

Views sought to boost the security of UK data centres and cloud services

- UK's essential services and wider economy are becoming ever more reliant on large-scale data storage and processing services to operate
- Call for evidence launched to seek views on strengthening industry's cyber and physical security systems

The UK's data infrastructure should improve its protections from cyber threats and disruption. The Government announced today it is seeking views on how to boost the security and resilience of the UK's data centres and online cloud platforms.

Views are sought on tools currently used in other regulated sectors, such as having an incident management plan in place, notifying a regulator when an incident impacts their services, and a requirement for a person board or committee to be held accountable for security and resilience.

The UK's data storage and processing infrastructure includes physical buildings housing large computer systems, which store and process huge volumes of data, as well as cloud platforms which provide remote, shareable computing services via the internet.

New protections would build on existing safeguards for data infrastructure, including the Networks and Information Systems (NIS) Regulations 2018 which cover cloud computing services. The National Cyber Security Centre and Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure also [regularly update guidance for data centres and their online assets](#).

The plans will give greater confidence to the millions of people who rely on these digital services every day to make calls, and send photos and messages. Proposals will also help small businesses who use cloud platforms as a cheaper, more efficient way to access essential IT services and as the UK's reliance on digital services grows, shielding this infrastructure against disruption will protect the economy.

Data minister Julia Lopez said:

Data centres and cloud platforms are a core part of our national infrastructure. They power the technology which makes our everyday lives easier and delivers essential services like banking and energy.

We legislated to better protect our telecoms networks and the internet-connected devices in our homes from cyber attacks and we

are now looking at new ways to boost the security of our data infrastructure to prevent sensitive data ending up in the wrong hands.

[Research from the Office for National Statistics](#) shows that from 2013 to 2019 the number of businesses purchasing 'cloud computing services' to store their data has more than doubled, with more than half (53 per cent) of businesses now relying on cloud platforms.

The UK government is today launching a [call for views](#) and inviting contributions from data centre operators, cloud platform providers, data centre customers, security and equipment suppliers and cyber security experts to understand the risks data storage and processing services face. It wants to know what steps they are already taking to address any security and resilience vulnerabilities.

The call for views will also ask companies which run, purchase or rent any element of a data centre to provide details of the types of customers they serve.

Based on the evidence, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) will decide whether any additional government support or management is needed to minimise the risks that data storage and processing infrastructure face.

The work is part of the government's [National Data Strategy](#) to ensure the security and resilience of the infrastructure on which data relies.

Julian David, CEO, techUK said:

The UK's data infrastructure – through cloud platforms and data centres – underpins the digital technologies and services upon which all citizens and organisations increasingly rely.

The technology sector already plays an important role in strengthening resilience across the UK economy and techUK welcomes the opportunity to engage with Government on these significant issues. One particular focus will be how these proposals will align with wider efforts to strengthen resilience across sectors as well as the wider ambitions outlined in the UK's National Cyber Strategy – which is a continuation of UK Government's longstanding leadership in cyber security.

Ends

Notes to Editors:

- The eight-week [call for views](#) will run until 23:59 on Sunday 24 July.

- Following the call for views, the government will review the feedback provided and will publish a response.

BBC review to focus on impartiality and 'levelling up' job opportunities

A review of the BBC has been launched to consider if reforms are needed to help it achieve greater impartiality and build a more diverse workforce.

The first Mid-Term Review – launched at the halfway point of the BBC's ten-year Royal Charter – will assess whether current regulations and governance could be improved to ensure it is delivering for licence fee payers.

The terms of the review are published today and reveal it will focus on the BBC's compliance with editorial standards and evaluate how it is representing audiences from working class backgrounds.

It will look at the effectiveness of the BBC's editorial complaints process, including Ofcom's role in holding it to account, and inspect the corporation's market impact on the UK media landscape, in particular in areas such as the commercial radio and local news sectors.

Following discussions with the broadcaster, the Culture Secretary has also today issued a new legal direction to the BBC to make sure it promotes equality of opportunity for people from working class backgrounds.

Changes to the Framework Agreement, a document which includes further detail on the BBC's regulatory duties as outlined in the Charter, will give the corporation a legal duty to follow through on commitments to do more to reflect under-represented people and perspectives, reflecting this government's desire to see a BBC that promotes greater diversity of opinion.

This includes a target for 25 per cent of staff to be from low socio-economic backgrounds, making sure 50 per cent of radio and 60 per cent of TV programme production spend is outside London by the end of 2027, and delivering 1,000 apprenticeships per year by 2025.

Culture Secretary Nadine Dorries said:

The BBC is a world-class broadcaster but one which has to adapt to a rapidly changing landscape just like all broadcasters are. The Government is committed to ensuring the BBC is more impartial, more accessible and more reflective of our country's variety of viewpoints.

This review will build on our recent progress to make the BBC more accountable to those who fund it, level up people's access to the job opportunities it offers and ensure it continues to work in the best interest of the public.

In addition, the review will assess the arrangements of the BBC's commercial subsidiaries – such as BBC Studios – to ensure they appropriately support its public service activities, can operate effectively and do not create an unfair competitive advantage in accordance with the corporation's Charter.

The Mid-Term Review may recommend changes for consideration at the next BBC Charter Review or it could lead to updates to the Framework Agreement before the review, which would require agreement between the government and the BBC, together with Ofcom's input where relevant.

It is the first time in 12 years the Framework Agreement has been updated during a Charter period, and the first update since the current Charter began in 2017.

The broadcaster will be obliged to report on its progress in its Annual Report and Accounts, supporting Parliament and the public to hold the BBC to account on delivery.

Separately, the government will soon launch a review of the BBC licence fee and the feasibility of alternative funding models in advance of the next Charter which is due to commence in 2028.

ENDS

Notes for editors

Mid Term Review

The Charter clarifies that the Mid-Term Review is a "review focusing on the governance and regulatory arrangements for the BBC". It specifies that the review must take place between 2022 and 2024. The Charter also states that the review cannot look at the BBC's Mission, Public Purposes or the licence fee funding model for the period of this Charter.

The Mid-Term Review will have a particular focus on the following issues:

- Editorial standards and impartiality: assessing the effectiveness of the BBC's governance mechanisms (including changes made in the light of the [Serota Review](#)) in ensuring compliance with its editorial standards including impartiality requirements, and the regulatory arrangements for the enforcement of the BBC's content standards;
- Complaints: the way the BBC handles complaints through its BBC First system, and Ofcom's framework for assessing BBC complaints as part of ensuring effective oversight of the BBC and its relationship with licence fee payers;
- Commercial governance and regulation: whether the governance and regulatory arrangements of the BBC's commercial subsidiaries ensure the

effective functioning of the BBC's commercial subsidiaries in accordance with its Charter obligations and appropriately support the BBC's ability to maximise revenue in support of its public service activities;

- Competition and market impact: evaluating how the BBC and Ofcom assess the market impact and public value of the BBC in an evolving marketplace and how that relates to the BBC's role in the UK media ecology, including with regard to commercial radio and local news sectors and other content makers and distributors;
- Diversity: evaluating how well the BBC's governance arrangements deliver on the duty for the BBC and its output to reflect the entirety of the whole United Kingdom, including how it ensures diverse perspectives and interests are taken into account, and its duty to enter partnerships with other organisations throughout the UK, and also the extent of Ofcom's regulation of these requirements; and
- Transparency: assessing the way in which BBC governance mechanisms support the BBC's duty to demonstrate high standards of openness and transparency in the BBC's reporting of progress against key commitments and performance against the above themes, and the extent of Ofcom's regulation of that transparency.

Framework Agreement

It is an agreement between DCMS and the BBC which sits alongside the Royal Charter, providing further detail on the BBC's obligations and responsibilities.

The updates to the Framework Agreement now include new BBC commitments to:

- More fully reflect and represent people and perspectives in the UK that currently are under-represented in the BBC's content;
- Increase investment outside of London, with 60% of radio and 50% of TV programme production expenditure to be outside London by the end of 2027;
- Deliver 1,000 apprenticeships per year by the end of 2025;
- Make progress on workforce accessibility targets, including the new target for 25% of staff to be from low socio-economic backgrounds;
- Report on how the BBC's commercial activities increase the UK's cultural and economic impact abroad.

The agreement also reflects BBC Board's responsibility to oversee the delivery of the BBC's impartiality action plan and assess the BBC's performance against its editorial standards as recommended by the Serota Review.

Cost of Living Support

Madam Deputy Speaker,

The high inflation we are experiencing now is causing acute distress for the people of this country.

I know they are worried, I know people are struggling.

I want to explain what is happening, why it is happening, and what we propose to do about it.

I trust the British people, and I know they understand no government can solve every problem, particularly the complex and global challenge of inflation.

But this government will never stop trying to help people, to fix problems where we can, to do what is right – as we did throughout the pandemic.

We need to make sure that for those whom the struggle is too hard...and for whom the risks are too great...they are supported.

This government will not sit idly by whilst there is a risk that some in our country might be set so far back... they might never recover.

This is simply unacceptable. I will never allow that happen.

And I want to reassure everybody – we will get through this.

We have the tools and the determination we need to combat and reduce inflation.

We will make sure the most vulnerable and the least well off get the support they need at this time of difficulty.

And we will turn this moment of difficulty into a springboard for economic renewal and growth.

With more jobs, higher skills, greater investment – our plan for a stronger economy.

Madam Deputy Speaker,

Before I turn to the details of our plan, let me put into context for the House, the challenge we face.

This country is now experiencing the highest rate of inflation we have seen for forty years.

The Bank of England expect inflation to average around 9% this year.

Our exposure to global shocks continues to explain most of the inflation above the 2% target.

Supply chain disruption as the world reopened from Covid...

...combined with Russia's invasion of Ukraine...

...and potentially exacerbated by recent lockdowns in China...

...are all contributing to significant price increases for goods and energy.

However, over the course of this year, the situation has evolved and has become more serious.

There are areas of particular concern.

Even excluding energy and food, core inflation has become broader based and elevated.

Of the basket of goods and services we use to measure inflation, a record proportion are seeing above average price increases.

Also, we are acutely exposed to the European energy price shock and, like the US, we have a tight labour market.

Make no mistake – the lowest unemployment in almost 50 years, just months after averting a jobs crisis during the pandemic, is good news.

But combined with the shock to European energy prices, it does contribute to the UK's relatively high rate of inflation.

And lastly, as the Bank have noted, longer-term inflation expectations have risen above their historical averages, by more than they are in the US and Europe.

We cannot and must not allow short term inflationary pressures to lead people to expect that high inflation will continue over the long term.

Because Madam Deputy Speaker

We can get inflation under control.

It is not some abstract force outside our grasp.

It may take time, but we have the tools we need and the resolve it will take to reduce inflation.

Madam Deputy Speaker,

We have three specific tools available to combat and reduce inflation – and we are using them all.

Independent monetary policy. Fiscal responsibility. And supply side activism.

First, our primary tool is a strong, independent monetary policy.

Since control of monetary policy was taken out of the hands of politicians 25 years ago, inflation has averaged precisely 2%.

It is right the Bank of England are independent.

And I know the Governor and his team will take decisive action to get inflation back on target and ensure inflation expectations remain firmly anchored.

Second, we need responsible fiscal policy.

That means providing fiscal support where required but not making the situation unnecessarily worse...causing inflation, interest, and mortgage rates to go up further than they otherwise would.

Excessively adding fiscal stimulus into a supply constrained economy...

...especially one in which households and businesses have built up over £300 billion of excess savings...

...risks being counterproductive and increasing inflationary pressures.

In other words, fiscal support should be timely, targeted, and temporary.

Timely, because we need to help people when the shock is at its worst.

Targeted, because unconstrained stimulus will make the problem worse.

And temporary, because if we do not meet our fiscal rules, and ensure the public finances are resilient in the longer run...

...we create even greater risks on inflation, interest rates, and the trend rate of economic growth.

And third, we are taking an activist approach to supply side reforms.

This will increase our productive capacity, ease inflationary pressures, and raise our long-term growth potential.

The PM's energy security strategy will, over time, reduce bills by increasing energy supply and improving energy efficiency.

The W&P Secretary is moving half a million jobseekers off welfare and into work...

...and doing more to support older people back into the jobs market.

The Home Secretary is making our visa regime for high-skilled migrants one of the most competitive in the world.

And, in the autumn, we will bring forward tax cuts and reforms to encourage businesses to invest more, train more, and innovate more – the path to higher growth.

So, independent monetary policy.

Fiscal responsibility.

Supply side reform.

The country should have confidence, that using these three tools...

...we will combat inflation – and reduce it over time.

But of course, we know that households are being hit hard, right now.

So today, Madam Deputy Speaker, we will provide significant support to the British people.

But as I have said, a critical part of how we are dealing with inflation is responsible fiscal policy.

What this means in practical terms is that as we support people more, we need to think about the fairest way to fund as much of that cost as possible.

The oil and gas sector is making extraordinary profits.

Not as the result of recent changes to risk taking or innovation or efficiency.

But as the result of surging global commodity prices – driven in part by Russia's war.

And for that reason, I am sympathetic to the argument to tax those profits fairly.

But as ever, there is a sensible middle ground.

We should not be ideological about this...we should be pragmatic.

It is possible to both tax extraordinary profits fairly...and incentivise investment.

And so, like previous governments, including Conservative ones – we will introduce a temporary, targeted, Energy Profits Levy.

But, we have built into the new Levy a new Investment Allowance, similar to the super-deduction...

...that means companies will have a new and significant incentive to reinvest their profits.

The new Levy will be charged on profits of oil and gas companies at a rate of 25%.

It will be temporary, and when oil and gas prices return to historically more normal levels, the Levy will be phased out – and with a sunset clause written into the legislation.

And, crucially, with our new investment allowance, we are nearly doubling the overall investment relief for oil and gas companies.

This means that, for every £1 a company invests, they'll get back 90 per cent in tax relief.

So the more a company invests, the less tax they will pay.

And we understand that certain parts of the electricity generation sector are also making extraordinary profits.

The reason for this is the way our market works.

The price electricity generators are paid is linked not to the costs they incur in providing that electricity...but rather to the price of natural gas – which is extraordinarily high right now.

Other countries like France, Italy, Spain and Greece have already taken measures to correct this.

As set out in the Energy Security Strategy, we are consulting with the power generation sector and investors...

...to drive forward energy market reforms and ensure that the price paid for electricity is more reflective of the costs of production.

Those reforms will take time to implement.

So, in the meantime, we are urgently evaluating the scale of these extraordinary profits...and the appropriate steps to take.

So, Madam Deputy Speaker,

Our Energy Profits Levy will encourage investment, not deter it.

It raises around £5bn revenue over the next year so that we can help families with the cost of living.

And it avoids having to increase our debt burden further.

Because there is nothing noble in burdening future generations with ever more debt to pay...

...because politicians of the day were too weak to make the tough decisions.

Madam Deputy Speaker,

I know the whole House will agree we have a responsibility to help those who...

...through no fault of their own...

...are paying the highest price for the inflation we face.

To help with the cost of living, we are going to provide significant, targeted support to millions of the most vulnerable people in our society:

Those on the lowest incomes, pensioners, and disabled people.

First, people on the lowest incomes.

Over eight million households already have incomes low enough for the state to be supporting their cost of living through the welfare system.

They could be temporarily unemployed and looking for work.

Unable to work because of long-term sickness or disability.

Or on low pay and using benefits to top up their wages.

Right now, they face incredibly difficult choices.

So, I can announce today we will send, directly to around eight million of the lowest income households, a one-off Cost of Living Payment of £650.

Support worth over £5bn to give vulnerable people certainty that we are standing by them at this challenging time.

DWP will make the payment in two lump sums – the first from July, the second in autumn, with payments from HMRC for those on Tax Credits, following shortly after.

There is no need for people to fill out complicated forms or bureaucracy – we will send the payment straight into their bank accounts.

Our policy will benefit over eight million households in receipt of means-tested benefits, from July.

Up-rating, in that time frame, could only be done for those on Universal Credit.

And our policy will provide a larger average payment this year of £650.

Whereas up-rating the same benefits by 9% would only be worth, on average, £530.

There are two further groups who will need targeted extra support.

Many pensioners are disproportionately impacted by higher energy costs.

They can't always increase their incomes through work.

And, because they spend more time at home, and are more vulnerable, they often need to keep the heating on for longer.

And we estimate many people who are eligible for Pension Credit are not currently claiming it...

...which means there will be many vulnerable pensioners not receiving means-tested benefits.

So, I can announce today that, from the autumn, we will send over eight million pensioner households who receive the Winter Fuel Payment – an extra, one-off Pensioner Cost of Living Payment of £300.

Disabled people also face extra costs in their day-to-day lives – like having energy-intensive equipment around the home or workplace.

So, to help the 6 million people who receive non-means tested disability benefits, we will send them, from September...

...an extra, one-off Disability Cost of Living Payment, worth £150.

Many disabled people will also receive the payment of £650 I have already announced, taking their total cost of living payments to £800.

And I can reassure the House that next year, subject to the Secretary of State's review, benefits will be uprated by this September's CPI...

...which, on current forecasts, is likely to be significantly higher than the forecast inflation rate for next year.

Similarly, the triple lock will apply for the state pension.

Of course, we recognise the risk that, as with any policy, there may be small numbers of people who fall between the cracks.

For example, it is not possible right now for DWP or HMRC to identify people on Housing Benefit who are not also claiming other benefits.

So, to support them and others, we will extend the Household Support Fund, delivered by Local Authorities, by £500m from October.

This is a significant set of interventions to support the most vulnerable in our country.

We will legislate to deliver this support on the same terms in every part of the United Kingdom – including Northern Ireland.

And, taken together, our direct cash payments, will help one third of all UK households with the cost of living, support worth over £9bn.

So, Madam Deputy Speaker,

We are meeting our responsibility to provide the most help to those on the lowest incomes.

I believe that is fair and I'm confident the House would agree.

But there are many other families who do not require state support in normal times.

They are also facing challenging times.

Is it fair to leave them unsupported?

The answer must surely be no.

While it is impossible for any government to solve every problem, we can and

will ease the burden as we help the entire country through the worst of this crisis.

So, we will provide more support with the rising cost of energy – and that support will be universal.

Earlier this year, we announced £9bn to help with the cost of energy.

Including a Council Tax rebate of £150 for tens of millions of households.

And we plan to provide all households with £200 off their energy bills from October, with the cost of that repaid over the following five years.

Since then, the outlook for energy prices has changed.

I've heard people's concerns about the impact of these repayments on future bills.

So I have decided that those repayments will be cancelled.

So, for the avoidance of doubt, this support is unambiguously a grant.

And furthermore, I have decided that the £200 of support for household energy bills will be doubled to £400 for everyone.

We're on the side of hard-working families, with £6bn of financial support.

So, Madam Deputy Speaker,

To summarise.

Our strategy is to combat and reduce inflation over time through independent monetary policy, fiscal responsibility, and supply side activism.

We are raising emergency funds to help millions of the most vulnerable families who are struggling right now.

And all households will benefit from universal support for energy bills of £400 – with not a penny to repay.

In total, the measures I've announced today provide support worth £15bn.

Combined with the plans we've already announced...that means we are supporting families with the cost of living to the tune of £37bn or 1.5% of GDP.

That's higher or similar to countries like France, Germany, and Italy.

And I'm proud to say that around three quarters of the total support will go to vulnerable households.

As a result of the measures we've announced today, and the action we've already taken this year:

The vast majority of households will receive £550.

Pensioners will receive £850.

And almost all of the eight million most vulnerable households in the country will, in total, receive support of at least £1,200.

Let me put this into context.

The House will have noted the news from Ofgem earlier this week.

They currently expect the energy price cap to rise in October to £2,800.

That's an average increase in people's bills this year of just under £1,200.

The same amount our policies will provide for the most vulnerable this year.

I know there are other pressures.

I am not trying to claim we have solved the entire problem for everyone.

No government could.

But I hope that when people hear the significant steps we are taking...

...the millions we are helping...

...they will feel some of the burden eased, some of the pressures lifted.

And they will know, this Government is standing by them.

And Madam Deputy Speaker in conclusion,

Supporting people with the cost of living is only one part of our plan for a stronger economy...

...A plan that is creating more jobs...

...Cutting taxes for working people...

...Reducing our borrowing and debt...

...Driving businesses to invest and innovate more...

...unleashing a skills revolution...

...Seizing the benefits of Brexit...

...And levelling up growth in all parts of the United Kingdom.

The British people can trust this government because we have a plan for a stronger economy and I commend this Statement to the House.

New safety warnings on risk of insulin leakage from Roche Accu-Chek Insight Insulin pumps

The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has issued [a national patient safety alert](#) for the NovoRapid PumpCart prefilled insulin cartridge and the Roche Accu-Chek Insight Insulin pump system following concerns raised about cracked cartridges and insulin leaks.

Patients are being asked to check the pre-filled glass insulin cartridge for cracks prior to use. The cartridge should not be used if it has been dropped even if no cracks are visible. Closely follow the [updated handling instructions in the pump user manual when changing pre-filled glass insulin cartridges](#).

The device, which releases the insulin your body needs through the day and night, comprises a pump, tube, battery and a pre-filled glass insulin cartridge. In some of the reported leakage incidents, the cartridges were found to be cracked and provided an inadequate supply of insulin to patients. However, leakages also occurred in cases where no cracks in the cartridge were visible. In some patients there were consequences of not receiving enough insulin from their pump system, including reports of severely high blood sugar and diabetic ketoacidosis (a serious complication of diabetes when the body produces high levels of blood acids called ketones).

Health care professionals are being advised to contact patients over the next six months using said device to discuss their individual needs and source an alternative pump where appropriate.

Key patient recommendations are:

- Check the pump and cartridge regularly for damages, for example cracks or leakage. If you smell insulin (a strong antiseptic chemical smell) this could also indicate a leakage.
- Do not use the cartridge if cracks or leakage are seen or if the cartridge was dropped. Follow the instructions of your Accu-Chek Insight user manual for replacing a cartridge and for cleaning the cartridge compartment in the insulin pump.
- During the day and before going to sleep please carefully check that your insulin pump is delivering insulin and there are no leakages.
- Never change treatment delivery methods without first consulting a relevant healthcare professional.
- Failure of insulin delivery due to leakage may not result in an alert notification from the insulin pump and cracks and leakages may not always be visible. You should check blood glucose levels multiple times throughout your day whilst using pumps.
- Tell your healthcare professional immediately if you suspect a problem with your insulin delivery.

Dr June Raine, Chief Executive, Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency said:

“For many patients with diabetes, insulin pumps are an important method of treatment and provide freedom and flexibility in the day to day management of their condition.

“Because of the rare risk of insulin leakage from the Roche Accu-Chek Insight Insulin Pump, patients should check the pre-filled glass insulin cartridge for any cracks prior to usage.

“We would like to reassure patients that risk of leakage remains low when used in accordance with instructions and today’s safety recommendations. Patients should continue to use their insulin pump as recommended whilst they await contact from their healthcare professional regarding an alternative device.

“If you suspect a problem with your insulin pump, please seek medical advice immediately.”

Professor Partha Kar, National Specialty Advisor, Diabetes with NHS England and co-lead of Diabetes GIRFT with NHS Improvement said:

“We are grateful to the MHRA for working closely with us on the issue of insulin pumps and any relevant safety concerns.

“We would encourage healthcare professionals to carefully review the National Patient Safety Alert and discuss with relevant patients the risks and appropriate mitigations as needed”

“We would remind patients that they should not change treatment methods without first consulting a relevant healthcare professional

[Read the National Patient Safety Alert and advice for healthcare professionals here.](#)

Notes to Editor:

1. Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) is responsible for regulating all medicines and medical devices in the UK by ensuring they work and are acceptably safe. All our work is underpinned by robust and fact-based judgements to ensure that the benefits justify any risks.
 2. The MHRA is an executive agency of the Department of Health and Social Care.
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Passenger and fishing safety, new technologies and a greener future are top MCA priorities for coming months

Press release

Reducing the numbers of deaths in the fishing industry, keeping people safe on-board ships, and continuing to drive forward greener maritime are all featured in the Maritime and Coastguard Agency Business Plan for the coming year.



The Agency continues to focus on maritime safety, pledging to improve how it responds to search and rescue incidents, promising to prioritise safety inspections on domestic passenger ships and fishing vessels.

Fishing safety remains high on the priority list with the MCA determined to work with others including the Fishing Industry Safety Group (FISG) towards eliminating preventable deaths by 2027. As one of the most dangerous industries in the UK if not the world, the MCA continues to commit towards reducing those tragic deaths.

With the challenges facing the world from climate change, the MCA will continue to play its part supporting the national and international drive towards zero carbon emissions from shipping.

The UK Maritime Services team has pledged to deliver digitised processes for seafarers including an online certification service by March next year. It has also promised to make sure it offers 95% of candidates an exam at an MCA venue within 21 days of a request in that same time frame as part of its work to transform seafarer training.

Commitment to reducing the frequency of inspections of UK-registered vessels will help maintain the UK's position as a quality flag in international lists such as the Paris Memorandum of Understanding White List.

Her Majesty's Coastguard will continue to maintain its high standards by

reviewing search and rescue and pollution incidents to look for ways to improve its response. It is also launching a website to help promote safety messages to the wider public.

As part of the continuing commitment to bringing in technology, the MCA is looking to award the contract for the next generation of aviation support for HM Coastguard by March next year.

The MCA's Chairman, Christopher Rodrigues said:

Maritime safety remains at the forefront of all we do, whether it be rescuing those in need or protecting them as they travel or work on board ships, trawlers, ferries and boats. That and the ongoing commitment to providing sustainable solutions to the real challenge of climate change remain our top priorities.

The full report can be found here:

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