you may know, there was a large military base called Brocton camp at Cannock Chase during the First World War. It became a training centre for the New Zealand Rifle Brigade in 1917, getting soldiers ready for the horrors of battle on the Western Front. There's an Anzac Day service there every year to honour those brave troops, and it's my great privilege to attend it as the local Member of Parliament.

Those New Zealanders fought shoulder-to-shoulder with the British to defend the freedom, democracy and human rights that our nations cherish. Those shared values, and the friendship between our countries, remain just as strong today. But today, once again, democracy is under attack. Autocrats and

despots are trying to undermine the values that guide our way of life. And a trio of challenges – pandemic, conflict and climate change – are destroying lives and livelihoods.

These challenges can only be addressed by countries working together. So the hand of friendship stretching across the oceans between our nations is as important today as it has ever been. I'd like to reflect on just a few aspects.

Firstly, tackling climate change and biodiversity loss is a top priority for the United Kingdom and New Zealand. We have both pledged to reach net zero by 2050. We both demonstrated our leadership and ambition at COP26. And we stand united in our commitments to deliver on the Glasgow Pact and keep 1.5 alive.

Along with mitigation efforts and net zero commitments, we know that adaptation finance is crucial to help people cope with the impacts of climate change. That's why the UK has committed more than £11 billion over five years to support developing countries. And I look forward to seeing New Zealand's new climate finance strategy published soon, following your \$1.3bn commitment.

I heard first-hand in Vanuatu about the impacts of climate change in the Pacific, and the importance of supporting Pacific Island Countries to build resilience. The UK is helping Pacific nations and others to protect the marine environment and reduce poverty through our £500m Blue Planet Fund.

At COP 26, we announced £274 million for a new 'Climate Action for a Resilient Asia' programme across the Indo-Pacific. This will support up to 14 million people to adapt to global warming. We also pledged £40 million to help Small Island Developing States become more resilient, including in the Pacific.

The UK and New Zealand are working with partners to ensure those States can access climate finance, and that Pacific Island voices are heard. This includes collaborating with Fiji to address concerns raised through the Taskforce on Access to Climate Finance.

The UK and New Zealand are also united in our desire to boost the resilience of the Indo-Pacific region. This is a key focus of British foreign policy, on climate but also on trade, security, science and more.

Together with New Zealand, we will work ever-more closely to support security and stability in the region, co-operating with our partners, including the Pacific Islands Forum. Our countries took a hugely positive step in June when we launched Partners in the Blue Pacific along with the United States, Japan and Australia. We also have a clear interest in peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait.

Along with our G7 partners, the UK expressed concerns over recent threatening actions by China – in particular, live-fire exercises and economic coercion. These risk unnecessary escalation. We do not support any unilateral attempts to change the status quo, and we call on China to resolve cross-Strait



differences by peaceful means.

Meanwhile the historic 'Research, Science and Innovation Arrangement' that our prime ministers signed last month will strengthen collaboration between the UK and New Zealand. Together, we will share expertise and develop new technologies – including in the fields of agriculture and climate-change.

The UK will welcome some of New Zealand's most advanced agritech companies to our shores next month, to build new links. Some of our own leading firms will head here on a similar mission in November. This is just the first of many exchanges that, I am sure, will lead to some fantastic new initiatives.

On trade, the UK is glad of New Zealand's support as we seek to join the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership. This is a brilliant opportunity to deepen our access to the massive consumer markets of the Asia-Pacific region. And it's a fantastic way to boost prosperity here, and at home, as we all seek to bounce back from the pandemic.

We are also looking forward to our free trade agreement entering into force and watching our trade with New Zealand soar. But this is about so much more than business opportunities. It's about the participation of indigenous people and women in trade. And it's about a greener deal; bolstering commitments to the Paris agreement and Net Zero, while encouraging investment in low-carbon tech.

Just as importantly, our countries are equally committed to promoting and protecting the international rule of law through the trading system. Together, we will support a global system that's free from aggression and economic coercion, where the sovereignty of nations is protected, regardless of their size.

On that note, I cannot end without talking about Putin's unprovoked, illegal war in Ukraine. He's thrown the international rules out of the window, shattered global stability and stamped on the principle of territorial sovereignty. The United Kingdom and New Zealand continue to stand with Ukraine. We must ensure that Putin loses, and that Russian aggression is never again allowed to shatter peace, freedom and democracy in Europe.

So we will carry on co-ordinating on sanctions to raise the costs for Russia – targeting its economy as well as its elites to cripple Putin's war machine. And we will stand firm in our security and defence collaboration.

Our Five Eyes intelligence-sharing arrangement is a key part of this, to promote and defend our interests in cyber space, quantum computing, artificial intelligence and more.

Early this year, UK and New Zealand defence forces worked together to assist Tonga following the volcanic eruption.

In May, New Zealand deployed military personnel to the UK, to train Ukrainian soldiers to help defend their country. And I welcome yesterday's announcement that this support will be extended, with additional New Zealand teams

deploying over to the UK. And that brings me back to where I started – with New Zealand troops on British soil, standing up for freedom, democracy and sovereignty.

More than a hundred years have passed since those New Zealand boots trod the paths of Cannock Chase, but our countries still stand together, just as we did then. Yes, we face a great many challenges. But there is also a great deal to be hopeful about, as we look to the future.

I can't wait to see what we achieve together.

Tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou, tēnā koutou katoa.