

New US-UK agreement boosts UK's spaceport plans

Press release

The UK and US governments have signed a new agreement paving the way for US companies to operate from UK spaceports and export space launch technology.



UK Ambassador Dame Karen Pierce and U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for International Security and Non-proliferation, Christopher Ford, signed the US-UK Technology Safeguards Agreement, which will enable U.S. companies to participate in space launches from the United Kingdom, on Tuesday 16 June 2020.

The Agreement means US space and technology companies throughout the supply chain can contribute to and benefit from the commercial opportunities offered by the UK space sector which already employs 42,000 people and generates an income of £14.8 billion each year.

Science Minister Amanda Solloway said:

This deal with the US takes us one step closer to seeing the first ever launch into space from British soil.

This is a key moment for our commercial space industry, and I look forward to seeing companies from Scotland to Newquay benefiting, and the creation of highly skilled jobs on both sides of the Atlantic.

Karen Pierce, UK Ambassador to the US said:

This agreement marks an exciting new area for UK-US space collaboration and represents a significant step towards US companies launching from UK spaceports.

The commercial space sector already represents hundreds of millions of dollars in trade between our two countries each year, as well as thousands of jobs on both sides of the Atlantic. This new agreement will generate further growth and prosperity for both our countries.

The UK Government has already awarded grants totalling nearly £40 million to establish commercial vertical and horizontal small satellite launch from UK spaceports and put in place the necessary regulation to enable the first launches to take place in the early 2020s.

The UK Government's Spaceflight Programme aims to establish commercial vertical and horizontal small satellite launch from UK spaceports. Bringing launch to the UK will be a catalyst for growth in the wider space industry, and the government is also developing a comprehensive national space strategy to bring long-term strategic and commercial benefits for the UK.

Published 17 June 2020

Statement on launch of UK-New Zealand FTA

Today we are very pleased to announce the launch of free trade agreement (FTA) negotiations between the United Kingdom and New Zealand. An FTA between our two nations, the closest of friends with deep historic and family ties rooted within New Zealand's founding Treaty of Waitangi, will strengthen our economies and set the stage for an exciting new chapter in our relationship. It is a top priority for both countries and will play an important role in our COVID-19 economic recovery strategies.

Our FTA will be ambitious, comprehensive, future-focused, and will support sustainable and inclusive trade. By removing tariffs and tackling non-tariff barriers, the agreement will reduce costs for exporters and consumers, support job creation, innovation and collaboration, and boost two-way trade in goods and services worth £2.9bn in 2019. It will also encourage more two-way investment, with the UK already the fifth largest investor in New Zealand, and the UK the fourth largest recipient of New Zealand's direct investment in 2018. At the same time, our agreement will ensure we can continue to regulate in the public interest and uphold our high health, environmental, labour, food safety, animal welfare and product standards.

We are committed to achieving a modern agreement with best-practice trade rules on emerging and increasingly important issues, including the digital economy. New Zealand's track record of innovation on digital trade, such as the Digital Economy Partnership Agreement (DEPA), matched with the UK's

innovation-oriented ecosystem, provides a strong foundation to enhance digital trade even further through our FTA.

With shared ambition in leading the global fight against climate change, we also see a UK-New Zealand FTA supporting our respective targets to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050, including by working closely together to ensure the agreement helps promote clean growth, supports our transition to a low carbon economy, and contributes to efforts to address other important sustainability concerns.

We both believe our agreement should open up the opportunities of trade to all parts of our economy and society, including for women-led businesses and entrepreneurs, as well as for Māori economic interests in the case of New Zealand. Similarly, we will work to make it easier for small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) to seize the opportunities our FTA will bring and encourage more growing businesses to do so.

At a time when the global trading environment is under threat from protectionism, and as we look to speed up our economic recovery from the effects of COVID-19, the launch of negotiations today demonstrates our support for open, rules-based, trade arrangements. These are so central to our shared prosperity, which is why we are committed to negotiating an ambitious agreement alongside deepening our cooperation at the WTO, in the Commonwealth and other fora on these issues.

Trade Minister, David Parker, said:

We are looking forward to getting down to business quickly with the UK to forge a world-leading bilateral agreement that not only opens doors for our businesses to trade, invest and innovate more together, but also demonstrates our commitment to inclusive and sustainable trade. Blazing an early trail together in this way will also act as useful stepping stone for the UK in advancing its wider Asia-Pacific trade connections, including through possible future accession to the CPTPP.

International Trade Secretary Liz Truss said:

This is an historic moment for both our countries. A free trade agreement will strengthen our historic bonds of friendship, help grow our economies, and perhaps most importantly demonstrate to the rest of the world that like-minded democracies are prepared to advance and defend free trade in the face of rising global protectionism. New Zealand is one of the world's most progressive trading nations. Together, we can break new ground in trade policy and help set new global standards, and in doing so position both our countries as leaders in the debate about how to grow and advance international commerce.

The FTA will serve as a framework for an even stronger economic partnership as the UK seeks to expand its already close relationships in the Asia-Pacific. New Zealand, as a leading member of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), welcomes the UK's intention to join this group and its determination to turbocharge its economic engagement in the region through membership.

The first round of UK-New Zealand FTA negotiations will begin on 13 July through virtual means. We will work flexibly and creatively to conclude a high-quality, comprehensive and inclusive agreement as quickly as possible, consulting closely with all interested stakeholders.

[£26.7 million engine support contract for Oxfordshire company](#)

News story

A £26.7 million contract has been awarded to supply and maintain outboard and inboard motors fitted to the MOD's small boats fleet.



Two of the craft covered under the £26.7 million contract. Crown copyright.

Oxfordshire-based EP Barrus secured the seven-year contract for the upkeep, update and supply of engines fitted to more than 1,100 craft.

The contract covers boats within the current MOD in-service fleet for craft under 25m, including Rigid Inflatable Boats (RIBs), the Mexeflote landing-raft system powered by the Thrustmaster propulsion unit, workboats, and planned future craft.

Defence Minister Jeremy Quin said:

Our maritime industry continues to grow from strength to strength.

This contract will secure an essential capability for our Armed Forces and support over 40 quality engineering jobs in Bicester plus many more throughout the UK.

The contract will support operations in the UK and overseas involving the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, British Army, Ministry of Defence Police, and Cadets.

The contract will directly support 40 jobs within Barrus's Engineering Centre, as well as a further 80 jobs across the UK supply chain that will benefit from the contract. In addition, this contract secures EP Barrus's graduate programme in Oxfordshire and the future roles for its young engineering students.

James Melia, Project Manager for DE&S Boats Team, said:

Boats are an essential capability of the UK Armed Forces and are used for many different operations around the world ensuring that our Navy has the reach it needs to protect our interests around the globe.

We are committed to ensuring that engines are effectively managed through every stage of their life cycle and our partnership with EP Barrus will provide critical support to this.

DE&S is proud to maintain excellent working relationships with EP Barrus, a valued industry supplier and we look forward to continuing to work together to support our front line with the equipment they need while also maintaining vital British skills and jobs.

Published 17 June 2020

[Change of Her Majesty's Ambassador to Georgia: August 2020](#)

Press release

Mr Mark Clayton has been appointed Her Majesty's Ambassador to Georgia in succession to Mr Justin McKenzie Smith.



Mr Mark Clayton has been appointed Her Majesty's Ambassador to Georgia in succession to Mr Justin McKenzie Smith who will be transferring to another Diplomatic Service appointment. Mr Clayton will take up his appointment during August 2020.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Full name: Mark Clayton

Married to: Helen King

Children: Two

2018 to present	Cabinet Office, Deputy Director, European Security and Defence
2017 to 2018	Moscow, Minister Counsellor (Political), and FC0, Eastern Europe and Central Asia Directorate
2014 to 2017	Dhaka, Deputy High Commissioner
2010 to 2014	FC0, Deputy Head, Counter-Terrorism Department
2008 to 2010	Home Office, Head, International Team, Office for Security and Counter-Terrorism
2005 to 2007	FC0, Head, G8 Team
2004 to 2005	FC0, Head, EU-Former Soviet Union relations Team
2003 to 2004	Kabul, Head, Counter Narcotics Team
1998 to 2002	Moscow, Second Secretary (Foreign Policy)
1997 to 1998	FC0, Desk Officer, Baltic States

Further information

Published 17 June 2020

[**Health and Social Care Secretary's**](#)

statement on coronavirus (COVID-19):

11 June 2020

Good afternoon and welcome back to Downing Street for the daily coronavirus briefing.

I am delighted to be joined by the Baroness Dido Harding, the executive chair of NHS test and trace. Before we turn to test and trace let's go through the daily slides. If we have the first slide, please.

This slide shows testing and the number of new confirmed cases of coronavirus.

And the figures show that as of yesterday there were 197,007 tests, bringing the total number of tests that have been done in this country to more than 6,240,801.

And the number of confirmed cases as of yesterday was 1,266, bringing the total number of confirmed positive test results to 291,409.

And you can see that despite the vast increase in the number of tests that have been carried out, the number of positive cases continues to fall, and has been falling on that 7-day rolling average, a little bit up from the very low figure yesterday of 1,003, but nevertheless continuing overall to fall.

Next slide, please. This matches the data from hospitals, which shows that the number of new admissions with COVID-19, excluding Scotland, was 462 on the 8 June and this is down from 658 a week earlier on the first of June and down from a peak of over 3,000 in late March.

Likewise, the number of those people on ventilator beds, mechanical ventilators, is down to 440. Down from 604 a week ago, and again, that was over 3,000 at the peak so it's very good progress to see both of those numbers continuing to fall over recent days.

If we turn now to the next slide, which shows the regional breakdown. Again, as it has throughout this crisis, this shows that the shape is broadly the same in most regions of the country and the downward trend persists everywhere, which is obviously very good news.

If we turn now to the number of deaths, the final slide. The latest figures show that yesterday 151 people died with coronavirus, that's the reported number, bringing the total to 41,279.

Again, we can see this downward trend continues to come down and in fact the number of deaths over the past week is the lowest since the week ending on the 28 of March and this is good progress but clearly, clearly there is more to do.

And these data show that this virus is in retreat.

In summary, we're working through our plan and the plan is working and that means we're able to restore some of the freedoms that people hold so dear.

And from the beginning of lockdown the challenge has been not just how to get the virus under control but how then to be able to ease the lockdown measures.

I was really delighted by the announcement that the Prime Minister was able to make yesterday, allowing these bubbles so that single parents or those who live alone will be able to form a support bubble with one other household.

I think this is a big step forward. It's very difficult to imagine the impact if you haven't lived on your own for 12 weeks and so I'm really pleased that we've been able to restore that human contact and the support that so many have been missing.

And I know the Prime Minister's announcement has given such hope and comfort to so many and I'm really pleased at the very positive reception that it's got.

To help us take more measures to come out of lockdown of course, the Prime Minister tasked Dido and I with delivering a test and trace system.

Testing for the virus and tracing how it's spread is critical to containing it locally so that we can ease the national lockdown.

And it's by isolating the virus that we can control it and we can stop it spreading through our communities.

In this plan to lift lockdown test and trace is our radar if you like: it helps us identify where the virus is and trace how it's spreading through the community.

And you have your part to play.

If you have symptoms, you must immediately self-isolate and get a test. It's easy to get a test on NHS.UK or by dialling 119.

If you test positive you must work with NHS test and trace to identify who you've been in close contact with and if you are asked by NHS test and trace to isolate, you must do so to break the chain of transmission and to stop the spread of the virus.

I would even go so far as to say that participation with NHS test and trace is your civic duty.

Please, do it to protect your loved ones, do it to protect your community, do it to protect the nation, and do it to protect the NHS.

Today we're able to publish some of the initial statistics about the first week of operation of NHS test and trace.

Baroness Harding will take us through these figures in a moment, but I just

wanted to put them in a bit of context. They paint a positive picture as we will see when we go through the figures.

Firstly, remember that they represent just the first 7 days of this service and yet it's already had a huge impact. The system is working well and as we both said at the start, we will keep improving it.

It will keep getting better and I think you'll see from these figures why we are confident that it will be world class.

And I'm also delighted to say we still have spare capacity, and long may it remain so. This is a good thing. It's a sign of the team's success.

And I just want to take this moment before I hand over, on behalf of us all, to thank Dido and her team, to thank the army of contact tracers, thank you, to thank the NHS and Public Health England who are playing such an important role, to thank the private companies without whom this would be impossible, including Boots and Amazon and Serco and Sitel.

And finally, I want to thank you for your participation. It is brilliant that the vast majority of people have done their civic duty.

And as we work through our plan and as we keep driving this virus down let us maintain that spirit and fortitude that has helped us throughout this pandemic.

And that of course includes not attending large gatherings, including demonstrations, of more than 6 people.

Now, I understand that people want to show their passion for a cause they care deeply about but this is a virus that thrives on social contact, regardless of what your cause may be.

So please, for the safety of your loved ones, stay alert, control the virus and save lives. I am now going to hand over to Baroness Harding to take us all through the test and trace statistics.