

# Scottish Secretary visits mobile testing unit in Moffat

UK Government Scottish Secretary Alister Jack today visited [Friday 12 June] a mobile testing unit in Moffat. He saw how UK-wide testing is being expanded, with support from our Armed Forces, to help the UK in the fight against coronavirus.

Mr Jack was given a tour of the facility by Brigadier Robin Lindsay, Commander of the Joint Military Command for the COVID Response and met soldiers from Balaklava Company, 5 SCOTS, who are running the unit.

The UK's Armed Forces are supporting the UK Government's testing programme, operating 13 mobile testing units across Scotland. From the Isle of Skye and Thurso in the north, to Dumfries and Galloway and the Scottish Borders in the south, they are helping maximise coronavirus testing capacity. Each mobile unit has the capability to test up to 500 people per day.

The UK Government is also funding six drive-through testing sites in Scotland (in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee, Perth, Inverness and Prestwick) and the Lighthouse 'megalab' in Glasgow to process samples.

With the 13 mobile testing units and six drive through centres combined, UK-Government-funded testing capacity in Scotland is more than 13,000 tests per day.

As well as operating mobile testing units in Scotland the Armed Forces have been heavily involved in helping Scotland's coronavirus response. This includes:

- Military planning and liaison personnel are based in the Scottish Government's Emergency Co-ordination Centre in Edinburgh.
- Liaison officers are working with each of Scotland's 14 NHS Boards.
- Three RAF Puma helicopters were detached to Kinloss Barracks in Moray, Scotland, to support requests for assistance from the NHS in Scotland and Northern England.
- Royal Logistic Corps staff have been assisting with transport tasks at the UK Government funded Lighthouse Lab in Glasgow.

Following his visit Mr Jack said:

"The men and women of our Armed Forces are working tirelessly to support the UK-wide effort to combat the coronavirus pandemic.

"The mobile testing units, operating in some of our more rural areas, have been a huge support in helping Scottish people get tested – especially our key frontline workers. It was an honour to meet some of the troops today and I would like to thank them for all their hard work.

"It has been encouraging to see the number of coronavirus cases and deaths

across the UK falling recently but we know we can't be complacent. We all need to continue to follow the advice during these uncertain times as we start to see lockdown being eased."

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## [UK Government will not be seeking an extension to the EU exit Transition Period](#)

News story

Scottish Secretary welcomes confirmation for the certainty it will bring Scottish businesses



New border controls and procedures have been confirmed for 2021 as the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Michael Gove, formally notifies the EU that the UK will neither accept nor seek any extension to the Transition Period.

The announcement comes after this morning's meeting of the Withdrawal Agreement Joint Committee – the last formal moment to agree an extension to the Transition Period – at which the UK Government confirmed the long-standing position that no such extension would be sought.

Scottish Secretary Alister Jack said:

We have been absolutely clear that we would not be extending the transition period. I firmly believe that's the right thing to do, because Scottish businesses need certainty. They need to know what to plan for. Our focus now must be on making the very most of the global opportunities that leaving the EU will bring to Scotland.

UK Government Minister for Scotland David Duguid added:

Scotland's entire fishing industry has a bright future as we leave the unfair Common Fisheries Policy. Leaving the EU means that Scotland, and the other Devolved Administrations, will see a significant increase in the decision-making powers in fisheries, and for protecting the marine environment. We are working to support our coastal communities as we, once again, become an independent coastal state.

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## [Domestic Seafood Supply Scheme supports fishing industry](#)

News story

Projects approved under the £1 million grant scheme supporting innovative ways to sell fish and shellfish across England.



The Domestic Seafood Supply Scheme was set up in April to help fund projects that will increase the sale and consumption of locally caught seafood. It was a competitive scheme, judged by an independent panel of fishing industry, government and Marine Management Organisation representatives.

The panel has now approved a total of 20 projects that have the potential to deliver significant collective benefits for the seafood industry in England.

The panel has awarded funding to businesses based across the country who submitted a range of innovative ideas to support their local fishing and seafood businesses get their products to market, including new processing operations, on-line auction and sales websites, and local transport solutions.

Projects were selected that could demonstrate they brought the greatest

benefit to the industry as a whole, working across communities and regions, or with partners.

Some examples are:

- In the South West, Newlyn Fish Market was awarded funding to create an electronic, cloud-based auction platform meaning local buyers can continue to 'attend' auctions and purchase catches.
- In the South East, Yorwarth's Fresh Fish in East Sussex was awarded funding for processing equipment to be used in a newly created hub to process and distribute locally caught inshore fish. This will mean orders could be distributed quickly and continued to provide a sales outlet for the local inshore fishing fleet.
- In the North East, Riley's Fish Ltd in North Shields was awarded funding for a refrigerated vehicle allowing them to support fishermen by providing an outlet for their catch to be sold.

[A full list of successful applications under the DSSS has been published.](#)

[Guidance has also been published](#) on the further support available for the fishing industry.

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## **[Update letter to residents on developments in response to the Grenfell Tower fire: 12 June 2020](#)**

The Secretary of State for Communities, the Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP writes to bereaved and survivors to mark 3 years since the Grenfell Tower tragedy and update on progress being made in relation to building safety, the Grenfell Tower Memorial Commission, the Grenfell Tower Inquiry and social housing.

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# Bluefin tuna in the UK

## Government response

Information on the current rules applicable to Bluefin tuna in UK waters



Atlantic Bluefin tuna is a highly migratory species managed at an international level by the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), the Regional Fisheries Management Organisation competent for managing Atlantic Bluefin tuna. Separate Bluefin stocks are understood to exist across different areas of the Atlantic. For several years Eastern Bluefin tuna appeared more or less absent from UK waters.

Sightings by scientists conducting surveys, and by members of the public on fishing vessels and leisure boats suggest potentially increased incidence of Eastern Atlantic Bluefin tuna in UK waters in recent years. The reasons for this are not clear, but could include a shift in distribution due to changes in environmental and prey conditions and/or increasing stock size associated with the stock's recovery. The UK has funded the Thunnus UK project, as part of the [ICCAT Grand Bluefin Tuna Year Programme \(GBYP\) research activities](#), to provide a baseline understanding of the ecology of Atlantic Bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*) in waters of the British Isles. This work is on-going.

The IUCN (International Union for the Conservation of Nature) revised their Eastern Atlantic Bluefin tuna entry from "endangered" to "near threatened" in 2015. This reflects the improving state of the stock but underlines the continued need for a cautious approach to its management.

In 2017, ICCAT received advice from its scientific committee (the Standing Committee on Research and Statistics, SCRS) that the stock was increasing and unlikely to be subject to overfishing. However, these assessments and stock projections are acknowledged by SCRS to include a degree of uncertainty relating to a number of biological and ecological aspects of Bluefin tuna life history and the models used. Further information is available in this [report](#).

EU legislation continues to apply for 2020; the UK does not have quota for eastern Bluefin tuna and no commercial UK vessels are authorised to land

catches of this stock. Any Bluefin tuna caught by any UK vessel must be returned to the sea, alive and unharmed to the greatest extent possible.

Recreational sea anglers are not permitted to target Bluefin tuna and must release any unintended catches immediately and unharmed.

Bluefin tuna caught as bycatch which are dead must be reported to the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) by contacting the local MMO office, landed whole and unprocessed. Bluefin tuna landed as a result of this requirement must not be sold or given away unless it is for scientific research following approval from the MMO.

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