

New maritime security strategy to target latest physical and cyber threats

- new maritime security strategy sets out how the UK will enhance its capabilities in technology, innovation and cyber security
- the 5-year strategy will officially recognise environmental damage as a maritime security concern to address modern issues such as illegal fishing and polluting practices
- improving the quantity and quality of seabed mapping data available to expand our knowledge and help to identify emerging threats

The UK's position as a world-leading maritime nation is secured by a new strategy that will enhance capabilities in technology, innovation and cyber security.

Unveiling the 5-year strategy, the Secretary of State for Transport has today (Monday 15 August 2022) set out the guiding principles for the UK government's approach to managing threats and risks at home and around the world, including leveraging the UK's world-leading seabed mapping community and tackling illegal fishing and polluting activities at sea.

The new strategy redefines maritime security as upholding laws, regulations and norms to deliver a free, fair and open maritime domain. With this new approach, the government rightly recognises any illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and environmental damage to our seas as a maritime security concern.

In addition, to enhance the UK's maritime security knowledge, the government has established the UK Centre for Seabed Mapping (UK CSM), which seeks to enable the UK's world-leading seabed mapping sector to collaborate to collect more and better data.

Seabed mapping provides the foundation dataset that underpins almost every sector in the maritime domain, including maritime trade, environmental and resource management, shipping operations and national security and infrastructure within the industry.

The UK CSM has also been registered as a UK government voluntary commitment to the [UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development](#).

By working with the newly established UK CSM, administered by the UK Hydrographic Office, government will have better quantity, quality and availability of seabed mapping data, which as a key component of our infrastructure, underpins the UK's maritime security, prosperity and environment objectives.

Secretary of State for Transport Grant Shapps said:

Mankind has better maps of the surface of the moon and Mars than of our own ocean. To ensure the UK's maritime security is based on informed and evidence-based decisions, we must build our knowledge of this dynamic ocean frontier.

Our new maritime security strategy paves the way for both government and industry to provide the support needed to tackle new and emerging threats and further cement the UK's position as a world leader in maritime security.

Working with industry and academia, Secretaries of State from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), the Department for Transport (DfT), the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), the Home Office and the Ministry of Defence (MOD) will focus on 5 strategic objectives:

- Protecting our homeland: delivering the world's most effective maritime security framework for our borders, ports and infrastructure.
- Responding to threats: taking a whole system approach to bring world-leading capabilities and expertise to bear to respond to new, emerging threats.
- Ensuring prosperity: ensuring the security of international shipping, the unimpeded transmission of goods, information and energy to support continued global development and our economic prosperity.
- Championing values: championing global maritime security underpinned by freedom of navigation and the international order.
- Supporting a secure, resilient ocean: tackling security threats and breaches of regulations that impact on a clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically-diverse maritime environment.

Offshore Plymouth – “Multibeam survey of the seabed off Plymouth”. Credit: UK Hydrographic Office

UK Chamber of Shipping CEO, Sarah Treseder said:

A proactive maritime security strategy is essential to keeping trade routes and energy supplies secure, especially for an island nation. Today's welcome commitments to improve collaboration, both with industry and governments across the world, will help deliver a more secure maritime environment and help provide confidence to the

shipping community.

Tim Edmunds, co-Director of the SafeSeas Network and Professor of International Security at the University of Bristol said:

The new national strategy for maritime security (NSMS) comes at a critical time for the UK maritime sector. Maritime security is key to delivering the UK's ambitions in foreign, security and defence policy, as well as for blue economic growth and environmental sustainability.

SafeSeas and the University of Bristol were privileged to be part of this effort. We are delighted that our research was able to inform the strategy process. We look forward to engaging with UK maritime security actors and assisting with the strategy implementation process in future.

Mark Simmonds, Director of Policy and External Affairs, British Ports Association said:

UK ports work closely with government and law enforcement to facilitate nearly half a billion tonnes of trade and tens of millions of passengers every year, whilst at the same time bearing down on threats to our collective safety and security. We look forward to strengthening that relationship as we help to deliver on these strategic objectives.

The new Centre for Seabed Mapping is a huge step forward for the maritime sector. It will help everyone better understand the UK seabed and be the foundation for numerous benefits, including more informed management of the marine environment.

The UK will continue to engage heavily with industry, academia, international partners and allies in the delivery of this outward-focussed strategy through increased information sharing partnerships, to increase visibility of threats to the global maritime domain.

Prime Minister launches 'Dame Barbara Windsor Dementia Mission'

- Prime Minister launches national mission to tackle dementia, and doubles research funding to £160 million a year by 2024

- New taskforce to speed up dementia research, using the successful approach of the Covid Vaccine Taskforce
- Prime Minister calls for volunteers to come forward and join 'Babs' Army' by signing up for clinical trials

The Prime Minister has launched a new national mission to tackle dementia and doubled research funding in memory of the late Dame Barbara Windsor.

Dame Barbara's husband, Scott Mitchell, met with the Prime Minister earlier this week at Downing Street. They discussed the significant suffering caused by dementia and the slow process of finding treatments and cures.

In response, the Prime Minister has launched the 'Dame Barbara Windsor Dementia Mission,' in honour of Dame Barbara and the millions of other people and their loved ones who have had their lives ruined by dementia.

An additional £95 million in ringfenced funding will support the national mission, boosting the number of clinical trials and innovative research projects. This will help meet the manifesto commitment to double dementia research funding by 2024, reaching a total of £160 million a year.

The mission will be driven by a new taskforce, bringing together industry, the NHS, academia and families living with dementia. By speeding up the clinical trial process, more hypotheses and potential treatments can be tested for dementia and other neurodegenerative diseases.

The taskforce will build on the success of the Covid Vaccine Taskforce led by Kate Bingham.

Prime Minister, Boris Johnson said:

Dame Barbara Windsor was a British hero. I had the pleasure of meeting her both on the set of Eastenders as Peggy Mitchell, and at Downing Street as we discussed the injustices faced by dementia sufferers.

I am delighted that we can now honour Dame Barbara in such a fitting way, launching a new national dementia mission in her name.

Working with her husband Scott, and on behalf of everyone who is living with dementia or has a loved one affected by this devastating condition, I am doubling research funding and calling for volunteers to join 'Babs' Army.' We can work together to beat this disease, and honour an exceptional woman who campaigned tirelessly for change.

One million people are predicted to be living with dementia by 2025, and 1.6 million by 2040. Up to 40% of dementia cases are potentially preventable but causes are still poorly understood. Dementia can affect the brain years before people show any symptoms, which means treatments need to be tested on

people far earlier.

More clinical trials are needed but these are often overly time consuming, with resources wasted on trying to find volunteers.

The Prime Minister has today issued a call for volunteers with or without a family history of dementia to come forward and sign up for clinical trials for preventative therapies, nicknamed "Babs' Army.'

Scott Mitchell, Dame Barbara's husband, said:

The first in 15 Prime Ministers and over 70 years to grasp the nettle and reform social care, I'm so pleased that Boris had the conviction to do this reform. I'm so honoured that not only has he reformed social care, but he's also committed this new money in Barbara's name to make the necessary research breakthroughs to find a cure for dementia.

Barbara would be so proud that she has had this legacy which will hopefully mean that families in the future won't have to go through the same heart-breaking experience that she and I had to endure. I can't stop thinking about her looking down with pride.

Volunteers can register their interest through the [Join Dementia Research website](#). The new taskforce, combined with the extra funding, will work to reduce the cost of trials while speeding up delivery. Existing NIHR infrastructure will be used, building on new ways of working pioneered during covid vaccination clinical trials.

A recruitment process will start this week for a taskforce lead, with the successful candidate focusing on galvanising action while ensuring the best use of tax-payer money.

The new national mission will build on recent advances in biological and data sciences, including genomics, AI and the latest brain imaging technology, to test new treatments from a growing range of possible options.

Researchers will look for signals of risk factors, which could help those who are at risk from developing dementia to understand how they might be able to slow or prevent the disease in the future.

Health and Social Care Secretary, Steve Barclay, said:

Anyone who lives with dementia, or has a loved one affected, knows the devastating impact this condition can have on their daily lives, but for too long our understanding of its causes have not been fully understood.

By harnessing the same spirit of innovation that delivered the vaccine rollout, this new Dementia mission, backed by £95 million

of government funding, will help us find new ways to deliver earlier diagnosis, enhanced treatments and ensure a better quality of life for those living with this disease, both now and in the future.

Hilary Evans, Chief Executive at Alzheimer's Research UK, said:

We're delighted the Government has recommitted to doubling dementia research funding, and that our call for a Dementia Medicines Taskforce to speed up the development of new treatments has been heard. This marks an important step towards finding life-changing treatments for dementia and supporting our NHS to be able to deliver these new medicines to the people who need them when they become available.

We are incredibly grateful to our tireless supporters who have helped keep dementia on the political agenda over the past three years. Over 50,000 people joined us in contacting their MPs, signing petitions, and even writing personal letters to the Prime Minister himself.

The upcoming 10-year dementia plan is a chance for the next Prime Minister to make sure this funding is met with ambitious action and we look forward to working with the Government to turn it into a reality.

[Environment Agency taking action in dry weather](#)

After the fifth consecutive month of below average rainfall and the driest spring and early summer since 1996, river flows and reservoir levels are below normal in most parts of the region.

The dry weather has been most prevalent in the Tees catchment, which recorded its driest 12 months ending July since 1976.

In the North East, the Environment Agency is working with Northumbrian Water to maintain the health of the region's rivers, with the company's Kielder Transfer Scheme moving around 30 megalitres of water per day from Kielder reservoir into the River Wear through its Frosterley outfall for 12 days at the end of July, the first time a Tyne-Wear transfer has been made in 16 years. The transfer started again on Thursday afternoon (11 August) due to low river levels at Chester-le-Street.

The Agency also requested Northumbrian Water make additional releases from Kielder reservoir into the River Tyne to maintain oxygen levels in the estuary to support salmon migration in the country's top salmon river. Almost 12,000 fish were counted moving upstream during July, the highest July total on record.

They've worked with holders of 35 abstraction licences to issue 'hands off flow' conditions, which means licences holders have been told that river levels are low and as a result abstraction must stop to protect the environment.

Rachael Caldwell, Environment Agency Area Environment Manager in the North East, said:

River flows across most of the North East are low after a prolonged period of dry weather, and with the warm weather set to continue we expect levels will continue to drop.

We're looking at the impacts of dry weather across the region to make sure we can act to preserve water for wildlife and people as we experience extreme weather conditions.

We are taking action alongside Government, water companies, environmental and angling groups and farmers to manage these impacts, such as operating water transfer schemes and managing abstraction licences.

On 9 August the Environment Agency declared prolonged dry weather in the North East.

Prolonged dry weather is a natural event which has become more likely with climate change. It occurs as a result of low rainfall for an extended period of time. Once prolonged dry weather is declared, actions are taken to minimise impacts on the environment.

For water saving tips visit [Waterwise](#).

If people see any environmental impacts due to dry weather, such as fish in distress, it should be reported to the Environment Agency 24/7 on 0800 80 70 60.

[Yorkshire drought order application](#)

approved

This week the Environment Secretary granted the application. It means the Environment Agency can ask Yorkshire Water to slow the flow of water leaving the reservoir to manage habitats and river flows to protect wildlife. The flow from the reservoir will reduce from 2million litres per day to 1million litres.

The order will have no impact on the public water supply as the Holme Styes Reservoir is a historic mill reservoir and not part of the public water infrastructure.

Victoria Slingsby, environment planning and engagement manager for the Environment Agency in Yorkshire, said:

We're pleased the drought order request we submitted for Holme Styes reservoir has been approved, which means we can reduce the flow from the reservoir to protect habitats and wildlife. Without it, the reservoir could run dry and plants and animals that rely on it would die.

It's an example of the action we are taking right across the country as the extreme temperatures increase the likelihood of local impacts and put pressure on the water environment and wildlife.

The Environment Agency declared prolonged dry weather in Yorkshire on 13 July.

Prolonged dry weather is a natural event which has become more likely with climate change. It occurs as a result of low rainfall for an extended period of time. Once prolonged dry weather is declared, actions are taken to minimise impacts on the environment.

Action is being taken by Government, Environment Agency, water companies, environmental and angling groups and farmers to manage the impacts. For example, the Environment Agency is responding to environmental risks and increasing fisheries incident response, as well as operating a large number of augmentation and water transfer schemes.

In Yorkshire, they have worked with holders of 128 abstraction licences to issue 'hands off flow' conditions, which means licence holders have been told that river levels are low and as a result abstraction must stop to protect the environment.

July recorded the fifth month in a row of below average long term average rainfall for Yorkshire, with most of Yorkshire's rivers in below normal flow conditions.

If people see any environmental impacts due to dry weather, such as fish in distress, it should be reported to the Environment Agency 24/7 on 0800 80 70 60.

Highlands and Islands play 'key role' in UK defence

Press release

Key defence sites in western Scotland were visited by UK Defence Procurement Minister, Jeremy Quin, to meet personnel and tour the facilities.



- Minister visits test, evaluation and training sites in Applecross and the Hebrides
- Sites play important role in major joint military exercises
- More than 250 people employed, supporting the local economy

The Minister visited the British Underwater Test and Evaluation Centre (BUTEC) based in Applecross on the north-west coast. The facility is used for noise ranging of surface ships and submarines and for testing underwater weapons, such as torpedoes. Run by QinetiQ, Minister Quin met the personnel who operate it on behalf of the MOD and the Royal Navy.

He then travelled to the MOD Hebrides range, also run by QinetiQ, where NATO exercises are conducted, ground-based air defence weapons are tested and complex weapons trials are run.

The Minister received a thorough overview of both facilities, including their use in major joint exercises, and gained a better understanding of their contribution to the local economy, with more than 250 people employed in engineering, logistics and other technical and administrative roles.

Defence Procurement Minister, Jeremy Quin said:

It has been excellent to see first-hand the operational importance of these facilities in the north-west Highlands and the Western Isles, and to engage with those playing a key role in UK defence.

I have also seen the impact the sites have on the local economy in the areas they are based, not only providing high quality that will drive innovation in Defence, but also the positive impact of a Defence presence supporting small businesses in rural communities.

QinetiQ Chief Executive Officer, Steve Wadey said:

It was a pleasure to host the Minister at the sites and give him the chance to meet some of our brilliant employees. As a major local employer in the area, we take our responsibilities seriously to ensure that we support the community and have a positive impact. In recent years, we have already committed £120m into both sites to modernise them and help sustain and attract work from our UK and international customers.

We remain committed to these sites, which are key to helping secure the vital interests of the UK, whether that be helping to host major NATO live-fire exercises or providing high value technical services to the Royal Navy on how to avoid detection by reducing noise on their platforms.

Earlier this week, Minister Quin also visited Defence Munitions Beith, in Ayrshire, a facility which produces, tests and stores weapons for the UK's Armed Forces. He was able to meet staff and see some of the complex weapons which are tested at BUTEC and MOD Hebrides.

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